



# FEDERATION OF BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS

President: Miss Margery Cooper

MARCH 2004  
Number 573

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The Federation, its Council and its Officers cannot be held responsible for  
the views expressed in the Newsletter or possible errors.

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## Future Events

12th March 2004	Leaver Memorial Lecture Upper Bucklebury	
26 <sup>th</sup> April 2004	Spring convention & Trade Fair Stoneleigh	

## FROM THE FEDERATION SECRETARY: -

The Federation AGM will have taken place by the time you read this, and I may not be your General Secretary any more. If this is the case then I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and patience during my reign. I have done my best to do the job on your behalf. Not always an easy task!

I hope that you all have your plans and preparations in place for the new season, and that all your colonies have come through the winter unscathed.

Don't forget the BBKA Spring Convention and Trade Fair at Stoneleigh on 26th April. Not only interesting lectures and a good day out, you might also pick up some equipment bargains as well. What more could you want?

Also this year, could I ask you yet again to support your local shows wherever possible? They are an endangered species, which once lost May never return. We will be the poorer for their loss, both as a social event and a measure of standards.

In the December Newsletter our Regional Bee Inspector, Mr. Ian Homer, mentioned that he is hoping to arrange several one-day conferences on Integrated Pest Management (I.P.M.) during the coming year and asking if your Association would be interested in hosting one. Well? Are you interested? If so, speak to your Association Secretary and get one organised.

**This is a chance for Berkshire to make a positive commitment and lead the way in the Region.**

**I.P.M.**, for the uninitiated, is a new concept of managing bees. Looking at every aspect of bee management, understanding and using correctly a variety of strategies and treatments to control pests and diseases, being in tune with your bees behaviour and needs, apiary hygiene, and so much more all rolled into one package.

At the Federation meeting on February 17th, I (or my successor) will have handed out copies of the B.B.K.A. leaflet on the subject for your representatives to pass on to you. If you don't receive one, ask.

In my opinion I.P.M. is the positive way forward.

Sandra Napper

## **Aspiring Scribe (STILL) Wanted:**

So far we do not have a replacement for Garulus. The column is aimed primarily with beginners in mind but even those with many years of experience are still learning. Have you four or five years experience? Have you a common sense approach to beekeeping, possibly by cribbing from others? There must be someone out there that would be prepared to “have a go” or maybe you know of someone that is too shy to come forward. The Editor would like suggestions; confidentiality will be honoured

**THE APIARY IN MARCH** »» Extract from a past Newsletter with apologies – As yet we do not have a contributor .

For the past few years now, spring has come early to this part of the country and it looks as if this year it might be the same. Which means that the early flowers - and the bees' all-time favourite food, oil-seed rape, will be out soon.

One of the tricks of successful beekeeping is to be one jump ahead of the bees, so we are thinking already about the important first inspection. But...before you go opening up the hive, make sure that the shade temperature is at least 60°F that is 16°C, or the bees, in their efforts to protect the queen from a rush of cold air might ball her.

When you go to your bees, you want to handle them calmly and gently, so you must always have a clear idea of what you are trying to do if you want them to be docile and co-operative. They sense - and resent - muddle and uncertainty very quickly.

### **The objects of looking into your hive now are:**

1. To make sure that the bees have ample stores. They will not have consumed much during the winter. It is now, when productivity has begun that they need that good supply you helped them to lay down in the autumn. If it is very low, then feed them with some syrup (1pt to 1lb.) until you are happy that they are bringing in nectar and can do without your support.

2- to make sure that the colony has a good laying queen. You will probably be able to see sealed brood if you look down between the combs, that will mean that all is well.

If you feel you really must inspect the combs, make sure the temperature is still warm enough. Remember to use the cover cloths to keep the warmth in and to work quickly and smoothly from one side of the brood box to the other. If there is no brood and you can't see a queen, and the colony is weak then you may decide to unite the colony to a stronger one using the newspaper method. A large number of drone cells may mean that you have a drone-laying queen, and you will want to see about getting a replacement.

At this stage this is all you can do. Except for treating for Varroa...

Hebe

We now have the spectre of pyrethroid resistant mites, which means that most of us will need to reconsider our methods of treatment. Since the above contribution was written, Apiguard has been licensed for use against Varroa to be followed by other products later this year. Do not wait for the presence of resistant mites to be proved – by that time it could be too late.

