Our President’s Message

July, 2014

By now most Beekeepers have harvested their honey. We hope everyone had a decent crop. Most prices I have heard were in the $1.80 range or higher. With good rainfall, we should have a good fall flow as well.

I have just returned from Washington D.C. from a Hearing on our Customs and Trade issues of the past and today. The Hearing was titled “Strengthening Trade Enforcement to Protect American Enterprise and Grow American Jobs”. It was held by the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, which Senator Landrieu is Chairperson. For an easier explanation, The Appropriations Committee handles all Federal Funds to be distributed and they have committees for different areas. When we were having trouble with Customs to enforce our trade laws (bond circumvention and adulteration) and a lawsuit was imposed on them, Senator Landrieu and her committee pressured Customs and border security to enforce our trade laws.

The Louisiana Beekeepers Association is preparing our annual Convention at The Best Western on 2720 North MacArthur Drive, Alexandria. We are holding the event on December 5 and 6, 2014. There is still time for any suggestions to be submitted by E-mail located at our website labeekeepers.org. This is a great time to get to get together with other beekeepers to share ideas and we plan to have some excellent speakers for this occasion.

Also the Annual Field Day in Baton Rouge at the Honey Bee Lab is on October 11, 2014. This event has always been educational for beekeepers with plenty of workshops and a chance to see some of the lab’s progress. Plan on preregistering to get a discount and help us plan for this event.

We are still promoting the “member get a member” campaign. If you know anyone who would like to be member of the Louisiana Beekeepers Association, they can join on our website at www.labeekeepers.org.
Spring is over and we are into a typical summer in Louisiana – hot, muggy and very uncomfortable if working in the sun for hours on end! Stay safe and keep hydrated! As projected in the last Bayou Bee Bulletin, the spring honey flow was off due to the late freeze(s) and cooler nights this last spring. Many in the CENLA Beekeeping Club harvested late this spring – twelve of our club members assisted me on Saturday, July 5th bringing in 22 supers. Many of these were beginning bee keepers and this was their first experience at harvesting honey. Their assistance was greatly appreciated, and we enjoyed a BBQ following the processing of the honey.

At the last board meeting in May, several items were discussed and decided.

1. The **2014 LBA Conference** will be held Friday and Saturday, December 5 and 6, 2014 at the Best Western (Alexandria Inn and Suites) Convention Center located in Alexandria, Louisiana at 2720 North MacArthur Drive 71303; reservations: 318-445-5530. When making reservations, specify that you are with the LBA to get the special rate.

2. Through the hotel, we have a block of 50 rooms reserved for attendees from Thursday through Friday, December 4-5, 2014.

3. Registration for the 2014 LBA Conference Information:
   a. Pre-registration fees for singles will be $20.00
   b. Pre-registration fees for a family will be $30.00
   c. Registration at the door will be $30 and $40 respectively.
   d. The cut-off date to preregister will be November 1, 2014.
   e. A registration form will be imbedded in the 5th Bayou Bee Bulletin due out in September.

4. An agenda for the conference will be posted in the 5th Bayou Bee Bulletin out in September.

5. Regarding **Bayou Bee Bulletins** (this newsletter): Beginning in 2015, those members requesting hard copies will see an increase in annual membership dues from the current $10/year to $20/year. All other memberships will remain at $10.00 This is needed to cover the additional expenses incurred in printing and mailing. Please see imbedded membership application.

6. Regarding vendors, if anyone is interested in being a vendor at our convention, please contact any of our Vendor Committee Members: Bobby Frierson, Bud Evans or Stan Brantley {Bobby Frierson: Ph. (225) 241-6132; bobby@labeekeepers.org; Bud Evans: Ph. 318/746-6320 (H) Beezz4@aol.com; Stan Brantley: Ph. 903/665-8343 (H)}.

7. Regarding the **Field Day at the Baton Rouge Bee Lab**:
   - **When**: Saturday, October 11th, 2014.
   - **Where**: 1157 Ben Hur Road; Baton Rouge, LA, 70820.
   - Gates will open at 9:30 am, the program will begin at 10 am and end at 3:30 pm.
   - Pre-registration fee will be $30 and will cover the program and catered lunch.
   - Walk-in fee at the door will be $35.00.
   - Pre-registration for the LBA annual conference and annual renewal fee can be made at this time.
   - An agenda for the day will be posted in the 5th Bayou Bee Bulletin, out in September 2014.
Following posting of the agenda, your contact for pre-registration and payment will be Dr. Lanie Bourgeois at 225/767/9299 Lanie.Bourgeois@ars.usda.gov, Sandra Hineman (225-767-9280) or Joe Sanroma (318-346-2805).

