



# EJ'S NEWS

EJ is East Jefferson Beekeepers Association's Mascot.

Volume 9

Gloria Neal, Editor

September, 2020

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**East Jefferson Beekeepers' Meetings cancelled until further notice**

For information on club activities or schedule changes, please check the club website for updates.

[Ejbees.org](http://Ejbees.org)

**Our thanks to Mike Edwards for keeping our website current**

## THE PREZ SEZ

Dear Fellow Beekeepers,

As Jefferson County remains in Phase 2 it is not possible for us to hold a live meeting and many of us are not inclined toward Zoom type meetings. We'll attempt to have a socially distanced meeting somewhere as things improve and larger meetings are allowed.

The board has agreed to carry over dues and apprentice beekeeping fees into 2021. After a short hiatus, we'll try to keep everyone informed of our mutual beekeeping efforts through our monthly newsletter. Rich Thomas has become an expert on the Giant Asian Hornet and coordinated setting traps at strategic locations. So far so good. As is requested elsewhere in the Newsletter, we seek your input on everyone's beekeeping experience thus far this year. Nancy and I had a great honey harvest from our two colonies so the blackberries must have been optimum. Rich will be touching on mite control as we move into late summer and early fall.

Recent studies show that honey could be more effective than antibiotics when treating cold and cough symptoms. This comes from research at Oxford University.

Sincerely,  
Dave Morris

### GET SERIOUS ABOUT MEDICATING AGAINST THE VARROA MITES NOW!

Treating in the fall helps ensure that the mites are eliminated before the last of the winter brood emerges. In winter bees are already in a weakened state, and the viruses that the mites carry can cause you to loose a large, healthy-looking colony in the middle of winter.

**MITEAWAY** IS AN ORGANIC 7 TO 14 DAY TREATMENT THAT WILL KILL THE MITES INSIDE THE BROOD NEST ALONG WITH FORETIC MITES.

**APIVAR** IS USED IN THE COLONY FOR 42 DAYS. Needs to be used early fall.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: David Morris

Vice President: Rich Thomas

Secretary: Susie Thomas

Treasurer: Harry Prather

Trustees:

Paul Jendrucko

John Lizwinko

Mike Kelley

## EJ BEES' WORKERS

These people have volunteered to head committees...

APPRENTICE CLASSES: Harry Prather

NEWSLETTER: Gloria Neal  
Eastjeffbees@gmail.com

MEDIA CONTACT: Gail Moa

WEBSITE: Mike Edwards

## MEETING AND ACTIVITY

### CO-ORDINATORS:

Tony Goldenberg, Harry Prather, &  
Gloria Neal

### Bee Keepers,

This is one of the researchers recommended by Apiary Dave Noble in a long webinar talking about his research dealing with Varroa and fat bodies (bee livers). A great article for scientifically minded people.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK2Xi0ST4rA>

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

EJ Beekeepers...

Well this has certainly been a different year for all of us. I miss the meetings and all the input from all of you about our bees and what's going on in everyone's apiaries.

The weather this year has been a more typical northwest spring, which I'm grateful for. The much needed moisture that our nectar producing plants need, has been consistent enough to give our colonies some good nectar flows, compared to last years' drought.

I'm hearing reports of some high honey yields this year. Will be nice to know the "girls" will have the better nutrition of a honey diet this winter.

Rich and Susi Thomas have been very busy keeping up on the developments of the Giant Asian hornets in Washington state. We will have more on that in this newsletter.

This is the time we need to be preparing our colonies for winter, which means the varroa counts **MUST** be dealt with in order for our colonies to survive winter! More on that in this newsletter!