It is imperative that these products are used according to directions, the ingredients are volatile and with the exception of Apiguard (which is in a gel), if they are used in hot weather it could result in balled queens.

Editor

## **Go Buy a Book!**

Old bee books hold a fascination all of their own. A curious beekeeper can trace the development of the craft from the Seventeenth Century through to the present day. In doing so, the reader may come to marvel at the obscure theories concerning the nature of bees and their generation within the hive. The story will also unfold as to how bee-masters came to abandon the straw skeps for wooden hives, and eventually introduced movable frames. However, be warned, amassing a library of antiquarian bee books can be an expensive exercise. The popularity of the subject, despite its specialist nature, has always ensured that prices are relatively high.

Even so, there are bargains to be found, especially at charity bookstalls and on the shelves of non-specialist booksellers. One of the great things about many bee manuals dating from the late Nineteenth Century through to the early Twentieth Century is that they were reprinted time and time again, an indication of the popularity of the hobby. For example, The British Bee-Keepers Guide Book by T W Cowan, first published in 1881, had run to its 23rd edition by 1919 and kept on going, year after year. Other classic books, which ran to many editions, were The Practical Bee Guide by J G Digges (1904) and The Beekeeper's Guide by W. Herrod-Hempsall (1938). If a lot of copies survive, it usually keeps the price down.

However, a really interesting find would be the American volume entitled The ABC of Bee Culture by A I & E R Root. First published in 1878, the work ran through scores of editions. A good early copy might cost well over £100, but later volumes in well-worn condition are priced much lower. The cost of any given book is very much related to its state of repair. A fine copy, tightly bound, and in good condition, without blemishes, will command a premium sum. A shabby copy will cost much less.

For a dedicated collector, the early to mid Nineteenth Century is the most interesting period. Commanding high prices are Thomas Nutt's Humanity to Honey Bees (1832); Samuel Bagster's Management of Bees (1834); My Bee Book by William Cotton (1842) and Frank Cheshire's Practical Beekeeping (1879). These books contain diagrams for the building of numerous types of hive, many of which would lend themselves to reproducing as a woodworking exercise. Not only would it be interesting to see how a colony of bees fared in an antique hive, but the bee box would be a talking point in any apiary.

If money were no object, then the really enthusiastic collector would search out a copy of The Feminine Monarchie; or a Treatise concerning Bees and the due ordering of them, by Chas Butler (1609). Sadly, its not on this writer's shelves!

For those who would seek out all manner of bee books on the web, try [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) or [www.bookfinder.com](http://www.bookfinder.com). Happy hunting!

T. Bewick

### **Your Regional Bee Inspectors are: -**

Southern Region: - Mr. Ian Homer. Fax/Telephone number: 01308 482 161

South Eastern Region: - Mr. Alan Byham Fax/Telephone number: 020 8571 6450

### **Newbury and District Beekeepers' Association: -**

**Beekeeping – my way** - Ged Marshall

Friday 12 March 2004 at 7.30 pm Upper Bucklebury Memorial Hall, near Thatcham, Berkshire.

### **Directions:-**

- Take the A4 to the eastern outskirts of Thatcham
- Follow the signposting to Upper Bucklebury and Cold Ash (turning right at a roundabout if coming from Reading or left at traffic lights if coming from Newbury)
- Follow any signs for Upper Bucklebury and after 1½ miles, at the top of Harts Hill Road, the road bends to the right and becomes Broad Lane. Continue through Upper Bucklebury past Peach's garage and a pub.
- The memorial Hall is the last building on the right within the 30mph zone, before you reach Bucklebury Common.

There is ample space for car parking beside the Hall.

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### **READING and DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January Reading Beekeepers Association held their Annual Dinner, again choosing the Maltster's Arms at Rotherfield Greys. This year we were a little disadvantaged with the seating arrangements being split between two large tables with other diners in the room, although certainly where this writer was seated there was plenty of 'beekeeping' discussed over the tables and judging by the noise level at the second table an enjoyable evening was had by all. At least our choice was justified by the good quality and service we received from the Maltsters.