In the Bayou Bee Bulletin (#3), I addressed a few of the articles I came across in the June 2008 periodical, California Rare Fruit Growers (http://crfg.org/), entitled Fruit Gardener. In this Bulletin I will continue with the remaining two articles: “Honeybee Genetics” and “Africanized Honey Bees”.

**Honey Bee Genetics** (article was written by Alfredo Flores)

Did you know that a Honey Bee Genome Project was initiated in 2002, with funding provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Institutes of Health, an organization interested in using bees as a model for understanding human health? By 2008 the entire genome of the European honeybee had been deciphered. These insects are among the first.** Why would anyone, much less a government want to do that you might ask? Here’s why:

Next to mankind, honey bees are the most studied animal in the world. As pollinators and food providers, honey bees are a key beneficial insect. About 1/3 of every food item on your plates is an end-product of pollination, and another 1/3 are indirectly tied to pollination. The other 1/3 includes your drink (ex. water). Without pollination, you are down to bread and water, and we’re not so sure about all of the bread. Honey bees “pollinate about 130 fruit, vegetable, nut, ornamental and fiber crops in the United States. In all, their efforts contribute about $15 billion (see same under Honey Bee Health article above) annually through improved crop yield and product quality in the form of larger or more appealing fruits. Sale of hive products – honey, wax, pollen, royal jelly and even venom – generates hundreds of millions more.” The effort has provided a significant new source of genes for study. These genes can be connected to disease resistance or other desirable traits, providing new tools for breeding and scoring honey bee lines that can cope with the challenges faced by bees today. At the Beltsville, Maryland ARS lab about 150 genes have been selected for analysis by entomologist Jay Evans and his associates. Genes have been identified that correlate with a colony’s ability to withstand exposure to pathogens.

One new resource generated through the bee genome project, “BeeBase*,” is a genome analysis and display database headed by scientists at Texas A&M University. It provides specific information on genes implicated in disease resistance and other desirable traits. The site now hosts genomic information for two key honey bee pathogens, the bacterium *Paenibacillus larvae* (cause of American foulbrood disease) and the fungus *Ascoaphaera apis* (cause of chalkbrood disease). With genomic data for both the honey bee and two of its most threatening pathogens, it is now possible to determine how the pathogens succeed in killing bees and, more importantly, how some bees seem to do just fine in the face of pathogens.

* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beebase](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beebase) gives the following for BeeBase:
**BeeBase** is an online bioinformatics database that displays data related to *Apis mellifera*, the European honey bee. It was developed in collaboration with the Honey Bee Genome Sequencing Consortium.

In Feb 2007, BeeBase consisted of a GBrowse-based genome viewer and a CMap-based comparative map viewer, both modules of the Generic Model Organism Database (GMOD) project. The genome viewer included tracks for known honey bee genes, predicted gene sets (Ensemble, NCBI, EMBL-Heidelberg), STS markers (Solignac and Hunt linkage maps), honey bee expressed sequence tags (EST’s), homologs in fruit fly, mosquito and other insects and transposable elements. The honey bee comparative map viewer displayed linkage maps and the physical map (genome assembly), highlighting markers that are common among maps.

Future enhancements planned for BeeBase are a QTL viewer and a gene expression database. The genome sequence will serve as a reference to link these diverse data types.

Biological data and services available on BeeBase include:

- DNA and protein sequence data
- official bee gene set (developed by and hosted at BeeBase)
- genome browser
- linkage maps
- server to search the honey bee genome using BLAST


** The honeybee is the fourth insect to have its genome sequenced, after the fruit fly, mosquito and silk moth. Locked within bee DNA there are striking links with mammals and humans, scientists discovered.

Like humans, honey bees spread into Europe from Africa, making at least two ancient migrations. They split into two genetically different European populations which, according to DNA evidence, are more closely related to African honey bees than to each other.

Honey bees have an internal "biological clock" which is more like those of mammals than of flies, the research has revealed.

The clock governs many activities, including time sensing, navigation, labor division, and the famous bee "dance language" which the insects use to communicate information about food sources.

