

2022 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes

If you are a bit under the weather, it is a good time to do some reading. The News & Observer (local paper in Raleigh) reports that this year's weather whipsawed North Carolina. Extremes of warmth and cold coming just days apart are going to be more common in future years. It points out 'Our scientific understanding of the climate system strongly supports the conclusion that North Carolina's climate has changed in recent decades and the expectation that large changes -- much larger than at any time in the state's history will continue. The prediction is more days above 95 degrees and coastal flooding will be more of a problem.

I have lived in Raleigh for only five full years. It is much different than living in Ohio. I have not had to pick up a snow shovel since moving here. But it is hot and dry. The paper reported that November 2021 was the driest month in 90 years. It is reporting that we will have more stifling summers, snowless winters, and flooding.

Our local bee school begins on Saturday January 8th. On January 11, I have a bee talk about swarming! I have seen a beehive with 5 frames of brood by January 1. There are at least four flowering plants in bloom and bees have been returning to hives with pollen. That was just several days ago when our high temperature for the day was 76 degrees.

The honeybees can handle the change in weather better than we can. Hopefully they have enough winter stores to feed all the new young being raised! No drones as of yet but it would not surprise me if some of you living in the area see some. I have been asked what the first sign of swarm is? If you see adult drones in your hive, the time is very near!

This week's article may not be of much interest to some of you but new beekeepers are facing the serious challenge of selecting the type of hive they want to put bees into. Because hive equipment is expensive, one can make a big mistake in the selection they make. I feel it is responsible to let new beekeepers know that other types of hives are available. But if one is looking for resale value, the more popular design will return the best sale price.

"Used flow hives" are not selling well. In fact, I saw a post giving one away. I just wonder about the hype that goes with each new bee season on something newly being introduced. I always wait for others to buy a hyped product and wait for someone else to use it. I have made a lot of mistakes in buying something that was different. Remember the Technoset hive? They seemed to be a good idea, but as I used them, problems showed up. Their one feature that is good -- If I kept bees in bear country, they might survive a bear attack. However, even then bears are very creative.

I will be sending a pdf on how to build the Warre hive tomorrow.