*That's the buzz for September.*

*Gloria* 360-301-1850 Eastjeffbees@gmail.com

### BEEZWAX



## **VARROA MITES ARE STILL THE #1 CAUSE OF COLONY COLLAPSE IN OUR APIARIES**

*(This is an article from Purdue University Cooperative Extension service)*

### **VARROA DESTRUCTOR LIFE CYCLE**

1. Mite enters cell of five day old larva.
2. Mite is trapped in larval food. Fifteen hours in worker cells. Forty-five hours in drone cells (Ifatidis 1988).
3. Worker cell is capped on the 8th day after the queen lays the egg. Drone cell is capped on the 10th day after the queen lays the egg. Mite starts feeding on larva after cell is capped. First mite egg is laid 60 hours after. Eggs are laid at 30 hour intervals. 1-6 eggs are laid. Egg development takes about 10 days. A protonymph emerges from the egg. It develops into a deutonymph that becomes an adult. First egg becomes a male.
4. Female offspring mate within the cell before the emergence of the bee. Males die after mating.
5. Worker bees emerge from the cell 21 days after the queen lays the egg. Drones leave the cell 24 days after the queen lays the egg.
6. Gravid and juvenile female mites leave the cell when the adult bee emerges. Undeveloped mite offspring die within the cell.
7. Mites move on to passing bees. Bees infect each other by close contact.
8. Infected nurse bee feeds larvae.

**MITE ENTERS THE CELL AND THE PROCESS IS MULTIPLIED  
AGAIN AND AGAIN, UNLESS YOU MEDICATE YOUR BEES!**

**Remember, if you have honey bees, you have varroa!!**



**VARROA MITES ON LARVA**



**DEFORMED WING VIRUS**



**VARROA DESTRUCTOR MITES**

## ASIAN GIANT HORNET UPDATE

**ASIAN GIANT HORNET UPDATE** On or about July 14th, a bottle trap in Birch Bay Washington yielded a giant hornet (AGH) which was identified in the lab on July 29. WSDA had a press release about that time. The hornet was identified as a worker indicating a working nest, probably within a mile of the trapping site. On or about July 28 another AGH was trapped in the same general area and was subsequently identified as a drone. The plan is to set out more traps to get a directional indication and then to use infrared imaging and possibly, if they can get some live specimens, to attach small streamers or chips used to track birds to try to bee line, or in this case hornet line, the nest location. The entomologists are quite sure that this nest is within 1/2 mile and is also consistent with the earlier finds this spring of individual queens in Custer, Washington, about 3-5 miles directly to the west however this nest has not been found yet. Birch Bay is almost all state parkland and rural land with few roads. The nest will have to be eliminated in September to stop the dispersal of new queens which are mated in the Fall and overwinter in or near the ground.

Rich

**Just in case you know someone. There is a great hullabaloo about this being dangerous but I see in the videos from Japan that there is no danger at all, or about as much as my going out to pick figs on which the bald faced hornets are feeding.**

Rich

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**From:** "Karla Salp (AGR)" <[KSalp@agr.wa.gov](mailto:KSalp@agr.wa.gov)>

**To:** [richandsusi@cablespeed.com](mailto:richandsusi@cablespeed.com)

**Sent:** Thursday, September 3, 2020 2:00:14 PM

**Subject:** WSDA hiring Asian giant hornet trappers immediately

We're looking to hire two more Asian giant hornet trappers in Whatcom County immediately. Temporary positions through at least the end of October. Salary range: \$2509-3294/month. Complete pages 9-13 of the [position description and application](#) and send to [ldoyle@agr.wa.gov](mailto:ldoyle@agr.wa.gov) for immediate consideration.

# WANTED!

## YOUR BEE STORY



We would like to share your bee stories from this year with everyone. If you have a story or something that you learned this year about your bees, please send it to our club email...

[Eastjeffbees@gmail.com](mailto:Eastjeffbees@gmail.com)



## TREATING VARROA WITH OXALIC ACID

It has been truly written by the sage gurus of beekeeping that you have two simple choices in the fall. You can test and treat for varroa mites or you can purchase new packages in the spring. All things considered, it is probably cheaper and easier to use the former option.

