



FEDERATION OF BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS

President: Miss Margery Cooper

October 2009
Number 636

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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 National Honey Show

The 78th National Honey Show is just weeks away. It is the U.K's 'gold standard' honey show – the equivalent of Wimbledon for tennis players. It will be held in Weybridge, Surrey from 29th to 31st October. There are almost 250 classes and beekeepers come from all over the world to enter so it is truly an international show. Why not book a ticket now to see the best of the best?

What's on?

Apart from the world class honey show there will be a full programme of workshops and lectures throughout the event and a wide selection of trade stands with lots of equipment and books to buy. You can see the line-up and download the show schedule on the NHS website www.honeyshow.co.uk and you will receive all the details in the programme that comes with tickets purchased in advance. Advance tickets plus the 2009 schedule of classes and show entry application are available now.

How much does it cost?

You can become a member of the National Honey Show for £10 (or £11 via PayPal) and then entry for the duration of the show is free. Admission for non-members is £12 per day. Accompanied children of 16 years and under are free and additional family members over 16 years living at the same address can come in for £5 each. On Saturday admission after 12 noon is £5 for everyone. You can join by contacting the membership secretary, Mrs Sandra Rickwood, 19 Kenwood Drive, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 5AU. Alternatively, email srhoneyshow@googlemail.com or telephone 020 33 55 8716 and leave a message. You can also pay on the door but it is better to get an advance ticket and avoid the queue.

The official closing date for show entries is 1st October but late entries will be accepted until 24th October on payment of a £5 late entry fee.

How do I get my entries to the show?

Exhibitors delivering personally to the show must bring their entries on Wednesday 28th October between 2.30pm and 6pm. You hand them over to a steward who will stage them for you. You could use a courier or post. In this case your entry must arrive at St Georges College after 21st October and before noon on 28th October. Why not persuade one member of your association to bring all the entries from your association to the show. You could split the fuel costs. Don't forget someone will also need to collect them on Saturday 31st October after the show closes. Thornes have, once again, kindly agreed to take exhibits to the show on your behalf. You can drop your entries at any Thornes agent south of the Scottish border. Jeremy Burbidge of Northern Bee Books has kindly offered the same facility to anyone who can deliver to him. (By Monday 26th October and please call him before you visit.)

Scout Bottom Farm, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire HX7 5JS
(01422 882751 – jeremy@recordermail.demon.co.uk)

Where is the show?

The show is at St Georges College, Woburn Hill, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 2QS

Opening times: Thursday 29th October 2.00pm to 6pm
Friday 30th October 9.30am to 6pm
Saturday 31st October 9.30am to 4.45pm

How do I get there?

By road: from junction 11 of the M25 (marked Chertsey) follow signs to Weybridge. At the roundabout, take the third exit, A317 to Weybridge. Turn left at the next roundabout into the college.

By rail: Trains leave from Waterloo station to Weybridge. Then, either take a taxi or take a connecting train to Adlestone – the college is five minutes walk from the station. Please make sure in advance that there is a suitable connection. www.nationalrail.co.uk or 08457 48 49 50.

Public transport advice: www.traveline.info or 0871 200 22 33

If you apply for membership before the show you will receive a programme which includes maps and directions.

THE APIARY in OCTOBER

October is an important month for beekeepers as several decisions should be taken which are likely to affect our bee colonies, how they will enter the dangerous winter months and if they will be a viable colony or not in the critical months of February and March. Twenty to thirty years ago things seemed to be easier at this time. Massive flowerings of ivy seemed to be less common; frosts were common in September, varroa, just a rumour or an article in a beekeeping publication of something that was a problem in Eastern Europe. Even smaller colonies seemed to be able to over winter well with a judicious feed of syrup in say October and hefted in February some fondant, and your small colony would usually be burgeoning in March when you'd feed single strength syrup to keep up with them.

Beekeepers would 'exploit' their colonies (exploitation of bee colonies by transporting them long distances in California for pollination being a strong feature in the 'blame-game' for colony collapse disorder in the USA) The largest cherry & plum orchard in Europe (Rowstock near Harwell) would receive Berks bees for pollination contracts, hives would be taken down to the New Forest for the heather and Kent for pollination, fundamentally in this respect, things have not changed since then in Europe or the USA, if anything as far as we are concerned in Berkshire is less. Yes, in the 1970's the good beekeeper was diligent but basically things were buzzing.

