



## buzzwords

<http://www.barnstablebeekeepers.org>

**October 2020**

### Upcoming Meetings

**Tuesday, October 13**

**7:30 pm**

**Gabrielle Sakolsky**

**Superintendent and Entomologist**

**Cape Cod Mosquito Control Project**



She will be speaking about mosquito control and chemicals used to control them on Cape Cod.

via zoom

### Update On Tale Of Two Queens

Recalling the story of the hive with two queens, this scenario continued from late April until early July. There is really no way to tell which is the mother and which is the daughter but just a guess that this was the case. What is interesting is the fact that they were both laying but the hive has never needed a second deep. Since July, we have only been able to spot a single queen but we did find a fully formed and capped queen cell in early September! This must have been torn down as the hive continues with all stages of brood. But note the picture below.



So what is with the pollen or bee bread stored BELOW the brood? This is such an unconventional hive and does its own thing!

### Fall/Winter Feeding 101

It would be sweet (pun intended) if we did not need to feed our bees come fall and going into winter. Years ago, this was not necessary as the top deep was full and the bees had more than enough winter stores to

### Newsletter Submissions

Please send Buzzwords submissions to [David Whalley](mailto:david.a.whalley@gmail.com)  
david.a.whalley@gmail.com.

We are looking for good stories, photos, links, news about talks and presentations you've done or seen, book and movie reviews, and items for sale or free to good home!

PDF, scanned document files, and hard copy submissions are not acceptable. You can create files in Word, Pages, Notepad, TextEdit, etc. for articles.

get them through the winter months and into early spring. Of late, with a short season and drought conditions, we find it necessary to provide the honey bee hive with winter feed throughout the season. Having seen starvation over the years that could have been easily prevented, a bit of sugar placed in the hive right over the cluster is a very cheap form of life insurance.

Here are a few ideas which you might find helpful and your bees will be so very thankful.



It is a shame to crush your foraging crew so why not cut 3/8" dowel in 6" lengths and place directly on the frames. Then you can add your paper plate and pile on the sugar. Spray with a mist of water or sugar syrup to help it clump and the bees will not start to carry it out as a foreign substance. Remember, your girls are very meticulous!

## Forage

[Catch The Buzz – We Are Inadvertently Damaging Honey Bees](#)

[MA Dept. of Agricultural Resources Announces Additional Spotted Lanternfly Detections in MA](#)

And here is what you will find after about a week this time of the year. Not only do they consume the sugar but they chew and drag out the paper plate. Sometimes you will find not a speck of white left depending on how hungry they are.



## Did You Know?

A honey bee can fly for up to six miles, and as fast as 15 miles per hour, hence it would have to fly around 90,000 miles -three times around the globe – to make one pound of honey.



Here is an aerial view of the debris lying in front of the hive from the paper plates. Really good housecleaners and perhaps better hygienics?

Check out the BCBA Facebook page for shared links, photos, and questions/answers! Join the conversation!  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BarnstableCountyBeeA/>



EVENING MEAL



Another way to feed your hive is using the Mountain Camp method. It is just a  $\frac{1}{2}$  sheet of newspaper laid across the tops of the frames where the bees have access to it on all sides. A few pounds of sugar can be added but one drawback is that it makes it difficult if you need to inspect the cluster one more time. Paper plates work much better.



A two inch shim is necessary to surround the sugar no matter which system you chose to use to feed. One inch by 2 inch wood works perfectly. A piece of a pollen patty is laid between the plates in this photo.

As the season progresses, some find the use of sugar bricks easier to add right near the cluster. Sugar bricks can be made using a 4 pound bag of sugar mixing it with 12 tablespoons of water. Stir to coat the sugar and let sit for a half hour. Then pack into square sandwich containers which have been sprayed with an oil mist. Let sit for a day or two and then carefully dump out and let the brick dry. This can be slipped in close to the cluster if feeding is needed



One last option is to make a sugar board. This is simply a 2 inch shim tacked with a piece of 1/2" hardware cloth. You can add 1/2" molding on the bottom so no bees are squished when adding. The hardware cloth is lined with a thin tissue paper and then spread with the sugar brick recipe. It will hold 10 pounds of sugar so the recipe would be two cups of water stirred well with the sugar and packed in well on a large tray. This sugar board should last nearly all winter long as the bees have access to it right on top of the cluster.

## 18 -- 10 -- 5 -- 10 --5

There are times when some of us “jump through hoops” to keep a hive alive and building nicely. Of course, those beekeepers with multiple hives and equipment find these efforts easier. Such is the situation with one particular hive.