On a beekeeping note, I heard from one of our Reading members that he was checking his apiaries at 2.00pm on 18<sup>th</sup> January for woodpecker damage and observed two of the colonies working at nearly full strength. They were apparently bringing in some nectar from a nearby source, although there was frost on the ground in the shaded areas – amazing! – Can we have information from members as to what the nectar source was likely to be?

**The March meeting will be held on “Friday” 12<sup>th</sup> March.**

**Reading Association will be joining Newbury and District Association at their Leaver Memorial Lecture at Upper Bucklebury Memorial Hall, near Thatcham.**

The Speaker is Ged Marshall talking about “Beekeeping-my way”.

The journey time is 30 minutes max and we will need to depart at 6-50pm to be there in good time. Lifts will be provided - we hope as many members as possible will be able to attend. Please see the following phone numbers to arrange a lift: -

Michael Blackburn. 0118 947 9450.

Jon. Davey 0118 975 0734

Secretary: Mr. R. Kiff, 114 Silverdale Road, Earley, Reading RG6 7LU Tel. 0118 966 5358

### **WOKINGHAM & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**

#### **Report on January meeting**

Dr Charles Hill stepped in at the last moment to deliver a very interesting talk on 'The changing face of British wildlife'. Illustrated with some 80 photos he had taken himself he identified the species that have benefited or suffered through climate change, pollution and alterations in habitat. Numbered amongst the villains are muntjac deer, mink, grey squirrels and North American crayfish whilst species that we welcome and have thankfully done better in the last 20 years are buzzard, red kite, butterflies, dragonflies and otters.

## **March meeting**

The meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March will feature a talk by Beulah Cullen on Bee Diseases. Beulah is now retired as our bee inspector but is still keen to remind us of the telltale signs and treatments for those nasty bee diseases.

## **Rosemary's Book of the month**

In our library there is an intriguing volume entitled, simply, "The Wasps". The book, which was donated by W.G. Whisker, was published by the University of Michigan in 1970. It is the work of Howard E Evans who held the Alexander Agassiz chair at Harvard University's Museum of Comparative Zoology and of a Researcher, Mary Jane West.

High powered indeed, and as you might expect, the book is a concise, well written study about all the wasps in the world. The Introduction gives a taste of the enormous varieties of wasps that there are - 200 species in Britain, 4000 in the United States and tens of thousands in the whole world.

The book describes the behaviour of wasps, their habitats, their predatory habits and victims and their rather gruesome ways of providing for the future welfare of their offspring.

It moves from the general behaviour of all wasps through the solitary wasps up to the social wasps. The final chapter deals with the close relationships between wasp species, their particular prey and their enemies.

It is an impressive and scholarly work, which gives an insight into the amazingly well balanced interdependence there is between these insects and their environment. Guaranteed to make you feel more well-disposed to the hungry wasp that comes along to share your picnic next summer.

Secretary John Edwards 0118 934 0238

## **SLOUGH AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY**

### **Incorporating Windsor, Maidenhead and adjoining communities.**

Once again, the annual dinner at the Aurora Garden Hotel was a great success. Our sincere thanks go to Don Church for initiating it again and to Brough Girling for handling the menu options and bookings. I am sure we all enjoyed the wonderful food and service that we have come to expect. Everyone there also signed a card in anticipation of the happy event expected by our apiary supervisor Jim Cooper and his wife Sarah. By now, most of you will know that they were happy to announce the safe arrival of Sophie Emily on the 20<sup>th</sup> January. Congratulations to you both.

Our March meeting on Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> will be a talk by Dr Jill Eyers on the geology of the Thames Valley. Dr Eyers is a well-known local speaker who gives a very interesting and informative talk on her chosen subject. This is a little different from our usual topic of beekeeping and we will be happy to welcome anyone, be they from surrounding associations or your own family or friends, who might wish to come along to hear her. The meeting will start at 8pm and will be at the usual venue of the All Saints Parish Hall, on the corner of Frances and Alexandra Roads, Windsor. Don't forget that the library is also available at meetings and that there are still a number of surplus books for sale.

**PLEASE NOTE...**because the scheduled April meeting is so close to the Easter weekend, it has produced problems in booking a speaker for the evening. Therefore, at the recent committee meeting, we reluctantly took the decision to cancel the evening. However, we hope to replace it with an event later in the summer to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Slough and District Beekeepers Society. We will let you know in good time, either by attached note or via the newsletter, what form the celebration will take.

