

# *CENTRAL VIRGINIA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION*



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Newsletter – Brian Gallagher

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**May 2009**

## May 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting

"If You Build It They Will Come: Soil Management considerations for ground nesting bees"

Maria Van Dyke will discuss the life cycle and nesting habits of female ground nesting bees.

Art Freeman will also be sharing with us a true story about an escape artist queen.

Q&A for the Class as well as anyone else.

See you at the Ivy Creek Natural Area on **Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.**

Directions to Ivy Creek Natural Area: <http://ivycreekfoundation.org/located.html>

## Programs

For June the speaker will be John McGhee, our area's state bee inspector. If you have ideas for meeting topics you would like to see covered, let Dana Tornabene know.

## Dues

Dues for 2009 should be paid now. Please send a check for \$5.00 made out to CVBA, to Art Freeman, 8799 Rockfish Gap Tpke, Afton, VA 22920.

Note: The 2009 Class members do not have to pay dues this year.

## This Month's Beekeeping

This year's colder than normal weather has set back the brood progress. Normally there would be more brood in our hives but as the bees need to cover the brood to keep the larva at 95° F they didn't expand as fast. However, there are swarm cells reported by several members. So, you need to check your bees more than normal but only on warm enough days. For those with packages, feed until the bees quit taking the syrup. With these cold days it is more important than usual for you to help them produce wax and build comb.

Keep checking established hives for the position of the brood and eggs. If the young larva and eggs are in the top box, reverse the boxes to help avoid swarming. While it is crowding of the brood area that is the cause of swarming, adding honey supers to a crowded hive may help. If you find queen (swarm) cells, that's an opportunity to take those frames and a few other frames with bees, and make another hive. Cutting the cells out only works if you find all of them, and if you check again every 7-8 days.

Normally, supering in our area starts around the last week in April. You will have to judge for yourself when to super. But, remember that it's better to super too early than too late. While some people use queen excluders, there are other methods of stopping the queen from laying in the honey supers. Reversing brood boxes to keep her in the lowest box helps. The queen will not cross a super of foundation so putting that below a super of drawn comb works. Once you have a super at least half filled with honey, it will function as a queen excluder. So, using an excluder for a week or two 'till they have partly filled a super with honey, and then removing the excluder is a good method.

## Package Bees

Mark Bennet from Dadant in Chatham (used to be in Lynchburg), VA is taking orders for 3# packages with Italian queen: \$73.50, Italian Queens: \$17.00 each. Make checks or money orders payable to Mark Bennett (not Dadant). Payment (in advance) type: Check, money order, cash - no credit cards. For info call 1-800-220-8325. **Delivery April 27**, this is a second delivery.

## Contacts

Our Bee Experts that you might want to contact at times are:

Keith Tignor, State Apiarist, Richmond, 804-786-3515

[Keith.Tignor@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Keith.Tignor@vdacs.virginia.gov)

John McGhee, Bee Inspector, Harrisonburg, 540-209-9153

[John.McGhee@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:John.McGhee@vdacs.virginia.gov)

## A Beekeeper's Calendar

So that you can mark your calendar ahead, and keep the following dates free for these important happenings, we're going to include this calendar with every newsletter. More detailed announcements will be included in each month's edition. The meetings of the CVBA are on the first Thursday of the month at Ivy Creek Natural Area at 7:00 PM, unless announced otherwise, from March through November.

May 7 - CVBA Meeting at Ivy Creek Natural Area, 7:00 PM

June 4 - CVBA Meeting at Ivy Creek Natural Area, 7:00 PM

July 18 - Annual Honey Tasting, Saturday at Ivy Creek (No July Meeting)

July 27 - Bring Honey entries to the County Fair

July 28 - Aug 2 - Albemarle County Fair

Aug 3-7 - Eastern Apicultural Society meeting, Ellicottville, NY

Aug. 6 - No Meeting because of the County Fair

Sept. 3 - CVBA Meeting at Ivy Creek Natural Area, 7:00 PM

Nov. 7 - VSBA Fall Meeting, Blue Ridge Com. College, Weyers Cave, VA

Hope to see all of you at a meeting soon.