



**FEDERATION OF
BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS**
President: Miss Margery Cooper

August 2010
Number 644

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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

28th to 30th October 2010	National Honey Show. Weybridge	www.honeyshow.co.uk
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THE APIARY in August

This season has been quite productive - for some of us, at least. The "June gap" turned out to be the main flow. Little being gathered in July, every thing has been so dry. Recent showers have brought the blackberry into a second bloom, however, the second clover bloom is late.

Now it is wise to anticipate what we need to do to be ready for settling our colonies for the winter. Have a look at your equipment and see what you would like to improve or add. Early in September the suppliers have their sales and you can pick up some really good bargains if you know what you are looking for.

But think about which treatment you're going to use for varroa, and make sure you've got enough. Remember to take off all the honey you want before you use any chemicals in the hive. Replace wet supers after any treatment and leave them for a possible ivy flow. If there is insufficient room, bees will choke the brood chamber with ivy, leaving no space for brood rearing, which could lead to the demise of the colony.

If you're as untidy as I am, you will have filled your storage space with odd bits of frames, supers, half-used smoker fuel etc. It will pay you to take an afternoon to clear it up so that when you are actually putting away your empty boxes, all you will have to do is put them in a neat stack.

Get a schedule for your local honey show, put the date in your diary and start to keep an eye out for suitable categories you may wish to enter for the competition. It will save you from muttering sadly after the show, that you had had a better jar of honey, a frame for extraction, wax exhibit, etc than the exhibits that were actually in the show!

The main nuisance, at this time of the year, are wasps, especially when we decide to have tea out on the patio or take the children for a picnic by the river. We should be able to keep them out of the extracting room; I understand that when a wasp brings food to a wasp grub in the nest it gets a drop of sweet saliva from the bug as a sort of reward. By the end of August, the wasp cycle has come to an end and the fertilised queens have gone out to find a place to spend the winter. So there are no grubs growing up for their little reward. The adults miss this and so they go round looking for sweet things like jam sandwiches or iced cakes. The odd comb of honey in a weak colony guarded by a few unhappy bees is to them - you might say - a piece of cake.

To fend off the wasps you can try narrowing the entrance to the hive drastically (even to one bee-space) and putting bottles half-full of sweet drinks to trap them. The best thing to do to protect weak colonies is to unite them with another stronger one

Triad

THE READING AND DISTRICT HONEY SHOW 2010.

To be held at the Swallowfield Show, Spencers Wood Sunday 29th and Monday 30th August (Bank Holiday)

Reading & District Beekeepers would like your support for our honey show, which is open to all beekeepers and others. Please consider entering some of the classes, as well as the cash prizes you can win plus both Berkshire Beekeepers Federation and Reading beekeeping trophies, you will help with public awareness of the honeybee and if you have some honey etc to sell, you can make some money.

Classes. The 'Honey' classes are on pages 14-16 of the schedule. Please contact your association secretary for a schedule

The cost to enter each class is 20pence, children free in their classes.

Prize monies range from £2, £3 & £5 per class.

Closing date for entries is Wednesday 25th August.

How to enter. 1) Send your entry form with payment (Cheques to Swallowfield Horticultural Society) to arrive not later than 25th August to: _

Mrs. Roberta Stewart. Russetts, Swallowfield Street, Swallowfield. RG7 1QX

2. Deliver your entries as above to Jon. Davey, 107 Northcourt Avenue, Reading RG2 7HG. 0118 975 0734 jondavey.foodnet @virgin.net By Monday 16th August and the Reading Honey Show secretary will have the pleasure in delivering same together to Mrs. Stewart by the due date.

Actual exhibits can be staged on Evening of Saturday 28th (6.00-9.30PM) at the showground or strictly no later than 10.00 AM Sunday 30th. Judging commences at 10.30am. Contact Jon for any information you need about staging your exhibit.

Please have a close look at your schedule and please feel free to enter any of the open classes in the show, all entries are welcomed by Swallowfield Show and contribute to the charities that the show supports.

The Whitchurch Village fete 4th September.

If anyone is interested in having a stand at this fete, please contact the organizing secretary: Helen Bowsher [<mailto:helenbowsher@hotmail.co.uk>]



National Honey Show - St Georges College, Weybridge, Surrey 28th to 30th October 2010

This year the show will be bigger than ever. The trade stands will all be together in a brighter hall and there will be a proper lecture theatre with tiered seating. A full programme of workshops and lectures with world class speakers will run during the show and there will be a wide selection of equipment and books to buy.

