

Sandusky River Valley Beekeepers Association



September 2019

srvba.ohiostatebeekeepers.org

Upcoming Events

- **Monday, October 7th 7:00 pm**

Monthly meeting at the First United Methodist Church.

510 W Maple Street, Clyde.

Open topic! Preparing for winter.

Come with questions.

- **Monday, November 4th 7:00 pm**

Officer nominations

Labeling honey bears



Thank you so much to Dr. Michael Stone for allowing the club to use your home for the September potluck! I was unable to attend, but I heard that it was a wonderful afternoon!

It's Robbing Season!

I found this webpage to be very informative and also entertaining. Here is a little excerpt...

“So imagine you're a foraging bee and you've visited your usual nectar spot, only to find nothing. Then a light breeze delivers the scent of stored nectar, filling your senses and beckoning loudly for you to collect your share.

You couldn't possibly say no so you follow that scent. But you're not the only one. Your sisters also got a whiff of the good stuff and they are right behind you. With the drive for sugar being paramount, and overpowered by the urge like a bee possessed, your sisters and you head straight in through the entryway of this new hive, fighting with the gatekeepers at the entrance yet spurred on by the possibility of sweet victory.

Some of your sisters fall in the fight but the cause is too great to turn back. Fortunately for you, the enemy is small in number and you quickly overcome them, leaving a trail of death as you claim your prize in liquid gold. It's the bee equivalent of Game of Thrones.

The strong overpower the weak and take everything for themselves. They don't take prisoners, and they're not keen on survivors so they may even kill the queen. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the essence of why and how honey bees rob other hives.

Bees of the Italian variety are particularly notorious robbers. They tend to be prolific and their numbers multiply very fast. As a result, in times of a dearth, they have way more mouths to feed than other races, such as Carniolans or Caucasians.

Although they are known to be calm, they are more aggressive than the latter two races. That said, any bee race is capable of this robbing behavior.”

<https://backyardbeekeeping101.com/stop-robbing-bees/>

Honey Bee Trivia

T or F: In the northern regions, it is advisable to unite small colonies that are not in condition for wintering.

TRUE - It is recommended that only strong colonies be overwintered. Small, healthy colonies can and do occasionally survive the winter even under severe climatic conditions, but they seldom expand sufficiently in strength during the next season to become a productive unit.

In the fall, the broodnest should be located in the lower part of the hive.

TRUE - The winter cluster will slowly eat its way upward during the winter. If the cluster does not start at the bottom of the food stores, then it will reach the top of the hive before the end of winter and starve to death.

....Robbing Season Continued

Honey bees are social insects, but they will steal from each other. This is survival of the fittest playing out right in your back yard.

Robbing becomes a serious problem for weak hives. Strong hungry colonies with 60,000 workers can overwhelm a small colony in just a few hours.

The threat of robbing bees in your yard is worse at certain times of the year. Especially when no natural nectar sources are out there, such as the fall dearth we are entering now. Robbing is identified by wrestling, fighting bees at the hive entrance. The influx of bees from different colonies spreads diseases and pests, such as varroa mites. Robbing will continue until the colony is killed and resources depleted. It must be stopped—doing nothing is not an option.

It is much easier to **prevent** robbing than it is to **stop** it.

Some tips:

Don't be messy in the bee yard! Don't spill sugar water when refilling feeders. Any pieces of wax or comb should be collected and taken away from the hive area.

Use entrance reducers and keep the opening small for weak colonies.

Equalize colony strength by moving frames of brood between colonies. Be careful not to move the queens! Spray the moved frames with sugar water to reduce fighting. (Some bees do not approve of this method as it may transmit diseases or pests)

Hive inspections can create robbing situations. During times of dearth, keep your inspections brief. Open one hive at a time. Use hive covers to protect supers while you are inspecting other boxes.

<https://carolinahoneybees.com/honey-bee-robbing-behavior/>



No-Cook Candy Board “recipe”

- 10 lbs Bakers sugar
- 10 Tbsp water (adjust as needed) The more water you use, the longer it will take to harden.
- Mix together, spread a layer in the candy board, place pollen patty, spread the rest of the candy on top of the pollen patty! Great insurance policy for winter.

<https://www.honeybeesuite.com/no-cook-candy-board-recipe-for-feeding-winter-bees/>

