



FEDERATION OF BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS

President: Miss Margery Cooper

September 2009
Number 635

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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

29 th —31 st October	National Honey Show Weybridge	http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/
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THE APIARY in SEPTEMBER

Bees that emerge late August to October are the ones that over winter, therefore these should be as far as possible, free of varroa. Apiguard is now the recommended treatment and should be applied according to directions, after your honey harvest has been removed. Open mesh floors should be closed in order to retain the vapour, the entrance stays open but restricted. Round about this time there is often a flow from the ivy.

Colonies should normally be wintered on their own stores but if light, they should be fed using a contact feeder, nuclei will most certainly need feeding. It is said that a normal colony requires approximately 40lbs of stores to winter satisfactorily To prevent robbing all entrances should be reduced, nuclei in particular, to 18mm (½ inch), The concentration of feed syrup should be 1kg white sugar to ½ litre of water. Reduce your entrances so that the bees can better repel wasps.

Feed in the evening and avoid spillage.

Nuclei that are weak in numbers but otherwise healthy can be united or wintered above a sealed crown board over a strong colony and given their own entrance. If you have not done this before, seek assistance from an experienced beekeeper.

In recent years ivy has been a source of nectar right up to the end of October, a question recently posed "does working ivy wear out worker bees so that they die early and do not last the winter" This, to my mind, is a valid question which as far as I know has not been researched and could be one cause of spring dwindling. The 2008 ivy flow ceased earlier than in previous years and 2008-9 colony losses were down, food for thought?

A number of Marie Celeste colonies have been reported this year. It is easy to blame CCD without looking for evidence. CCD leaves no dead or live bees that can be examined, no other insects go into the hive, not even wax moth: research into the cause is ongoing. The most common problem is varroa or a virus for which varroa is a vector, the bees abscond leaving damaged emerging brood and in some cases brood dead in their cells which can be analysed. Many beekeepers are still using pyrethroid strips that are of little use against pyrethroid resistant varroa. Nosema Ceranae is a silent killer and can only be found with a microscope

Triad.

Reported on German television (ZDF). Asian hornets have been attacking bees in Western Germany. They pounce on other insects in flight, and in the case of bees they can rapidly reduce a colony to a non-viable state.

Well worth reading, August edition of Georgia Beeletter

<http://www.ent.uga.edu/Bees/georgia-bee.html> Page 10 onward is of most interest to UK

The University of California have opened a new website which is also worth visiting.

<http://beebiology.ucdavis.edu/>

Your Regional Bee Inspectors are: -

Southern Region: - David Packham Tel No: 01392 881253

also visit <http://services.csl.gov.uk/fera> The main website is:

<https://secure.csl.gov.uk/beebase/public/Contacts/contacts.cfm>

National Bee Unit, Central Science Laboratory, Sand Hutton, York. YO41 1 LZ

00 44 (0)1 904 462 510 <mailto:nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk>

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




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The BeeKeepers Quarterly can now be seen on the web at

www.bkq.org.uk

this will be a free, try it and see service to beekeepers for the March & June 2009 editions.

There will be a small charge to subscribe after this time

Northern Bee Books have developed a new site to view and purchase books for beekeepers

www.GroovyCart.co.uk/beebooks

SLOUGH, WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

August has seen the removal of honey at our apiary – with the bees hopefully tucked up for the autumn. We have taken off about 150 lbs of honey and the Apiguard is in place. As a reminder to any new beekeepers, it is recommended that we use Apiguard as a varroa treatment, and it should be placed on top of the brood frames. The earlier it can be placed in the hive the better, as warm weather helps it to work effectively. The first pack should be left in place for 2 weeks and then replaced by a second. Full instructions are on the packets. Wynne Jones (email wynnejones@btconnect.com with order and card details) supply quickly and charge £18.50 for a pack to treat 5 hives (smallest pack), which is a good price.

It is also important to check food stores in the hives, as it is quite possible for an otherwise strong and healthy hive of bees to die of starvation during the winter months. Any good 'bee book' will give full and clear instructions on how to do this.

The Apiary visits continue on the 6th and 20th of September, and these are extremely valuable to less experienced bee-keepers, who can gain first hand experience of all these preparations for winter.

We have welcomed many new members to our Society in the last 10 months - increasing our membership by 50% to 51 and bringing us a "transfusion" of new enthusiasm for beekeeping. We have been trying to help our new members as much as possible. Practical sessions at our Apiary at the Teikyo School, Fulmer seem to have been particularly helpful and we would like to take the opportunity to thank those experienced bee-keepers who regularly give up their Sunday afternoons to lead these sessions. We all know how busy our weekends can be, and we all appreciate the time they give to this.

We have also tried to allocate swarms to these new beekeepers and introduced a mentoring arrangement. However, to see how the new members were progressing, we have carried out an on-line survey. Interestingly, all 18 new members are on-line and all 18 completed the questionnaire! Well done to all of them - and many thanks for such useful feedback! We are analysing the responses. The survey invited comments on how the Society should continue its support - and we shall be as responsive as possible.

