

2023 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes Issue #28a

I hope you are keeping cool. I have spent a lot of time inside this week. This weeks article is about summer feeding. The topic may not be currently what you are doing with your bees -- especially those of you with bees still getting honey crops.

I am now a fixed location beekeeper as are many other hobby beekeepers. Judi and I will be travelling to Ohio and New York state the latter part of August. I love the beekeeping opportunities those states share with late season honey crops. But my bees are staying home! I am sure I will see fields of goldenrod, and other late blooming plants.

I have been asked by at least 3 readers of these note to talk about how I feed my bees during this mid-summer season. There are various views on how to feed bees -- I have just one view (the way I am doing it!) We have two serious pest in the Raleigh area that are capable of wiping out a hive of bees. The only cure I have found with wax moth and small hive beetles, is to make sure I do not have weak hives. As bee populations begin to decline these pest find opportunities along with Varroa mites to destroy hives.

Thus, I feed to make sure my bees are strong. The result of using mid summer feeding has worked for me. If any of you saw my hives in January, it was a result of feeding each hive something like 50 pounds of sugar over a period of time to maintain strong hive populations. During summer bees use the food for brood production with the side benefit of drawing wax on new foundation. I have seen no small hive beetle problems as have many of my beekeeping friends. I have treated for Varroa as well. I am less sure how well the treatment I used works.

On the other hand, I attended a meeting last week when a discussion at the State Beekeepers meeting indicated that the new thinking is that bees have built up resistance to almost any product we might be treating bees with for Varroa so it might just be a waste of money. I hear many things that are reported and will take a wait and see approach on this topic. I have re-queened my colonies of bees -- everyone of them. They have all gone thru a brood interruption period. With feeding -- my hives are doing very well and some honey storage is taking place with most of the food going into brood production and keeping the bees in the hive well fed.

If there is any secret about how I feed, it is using Honey Bee Healthy as an additive to my syrup.