Now you have to decide how to test and treat for varroa mites. Testing has several options, but that is not the subject of this discourse. I would recommend treating regardless of the test results, and I usually don't bother to test first.

There are several commercial products available for treating your hive. Again, that is beyond the scope. I am only going to talk about Oxalic acid.

What, you may ask, is oxalic acid? It is a weak organic acid. It gives spinach and rhubarb its taste. While it is relatively harmless in its solid or liquid state, the vapors can be more hazardous.

So let's talk about protective gear. You should always wear rubber gloves when handling the crystals or liquids. If you get either on your skin, wash the area promptly. In addition, you need to wear a good respirator (filter mask) when handling the vapor. It is always useful to stand upwind. The vapor does not hurt the bees, but bees do not have lungs. You do.

When can you apply oxalic acid? The easy answer is: anytime. It does not matter if you have honey supers on or not. Tests show that honey already has a small amount of oxalic acid in its makeup, and treatments do not raise the level by a significant amount. Also, since you are using a liquid or vapor, temperature is not a concern. It is probably wise to treat in the middle of winter, since there is no brood.

Speaking of brood, oxalic acid treats the bees, but not the brood. The vapor or dribble cannot get into the cells to affect the brood. If you have brood, a full treatment consists of four or five visits a week apart. If you have no brood, then one visit does the trick. Many people treat once a month because the treatments are so inexpensive.

The first order of business concerns procurement. Where do you get oxalic acid? The major beekeeping suppliers all sell it, but I think the easiest method is via the hardware store. Wood bleach is pure oxalic acid, and is the same purity as the mail order establishments.

Now that you have oxalic acid, what do you do with it? There are three approved ways to apply oxalic acid to your hive. I am only going to list them, with a brief discussion, as a quick search of youtube gives countless videos of each procedure and a picture is much more informative.

The first method uses a 12 volt battery and an aluminum tray. The battery energizes a diesel engine glow plug which heats the tray and vaporizes a bit of solid oxalic acid. It takes about five minutes per hive to treat.

The second method uses a propane fueled pesticide vaporizer, which has not been used for pesticide. A measured amount of oxalic acid crystals is dissolved in a measured amount of everclear 190 Proof ethyl alcohol, which is used as the medium in the vaporizer. Once the vaporizer is warmed up, you simply apply the vapor through the bottom of the hive with three or four waves, and on to the next. This is the fastest that I know .

The third is called the dribble method. I know very little about this, and have not personally used it. It seems that you make a solution of oxalic acid and dribble it over the frames.

As far as I know, all three have relatively equal effectiveness. You pays your money, you takes your choice. I believe the propane vaporizer is less expensive than the aluminum tray, but the dribble method is cheaper than either. Of course, I could be wrong. It did happen once before.

Harry Prather

## HOW IS IT SEPTEMBER?

How can it be time to treat my hives for varroa already? Wasn't it just May? Wasn't I just talking with Gloria about how gentle the Old Sol bees were? Seems like I could inspect this hive without wearing any protective gear. Six weeks later the same hive was loaded to the gills with every form of brood and eager to murder me to protect that brood and all the food they'd packed into the comb. Duly noted.

How can it be time to add honey supers, I thought, way back in July, comparing my lagging hives of 2019 that took precious weeks to hatch new queens after both hives lost their original queens. Operator error? Did I somehow destroy both queens last year even as careful as I was during each inspection? What a difference when the original queens are able to grow the hive! The differences between managing two hives vs. four, thanks to a split this year. So many new experiences—even watching one hive swarm while I thinned the cherry-sized fruit of the Liberty apple tree. *My oh my*, I thought to myself as the bees turned into a tornado within the canopy of my pear tree. *What are all these bees trying to prove?* Then realizing what all those bees were trying to prove (yes - it *had been* time to add supers), and me running around the garden like a banshee trying to find my metal pot and stick. There was the "July Veil Fail" where I found myself eyeball to eyeball with guard bees un-pleased that I was opening their hive. Where's the Benadryl and Calamine? Experience *is* the best teacher.

