

The opening talk was:

- Early blooms of acacia and almond, early drones spotted, and early drone brood, and the first large swarm already bagged early, on Jan. 31st in Soquel.
- Carla was voted President by the Steering Committee for a 2nd year.
- And this meeting welcomed a sizable attendance of eager young newbees ready to dive into our beekeeping world.

The first presentation was on Yellow Jacket Control, by Ken

- Now is the time to put out yellow jacket traps if you were going to, because now you can catch a emerging wasp queen, which equals 10,000 wasps in August! But remember that all wasps are also beneficial to bees, because they take away dead bees. Dead bees can be diseased, and they do this in summer when infections and varroa can quickly wipe out a colony if the workers cannot quickly remove the infected bees far enough from the colony. Hive entrances that are only one bee space high are much easier to defend as wasps have to really squeeze in.
- He did his own research on all commercially sold wasp bait and concluded that they all were a total waste of money. The only bait he could come up with, that a wasp would take back to the brood and so kill the nest, was the termite poison Fibronil, in a .00025% solution in H<sub>2</sub>O, mixed with catfood. This is not approved for that use. If a wasp nest is inconveniently close, breaking eggs into the nest at night, so the skunks can feast on it, works. Or just simply pour soapy water into it (at night.)

The second presentation was on “Breeding to Allow Stronger and More Adaptable Bees to Evolve,” by Manfred Warmuth. Our bees are under stress, yet we are not allowing them to adapt to our changed world. Humans have been domesticating animals and plants by breeding the strongest of most suitable plants and animals to feed us for over 12,000 years, but in the last 50 years we have become lazy and stopped breeding, in favor of chemical and other shortcuts, designed to mostly just increase yield. This might feed our population today, but, the cost has been to not allow today's bees, pigs or wheat etc. evolve adaptive traits for future breeding. Not a wise choice in the face of mounting challenges of chemical toxicities and climate change. He used *Apis scutelli*, the "africanized" bees as an example. They should have been domesticated instead of letting them roam loose in Brazil and breed for becoming good survivors of exterminators. He told of his visit to the San Diego group that is finally domesticating them (carefully) now, and had many tales and footage of the giant bee, *Apis dorsata* too, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpidR6Wb8Wg> and [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cW9R\\_tRPWs4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cW9R_tRPWs4) to get the idea.

He urged us:

- Stop being Honey Mongerers, and do not rob honey from bees under stress, such as hives in their first year. He advocated for breeding for stronger bees by not robbing honey from hives every second year, and so allowing them enough energy to not only survive but give them extra energy to swarm and to freely procreate and evolve desirable traits.
- Create Habitat for swarms to seek out, by any creative means of your own. Just do it, anywhere. Langstroth boxes, top bar hives, banana boxes, pots up high, give the swarms

a choice and do not disturb them for that first year at all. His best success has been with halved wine barrels, topped by top bars, with covers. The entrance was several 3/8" drilled holes. The old combs he brought showed us were impressive.

--Plant!!!! Fruit, flowers, low water natives, plant now, and plant everywhere. His favorites: Loquat and tagasaste bean, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tagasaste>

--Breed your own queens, as nothing is sadder than a queenless swarm. Queens hatched in a Jenter box are safe from the other queens, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jenter\\_kit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jenter_kit)  
See, for photo of the one shown to us:

[http://blueskybeesupply.com/jenter\\_queen\\_system.html](http://blueskybeesupply.com/jenter_queen_system.html)

He sent around the books that had inspired him by Ormond and Harry Aebi: Art and Adventure of Beekeeping, and Mastering the Art of Beekeeping.