

New River Valley Beekeepers Association **April**

Meeting 4/11/24

6:30 PM

ATTENDEES

36 in person with 10 via Zoom

AGENDA

What are people doing in their hives now:

- Watch for swarms
- Watch for sneaky bears, check your fences, make sure they're low enough to the ground, and check their electric charges. Strap hives with ratchet straps to at least hold them together if they're toppled.
- Start splitting if you're preventing swarming. Make splits before queen cells are present at the bottom of frames.
- Check hives for honey stores. Just because one hive has lots of honey reserves does not mean that the neighbor colony has honey. Bees can still be lost to starvation.
- Read the article "Queen For Pennies", Randy Oliver's website about how to rear queens

Announcements

- Fred Jones got bulk Apiguard and Formic Pro for members:
 - \$6 formic pro, 1 treatment
 - \$5 apiguard, 1 treatment
- Sam from the Roanoke Beekeepers Association: if you're interested in queen rearing, storing, and selling. The president of the VA Beekeepers Association is speaking at the Roanoke Valley Beekeepers meeting @6:30pm, 4/19 in Salem. See Roanoke Valley Beekeepers Association Facebook Page for details
- At the club's apiary: Saturday 4/13 @2pm will be doing splits

- Spikenard Farm in Floyd has an open apiary, Dandelion Days, day April 19
- Raffle commenced to end the meeting.

Treasurer's & Membership Report

- \$6679.44 + 1 unaccounted renewal (See Jim's email for the full report)
- Google is making it difficult to add members to The Hive List. If you aren't getting emails from The Hive List let Sharon Vest know.

SPEAKER NOTES

Bob Whiton - How to keep your apiary small

Swarms, spares and nucs: Management from a hobbyist's perspective

- Know your goals, why you keep bees and what you want to accomplish • Maintaining a 2 hive apiary is difficult.
- Overwintering outcomes for a two colony apiary:
 - 0 survive -> start over
 - 1 survives -> split
 - 2 survive -> swarms
- Outcomes for a three colony apiary
 - 0 survive -> start over
 - 1 survives -> split
 - 2 survive split -> one one swarms
 - 3 survive -> swarms or more colonies
- Alternative: add a nucleus colony (nuc)
- What is a nuc: a nucleus colony is a fully functional small colony in a 4 or 5 frame box
- Why nucs: nucs provide the flexibility needed to stabilize a backyard apiary without large investments of money or space • Uses for nucs:
 - swarm prevention splits
 - swarm capture
 - queen storage
 - queen rearing (free queens!)
 - Requeening
 - overwintered nucs to replace losses or sell

- Sell extra populated nucs
- 2+2 apiary (2 permanent hives + 2 nucs)
 - If everyone survives you can sell both nucs and do swarm prevention splits on both permanent colonies.
 - If less survives use the stronger colony to repopulate the lesser hive
- You don't have to fill every box you've got every time
- Nucs with 30lbs of honey, ~1.5 boxes of honey, should overwinter nicely

NEXT MEETING

MAY 9, 2024

210 Pepper St. SE, Christiansburg, VA