Remember the hive posted on Facebook with massive robbing back in mid-August? Well, that began in May as a new package and built to 18 frames (division board feeders replace two frames). Never a great laying queen, she was replaced with a locally grafted Saskatraz virgin queen in late July. She mated and became a good layer or that was until mid-August when neighboring bees became hungry and obnoxious. This 18 frame double deep hive was reduced to a 10 frame single deep as it was left with not a lick of honey and hundreds/thousands of very dead workers on the bottom board. But the queen survived the ordeal! A week later the numbers were down and robbing ensued again so the hive was again reduced to a 5 frame nucleus colony and moved to the home apiary.

Late August, a hungry 5 frame nucleus colony has little chance of survival unless combined with another hive. In the apiary was a 5 frame nuc which was the balance of mating nucs. The queen in residence was a supersedure queen swapped out from a mentee's hive to break the brood cycle and hopefully clean up the hive from chalkbrood. Well, the swap worked nicely on one end but brought chalkbrood into the apiary. This nuc was perfect to combine with the continually robbed out nuc from the bog. The supersedure queen was killed and the two nucs were combined one on top of the other with a sheet of newspaper between boxes. Several slits were made in the paper to speed up the combining process. This combo was given five days to eat through the paper and become one big happy family. On the fifth day, now early September, the individual nucs were inspected. All good with the Sassy queen on top, few holes in the newspaper but several capped queen cells were found in the bottom box? Apparently, the Sassy queen's pheromone was not sufficient to work its way through the newspaper or carried down with her workers. The cells were scraped off, the Sassy queen was caged to be on the safe side and frames were combined into now a 10 frame single deep box. A pail feeder was placed over head and the beekeeper walked away. Six days later the queen had been released so a shallow of leftover honey was added for winter stores and feeding pail moved up.

Seriously? This poor hive just does not get a break as robbing ensued yet again!! Back to the routine of adding the robbing screen and a wet bath towel with fingers crossed the queen would survive again. (Maybe nine lives!) Mid September an inspection was made and numbers were down with piles of dead on the bottom board so the hive was reduced back to a 5 frame nucleus colony. No queen was spotted but an open queen cell was noticed. Is there a virgin? Or was she lost trying to return during the robbing? And where is Sassy?

Last inspection “when what to my wondering eyes did appear” but a gorgeous dark Saskatraz queen! With a few more heroics, this hive just might survive even with its final 5 frames! Its best chance to make it through the winter might be to add it over a strong hive separated by a double screen board. Stay tuned.

## OBSERVATIONS OF AN OBSERVATION HIVE

Few of you folks have the opportunity to watch the activity of your honeybees 24/7. But the more we watch, the more we wonder what is really going on in the hive. One might think an observation hive with just two frames can be boring but seriously, there is much to watch and wonder.