The increasing problems with maintaining long-lasting, healthy, populous bee colonies today, as we know to our cost, is more demanding, we, like our insect charges are under more pressure: this from well meaning comment in the media which is often parroted at us by equally well meaning non-beekeepers, we have advice from various articles in, many originating with The BBKA, now we have to try to move forward with confidence to try to make decisions to 'do the right thing' in the month of October. The future of successful pollination, the food industry and affordable foodstuffs may well depend on people like us.

Feeding your bees in October. The BBKA in the June 'News' recommends a kind of 'back to nature' approach, doing everything to supply sufficient winter stores for the bees in the least stressful way possible. Supers of non-granulated honey to be left above the brood box. This is an ideal. In our region after our August honey harvest, the blackberry blossom was virtually a failure. Thankfully, rose bay willow herb has come to our rescue providing ideal winter stores. The knobs of ivy are now in evidence but there is little sign of nectar, which maybe is due to the dry weather.

Whatever commercial beekeepers may say in favour of ivy honey saving them a fortune on sugar for autumn feed, it needs to be handled carefully. Weaker colonies, in this writer's experience just do not do well on ivy over winter. Successful beekeepers scour the rock-hard comb and add a couple of frames in the middle of 'the feed super' or if it's mild and the bees are 'coming-up' above the ports in on the crown board. Better to syrup feed your bees now, it should keep them off the ivy to some extent, ivy can produce nectar up to the first frost, these days that may mean November. We don't want these vulnerable colonies chocked up with ivy honey. The BBKA have arranged access to members, (which means our membership) to sugar at wholesale prices via the Booker wholesale warehouses.

October is a good time to unite weaker colonies. The 'newspaper method' is well-known, also effective is uniting in one brood box is by using the 'syrup spray', culinary flavoured syrups are ideal, they are available in food shops with an ethnic foods section. You can unite three weak colonies in this way; search-for and remove surplus queens. Thornes now sell the 'Vita' range of feed supplements. Vitafeed Gold and Vitafeed Green. Successful beekeepers that this writer has spoken to confirm that these products give good results. The instructions are on the label but one helpful thing in these is a method for applying the syrup feed with the supplement via a syringe directly onto the bees on the frames. At least we will feel in doing this that we are ministering with this technique to our weaker insect flocks with a concentrated nectar substitute and trying to strengthen them for the ordeals ahead.

On closing, it is as well to mention that if you've not done your late summer anti varroa procedures, which ever you have decided upon, be it Apiguard, Hive Cleanse etc. Do it now. Pronto!

Triad.

BBKA withdraws from FERA Project Board

Poor consultation and flawed structuring of FERA's Project Board (previously known as the Steering Group) responsible for the implementation of the Healthy Bees Plan (HPB) resulted in the BBKA Trustees' resolution at its 5 September meeting to leave the Project Board.

The principal difficulty that the BBKA has with the Project Board, is that it will not deliver improved honeybee health and that the BBKA's views can too easily be ignored. This is due to a seriously flawed structure. As set-up it pits stakeholders (i.e. beekeepers) against suppliers and the implementation team (Defra/FERA/Welsh Government etc). In classical government project management, stakeholders and suppliers should be separate groups. On advice, in our view if managed in this way, the HPB will deliver little if any worthwhile outcome for bees and beekeepers. The Project Board fails also to make any allowance for the differential democratic weight of its members. The BBKA is by far the biggest stakeholder, representing some 15,000 beekeepers, yet effectively has but one vote around the table, which can be easily off-set by other smaller groups or government bodies. The BBKA thus does not believe that the Project Board as currently structured and its governance, provide an adequate vehicle to represent BBKA members or to benefit honey bee health.

The BBKA remains committed to most of the concepts of the HBP, to which it made major contribution during the consultation phase, although of course little of this was actually taken on board. The BBKA wishes to work with FERA/NBU but believes in this case that it can achieve more and that, more quickly, by operating independently. With a burgeoning membership, we have an obligation to deliver an updated education and training programme. To allow ourselves to become ensnared in the flawed Project Board and the consequent heavy commitment of precious and limited human resources to the various work streams comprising the HBP, the BBKA no doubt being expected to undertake the major part of the work, will compromise our ability to deliver on urgent and more productive projects initiated independently.