The summer schedule of visits to the Society's apiary in Fulmer will commence on the 28th of March and continues at the usual fortnightly interval throughout the summer. The April dates for your diary are the 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

It is hoped to have had the weekend work party a little earlier in March to site the new Dartington hive and repair the wobbly stands that have been affected by tree roots. Many thanks to those that have already answered the call for volunteers, if you are now able to help out, please call Jim on 01628 783228 for the date decided.

One most important date for your diary is the 13<sup>th</sup> of June when our regional Bee Disease Inspector will be paying the apiary a visit to give an all-important demonstration on the method of testing for resistant Varroa mites. This topic is becoming of increasing concern for us all and we hope that you will attend if at all possible.

Newsletter items: Joy Dodson Burnham (01628) 664091  
Secretary: Michael Sheasby Farnham Common (01753) 642656

## **DEVON BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION SUMMER CONFERENCE (FORMERLY SEALE-HAYNE WEEKEND)**

The Devon Beekeepers biennial summer conference will be taking place this year on 17<sup>th</sup> & 18th July at the new and prestigious venue of Exeter University. Speakers of international renown will impart their knowledge on the theme of 'Healthy Bees, Healthy People'. They will include Dr Otto Boecking, Germany, on the Status of Breeding Varroa Resistant Bees, Dr Rose Cooper from the University of Wales on the Research and Developments in Honey as a Healing Agent and Dr Anton Imdorf, Bee Research Institute, Switzerland on Alternative Treatments for Varroa Destructor. Accommodation is available on site and all rooms have en-suite facilities.

For further information and application form please contact Mrs Jane Ducker, Oak Cottage, Chapel Lane, Manaton, Devon, TQ13 9UA. Tel. 01647 221225

**Newsletter "Deadline": - - Contributions**, this includes **E-mails**, to arrive with the Editor by the **FIRST POST** (Around 10.00am) on the First of the Month for the Following Month


To enable the Advertisement Manager to place adverts with the Editor for the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month deadline; adverts should be sent well before this time.

**ADVERTISEMENT ENTRIES:** - 2 Lines for £1.00. Commercial, £1.00 per line, together with your cheque made payable to FBBKA. To be sent to the Advertisement Manager:-

Mr. Michael Blackburn, M.B. Photography, 41 Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JV. Telephone:- (0118) 947 9450/5451

5 Frame National Nuclei **FOR SALE**, April onwards Telephone: 01344 776359

**Surplus BS national hive parts for sale** - B/chambers, supers, floorboards, clearer/Snelgrove boards etc. Very low prices - must clear. Call for details. Harry Peace 01628 - 624543"

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## **Around and about the region**

February 2004

A common theme in articles in this issue of "Around and about the region" is the effect of weather on our bees. Whether global warming is a reality or not, there is plenty of evidence of the influence that unusual weather patterns are having on our bees and our beekeeping, from failed crops due to drought to the risk of starvation due to our bees being so active during the winter.

Once again, I hope that you will enjoy this newsletter and I look forward to seeing many of you during the coming season.

*Ian Homer*

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### Frequently asked questions.

Since last season I have managed to visit a number of associations and have been fascinated by the range of questions association members ask. There are three particularly common questions which arise.

Firstly, how can we combat the effects of woodpeckers on our hives? (Draping hives with a fine mesh plastic fruit netting seems to be an effective solution).

Secondly, why is wax moth such a problem these days and what can we do about it? (The withdrawal of PBD from the market has removed the chief weapon most beekeepers used). There are other techniques such as freezing combs but another very effective control method is to remove all wax moth larvae from the hive each time the colony is inspected).

But, without any shadow of doubt, the most frequently asked question is "What are we going to do about resistant varroa mites?"

The answer to this last question can be as complex as you want it to be but, put simply, it is essential that you have a clear understanding of what is happening in your colonies.

The very minimum you need to do is:

1. Monitor your hives, assess the extent of varroa infestation and test for resistance.

2. If your mite population warrants control measures try to adopt alternatives to your previous control measures.
3. Apply these control measures.
4. Monitor your hives to assess the impact of the control measures.