One positive way to gain knowledge and confidence is to take the BBKA's Basic Assessment. This is, as it says, a test of beekeeping basics - practical handling skills, an adequate knowledge of bee diseases, swarming, equipment and the beekeeping season. It is, perhaps, the GCSE of beekeeping before going on to higher levels of knowledge. A beekeeper with a single year's experience under his or her belt should be able, given some study and perhaps some coaching, to pass this Assessment. But many more experienced beekeepers can gain by 'having a go' at it. One way of looking at it is that the Assessment is a personal period of tuition - approximately one hour - with the examiner. The test represents, too, one of the BBKA's efforts to raise the competence of beekeepers in Britain, when the very survival of bee colonies is at stake. More details of the Assessment can be found at http://www.britishbee.org.uk/files/taking_the_basic_bbka_assessment.pdf.

Over the next few months, the Society will be arranging a programme, linked to the Basic Assessment syllabus, which will lead to volunteers undertaking the Assessment in May/ June 2010. Volunteers to take part in this will be sought at the Society's meeting on 14th September and by e Mail. SWMBKS is funding all examination fees and is keen that as many members as possible 'have a go!' Full details will be given at the September meeting – details below.

Another important date for your diaries is the October meeting - on the Tuesday the 13th, which will be our now well-established Honey Show. This year the Judge is to be Chris Symes from Marlow and he will be judging the entries in front of us, which gives everyone the chance to see first hand what judging is all about and what is looked for in the entries. It is a very informal affair, only one jar is required for each class entered, unless you have a different honey which qualifies for the same one. Anyone who has not previously won a prize can also enter the Novice Class, so we hope that everyone will bring along a jar or two of their honey; bake a honey cake or make some candles etc. and join in the spirit of the evening.

The schedule will be sent out with this newsletter, so take a look at the various classes, see what is required and bring your entries along on the night. As before, it would be helpful to know of multiple entries beforehand, so that the labels can be pre-prepared. And don't forget, the evening proceedings will start earlier than normal - staging begins at 7pm and judging starts at 7.30pm. If you have any queries or need help getting your entries there, please call the Honey Show Secretary on 01628 664091.

Before that though, we do have the September meetings at the Apiary, as previously mentioned. Also, our first 'Winter' meeting will be on Tuesday 14th September at 7.30 pm. at All Saint's Parish Church Hall in Alexander Road, Windsor SL4 1HZ. The Church is on the corner of Frances and Alexandra Roads and there is a small car park on site. However, because of new parking restrictions around the hall, if the car park is full it is advisable to park in Bolton Avenue, just a short walk away, where they do not apply. This is the next but one exit from the nearby roundabout and just before the exit for the hospital.

Some of our members will also be representing the Society at Sunningdale Carnival on September 13th. If you have the time to help to set up the display, to represent the society during the day or to help clear away at the end, please contact Michael Sheasby. If you will be there with friends or family, please come and say hello!

All details of our meetings and the Show can also be found on the website www.wherecanwego.com - click SL4 + gardens + nature (boxes)

Newsletter items: Liz Juby Windsor (01753) 859382 [mail to](mailto:lizjuby@btconnect.com)
Chairman: Michael Sheasby, Farnham Common (01753) 642656. [mail to](mailto:msh@btconnect.com)

<p style="text-align: center;">C WYNNE JONES Ty Brith Pentrecelyn Ruthin Denbighshire LL 15 2SR Tel. 01978 790279. Fax. 01978 790265 wynnejones@btconnect.com www.bottlesandjars.co.uk http://www.beesupplies.co.uk/ PLEASED TO QUOTE FOR YOUR 2009 NEEDS SPECIAL PRICES ON APIGUARD - 30 HIVE TUBS A SPECIALITY VARROA TREATMENT - WAX FOUNDATION - AND MUCH MORE OUR PRICES WILL BENEFIT YOUR POCKET!! PLEASE ASK FOR OUR PRICE LISTS FULL OF SPECIAL OFFERS</p>

Wokingham & District Beekeepers Association

Communications are everything! Bees can communicate between each other and throughout the hive in complete darkness. man has various ways of transmitting information. The number of ways is increasing, also speed. These notes are being written down by hand but will have been typed into a computer and sent electronically at the touch of a button. Not only that, the writer is, at present, about 300 miles due south of Reading in the Loire Valley enjoying some hot weather and lovely scenery. Such is the power of modern communications.

Some local honey has been bought and tasted. It has a lovely aroma and flavour, the French seem to be able to get a consistency between set and runny, but not exactly creamed. There is a local beekeeper not far from where we are staying near Gennes, between Angers and Saumur and a large firm north east of Saumur (www.miel-girard.com) but we may not have time to visit them.

