

# Report from Joint Eastern Ontario and Lanark County Beekeepers Association's Summer Meeting.

June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010

By Peter Prodger

Sooner or later every beekeeper will discover that a queen marked with the colourful dot has been replaced by a home grown girl. As a novice beekeeper the idea of finding and marking the queen is daunting. What if you squish her? Will she sting? The joint Eastern Ontario and Lanark County Beekeepers meeting held Saturday June 19<sup>th</sup> provided the answers to these questions and more.

The meeting was held east of Metcalf at the home of Pegi Holtz. A crowd of about 40 had a very enjoyable day. The facilities were excellent with lots of shaded seating for the sunny times and a dry barn for when it rained. The official program included demonstrations of making up nucs (Brent Halsall) and queen marking (Phil Laflame). There was also a review of American Foul Brood (AFB) issues. How to identify AFB and best practices for control. It is recommended that everyone review the [2010 Integrated Pest Management practices at OMAFRA web site](#). Proactive management by checking the brood nest every 2-3 weeks for the various brood pathogens is recommended. Ontario maintains a relatively low infestation level of about 2% because of an active program of inspections to identify and contain AFB.

It seems whenever pest controls are discussed Varroa mite control will always get added to the agenda. Brent Halsall ran through the various chemical and non-chemical controls. NOD Apiary Products is replacing Mite Away II with a new and improved product called Mite Away Quick Strips. They have switched over the production equipment to the new product but have not yet registered it for sale in Canada. Supply of Mite Away II will be limited this fall. If the Quick Strips are not registered this year then beekeepers will need to make up their own formic acid pads. Working with formic acid requires careful handling. All the protective gear should be worn and best practices followed.

We broke into two groups for the demonstrations on queen marking and nuc building.