Another group of scientists from the University of Illinois found 36 genes in the honey bee brain, 33 of which were previously unreported.
They coded for 100 neuropeptides - organic molecules that control brain activity in both bees and humans, the researchers report in Science. In the bee brain, which is not much larger than a full stop (a period), they help to regulate around one million neurons. The honey bee was estimated to have around 10,000 genes in total, less than the fruit fly and mosquito. Honey bees have many more genes relating to smell than fruit flies or mosquitoes but far fewer involved with taste.  
http://www.boston.com/news/science/articles/2006/10/30/scientist_finds_100_million_year_old_bee/

**Africanized Honey Bees (AHB)** (article was written by Kim Kaplan)

This is a great article and it provides information about the AHB that I was unaware of – and which we as beekeepers really need to keep in mind! I’ve presented the finer points in bullet statements.

- Between October 1990 and 2005, the AHB moved into Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, California and Nevada in that order. Between 2005 and 2007 they spread into Florida, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana. At this time (2014) their range seems to be limited to those lands located below the 40th latitude line. [For those into geography and history, the 38 latitude line is located just above Seoul, South Korea and designates the boundary between North and South Korea. That boundary actually runs along a boundary from 37.8 in Kangha Bay in the south to 38.5 in the Sea of Japan in the north.] Temperature is a major factor in this insect’s ability to spread. Through interbreeding with the European honeybee and global warming, the AHB’s range is likely to move northward. How far will be a question asked by many for a good many years.

- Today’s AHB’s most likely came from a combination of releases and escapes of bees imported in the 1950’s in Brazil by a research scientist trying to improve honey production and a better queen.

- European honey bees are better adapted to temperate climates; African honey bees are more suitable to the Tropics. A hybrid of the two is referred to as “Africanized.”

- It took 33 years for the bee to migrate northward and into the US in 1990. Why so long and why were there periodic pauses in its migration? ARS entomologist Gloria DeGrandi-Hoffman, a research leader at the Carl Hayden Bee Research Center (CHBRC) at Tucson, Arizona gave a good answer: “First, it took some time for Africanized honey bees to fill up all the nest sites in the areas they were already in, there probably wasn’t a lot of population pressure to expand outwards. Then, when you add in the number of empty nest sites because of the toll Varroa mites have taken on the feral honey bee population, it meant there was even more space for Africanized honey bees to fill up before they needed to spread north and east.”

- “Another reason why AHB’s have been found in new places is that more people are looking for them today than ever before. State’s expecting the influx of the bee were placing trap lines and increasing their sampling. More looking means increased detection.”

- “Human-assisted transport,” hitching rides on trucks, ships, and railroad cars from Central and South America to the United States, and through the southern states once the AHB was here, sped the movement of the AHB.
A Little History Lesson is in order:

**Origin, Systematics and Distribution**

Honey bees appear to have their center of origin in **South** and **Southeast Asia** (including the **Philippines**), as all but one (i.e. *Apis mellifera*), of the extant species are native to that region. Notably, living representatives of the earliest lineages to diverge (*Apis florea* and *Apis andreniformis*) have their center of origin there.\(^2\)

The first *Apis* bees appear in the **fossil record** at the **Eocene–Oligocene** boundary (23–56 Mya), in European deposits. The origin of these prehistoric honey bees does not necessarily indicate Europe as the place of origin of the genus, only that they were present then. A few fossil deposits are known from South Asia, the suspected region of honey bee origin, and fewer still have been thoroughly studied.

**No** *Apis* species existed in the New World during human times before the introduction of *A. mellifera* by Europeans. Only one fossil species is documented from the New World, *Apis nearctica*, was identified from a single 14-million-year old specimen from Nevada.\(^3\)

The close relatives of modern honey bees—e.g. **bumblebees** and **stingless bees**—are also social to some degree, and social behavior seems a **plesiomorphic** trait that predates the origin of the genus. Among the extant members of *Apis*, the more **basal** species make single, exposed combs, while the more recently evolved species nest in cavities and have multiple combs, which has greatly facilitated their domestication.

Most species have historically been cultured or at least exploited for honey and **beeswax** by humans indigenous to their native ranges. Only two of these species have been truly **domesticated**, one (*A. mellifera*) at least since the time of the building of the **Egyptian pyramids**, and only that species has been moved extensively beyond its native range.

Today's honey bees constitute three **clades**.\(^1\)[\(^4\)] [**A clade** (from **Ancient Greek** κλάδος, *klados*, "branch") or **monophylum** (see **monophyletic**) is a group consisting of an ancestor and all its descendants, a single "branch" on the "**tree of life**".\(^1\)]
No honey bees are native to the New World, so they can’t be considered indigenous insects. Before AHB’s appeared, all feral and domesticated honey bees were descendants of honey bees brought by European colonists in the 1600’s and 1700’s; hence, the term “European honey bee” (EHB). As noted above, prior to the last Ice Age (began in North America sometime around 250,000 years ago and ended around 10,000 - 16,000 years ago), there is fossil evidence that there were honey bees in North America. What became of those bees is unknown.