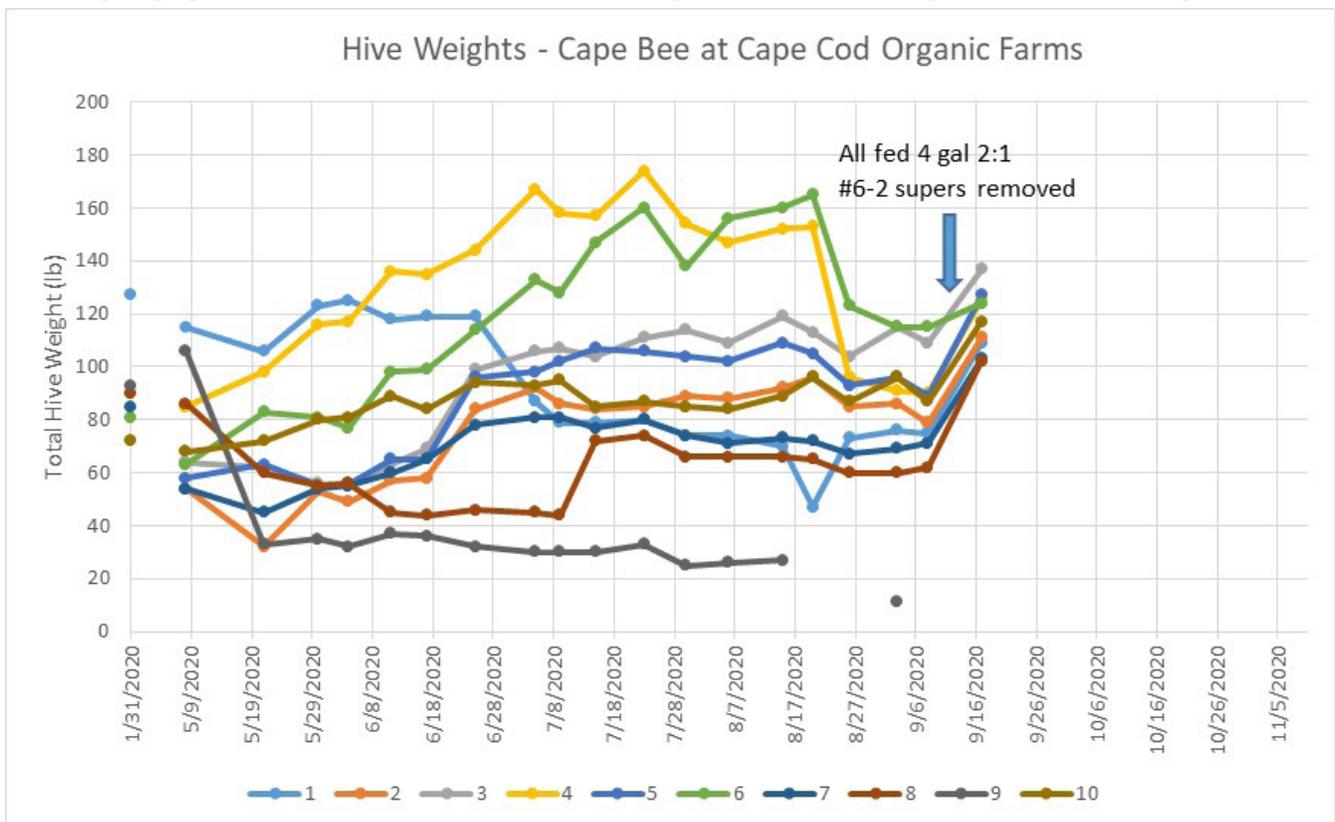
This particular queen is in here second year and a Cape Cod Mutt and laying a solid brood pattern. Earlier, every three weeks a frame of brood needed to be removed to prevent swarming. A constant wonder is why or how this hive is dealing with the varroa mite since there is no way to treat?

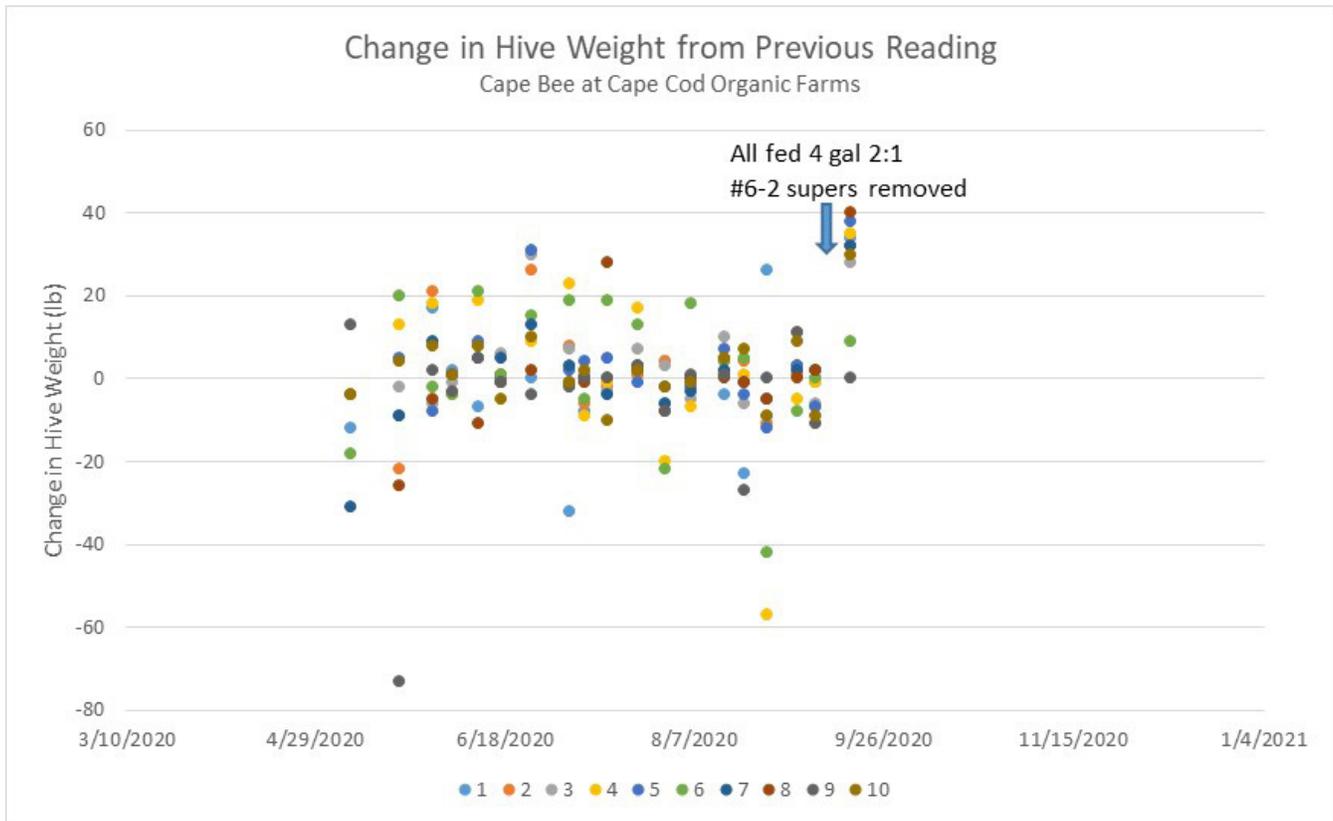
Taking a peek one night, workers were seen dragging young larva and a pupa around the hive. Were these white immature bees infested with a mite or two? Also, a worker with deformed wing (a virus passed around by biting varroa) was observed being dragged out of the hive. Few drones are raised in an observation hive unless overcrowding and potential swarming might happen. Would raising fewer drone be a form of varroa control?