Most importantly, this needs to be a continuous process because, whilst **you** may have effectively controlled mite numbers to an acceptable level, you cannot control re-infestation from any other colonies in your neighbourhood. No longer can varroa control be a once (or perhaps twice) a year activity.

There are a number of one day workshops and apiary workshops planned to take place over the coming months. These will provide opportunities to discuss alternative control methods as well as how to assess the mite population in your colonies and determine treatment thresholds. The concepts of Integrated Pest Management are not new but many beekeepers are benefiting from the opportunity to discuss the practical application of the control methods and techniques which these events offer.

If there is not an event planned for your area and you feel one should be arranged, then do please contact me.

### New Honey Regulations.

Most of you will know that new Honey Regulations recently came into effect but, it is clear from the number of times I have been asked about them, that many beekeepers are concerned that they don't know the exact implications of them.

There are web sites available from which you can obtain copies of the regulations ([www.hmso.gov.uk](http://www.hmso.gov.uk)) and guidance notes on their interpretation ([www.foodstandards.gov.uk](http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk)).

Perhaps the most useful advice will be that obtained from those who have the responsibility for enforcing the regulations – the Trading Standards Department of your local County Council. Hampshire County have produced an excellent leaflet which sets out exactly what is required – this can be accessed at [www.hants.gov.uk/regulatory/busadvice/honey/html](http://www.hants.gov.uk/regulatory/busadvice/honey/html)

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### Failure of autumn sown rape.

Can you remember back to last summer and autumn? If you can you will recall just how dry it was. Whether it constituted a drought or not I'm not sure, but in many areas of the region it was so dry that much of the autumn sown rape crop failed to germinate. The problem was extensively covered on TV and radio but, as far as I am aware, every story failed to note the significance to the bee community. A number of farmers attempted to re-drill but, I gather, that was not altogether successful and there is a real prospect of the early rape crop being rather patchy in many areas.

This won't present a problem unless your bees are reliant on early rape but I know that, for some beekeepers in the region, rape is a major source of both nectar and pollen. If you are affected by this, it may be as well to keep a careful eye on your bees as shortfalls of either nectar or pollen could seriously affect the development of your colonies. Where necessary, feed them to overcome the nectar shortage and to assist brood development.

The winter rains have, to some extent, redressed the situation and it is probable that spring sown crops will germinate well. Providing we get a near average, or better, spring and summer then there should be reasonable flows from these crops.

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### Honey Survey.

Thank you to everyone who responded to the request for information on honey yields and honey prices. Responses are still coming in (it's not too late to send further responses) but the initial analysis shows that a 454gm (1lb) jar of honey, on average throughout the region, is selling direct at around £2.62 with the wholesale price typically being around £1.90. Cut comb honey is retailing at around £2.50 for 227 gm (8oz) for both blossom and heather, whilst heather honey in the jar is, typically, retailing at just under £4 for a 454gm jar. There are significant variations around the region with the price apparently being closely linked to tourism (the more tourists the higher the price). In several parts of the region, a 454gm jar of blossom honey regularly sells at £3.00

Average yields during 2003 varied between 13kg and 55kg per colony (28lbs to 120 lbs) with the mean value being just under 30kg (65lbs) per colony. Highest yielding colonies were reported as producing a mean of 49kg (103lbs) within a range of 27kg to 90 kg (60lbs to 200lbs).

### **SOUTHERN REGION ASSOCIATIONS DAY – APRIL 25<sup>th</sup> 2004**

Association Secretary's are already aware of this event but, alas, not everyone will be able to attend. The large number of associations within Southern Region means numbers have to be restricted to two delegates from each association. For those lucky enough to attend, the day promises to be an interesting mix of news from the National Bee Unit and discussion between associations. The programme is still being finalised but is expected to include presentations on:

- current research activity at the National Bee Unit
- the roles and responsibilities of NBU
- a discussion on the role of Disease Liaison Contacts
- an insight into some of the odd and interesting things which bee inspectors find as they go about their work.



This will be complemented by an open forum where topical or contentious issues can aired and discussed. The aim is for it to be a social opportunity for members of the various associations to meet and compare notes.

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## What ever happened to winter?

As I write this, on January 21<sup>st</sup>, my bees are actively flying and bringing in pollen – they have been for the last 4 weeks! I can't say what happened whilst I was away on holiday but during the times when I have been here, there has never, since October, been a period longer than four days when the home bees weren't out flying at some time or other!