*Phil Laflame demo on queen marking*

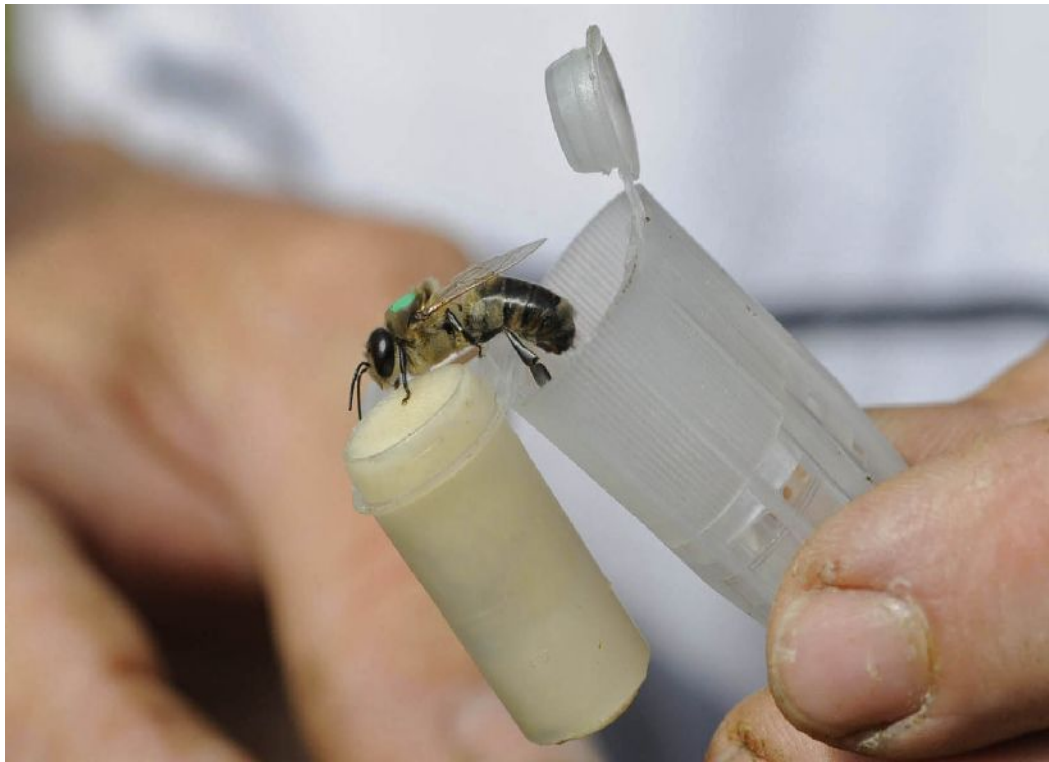


*Brent Halsall demo on assembling a nuc.*

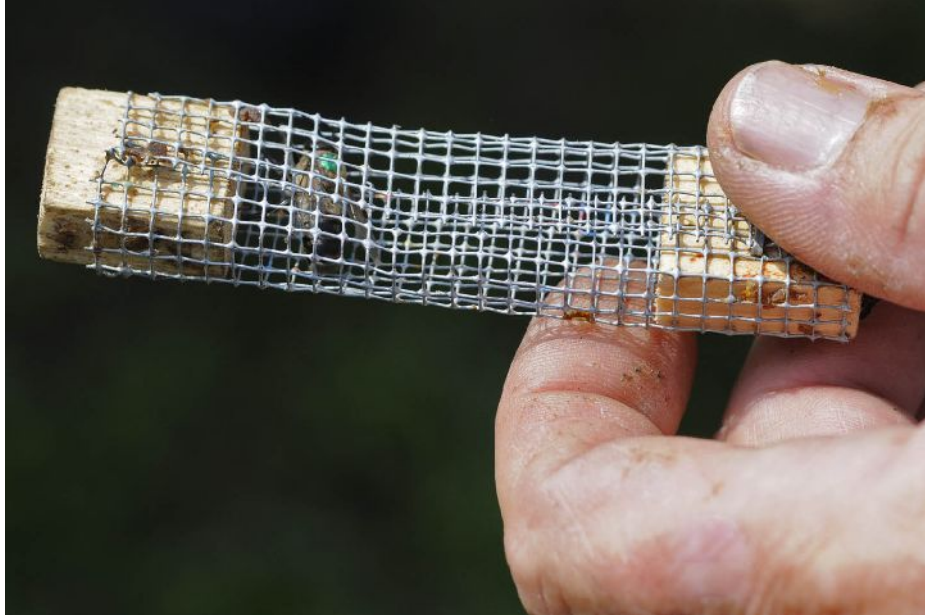
The answers to concerns about squishing the queen or getting stung were quickly answered. Stinging is not likely. Phil has only been stung once by a queen. He believes it was because he had been handling many queens that day and had queen pheromone on his hands. A virgin queen confused his finger for a competitor and let him have it.



The answer to squishing is to grab her by the wings with one hand and transfer her to your other hand by grabbing her front legs. (get one leg on each side or she may spin around and do herself damage). Sounds simple? The trick, I learned, is to practice on drones!



Phil uses a home made queen cage to temporarily hold queens if required when he works a hive. It is also a good place to keep the queen while the ink dries!



There were several tips and tricks in response to questions. The one that stuck in my mind was related to releasing queens. If she should fly away on you do not despair immediately. There is a good chance she will return to her queen cage within 5-10 minutes. The pheromones and the drive to be with the other girls will draw her back.

The pot luck was excellent. Pierre Houle provided a pot of his homemade beans sweetened with honey. Replacing the molasses for honey in the recipe makes a nice change. My other favourite was a small tray of baklava. I believe it had pistachio nuts instead of the ground walnuts.

It was announced that Bruce Boles will be heading off to Uganda in the fall to work with Ugandan beekeepers. He has asked for donations of any beekeeping equipment not needed locally. He can be reached at [buzzzzz@live.ca](mailto:buzzzzz@live.ca). Bruce is located at 22 Perth Street, Portland on Hwy.15 about 20km south of Smith Falls. 613-349-5435