



## ILLINOIS STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

# BULLETIN

September/October 2010 • Volume 92 Number 5

### ISBA Searches for Beekeeper of the Year

The Illinois State Beekeepers Association is proud to announce the ISBA Beekeeper of the Year Program for 2010. This program is designed to recognize, on a yearly basis, an Illinois beekeeper who most embodies, illustrates and exemplifies the key objectives of the ISBA, to promote:

- Interest in Honey Bees and Beekeeping by encouraging good beekeeping practices in Illinois
- The utilization of Honey Bees for pollination of agricultural crops
- The dissemination of information about Honey Bees and beekeeping

If you know a beekeeper who exemplifies these objectives, is a member of the ISBA and a resident of the state of Illinois, we want to hear from you! The initial selection of Beekeeper of the Year candidates relies upon you, the ISBA membership! If you would like to nominate someone for this prestigious award, please send the following information to the ISBA Beekeeper of the Year Chairperson via mail or e-mail no later than October 1, 2010.

Please send:

1. Your name, address and phone number
2. The name of the candidate
3. A description of why you feel the candidate should be designated the ISBA Beekeeper of the Year (see qualifications above)
4. Send this information to the ISBA Beekeeper of the Year Chairperson

[vikinghoneyfarm@comcast.net](mailto:vikinghoneyfarm@comcast.net)

The ISBA Beekeeper of the Year will be presented a personalized plaque at the ISBA Annual Fall Meeting! Additionally, the recipient will be announced in various Illinois and national beekeeping media. β

### Mission Accomplished!

### Honey Law Signed by Governor

By Mike Sabo

Well, we did it! Governor Quinn signed our honey legislation on July 13th. What a lucky day for us. I commend everyone who helped out in this process and the friends and families who threw in their support. As of January 1, 2011, IDPH will no longer be able to rely on the Sanitary Food Preparation act to inject themselves in the free trade of small honey producers. This doesn't mean that beekeepers should rest on their laurels. Counties and municipalities can still pass local ordinances mimicking the old IDPH law. We all will need to remain vigilant for such actions.

Finally, with this success I believe that the ISBA and local groups should take steps to ensure that new beekeepers become aware of this law and help them learn the importance of good housekeeping practices when extracting their honey. We should also educate those managing the local farmers markets and retailers through which a beekeepers sell his or her honey to become aware of this new law.

Thanks to everyone who helped. β

### Fall ISBA Meeting

November 6, 2010

9:00am

Ag Building

State Fair Grounds

# Wax Moth: Friend or Foe?

By David Burns

Finally you have some time to fire up the smoker, put on your hat and veil and inspect your hive. It has been over a month since your last inspection. You are hoping to find lots of bees, lots of stored honey and a laying queen. But as soon as you lift up the inner cover, much to your surprise you find this strange looking webbing, like condensed spider webbing, all throughout your comb. The bee population is greatly reduced. And you notice these small 3/4" grubs in the comb and cocoons everywhere. You panic!



Wax moth larva at home on the top of a frame.

To a new beekeeper, seeing this for the first time is overwhelming. Everything was going so well and now your hive appears to be lost. What's going on? All beekeepers will experience this from time to time. What is it? It is *Galleria mellonella* L. Sounds terrible, doesn't it? The more common name is wax moth.

It is known as the greater wax moth and yes, there is a lesser wax moth, but typically it is the great wax moth that attacks our hives. Wax moth larvae are friends to fisherman, but to the beekeeper they are our foes. In this article I want to describe the wax moth's activity in the hive, what to do when your hive is attacked and how to keep it from happening.

## WAX MOTHS IN THE HIVE

Almost all beekeepers have experienced wax moths in the hive. It happens to the best of us. Wax moths can destroy colonies but typically only colonies that have become weak due to other issues. A

strong colony does well to kill the adult wax moth if she enters the hive. A strong colony is quick to destroy wax moth eggs and larvae, preventing their take over. This is not the case when a hive is weak or if a strong colony has too much unprotected comb.