What then should I read into all of this activity?

Well, firstly we can conclude that it has been a relatively mild winter and that at least some of our bees are prepared to pop out for a few minutes. It is one thing for the odd bee or two to take a cleansing flight but a rather different proposition when they are out to work – for that is exactly what they have been doing – collecting water and pollen.

If the bees are collecting pollen, then there is a need for it within the hive to feed young brood. That in turn means that stores are being consumed (for there is nothing yielding nectar in January in this locality) and, of course, that is why water is being collected – to dilute the stored honey.

So, if stores are being consumed fairly quickly, will they last until there is a significant nectar flow? This is

## Preparing for the season

This is the time when many of us will be planning our activities for the coming season. For many beekeepers the practice of replacing several combs in each hive with brand new foundation will be routine – one which they have carried out for many years. This has long been recommended as the most effective method of, progressively, replacing each comb in the hive to avoid the combs becoming old and dark and, potentially, harbouring disease.

There are several aspects of this practice which, if considered for a few minutes, tend to minimise the benefit which can be achieved. Firstly, unless the combs are marked with the year they were changed, it may be difficult to identify which combs were replaced even as recently as last year. Secondly, since only two or three combs are replaced, the colony continues to contain old comb and so could still be harbouring disease.

where you must judge the status of each colony carefully to decide whether to feed or not. How heavy is each hive and how much stores remain? At what rate are the stores being consumed? What is the source of the earliest nectar flow in your locality and when do you expect it to start this year?

These are all questions you can be addressing right now – the beekeeping season need not be restricted to the months of April – September. And if you decide to supplement a colony's winter stores, you have a good reason for an early look inside each colony without doing any harm to the colony.

Take what you may have been told, or read, about the risks of chilling bees with a pinch of salt, the risks are negligible (brood is more at risk from very hot weather than it ever is from cold). Supplementary winter feed is best provided in the form of fondant or candy wrapped in a polythene bag with a hole in the underside for the bees to gain access and then placed above a feed hole on the crown board.

It's a strange paradox that a milder winter can be seen as, potentially, more problematic for our bees than a more severe one. Perhaps we should all go back to the old country ways and be more like our bees. After all, they work according to the weather rather than according to the calendar!

## **Bailey Comb Change**

Here however is an alternative approach. Instead of changing, say, one third of the frames in each colony in any given year, consider instead, changing all of the frames in one third of your colonies. The practice is known as the Bailey Comb Change and has the significant benefit of removing all of the old combs at one time.

You will need to place a second brood box containing the frames with the new comb above the original brood box and, subject to timing, you may need to feed the colony with a winter strength sugar solution. Once some of the new foundation has been drawn, find the queen and place her on this new foundation. Place a queen excluder between the two brood boxes to prevent the queen going back down into the bottom box.

Unless there is a strong nectar flow, continue feeding to encourage the bees to draw the new foundation. Remove the bottom brood box when, after three weeks, all of the brood has hatched out. At this point you can either destroy the old comb or render it down to recover the wax.

This procedure can be carried out anytime between March and June – the earlier the better as the colony will have longer to build up before the peak summer flow. But do make sure that there is sufficient feed available to get the new comb drawn out.

### Shook Swarms

Another approach, which also allows all of the brood frames to be changed simultaneously, is to use a “shook swarm”. To use this technique, first move the colony to one side and place a new floor board where the colony was originally. Place a queen excluder (wire, not zinc) directly onto the floor board and then

place a spare brood box with new foundation onto the queen excluder.

Now carefully examine the colony to find the queen and put her into a match box for safe keeping. Frame by frame, shake all of the bees from the existing brood box into the new one and once they are all in, run the queen into the new brood box. This can now be re-assembled and a winter strength feed applied. Again, the amount and duration of feeding will be determined by timing and nectar flow.

Once the queen is proven to be laying, remove the queen excluder from underneath the brood box and re-assemble the hive as normal.

This is a technique which is increasingly used as part of the disease control procedures following cases of European Foul Brood. Beekeepers whose bees have been “shook swarmed” will often tell you that those colonies had, by the end of the season, out performed those that were not!

**Ian R. Homer, Regional Bee Inspector – Southern Region,  
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[www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com)**