

2024 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes Issue #1a

Good Morning

2024 has arrived! I have had plenty of time to look at what I will be writing about this year. I know that a number of new readers will need starting beekeeping information. But my focus is going to be on bee management and issues. I know that many beekeepers have lost hives of bees this past fall and early winter. I get questions asking why?

That question for me is difficult to answer. I hear and read that it is the mites. In fact, no one I have talked to has brought up the issue that our climate is so contaminated with smoke, dust, chemicals, land management that I wonder just how such a question can be answered. I firmly believe that bees need two things to survive the winter (1) good bee populations [good queen stock] and (2) food. As beekeepers we can manage those two issues. Mite management is confusing. So many conflicting opinions are flying around. I ask this question when I am question! Have you checked your mite levels and have you treated your bees for mites. The answer is usually, "I have." The next question is "What did you use." Again many are finding that even following the directions and using available products-- their hives failed. Something is going on -- could it be that areas are over populated with beekeepers. Disease is spread and food supplies are limited. Even if one does everything right -- bee hives near by that are untreated are competing for available food and they are going to spread disease because your bees will seek out weak hives to rob. No amount of bee management is going to work.

This is something to think about! Your bees are just like those that "smash and grab" and what they bring home may kill them!

Dana