Let's sneak out into the apiary and figure out how the wax moth can take over a hive. Let's choose mid- August to do our investigation. It was a hot and humid day and now it is a warm August night. The adult wax moth is flying around dodging car headlights and finally flies into our apiary, attracted to the smell of wax. The adult wax moth only lives a few days (at summer temperatures) and does not eat or drink. She flies into our test colony and slips past the guard bees and finds her way to a vacant corner inside the hive. There she begins to lay her eggs. She lays her eggs about 4-10 days after she emerges as an adult moth and lays 300-600 eggs. Wax moth larvae can crawl and enter surrounding hives as well.

Once in the larva stage the wax moth tunnels its way through the comb eating honey, pollen and sometimes beeswax, preferring darker comb, and finally spins its cocoon about 19 days later. These cocoons burrow into the wood slightly and once removed will leave small, striped indentations in the wood. As the population of wax moths grow, the remaining bees will finally abscond.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SEE WAX MOTHS IN YOUR HIVE

The damage can be mild to severe. It looks worse than it is. You can see wax moth droppings in the webbing and the webbing will sometimes make the frames difficult to separate. When you first saw wax moths

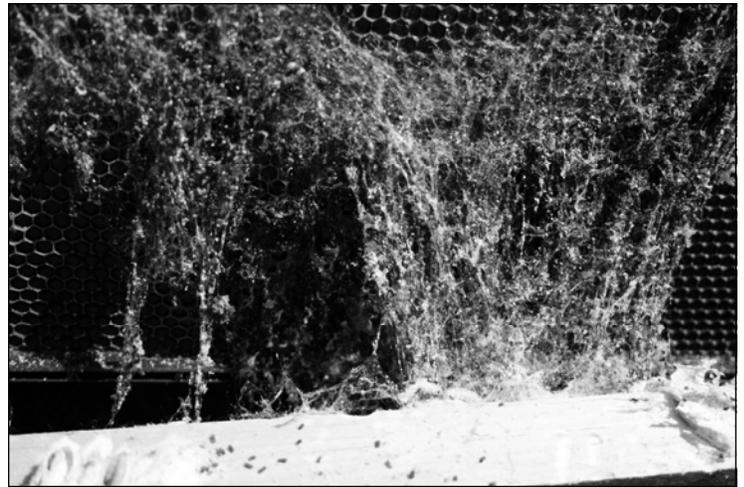
in your hive it was because your hive became weak and could not defend itself from the wax moths. Perhaps you hive became queenless and bee population dropped. Little can be done once the wax moths have taken over your colony. The bees will eventually leave and you'll be left with bad looking comb. But don't despair. Fortunately you can kill all the larvae and eggs by freezing your combs and reusing them. 20 degrees (f) for 5 hours will kill all stages of wax moths in comb. Or only two hours at 5 degrees (f). Here in Illinois we have winter working with us to kill all left over wax moths in our stored comb. Stack your hive bodies and supers on a queen excluder to keep out mice and set them in an unheated out building for the winter. Your problems are solved. No more wax moths until next summer when new ones fly back into your hives.

### HOW TO PREVENT WAX MOTHS

Your best control against wax moths is to have a strong colony. Be careful not to place more hive boxes on than what is necessary to control swarming. Too much empty space will give both wax moths and small hive beetles small room to spread. Weak colonies in large hives are very inviting to wax moths. Keep your colonies tight and strong.

### COMB HONEY

When selling comb honey, the comb can contain eggs and small wax moth larvae, which can grow in a warm environment. This can be very alarming to a customer. Comb honey should be frozen to kill any potentially unseen wax moth eggs or small larvae.



The wax moths' spider-like web can make it difficult to separate frames during an inspection.

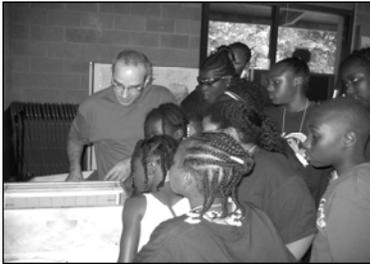
### IMPORTANT POINTS

- Wax moths occur around the world wherever bees are kept.
- Bees will not rebuild comb on plastic foundation where there has been wax moth damage unless the foundation is recoated with beeswax.
- Wax moth larvae can travel over 150 feet to a new hive.
- Sealed bee brood can become trapped by wax moth silken threads of webbing and die.
- Moth balls (Naphthalene) can no longer be used to protect stored comb not on the hive. Para-moth (paradichlorobenzen) is a more acceptable fumigant for use with comb stored off the hive.  $\beta$



A "see-through" frame left by the wax moths. Honeybees have a difficult time repairing the damage.