Whilst you wait for the active season to start, why not have a look at the NHS website? You will find lots of information about the show and notes on a wide range of beekeeping subjects; all written by experts in their fields.

www.honeyshow.co.uk

Your observations requested:

We had several reports of little or no visible evidence of Varroa after autumn and winter losses, and poor colony strength in the spring. We would like comments on this, or anything unusual that has been noticed. It may be worthwhile to conduct a survey, send your notes to: berksbees@btinternet.com



From a Newbury member

Not seen so much propolis before as on our hive entrance. Are our bees just being a little bit defensive? They had propolized heavily inside but I only noticed this today. They are always sitting at the entrance to the hive regardless of the weather.

Lesley Pace

The Free Apis-UK newsletter is available at:

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

Your Regional Bee Inspectors are: -

Southern Region: Nigel Semmence nigel.semmence@fera.gsi.gov.uk Tel No: 01264 338694

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

01 904 462 510 <mailto:nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk>

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



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SOUTH CHILTERN BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Apiary Meeting 19th June 2010

We had a very informative meeting at Toby Price's apiary, looking at four hives in total. The first was an artificial swarm. The presence of eggs informed us that the queen had mated and was producing lots of brood. Unusually, there was a gap between brood, but it was decided to leave this alone. The queen excluder was removed to encourage the bees to build more stores up in the super.

The second hive we looked into was the one from which the artificial swarm was drawn. We found that all the queen cells had already hatched, possibly indicating a swarm already gone. As there were a lot of drones hanging around, it was decided to shut up the hive quickly, in case the queen had not yet mated.

The third hive was a swarm taken from Toby's garden three weeks prior to our visit. The queen was laying and there was a lot of brood. The bees were not so sweet, and so we shut up the hive quickly. Toby was advised to put on another super, as a flow was coming and there was so much brood.

The fourth hive investigated was described as two weak colonies combined. In fact, the super was heavy and the colony was building up quickly. We spotted the queen who looked large and in full lay. She was laying in wild comb hanging off a super frame. This will be moved to the edge once the brood had emerged. A varroa check on some drone cells was clean. Again, a super was added as again, there was so much brood.

After the hive checks, Reg described the different methods for rearing queens. If you have a two year-old queen in a colony attempting to swarm, it is possible to use queen cells to increase your apiary via artificial swarming. It is important to use the best stock available, preferably native or Northern Italian.

First, Reg showed us a brood frame only half filled with unwired foundation. This can be put into a full, queenless, brood box. The bees will then form queens cells which can be cut out and distributed among queenless colonies or nuclei made up to get queens mated.

Reg then showed us a grafting frame, with queen cups already in place, and went on to describe how to graft queen cells. First, remove the queen on a comb from a strong colony for at least an hour and put in a nucleus box. Then, take young larvae up to 36 hours old, and using a grafting tool – Reg's preferred model was from China - place one in each of the cups and put in the hive in between unsealed brood. After 10 days, they should be ready to be put in a mating hive.



Illustration 3: Breeding frame with queen cells

Reg also demonstrated his ingenuity by describing how to make wax cups with old arrows. Sticks used for such a purpose need to be 5/16" in diameter.

A special thanks to the host, Toby Price, and to his wife for the generous hospitality and lovely sandwiches.

Secretary: - Joanne Shanagher. 01189 721067

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

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SLOUGH, WINDSOR, AND MAIDENHEAD BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

The Society's Apiary at the Teikyo School in Fulmer and some members' hives were inspected for European Foul Brood over the last few weeks. Whilst this has produced a level of anxiety amongst some members, the general view was that it was good to be given a clean bill of health and to alert members to the benefits of having a second opinion on the health of their hives. The other good point of alerting members to the presence of EFB in the area was that those beekeepers who are not members of a society might just be known to members and be alerted by default. We circulated all the information the bee Inspector gave us, including the map references of the area under inspection. Those members who had not registered with Bee Base were interested in the benefits that were associated with registration and many have now registered. An added benefit of inspection was the opportunity to see firsthand what the bee inspector does, what he is looking for and how he tests for the various diseases. As the Apiary is concentrating on improving hygiene, it was also interesting to see what methods of disease prevention were used and to note that we are observing the main requirements of clean equipment for each hive, proper observation recording and seeking clarification for any anomalies we may find. The Apiary continues to be a valuable teaching focus and we continue to circulate the story on our web site.