Thinking about the programme for the coming months, don't forget to bring a pot of your honey for the meeting on October 14th where it will be judged by the members. The winner will be awarded the Albert Spragg Cup. You may also wish to bring anything made out of your wax.

www.WDBKA.ik.com

Derek Porter Hon. Sec. 0118 979 0326

SOUTH CHILTERN BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

On a sunny afternoon over 50 members attended and enjoyed our apiary meeting for July, this was held at Coppid Hall where Head gardener Stephen Kaseki keeps bees.

Reg found the bees in good condition with a super of honey on board, afterwards he gave a talk on removing the honey and Varroa treatment. This demonstration by Reg was followed by a superb tea on the terrace, hosted by Lord and Lady Phillimore. After the tea we were given a tour of the splendid gardens by Stephen, a very enjoyable afternoon.



Our next meeting is Saturday September 19th commencing 2.30pm in Toby Price's apiary, Station House, Culham (Rail) Station), Culham, Abingdon, OX14 3BT.

Presentation

Guy presenting John Vickery with his 50 years Beekeeping certificate, which came as a complete surprise to him, but for someone who deserved it. John is always a joy to visit with tales of years gone by.



Dear South Chilterns Beekeepers,

As you may know the AGM is coming up soon (Wednesday October 21st..) as we have a significantly increased membership, there is more work to be done and more help is needed, the duties aren't onerous and we keep the formalities to a minimum, so please speak to a member of the committee or call/email me to discuss what we do, and how you could make a difference.

Nominations and volunteers for the various posts and committee are required, please send these to the secretary – Catherine Cooksey

I look forward to hearing from you,

Guy Simpson (Chairman)

Secretary: - Catherine Cooksey, Tel: 01491 641467

<http://www.southchilternsbeekeepers.org.uk/>

READING & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION.

On a splendid warm Sunday 16th August Reading beekeepers and some new interested people were the guests of Ronald Blower in his garden apiary at Shurlock Row. Ron has 5 active colonies which he has worked hard to get 'queen-right' after several false starts. Ronald has had considerable success with bait hives in his field, placing these diagonally apposed to the hive entrances in his apiary and a good distance away rather than close up and facing as many of us tend to do.

Colony 1 had been a problem since a queen, presumed to be the incumbent was found out on the roof, she was shoved back inside but a queen's corpse was subsequently found with no brood for some-time until Ron eventually inserted a group of eggs from a neighbouring hive, raising a queen cell and now has good queen activity. Unsurprisingly, the population strength is lower than the other colonies and we saw the beginnings of some chalk or sac brood, Ron will investigate further when things have developed. The colony was light, so Ron is reserving some frames of capped honey from his apiary to carry it into the autumn/winter.

The colonies that had over wintered were in very good condition, eggs and brood at all stages, capped and uncapped stores. One of these excellent colonies had a queen raised using the 'patch method' last summer: these 'scrub-queens' are doing well here. There were some snow-white capped frames of stores in some of these deeps, as well as the 'halves' the recent additions of new frames and foundation is paying dividends, in fact we were all filled with admiration for the clean, greased frame channels and top-hygiene in Ron's bee-hives, a lesson for many-of us as to how to do it! In colonies where Ron has completed his honey harvest Apiguard is already in place. We found very few patches of drone which we raked out, just a few varroa were seen, two or three per rake-full. Ron also trickles oxalic acid during the winter.

An excellent session, members and new observers were able to see some good examples of beekeeping. Refreshments were provided, we had a fine visit to Shurlock Row. Many thanks to Ronald and all who attended.

September Activities:

Come and see us, it's free to get in, bring the family to The Caversham Festival on Saturday 12th September. We've got our own 'pavilion' the venue is The Westfield Road Recreation Ground. As well as Reading beekeepers, the events and stalls will be of interest to all the family.

Sunday 13th September.- The final beekeeping meeting of our summer programme is at Tim Sheldon's woodland beehives at the Mapledurham estate where he is gamekeeper. We start at 11.30 and after beekeeping Tim and his wife have the barbeque going for us. Don't forget to bring something along for the feast. We meet at Tim's house in Collins End Goring Heath, To help arrange parking etc please, as before, could attendees confirm they will be coming, vehicle sharing will be a good idea.

www.rbka.org.uk

Secretary: Mr. R. Kiff, Tel. 0118 966 5358

Contributions, this includes **E-mails**, to arrive with the Editor by the **FIRST POST** (Around 10.00am) on the twentieth of the Month for the Following Month, Contributions received after this will be held over for a later month.

To enable the Advertisement Manager to place adverts with the Editor for the 20th 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. Jon Davey, 107 Northcourt Avenue, Reading RG2 7HG. 0118 975 0734

FOR SALE: - Surplus bee equipment, including complete hives. Good Condition, very reasonable prices. Phone Ian on 0118 9344438 or 07989837864.

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