While AHB’s and EHB’s look the same to the eye, there are several important differences between them. Among the most overt behavioral differences is the AHB’s well-known defensive behavior. AHB’s will ardently defend their nest, stinging in greater numbers (140 times/minute has been recorded) and on less provocation than EHB’s (40 times/minute). AHB’s will chase their victims for up to 5 football fields in greater numbers than the EHB’s (about a football field with just a few bees).

Both types of bees exhibit the entire gamut of defensive behavior, from very mild to very defensive. It is simply that AHB’s tend to cluster at the more defensive end of the continuum. “On any given day, the same hive can show more or less defensive behavior, depending on factors such as food supply and weather,” DeGrandi-Hoffman says.

Another behavioral difference is that AHB’s are more likely to desert a nest site when food sources become less available or when disturbed. This trait makes them harder to use in managed beekeeping.

It was long believed that African bees would hybridize with European honey bees already in the wild, especially in temperate areas, where African honey bees were expected to lose their tropical climate adaptation advantages. Hence the name, “Africanized honey bee.” But this hybridization turned out to be less than expected. Recent population genetics studies have shown that feral honey bee populations tend to be predominantly African after several years of hybridization.

- Two types of DNA govern gene flow in honey bee populations, and both can be traced. One is mitochondrial DNA, which is inherited solely from the mother (queen). The other is the DNA in the nucleus that comes 50-50 from the queen and the drone and is referred to as “nuclear DNA.”
- “As interbreeding continues, you would expect to find a variety of combinations and proportions of African and European genes in nuclear DNA,” DeGrandi-Hoffman says. “But you don’t. We’ve found that, in just a few years, EHB marker genes in nuclear DNA have become very difficult to detect in feral honey bee populations. European mitochondrial DNA also diminishes in frequency.”
- Several factors appear to give African honey bee DNA its ascendancy over hybrids and European honey bees.
- First, European/African hybrids have lower metabolic rates than do pure African or European bees, and the wing shape in hybrids is slightly less symmetrical than in either pure race. These two points indicate that hybrids might have a lower level of fitness that could play into hybrid colonies’ lack of survival in the wild.
Differences in mating flight times also increase the chance of EHB queens mating more with African drones than with EHB drones. Oddly enough, DeGrandi-Hoffman found that even when queens are inseminated with sperm from an equal number of African and European drones, they preferentially use the African sperm, producing, on average, about 70 percent AHB offspring.

DeGrandi-Hoffman found that when colonies are replacing their queens, African patriline queens (queens that had an African sire) emerge sooner than EHB rivals, giving them a big advantage in the fight to become the nest’s new queen.

In addition, African colonies grow at a faster rate, devoting two to four times as much comb area to brood rearing as EHB’s. So AHB’s with these African traits simply outgrow the competition.

A unique AHB behavior, which also helps the population shift from European to African, is that they can invade and take over an EHB hive when the EHB queen is weakened by age or illness or is absent. In a single generation, the EHB matriline is eliminated, and an EHB hive has become Africanized.

DeGrandi-Hoffman found that in southern Arizona, annual usurpation rates can reach 20 to 30 percent, especially in the fall swarming season, when AHB’s are most likely to leave their nests to seek better foraging conditions.

“AHB’s just seem to have a suite of traits and behaviors that enhance their ability to survive and thrive”, DeGrandi-Hoffman says.

**Best Advice for Beekeepers**

- Buy European queens that have mated with European drones annually from reliable queen breeders and clearly mark the queens before putting them in the hives.
- Beekeepers must be vigilant about making sure the marked queens don’t get replaced.
- This advice applies to the hobby and the commercial beekeepers.
- Monitor the Behavior of your bees. If a hive becomes hard to manage, it is time to introduce a new European queen.
- The anecdotal belief that AHB’s are more resistant to Varroa mites appears to hold some truth.
  - Perhaps the AHB workers and drones develop fast enough to prevent Varroa mites from completing their development in cells. Research on this is in progress.
  - It is known that when Varroa mites feed on EHB’s it shuts down the bee’s immune system. Perhaps this also occurs with AHB’s.
PLEASE RENEW YOUR LBA MEMBERSHIP!