You will have followed the developments reported in recent issues of BBKA News relating to the application and allocation of the £10.5M 'pollinator decline' research fund and the £2.3M voted to FERA/NBU. Meetings with the research funders (BBSRC, NERC, Wellcome Trust etc) have given some comfort that honeybees will receive a substantial part of the research money. However, establishing how the FERA/NBU money will be applied has been very difficult. Eventually, through a series of meetings with FERA, we have established that just some £370K remains uncommitted by FERA of the original £2.3M. Effectively there has been no consultation on the application of these funds. FERA's approach to consultation remains 'decide and tell', which is unacceptable. We seek blank sheet consultation, i.e. 'discuss and agree', where our expertise and advice is valued and acted upon. We have not campaigned nor raised huge public awareness and support to see our views ignored.

This clearly is a decision which has not been taken lightly but does mean that we are able to concentrate our efforts in confronting the education and training needs of members both new and established. It is activity in this area, improving our husbandry of honey bees, that is likely to deliver most in the short term, pending answers to the big questions posed by current challenges to honey bee health which can only be answered through research and which will take time. The BBKA remains ever more firmly committed to securing adequate research funding and will continue its engagement with the funding bodies as referred to earlier.

Tim Lovett 8 September 2009

Press release to beekeepers' associations in England, Wales and Scotland

Low priced, great value sugar from Booker Wholesale

Members of beekeepers' associations are now welcome to shop at any of Booker's 173 trade-only Cash and Carry stores. Booker's price for granulated sugar is about 60p per kilo, compared with 84p (Lidl, own brand) up to 93p (Tesco) per kilo at supermarkets, offering members great savings.

Booker is a trade-only wholesaler, and each member should register individually with their local store. When registering, each member should present their current BBKA membership card if in England, They will then be registered and able to shop straight away. A membership card will be sent by post within 14-21 days.

Payment is by cash or debit card when leaving the store. Members can visit www.booker.co.uk to find their nearest Booker store.

This new arrangement has been approved by Booker head office, Northampton in discussion with Conwy BKA, North Wales.

Booker contact: Melanie Balmer Conwy BKA contact: Peter McFadden

www.conwybeekeepers.org.uk

The September issue of the Free Apis-UK newsletter is now available.

<http://www.beedata.com/apis-uk/newsletters09/apis-uk0909.pdf>

Your Regional Bee Inspectors are: -

Southern Region: - David Packham is reverting to seasonal officer, Beebase will be updated as soon as the new Officer is in place, for information 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

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SOUTH CHILTERN BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

The meeting at I.K.Brunel's former home hosted by Toby Price again proved successful. Attendance was fewer than hitherto; even so, without the P.A. system, people at the rear had difficulty hearing the speaker.

In preparing the bees for winter, Reg discussed the importance of making sure that the bees have sufficient stores and demonstrated hefting of hives.

Apiguard was applied and the importance of reducing varroa as far as possible was discussed. Varroa not only weakens bees by sucking their blood but also are vectors for a number of diseases.

New and prospective beekeepers were shown eggs, larvae, sealed and emerging brood and a queen. Many questions were asked and answers given.

Skep Making Day

There was an opportunity to see inside the Victorian bee house at the Berkshire College of Agriculture before the main attraction of the day. Fourteen members turned up to make a skep, Martin Buckle provided tools and equipment, then demonstrated how to start. Amid keen concentration he showed everyone how to continue, and even had time to repair Don's 60+-year-old skep.

On view were all kinds of skep that Martin had made for films and demonstrations, his web site is well worth a look <http://www.martinatnewton.com/> Members were supplied with the necessary material to take home and finish their skeps. A good time was had by one and all

Our thanks go to Martin for making it a very entertaining day.

Linda Clarke

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.

Sunday 20th September saw Reading beekeepers and new friends joining our hosts Tim and Dianne Sheldon for the last meeting of our summer programme where we visited Tim's beehives seated on straw bales in fine-style on the back of Tim's truck, enjoyed a barbeque. It also gave us great pleasure to have our Singapore based member with us again, as Peter Bruce interrupted his jet-setting life style, to join us, while briefly in Europe to attend a conference.

Pond apiary.

The pond is in dire need of some rain, but the bee colonies were looking good. Tim has 4 full sized hives on 14inch brood boxes and a nucleus which he had recently set-up with a new queen. The nuc had brood in fairly small patches; the queen was found and looked well and active. There was nectar coming in with ivy pollen. Tim will 'coffee-jar' feed with syrup and add Apiguard. There was a suspicion of 'K wing' in a few bees. The remaining hives were opened and thoroughly examined, Michael Blackburn led our team. We had good success in queen finding and Michael re-organized the Apiguard trays by turning the contents to bring the 'wetter side' in contact with the atmosphere to help the thymol to diffuse. Two colonies still had a super on and there will be honey in these ready to extract in about a week. Tim will then apply Apiguard.

