

Minutes of the meeting of the ETBA August 6, 2009

Executive Director Dick Counts opened the meeting with the pledge to the flag and the invocation. Visitors were introduced.

Vi Bourns gave us an update on the cookbook project. Member David Baker came up with a title "Cooking with my Honey". More recipes are still needed. The recipe book will also include ETBA club information and honey queen program information. Members are in the proof-reading stage and putting in a lot of work into this project.

Deadline for recipes is August 31st. The cookbook may be ready for sale for the TBA State convention.

The National 4H is asking for the ETBA to contribute more money for their essay contest. This will be decided and voted on at a later meeting.

The East Texas State Fair will be held September 24 thru October 4, 2009. Much work is still needed to get ready for this. Volunteers are needed to talk to visitors during the fair.

The Texas Beekeepers Association State Convention will be held in Tyler November 11-15, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Select. The opening will be given by Leo Berman, state representative. Thursday morning will be Kids Learning about bee's day. Our goal is to have 500 kids come to the convention. The honey queens and some other young members will be on hand to speak to the kids about bees.

The groundbreaking for the Texas A&M bee lab took place earlier this month. The framing is going up and the project is moving along.

It is reported that a new species of ant has arrived in Texas and is invading beehives. More information will be given as information is gathered.

Eddie Collins gave an informative presentation on the Small Hive Beetle.

Aethina tumida arrived in the US from Africa on 1998. Eddie gave a description of the live cycle. The adult female lays masses of eggs in cracks in the hive. A female can lay 1000 eggs over her lifetime. The eggs hatch in 1-6 days, there may be a temperature dependence on how fast the eggs hatch.

Larvae: After the eggs hatch larvae develop in 10-16 days. These larvae eat pollen, honey and bee brood. These eventually drop to the bottom board where they crawl outside to pupate in the soil. They can crawl up to 100 feet from the hive. They prefer sandy soil with high humidity.

Pupae: They pupate in the soil for 3 to 4 weeks.

Adults: become sexually mature on 1 week and live 30 to 60 days. In winter they shutdown reproduction and can be found in a cluster next to the bees.

Impact:

- Very few beetles can overwhelm a colony
- They consume bee resources
- They defecate in the honey causing it to ferment, honey becomes slimy and the bees
Will not eat it or work the comb near it any longer.
- The honey is un-saleable if contaminated with the beetle feces.
- The beetles damage comb by tunneling thru it.
- The beetles cause the beekeeper more time in honey extraction and in hive maintenance.

Beetle detection: When opening the hive beetles can be seen running across the bars to find hiding places. The bottom board is a good place to look and also inside feeders.

Beetle control:

- Strong colonies are the best defense.
- Keep honey house clean, do not store full supers for long or leave honey filled wax cappings exposed.
- Moving infested colonies to another apiary site may reduce build up in particular areas.
- Fire ants prey on the pupating beetle
- Put hives in full sun area.
- Some chemicals are available
- Beetle traps, there are many varieties available.

Honey Queen Kellie Lenamond gave us an update on her activities. She is active in 4H, her project is entomology, specifically about the honeybee. She has won awards for her hard work. Kellie gave a talk and cooking demonstration to the Gregg County Master gardeners. She has more speaking engagements scheduled August 13th and October 8th. Kellie is making a quilt for the TBA convention to be auctioned off.

Vi Bourns reminded us that Kellie's queen term ends January 2010. Girls age 14-16 who would be interested in becoming the next honey queen need to contact Dick Counts or Vi Bourns.