

March, 2015 North Central Beekeepers Assn. newsletter

Greetings ;

Lunch committee;

Jeff Nelson, Peter Lodermeier

Speaker at 7:00pm. Business and lunch to follow;

Our speaker will be Mike Goblirsch of the University of Minnesota, Bee Squad. Mike was here a few years ago speaking on nosema. He will update us on the ongoing research projects at the U as well as his own work. Mike will also report on the new bee facilities scheduled for the University.

Before the next meeting (HOPEFULLY) the 2015 active beekeeping year will be upon us. Many will be receiving and installing new packages of bees, nucs and putting in new queens.

There are as many ways to install a package as there are beekeepers. Almost all methods work as long as the bees are not wet down too much and the queen doesn't fly off into a waiting snow bank. If you wet down the bees too much they will chill and die. If the queen flies away you must find another, that expensive package just got REAL EXPENSIVE. Nucs are much the same. In the short future you will need to place that nuc into 8 or 10 frame equipment for that huge honey crop. You must be very careful not to roll that queen or its back to REAL EXPENSIVE. Here I will attach a excerpt from an 1884 report on queening/ requeening. Things haven't changed very much. W. P. HENDERSON. (1884) INTRODUCING QUEENS. The Beekeepers Magazine

Much has been written upon the subject of introducing strange queens to a colony of bees, and yet no rule or practice has proven infallible. The season of the year, the size and condition of the colony, the age

and kind of bees has much to do with the safe introduction of the queen.

At certain seasons, almost any slipshod method will succeed, and at other times, the bees refuse to accept the queen, although the greatest care and caution are observed. An exhaustive article upon the subject of introducing queens would occupy several numbers of the MAGAZINE, and I will therefore give, in this short article, a few general observations.

When bees are storing honey rapidly (the native queen having been removed) the stranger queen can be introduced in a wire cage and after confinement from twelve to twenty-four hours she may be released.

At noon is the best time to release her, some authorities to the contrary notwithstanding.

The cage should be of fine wire (ten or twelve meshes to the inch) and not less than six inches long and one and one-half inches wide, so as to allow the queen perfect freedom, and placed between combs of brood. If no honey presses on the cage where the queen can feed herself, honey should be placed in the cage.

A young queen will be more readily accepted than an aged one. Black or brown bees will receive a strange queen more readily than any other variety. A small or weak colony is to be preferred to a strong one.

Young bees will receive and treat kindly a stranger queen, sooner than old bees.

When a colony has made preparations for swarming, a strange queen may be introduced to a part or the whole colony, by placing a new hive in place of the old one and brushing the bees in front of the new hive, letting them run in and dropping the queen amongst the bees as they go into the hive. This operation should be performed about sun down and should be practiced by none but an expert, as every condition should be right to prove successful.

A queen that has been caged for several days outside a colony of bees is apt to take wing and be lost in immediate introduction. Sometimes when caged for twenty-four to forty-eight hours and then released, she will come to the entrance of the hive and fly off. I have noticed this especially with the Syrians.

Do not attempt to introduce a queen to a queenless colony, having fertile workers, unless they have constructed queen cells (over brood, by the way, that will never hatch a queen) and having previously given a frame of brood in different stages of developement from another hive.

No mailing cage that transmits queens safely, is suitable as an introducing cages.

Have no accompanying bees in the cage; the queen should be alone.

These are all the general rules to be observed that I can think of at present. Practice and experience will suggest many minor points at times very necessary for the safe introduction of queens.

I get some very amusing letters occasionally in regard to the manner of introducing queens. I am now just in receipt of two; one from W. H. Birnen, of Nelson, Madison county, N.Y., which was intended, I suppose, as a pleasantry; it reads thus:

"I send you this to enquire if you have seen anything of an untested Holy Land queen, you sent me a week ago. I put the cage on top of the frames. The bees acted so contented that the next day I opened the cage. One of the bees grabbed her, so I blew a little smoke on her, when the bee let go and the queen immediately took wing and I have not seen her since. If you have seen anything of her I wish you would send her back," and so forth.

That is from 1884

Gilbert Frank is still fixing and building bee equipment

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