

STAHLMAN BEEKEEPING

NOTES FOR 2023

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“The Big Apple an ode to beekeepers”

I like to be positive when I discuss beekeeping issues. Unfortunately, we all have good days and bad days.

Looking back a number of years, I remember some pretty depressing events. I was flying home to Columbus, Ohio from St. Louis during a thunder storm. When I reached home we had about 4 inches of water in the basement – the electricity went out and the sump pump stopped working. The next morning I got a phone call telling me that my bee yard near Ostrander, Ohio was flooded. I had 70 hives in that yard and I was concerned. I started thinking I was going to need to get some help to move the bees from that location near a river to some other spot. Henry Lowe, a mail carrier and beekeeper had found this location for me and in his lifetime water had never come near where the bees were located. He called to say it was bad. I wouldn't need to move the bees – the water did it! It was called a “100 year flood.” The bees had been washed down river. Henry and I walked the banks of the river thinking I would find something. A hive box or two caught in some of the trees was all that survived. Later I was notified that some equipment had washed up in fields and I could get what was there. Have you ever seen what mud will do to comb? I wrote it all off – reminding myself that when told flood waters never rise this high, don't believe it.

Some beekeepers are now finding hives with declining bee populations – serious decline – no brood. Maybe Varroa or Small hive beetles or a poor queen. I note the somber tone to their posts and in many cases the goal is to begin again next year. Learning is a life time job. I would say “chalk it up to experience!” All of us have something new to learn about keeping honeybees.

I was in New York City this past week. I have been there a few times but this week was different. I wasn't just passing thru. I started thinking about how honeybees seem to be a lot more orderly and organized than we humans are.

Let me start with what I know about swarming! Honeybees swarm and they do it despite my efforts to stop it. Humans on the otherhand, do everything in their power to handle over-crowding like building

IMPORTANT POINTS



Honeybees are adaptive creatures.

I was asked what kind of bees were these? A friend was upset because the bees were driving the birds away from her bird feeder. But this is food in October and it is providing some sweet orange juice sugar they can use to either stay alive or store for this coming winter.

Introduced pests into the U.S. continues to be a problem.

I found a lantern fly in New York City on this visit. It is a native of Asia and it kills trees.



structures that reach the clouds. Humans create road signs – some very interesting ones – and I have yet to see a honeybee that needs a sign to tell them which way to turn, not turn, stop, go, walk, and several interesting signs like don't block the box and security checkpoint.



I thought of queen excluders – a human's way to keep the queen where they want her. Signs are to help people know where they can go and when they can go. Signs help humans find the address they want to visit. Honeybees have dances! Humans have GPS. Which guidance system works best?



I started thinking about bees arriving at the entrance to a hive.



This is a strong bee hive ready for winter. The robbing screen restricts the entrances. The bees have a choice of three openings which at this time are all open. This photo was taken on September 29.

The are bees coming and going.

How do they accomplish this without rear view mirrors, signs, and painted lines?

No traffic tower to guide them, no red, yellow or green lights to indicate when and how they should enter.

Humans on the other-hand have lanes, signs, and barriers to guide them to where they should go.



Humans have a police presence to write a ticket if you happen to violate one of those signs.

The mass of human traffic by subway, taxi, car, and foot all comes together in a river of people going somewhere. They are impatient – honking horns, pushing, shoving, and plugging up intersections. And in some cases, violate those signs. Finding a place to park is challenging to say the least!



Do bees have any forms of entertainment?

Do honeybees have trials, jails or any method to keep every bee on the straight and narrow?

Think of bees rushing, bumping, cutting one off, pushing one from behind – yes, I have seen them do it. Each bee with a mission, some invisible driving force – food for the colony, protection for the colony, warmth for the colony. No police to enforce signs and no names to identify places to go. Yet, there is no road rage that I have seen. And yes, they rob from those hives that cannot protect themselves but there are no jails. Worker bees carry a weapon – each and everyone of them. Yet it seldom is used.

Human's have names! And they may even give a favorite honeybee queen a name.

<  National September 11 Memorial & Museum
Apr 29, 2018 · 🌐

Nearly 40,000 windows in the Twin Towers shattered on 9/11. This windowpane, from the 82nd floor of the South Tower, is the only one known to have survived intact. Discovered at Ground Zero, the windowpane was donated to the 9/11 Memorial Museum and is on display in Foundation Hall.

Recovered from the World Trade Center site after September 11, 2001 Collection 9/11 Memorial Museum, Courtesy of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.



... **Buildings have names, streets have names, money has names, people have names, leaders have names, bridges in NYC -- over 2,000 of them have names, and even the one single window out of 40,000 panes of window glass in the world trade center to survive unbroken has a name and place in history. It survived the fall from the 82nd floor unbroken.**

But we do have one thing in common! Life is limited for bees as for people. Life goes on even after 9-11. A hive without bees can have a life next year. Songs live even though the writer who wrote the words and the singer who sang the songs have passed.

The music of buzzing bees will be sung again and maybe next year the song will be better than this year! This is an ode to anyone thinking that this years bee season has been a lost cause!

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