

## **Beekeeping in Coastal California Review**

*By Archie Mitchell, Regional Director for WAS*

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One of my favorite beekeeping sources, *The Backyard Beekeeper – An Absolute Guide to Keeping Bees in Your Yard and Garden* by Kim Flottum indicated that “pretty much every book on keeping bees is the same because beekeeping books haven’t changed much in the last 150 years. The authors say the same things, do the same things and show the same things.”

There is one young author, Jeremy R. Rose, who has broken the mold with the publication of his new book titled *Beekeeping in Coastal California*. This book is different because unlike others, I have never seen a text that specifically addresses beekeeping on the Central Coast of California in my more than twenty years of beekeeping here in Santa Barbara County.

The only other source for California beekeepers which I purchased more than twenty years ago is “*The Art and Adventure of Beekeeping*” by Ormond and Harry Aebi who were listed in the Guinness Book of Records for their record of producing “404 lbs of honey from a single hive” many years ago. They broke the record while working bees in Santa Cruz County.

Over the years, I have had to rely on my mentors and a multitude of sources to learn about beekeeping. California beekeeping along the Central Coast is different and unique. For example, Jeremy noted that in certain areas it is possible to divide hives all year because of the mild weather and availability of nectar and pollen from the Blue Gum Eucalyptus tree blossoms. We don’t have to “winterize” our bees for extreme weather here.

Jeremy’s book fills a vacuum for new beekeepers located in the Mediterranean climate zone along California’s Central Coast. The book provides detailed and pertinent monthly information about what the beekeeper should be doing, what the bees are doing, what forage is available and the solutions for common seasonal problems. Jeremy is a new member of WAS who became interested in bees after borrowing a hive from the Gilroy Beekeepers Association.

He became involved in commercial beekeeping after involvement in a college beekeeping project at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. The students were given an opportunity to care for beehives and share the profits from honey production. From this experience, Jeremy became hooked on bees. Before graduation, he started The California Bee Company with a friend from his childhood.

The company lost half of its inventory, 70 hives, in his first year. Despite challenges, The California Bee Company has managed to survive. Jeremy moves his bees to the almond groves for pollinating each year. He manages 100 hives with approximately a 90 per cent survival rate. Jeremy graduated with a B.S. degree in Fruit Science in 2007. Currently, he is working on Masters Degree in Agriculture, specializing in Food Science. For more information regarding purchasing his book refer to his website: [www.californiabeecompany.com](http://www.californiabeecompany.com) or contact Jeremy directly: [Jeremy@californiabeecompany.com](mailto:Jeremy@californiabeecompany.com)