One very strange activity was observed a few evenings ago when outdoor temperatures were cool. Workers were placed atop open cells with larva and beating their wings so fast they were competing with hummingbirds in flight. And not just one worker was participating but several workers covered various open larva with wings totally a blur. What do you suppose they were doing? Makes no sense to think they were incubating the larva as so many were opened and uncovered. Wouldn't you think many workers would hover and cover together to keep the larva at the needed 95 degrees? Very strange but fun to wonder! One final activity to report is that these two frames of bees are using 30 ounces of sugar syrup every 36 hours. What the heck are they doing with it as there are very few cells left in the hive to fill?

## CAPE BEE UPDATES

Our 12 hives at the club's apiary have been fed with sugar syrup and gaining weight. At this time, we have stopped feeding and will be inspecting each hive to decide just what stores each hive has available. Also, we want to establish that each hive has room for the queen to finish laying her winter to brood. Swarming is possible at this time of the year and becomes suicide for the swarm as there is no time to build and store for the winter. Over the season, we have been noting their weight on a regular basis and we offer the attached graph prepared by Anne Richards from our data. Our goal for each double deep hive will be 25 to 130 pounds.





Claire

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## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The Board of Directors have agreed to postpone/cancel our 2021 Bee School due to the current health crisis. We have found no solution as to how best to put together safely our annual program as much of it is a hands-on program. We will keep you posted as to future events.

BOD

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## INVITATION FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Attached is a flyer to attend a Zoom presentation in October featuring Sammy Ramsey, PhD.

# NHBA Virtual Fall Meeting

**Guest Speaker:**

**Dr. Samuel Ramsey**

**Who will be presenting two talks:**

**Varroa Mites True Diet Feeding on Honey Bees**

**&**

**A New Mite, A New Threat: Tropilaelaps Mercedesae**

**Date:** Saturday October 17, 2020

**Schedule:**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 9:30-9:40   | Welcome/How to Zoom   |
| 9:40-10:30  | Dr. Ramsey: Varroa Mites True Diet Feeding on Honey Bee       |
| 10:30-10:40 | Presidents Report & Scholarship Award Announcement            |
| 10:40-11:30 | Dr. Ramsey: A New Mite, A New Threat: Tropilaelaps Mercedesae |
| 11:30-Noon  | Q&A (Moderated)   |

**Pre-Registration is required:**

Please register in advance for this meeting here:

[https://unh.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwud--uqD4uHN20DEtKV\\_KSog2Ppy3z5y7F](https://unh.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwud--uqD4uHN20DEtKV_KSog2Ppy3z5y7F)

You will then receive instructions for the Zoom meeting. Registration will be open to NHBA members first. After September 21st, it will open to everyone.

*This event is being funded by an IPM Grant from the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food, Division of Pesticide Control*

## RESOURCES

The following officers and directors are a great resource to answer questions and requests for assistance.

| <b>Officers</b>            |                  |  |
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