

## Strong nectar flows get rained out in SE but swarming continues.

Strong nectar flows continued in parts of the Southeast for the first three days last week until rain and cooler weather arrived.

A map of cumulative rainfall amounts for the last 7 days from from the National Weather Service Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service <http://water.weather.gov/precip/> is shown in Illustration 2. Most of the US, except California, received rain. Amounts were heavier in the east and so widespread that all nectar flows were probably disrupted. Good weather is forecast for the SE this week. It will be interesting to see if this nectar flow resumes.

In northern California, the hives in Redwood City continued to bring in nectar but ended the week with losses (up to 12 lbs).

It appears that hives in Iowa and Michigan are building up and took advantage of the rain to bring in water. Water is used to dilute honey to feed brood. An unprotected hive gains weight during rain but quickly loses most of the weight as the water runs off and the wood dries.

Notice in Illustration 3 how the weight jumped up during rains at A, B and C as water is brought into the hive. The weight then slowly fell. The slow, linear weight loss is probably due to respiration and metabolic activity of the brood.

Hive weight can be misleading this time of the year. The hive is only slowly losing weight but it is undergoing a radical transformation from frames of honey to frames of brood. Special attention must be given to hives building up as they can quickly starve.

The rain and cooler temperatures didn't keep the scale hive at Green Goddess Farm in Asheville, NC from swarming. This hive was a 5 frame nuc about 3 weeks ago. It was crowded and needed another super but it had been raining and it was 60 degrees. Surely they wouldn't swarm ...

Carl reports he was visiting a friend when the 5 lb loss was noticed.

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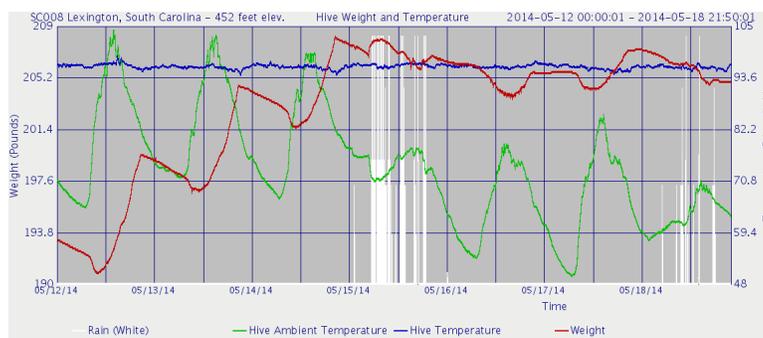


Illustration 1: Lexington, SC gained about 20 lbs the first three days until rain and cooler temperatures arrived.

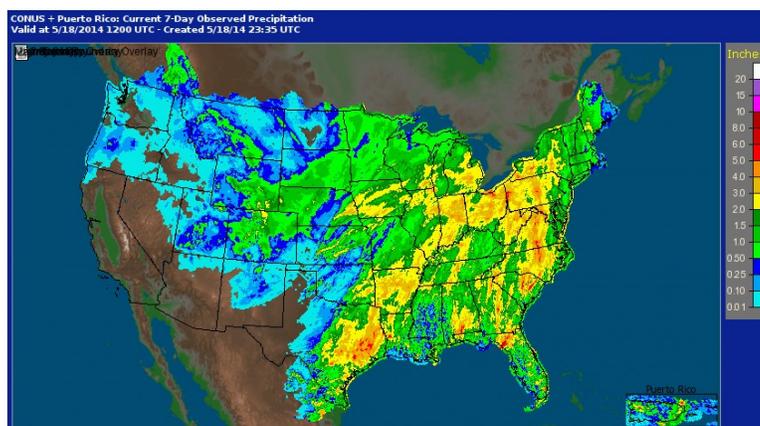


Illustration 2: Cumulative rainfall amounts for last 7 days.

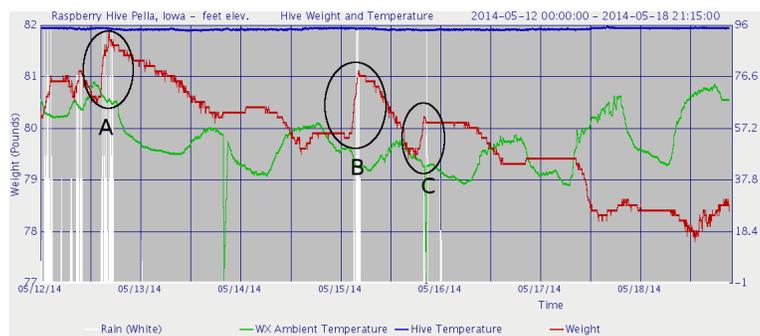


Illustration 3: Bringing in water to feed brood.