How can it be time to harvest honey already? But there were the supers brimming with capped honey. How do you work this electric knife? How do I load this extractor? 2020 was a year to start to make sense of information from the 2019 class series with E. Jefferson, and also a time to absorb readings, YouTube videos, and copious conversations with Gloria. A different time, not being able to hear what all the other beekeepers were experiencing with their hives. Not being able to listen to Rich maintain order with a squeaky duck! I heard through the grapevine that so-and-so has a feisty hive, and that so-and-so has a proven way to catch swarms—HEY! Have you seen mine? Do we need a Zoom meeting?

Hope springs eternal. My hive that swarmed is bursting again with bees and brood. Honeycomb is being worked in its super. Fingers crossed that a COVID vaccine will be in place soon and public gatherings will once again take place, and the E. Jefferson Bee Club will take their spot in the library on Saturday mornings, with stories, theories, and ideas about the world of beekeeping.

By Catherine Slaton

## Do you have a favorite link you would like to share?

Although we are still unable to meet, there are a lot of links about beekeeping on the internet. Some good, some not so good. So each month we hope you will share your favorite links with the rest of us. They will be added to the club newsletter.

Here are two from Susi Thomas...

"Scientific Beekeeping" is an excellent technical, scientific website that offers research reports and articles about *beekeeping* by Randy Oliver, an author who writes for the *American Bee Journal*. He describes himself as a "data over dogma" guy. You can learn a LOT from going through his archive of many years' worth of articles.

[Scientific Beekeeping - Beekeeping Through The Eyes of a Biologist](#) (Research and articles about beekeeping by Randy Oliver, an author in the *American Bee Journal*.)

"Honey Bee Suite" is a blog by Rusty Burlew, a Master Beekeeper who lives in Western Washington. She has a section for beginning beekeepers, information about native bees, and articles on various topics of interest. Her style is quite accessible, not as technical as some sites such as "Scientific Beekeeping," but she has a similar attitude, believes in science, data from experiments and field trials rather than in myths or "my uncle did it this way for 93 years in the old country...."

[The Science of Bees - Honey Bee Suite](#)

## WASBA CONFERENCE FOR 2020

As you may have already heard, the 2020 WASBA conference this year will be virtual on October 3-4. We really wanted to hold an in-person meeting but with COVID-19, it just wasn't in the cards. This year's conference is a fund raiser for the new WSU bee research lab in Othello, WA. All proceeds over our costs will go directly to the WSU bee research lab. We have a great lineup of speakers this year starting off with our Keynote by Randy Oliver and followed up with a talk by Steve Sheppard. After these two outstanding speakers, we'll have two concurrent sessions, one focused more on the science of beekeeping and the other focused on the hobby. We'll also have several times that we'll be able to socialize via the web and to chat with the speakers and each other. We also have some incredible auction items this year including trips with Commercial Beekeeper Tim Hiatt to move hives and visit his bee yards, a weekend on Camano Island visiting Dr. Jennifer Short's sideline bee business, Queens from the WSU Bee lab, along with an electric extractor, artwork, and many other items. The auction site will be go up about a week prior to the conference.

Here is the link to the site to sign up for the conference. Please pass this information along to the members of your club and to anyone else that you think may be interested.

<https://www.accelevents.com/e/WASBA2020PacificNorthwestBeekeepingConference>

Cheers,  
 Kevin R. Oldenburg, Ph.D  
 President, Washington State Beekeepers Association  
 509-389-2235

## TIPS & TRICKS

*September 2020: a monthly offering of useful hints for beekeepers.*

- \*If you are stung on a part of your bee inspection clothing or gloves, remove stinger immediately and smoke the area of the sting to mask any pheromone*
- \*.Make bee candy for late winter/early spring emergency stores: 8 lb sugar, 1½ cup water, ½ teaspoon white vinegar. Mix and press into ½-inch galvanized mesh for a candy board.*
- \*Melt wax off the queen excluder to keep it clean & open to traffic, collecting the wax on a paper towel to use as a fire-starter in your fireplace or barbecue.*

