

North Vancouver Island
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This was our first full year of beekeeping on Vancouver Island and an abnormal season by almost all reports. Colony survival into Spring 2020 seemed to be a pretty mixed bag in this region, there did not seem to be a clear trend towards overall good or poor survival. Early spring conditions had the colonies building up quickly, but things stalled with a shift to colder and rainier weather. In general it seemed the season was behind by a couple of weeks approaching summer. Early season queen production was challenging in most of the region and some nuc producers struggled to meet commitments and demand.

The pandemic seemed to increase interest in hobby beekeeping, but restricted the ability to gather for meetings or classes. Some beekeeping clubs moved meetings to online platforms with moderate attendance, and field days were generally cancelled with the odd socially-distanced exception.

Varroa counts were generally reported to be low in the early season. There was a post-spring dearth in our region that had beekeepers scrambling to feed strong colonies for a week or two before the main nectar flow. Blackberry bloomed well and the weather cooperated for the most part, and beekeepers that chase fireweed blooms in the hills seemed to do well.

Very gratefully at the time of writing there have still been no sightings of the 'Murder Hornets' here following the brave removal of that first nest in Nanaimo last year, though we have been following the news surrounding the recent discovery of the nest just across the border. The familiar yellowjackets have pestered and persisted through September, but the abrupt colder weather in October has really slowed them down.

We are wishing we could gather in person for this 100th anniversary of the BCHPA, but want to thank everyone involved in making this online gathering possible.