## Illinois Queen Initiative Fall Meeting



Corky Schnadt of the Northern Illinois Beekeepers Association talks to a class at the Pringle Center in Bristol, Wisconsin about the Lanstroth hive.

As part of his demonstration, Corky uses a fish hook and an orange showing how a honeybee stinger works.



The Fall Meeting of the Illinois Queen Initiative (IQI) will be Saturday, October 16 at Grand Bear Lodge in Oglesby, IL. Dr. Jeff Harris of the Baton Rouge Honey Bee Lab will be the featured speaker. He has considerable experience with both the Varroa Sensitive Hygiene and Russian honey bee projects. Dr. Harris will give one talk on breeding basics and one on those projects and how beekeepers can utilize their genetics in breeding locally-adapted, mite and disease resistant bees. Oglesby is located near the intersection of US Highways 39 and 80. There are numerous hotels/motels 15-30 minutes from the Lodge, which is near Starved Rock State Park with its beautiful fall foliage and unique vistas.

The meeting will be from 9 am to 4 pm. In addition to Dr. Harris, there will be a panel discussion with several Illinois queen producers and a presentation by IQI coordinator Dr.

Stu Jacobson. There will be plenty of time for questions and sharing ideas. The priority audience for the meeting is those who are currently raising queens for sale to other beekeepers as well as those who took the IQI queen raising classes in 2009 or 2010.

Registration: The cost is \$15.00, which includes lunch and refreshments. Space is limited. If you currently produce queens for sale or seriously plan to do so and wish to attend, please send an e-mail to > [sjacobson@warpsnet.net](mailto:sjacobson@warpsnet.net) describing your queen raising interests.β

### Researcher Dennis vanEngelsdorp Speaks on the Future of Honeybees

**Q: What is the “take home” message of your research and results?**

**A:** There are three messages: 1.) Honeybees are vital if we want to continue producing fruits and vegetables. 2.) A lot of different environmental factors stress bees. Bees are an indicator species, they are a keystone. There is a lot of environmental studies going on in that department now. 3.) It is so complicated. There are a lot of different factors causing bee mortality. Here, the general public can help. We have seen a swell in public interest, and from the corporate side as well. The public can do a lot of things to help. Buy local honey, be a bee keeper, plant a garden, have room in your environment for pollination. There are thousands of bee species in this country, not just honeybees, and we need to have room for them as well.

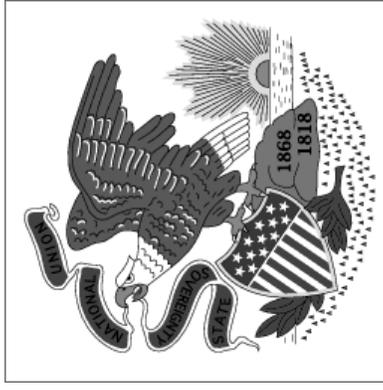


**Q: As of now, what do you think the future of bees and pollinators are?**

**A:** I do not think they are going to go extinct. Commercial beekeepers, who own half the population of bees, are trucking them up and down the coast to pollinate and the beekeepers have been losing a lot of colonies for four years now. I worry that they can't keep it going, especially financially. I think it is their love of bees that only keeps them going. β

## 2010 Results - ILLINOIS STATE FAIR HONEY SHOW PROFESSIONAL DIVISION

	<b>1st place</b>	<b>2nd place</b>
14694	display of white comb honey, 12 sections	Cook-Dupage
14695	frame of honey for extracting	Lincoln-Land
14696	frame of white honey for cut comb	Cook-Dupage
14697	frame of amber honey for cut comb	Lincoln-Land
14698	display of amber cut comb in plastic box	Lincoln-Land
14699	display of white cut comb in plastic box	Lincoln-Land
14700	white comb honey in round sections	Lincoln-Land
14701	display of light extracted honey	Lincoln-Land
14702	amber comb honey in round sections	Cook-Dupage
14703	display of amber extracted honey	Lincoln-Land
14704	display of dark extracted honey	Cook-Dupage
14705	display of variety of Illinois honey	Cook-Dupage
14706	display of designs in comb honey	Cook-Dupage
14707	chunk honey in square jars	Cook-Dupage
14708	light chunk honey in round jars	Lincoln-Land
14709	amber chunk honey in round jars	Cook-Dupage
14710	beeswax in commercial shapes	Lincoln-Land
14711	art designs in beeswax	Cook-Dupage
14712	color photography	Lincoln-Land
14713	creamed honey	Cook-Dupage
14714	honey gift pack	Cook-Dupage
14715	best Display Booth	Cook-Dupage
14716	sweepstakes	Cook-Dupage