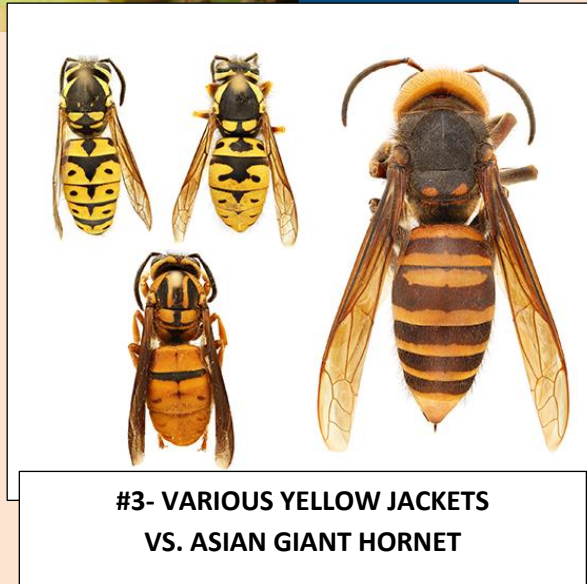
If you would like to submit your own tip or trick for possible future inclusion, please send it to [richandsusi@cablespeed.com](mailto:richandsusi@cablespeed.com) .



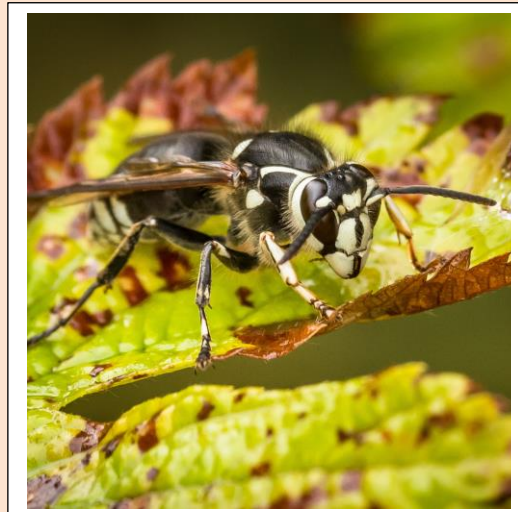
## ASIAN GIANT HORNET AND LOOK-ALIKES



**#2  
AMERICAN  
HORNET  
MOTH  
VS.  
GIANT  
ASIAN  
HORNET**



**#4- BALD FACED HORNET VS. ASIAN GIANT  
HORNET**



**#5 BALD FACED HORNET**



# BUZZING WITH



# Blake

## Bee-lieve me. It's a fact!

**BEEKEEPERS!**

MEDICATE AGAINST VARROA DESTRUCTOR MITES,  
NOW, OR CHANCE LOOSING YOUR BEES THIS WINTER.

IS IT WORTH THE RISK?.....Blake



## KEEP BUZZING WITH BLAKE

Oxalic Acid treatments for your bees

For information, call Gloria and leave a message for Blake.

[buzzingwithblake@gmail.com](mailto:buzzingwithblake@gmail.com)

He will return your call....360-301-1850

## TARBOO VALLEY WOODENWARE & HONEYBEES

Frank Neal- Ph. # 360-301-1850...

**We have a limited number of miteaway treatments available for sale.**

5% discount for EJB club members for bee supplies

NEW WEBSITE: [tarboovalleywoodenware.com](http://tarboovalleywoodenware.com)  
NEW EMAIL: [gloria@tarboovalleywoodenware.com](mailto:gloria@tarboovalleywoodenware.com)

**PLEASE CALL AHEAD!**

If you would prefer not to receive this newsletter, please email us at [Eastjeffbees@gmail.com](mailto:Eastjeffbees@gmail.com)