All the full colonies had a very good brood pattern, a few eggs and larvae with mostly capped worker brood.

Home Wood Apiary.

Two colonies were here. One was the donor of the two new queens Tim had used at Pond Apiary. Again members old and new with newly interested people looking-on were able to see well set-up hives with nectar coming in, smelling strongly of ivy. Tim will syrup feed and try to minimize the ivy honey. Apiguard is to be applied. On both sites the bees were very good tempered and Michael was able to open-up the hives 'smoke-free' with just a little smoke to clear bees clustered on the frames while the boxes were being re-assembled. Nice bees, nice work!

Then back at Tim's well-stocked garden for our barbeque which as usual was a great success, as well as our efforts over the coals, Dianne was preparing in her kitchen trays of hot bread and 'pomes a la boulangerie' delicious! Thanks then, to Tim and Dianne Sheldon, daughter Gwen, Slipper and her new puppies for making it a grand day!

October meeting, the first of our winter programme is on Thursday 8th October at 7.30pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Hall. Our speaker will be Will Messenger a bee farmer from Moreton in the Marsh, Gloucestershire. Title is 'Old Hives and New Thoughts' and will be about bee management and also the 'Stewarton Hive' see you there!

www.rbka.org.uk

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

The Reading Honey Show 2009.

Reading & District Beekeepers Association are pleased to announce the results of The Honey Show held on 30th & 31st August at The Swallowfield Show as follows.

Light honey 1st. Stella Lawson-Foster. 2nd J. Davey. 3rd S.Blinstrub.
Medium/dark 1st R. Kiff. 2nd J. Davey. 3rd not given.
Granulated/soft set. 1st J. Davey. 2nd Lorna Rivett. 3rd Julia Crosthwaite.
Honey for sale. 1st Hazel Blackburn. 2nd Noelle Schrieber. 3rd Stella Lawson-Foster.
Novice class. 1st Stella Lawson-Foster. 2nd Noelle Schrieber 3rd Lorna Rivett.
Beeswax blocks. 1st Hazel Blackburn. 2nd & 3rd not given.
Beeswax candles. 1st R.Kiff. 2nd J. Davey. 3rd Hazel Blackburn.
Chunk honey. 1st R. Kiff. 2nd J. Davey. 3rd not given.
Cut comb. 1st R.Kiff. 2nd J. Davey. 3rd not given.
Honey& banana tea bread. 1st E. Strong. 2nd Julia Crosthwaite. 3rd G.Underhill-Smith.
Honey crunch biscuits. 1st J. Davey. 2nd R.Kiff. 3rd Lorna Rivett.
Honey, plum & ginger conserve. 1st J. Davey. 2nd S. Blinstrub. 3rd Lorna Rivett.
Bee fodder. 1st Hazel Blackburn. 2nd J. Davey. 3rd R. Kiff.

Congratulations to Mrs. Stella Lawson-Foster who wins the trophies for both the novice class and best lady beekeeper's exhibits. With thanks to Lorna Rivett from Wokingham Beekeepers Association for supporting our honey show and entering some show exhibits.

Trophies to be awarded at the AGM in November.

SLOUGH, WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

Newsletter items: Liz Juby Windsor (01753) 859382 [mail to](mailto:ljuby@berkshirebeekeepers.btik.com)

Chairman: Michael Sheasby, Farnham Common (01753) 642656. [mail to](mailto:msh@berkshirebeekeepers.btik.com)

Wokingham & District Beekeepers Association

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

Watch bees on-line at <http://www.sysonby.com/beecam>

Varroa jacobsoni (Varroa destructor). Early research, updated.

[A look under the cap: the reproductive behaviour of Varroa in the capped brood of the honey bee](#)

Page 7 is blank but read on.

Golden Crunch

6 oz cornflakes
3 oz plain chocolate
4 oz margarine
3 level tbsp honey
4 oz sifted icing sugar

Lightly grease two 8" sandwich tins.
Put cornflakes in a polythene bag and crush with a rolling pin.

Put chocolate margarine and honey in a pan and gently heat until melted.
Take off heat and stir in sugar.
Add crushed cornflakes and mix well.
Divide the mixture between the tins and press well down with palette knife.
Leave for two hours in fridge.
Cut into wedges.

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

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