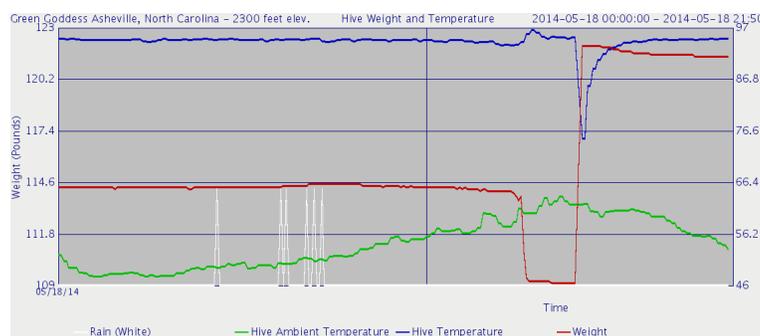


Illustration 4: Swarm and hive manipulation at 60 degrees.

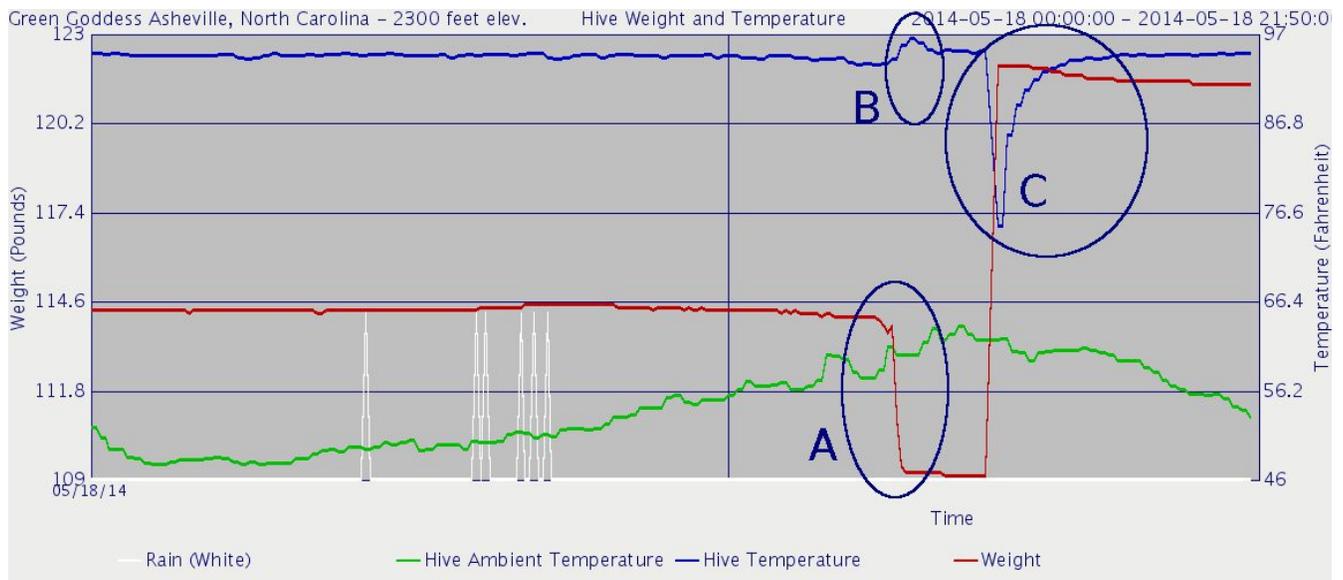


Illustration 5: (A) 5 lb swarm. (B) Temperature rise (C) Slow recovery when opening hives at 60 degrees.

Carl rushed home and found the swarm in a large maple, over 20 feet up, way out on a limb. About 2 hours after the swarm, the hive was opened and inspected for queen cells and a super was added.

Illustration 5 shows the details of the swarm.

(A) 5 lb swarm leaves the hive.

(B) The temperature rises just after the swarm leaves.

(C) Note the 20 degree temperature loss and the time it took for the hive to return to normal temperature (about 2 hours) when the ambient temperature is in the 60s.

Illustration 6 shows 5 lbs of bees high up in a maple. Bye bye, bees.



Illustration 6: 5 lbs of bees.