## 2010 Results - ILLINOIS STATE FAIR HONEY SHOW - OPEN DIVISION

	<b>1st</b>	<b>2nd</b>	<b>3rd</b>	<b>4th</b>	<b>5th</b>	<b>6th</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>8th</b>	<b>9th</b>
14722	frame of honey for cut comb	Charles Lorence	Kevin Kames	James Belli	Robert Walters	Buck Williams			
14723	white cut comb in plastic boxes	Robert Walters	Charles Lorence	Kevin Kames	James Belli				
14724	white comb honey, 3 sections	James Belli	Audrey Gerberding	Fred Gerberding	Gabe Gerberding				
14725	comb honey in round sections	Kevin Kames	Buck Williams	James Belli	Fred Gerberding	Gabe Gerberding	Audrey Gerberding	Terry Breen	Audrey Gerberding
14726	light extracted honey	James Belli	Gabe Gerberding	Richard Chamberlain	Jerry Wasson	Terry Combs	Christopher Saad	Kevin Karnes	Terry Breen
14727	amber extracted honey	James Belli	Fred Gerberding	Audrey Gerberding	Charles Lorence	Christopher Saad	Gabe Gerberding	F. Leon Billbrew	Gerberding
14728	dark extracted honey	Fred Gerberding	Robert Walters	Robert Walters	Audrey Gerberding	Charles Lorence	Kevin Karnes		Terry Breen
14729	amber chunk honey	Christopher Saad	Robert Walters	James Belli	Christopher Saad				Kevin Karnes
14730	light chunk honey	Charles Lorence	James Belli	Robert Walters	James Belli				
14731	chunk honey in square jars	Robert Walters	Charles Lorence	Kevin Kames	Robert Walters				
14732	creamed honey	Audrey Gerberding	Fred Gerberding	Charles Lorence	Christopher Saad	Robert Walters	Gabe Gerberding	Jerry Wasson	F. Leon Billbrew
14733	Beeswax in commercial forms	James Belli	Christopher Saad	Fred Gerberding	Audrey Gerberding				
14734	Beeswax art designs	Fred Gerberding	James Belli	Audrey Gerberding	Gabe Gerberding				
14735	Beeswax molded candles	Robert Walters	James Belli	Fred Gerberding	Audrey Gerberding				
14736	Sweepstakes Winner	James Belli	James Belli	Fred Gerberding	Audrey Gerberding				

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Membership in the Illinois State Beekeepers Association is open to all persons interested in bees and beekeeping. Beekeepers are urged to join through their local associations. Dues for 2009 are \$10 for the calendar year January 1 through December 31 only. Dues include a subscription to this newsletter, the ISBA Bulletin. Beekeeping journals are available at about 25% discount to members as listed below; rates are subject to change without prior notice. Make checks payable to: Illinois State Beekeepers Association and mail to: Rita Taylor, Secretary, 4274 Taylor Homestead Road, Pleasant Plains, IL 62677-4024

Please indicate new or renewal subscription when ordering journals.

Address Changes: Send old and new address six weeks prior to date of change when practical to the association secretary.

#### Reduced Journal Rates for 2009 (*members only*)

	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr
American Bee Journal	19.50	37.00	52.15
Bee Culture	21.00	38.00	N/A
The Speedy Bee	13.25	25.25	34.00

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POSTMASTER: Send address Corrections to Illinois State Beekeepers Association 4274 Taylor Homestead Road, Pleasant Plains, IL 62677-4024.



### ILLINOIS STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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- ⇒ *Legislative news*
- ⇒ *Wax moths*
- ⇒ *State Fair results*
- ⇒ *Beekeeper of the year*