LBA memberships have almost doubled over the last two years. The LBA is excited about this growth and sincerely appreciates your membership support. If you have not completed and submitted your membership renewal for 2014, please use the membership application at the end of this newsletter and send your renewal to our treasurer as soon as possible. The January issue of our newsletter was your last issue if you allowed your membership to expire. Please don’t delay any longer and renew your LBA membership today.

Please feel free to make additional copies of this Bulletin and provide them to others interested in beekeeping and our organization. Reading the information provided below by our membership chairman will help you join us in our recruiting efforts by participating in our “Member Get A Member Campaign.” Prizes are awarded to the top three recruiters annually! The new campaign begins November 1st, 2013 and ends October 31st, 2014.

There are many challenges facing beekeepers. Our organization provides a voice to Louisiana beekeepers and lets state government know that we are an important part of Louisiana’s agricultural industry. There is strength in numbers, so help us help you through your membership support!

“MEMBER GET A MEMBER CAMPAIGN”

Membership in the Louisiana Beekeepers Association (LBA) is a privilege, but more importantly, an obligation. Louisiana beekeepers can only help themselves and their industry by participating in the dialogue that creates and enforces our state’s beekeeping policies. Anchored in a rich tradition of service, the LBA has always promoted a healthy, productive beekeeping industry. This can only be accomplished through a strong state beekeeping organization. To accomplish this we need the help of more beekeepers. Our current membership is growing but still consists of less than 50% of the state’s beekeepers. We have to continue to mobilize if we are to remain an effective voice for all Louisiana beekeepers.

You can help us and help yourself by joining the LBA today. Equally importantly you can recruit other beekeepers to join the LBA! To help increase our membership we are continuing our “MEMBER GET A MEMBER CAMPAIGN.” Simply talk to fellow beekeepers about their participation in their state beekeeping association through membership. In addition, ask their assistance and support in recruiting other LBA members. There is strength in numbers and if the LBA is to be the beekeepers voice we need a large membership.

Our membership application contains a referral blank to be used to list the member that recruited the new member to join the LBA. An award awaits three individuals (1st, 2nd, and 3rd place) that enlist the most new members in 2014. The award will be presented at our annual convention, which will be held in the Alexandria, LA the first weekend in December 2014. Please feel free to contact any officer or board member if you need more information on promoting membership in the LBA.

Thank you for your support,

David Ferguson
LBA Membership Chairman
Rules for the "Member Get A Member Campaign"

1. Each year the contest start date is November 1st, continuing through the next calendar year to the contest end date of October 31st.

2. 1st place: Plaque and $50.00 check. 2nd place: Ribbon and $25.00 check. 3rd place: Ribbon and $10.00 check. The local club in which the first place winner is a member will win a one year associate membership valued at $25.00.

3. The winners will be contacted before the convention by the "Member Get A Member Campaign" chairman in order to see if they will be attending the convention. If they will not be attending, for whatever reason, their award will be sent home with a person of their choice. It is up to the winners to make these arrangements.

4. LBA officers and board members can participate in the contest, but cannot win the contest.

LOUISIANA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
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Please send your check or money order payable to the Louisiana Beekeepers Association Inc.
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*Membership Expires December 31st*

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Commercial Business Ads

The Louisiana Beekeepers Association would like to thank all of our sponsors for their business advertisements. We encourage our membership and visitors to our web site to consider the fine products and/or services they offer when selecting a vendor to fulfill their business and/or personal needs.

Over the past five years the number of our newsletter advertisers has steadily increased. In appreciation for their support the LBA has offered vendor booths to these advertisers at our annual State Convention free of charge. Vendor displays have also increased, providing our guests with a convenient venue for purchasing the beekeeping products they might need. These vendors in turn contribute many door prize and auction items to the LBA, making the event more enjoyable for our guests.

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Remember, for only $25.00 annually you can advertise your company products in six issues of the Bayou Bee Bulletin. Your business ad will also be carried on our web site, labeekeepers.org.

Remit your advertising fee to LBA Treasurer, Mr. David Ferguson, P. O. Box 716, Brusly, LA 70719 and forward your company’s camera ready, 4 inch by 3 inch jpeg ad image to Mr. Tim Haley, LBA Newsletter Editor, at tamh212@suddenlink.net.
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## LOCAL BEEKEEPING CLUBS AND CURRENT PRESIDENTS/CONTACTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCALITY</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>ADDRESS</th>
<th>PHONE</th>
<th>E-MAIL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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