The number of swarm reports continues and we have done our best to help the members of the public deal with their concerns by removing bee swarms and advising about bumblebees, there seems to have been a vast increase in the number of bumblebees if the number of calls from the public is anything to go by. We look forward to seeing whether the Bumble Bee Conservation Trust come up with statistics to bear this out or whether the public are just more aware after all the publicity there has been about general bee health.

Fortnightly visits to the apiary continue on alternate Sunday afternoons at 2.30pm. For details on how to find the Apiary, please contact our secretary, Maureen Williams on 01753 643604 or swarm.bees@o2.co.uk.

All details of our meetings can also be found on our web site, www.britishbee.org.uk/local/slough-windsor-maidenhead and on the website www.wherecanwego.com. - click SL4 + gardens + nature (boxes)

Newsletter items: Liz Juby, Windsor (01753) 859382 lizjuby@hotmail.com

Chairman: Michael Sheasby Farnham Common (01753) 642656

michaelsheasby@lineone.net

Wokingham & District Beekeepers Association

The time for extracting your supers is rapidly approaching; so do make use of the Club's extractor if you have not got your own. Please contact me if you need to hire the extractor, Pratley tray or settling tanks.

I trust you all have had a better yield of honey than some of us have had in the last three years. This year, my own three colonies have produced about 60lbs each so far and I should get a few more pounds by the end of the summer. I have also managed to get a full rack of 28 sections. It is quite difficult to get the bees to work sections so I am particularly pleased with this production.

Sunday afternoon meetings will continue until early September so please keep coming along. It is very rewarding to see so many people attending the apiary meetings.

Derek Porter Hon. Sec. 0118 979 0326

www.WDBKA.ik.com

READING & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION.

Report from Reading & district Beekeepers for August 2010 Newsletter.

On Sunday 18th July at the kind invitation of Tim & Hilary Whitaker we assembled at Vicarage Cottage in their unfailingly beautiful gardens to delve into the WBC beehives. We had a very good attendance including family and friends and it was a pleasure to see so many newer Reading Beekeepers, most of whom now have some bees of their own to work with.

A nucleus which was the first to be opened followed by a further four colonies. Tim gave its history as a swarm from late summer 2009 which had failed to build-up with little queen activity. This is the situation today, regrettably, certainly there's patchy brood in there but everything that's capped is drone, no queen found, perhaps some uncapped larvae, maybe worker, a thousand or so workers present plus a hundred or so drones, Tim will continue to monitor, as not worth transferring to a full hive as things stand.

Hive 1. This is a colony which was strong enough in 2009 but now is looking weaker. Worker larvae present, and some eggs in small patches. On a brood and a half, there were open and broken down queen cells in the top box. The deep below showed more interest, two queen cells on the face of comb, one occupied but unsealed and the other sealed these are in classic 'supercedure' positions, we left both cells in place and Tim will look out for signs of successful supercedure.

Now for three good-looking colonies. First on a brood and a half with beautiful brood extending to the shallow, eggs and larvae all in good shape. Tim has had full supers from here and are at least two ready to come off, and Tim's recently added frames in foundation drawn-out and filling fast! Next a very recent swarm that's gone into a vacant ready hive. The bees may well be ex hive no. 1. They look very good, brood already and colony well settled. Lastly, a big colony on double brood boxes. Tim has a full super to take-off here, but no doubt the main weight of his honey in deep frames, particularly in the top box; no doubt these can be extracted in due course. Larvae and eggs a plenty. We did have a closer look at a patch or darker-looking caps on worker larva but on uncapping, the occupants were developing normally, and close to emergence, waving their antennae at us and obviously alive. After a successful beekeeping session we then adjourned to the famous barbeque, where our family and friends, gambolling puppies etc. awaited us and enjoyed the rest of the afternoon in the way we like it! With very many thanks to Tim and Hilary and all who helped-out and attended.

August's meeting. On Sunday 15th. At Tim Sheldon's at Collin's End, here you'll have the chance to open beehives in woodland glades in a round-tour on Tim's trailer. We are being spoiled again here because Tim Sheldon set's up a barbecue for us in his well-stocked cottage style garden. It's not to be missed, bring some comestibles for the feast! Directions from Tim Sheldon, Mike Blackburn or Jon. Davey. Also on the Sunday and Monday of August Bank Holiday we have the Reading Honey Show at the Swallowfield show. It's an excellent country show so while you are there, come and have a look at us in the produce tent and outside. See separate announcement.

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

www.rbka.org.uk

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

www.groovycart.co.uk/beebooks

See: <http://beebase.csl.gov.uk/pdfs/fbleaflet.pdf>

Well worth looking at, <http://www.co-operative.coop/planbee>

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

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

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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