



THE FEDERATION OF BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS

President: Miss Margery Cooper

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Number 658

General Secretary:
Martin Moore
Tilehurst
Reading
01189677386
07729620286

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

E-mail:- berksbees@btinternet.com
Web: <http://www.berkshirebeekeepers.btck.co.uk/>

Hon. Editor
R.F.Crocker
25 Shiplake Bottom
Peppard Common, Oxon
RG9 5HH
(0118 972 2315)

The Apiary in October

October, to the beekeeper should be considered as the threshold to winter. Hopefully, the varroa treatment is complete as we may not get more warm weather. There is a wider choice of products now available, Apiguard, 'Hive Clean' 'Apilife Var', 'Thymovar' etc., all branded methods of suffusing the brood box with vapours from 'aromatics', thymol playing a big part. Check with your beekeeping supplier to make your choice, Apiguard is the one most of us know best. Other methods also stimulate the grooming behaviour of the bees, most of us know that icing sugar can be used, dusting the bees who groom themselves and each other and make use of the fine sugar which can damage the mites, who have no grooming mechanism and cause fatal dehydration of the mites body. Pay close attention to the instructions on the pack when carrying out these measures.

Feeding. You can also feed your bees in October if the stores are light, autumn strength sugar syrup, 2 parts white granulated sugar to 1 part water. Should you have Apiguard on the frames and a feeder over a port in your crown-board, make sure they are in different areas of the box. In October you should minimize the empty spaces in the hive configuration i.e. not as in late spring and summer when an empty super is often placed on top to allow the bees to have some 'parking-space' and feel less congested. Therefore, a possible configuration would be Apiguard on frames, a 1 inch eke, crown-board, feeder over a port well away from the Apiguard empty super as an eke for feeder then roof. Take off any super/eke when feeding is finished.

In our reading of BBKA literature, Bee Craft articles etc., we are aware of recommendations regarding care for our bees in a 'back to nature' and 'less intensive' vein. Whether or not we take everything written on board, we would probably agree that a good super of soft honey above the brood box is one of the best things for our bees, hard ivy honey cannot be dealt with by smaller colonies, frames of ivy can be lain across the crown board with the capped surface scored, but just relying on a super of ivy is unwise. The bees will also have little chance to utilize deep frames of rock-hard honey at the sides of the cluster/brood nest so don't be lulled into a false sense of security by weight alone, check these stores and assess, if you've no frames of 'good honey' available feed sugar syrup or proprietary brands of sucrose based feeds such as 'Ambrosia, you'll have to fall-back on fondant during the winter if you get it wrong.

Uniting. October is also a good month to unite two weaker colonies provided both are healthy and alongside each other, the newspaper method is the most reliable. You can configure: brood-box, newspaper (nicked in a few places), queen excluder, brood box which has the queen removed. The excluder holds the paper nice and flat without risk of rucking-up as you adjust the boxes during configuration.

Good luck!

Triad

Georgia Bee Letter <http://www.ent.uga.edu/bees/documents/GBL-Sept2011.pdf>

See like a bee - life - 22 August 2011 - New Scientist

22 Aug 2011 ... Where you and I see flowers, bees see ultraviolet landing ...

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg21128261.700-crittervision-see-like-a-bee.html>

NBU ADVICE for OBTAINING BEES:

JOIN BEEBASE

By joining **BeeBase** you can access beekeeping information and ask for advice or help from the Bee Unit: <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase>.

COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER

<http://www.soilassociation.org/Whyorganic/Welfareandwildlife/Wildlife/Bees/Beersearch/tabid/439/Default.aspx> (control+click to follow link)

Your Regional Bee Inspectors are: -

Southern Region: Nigel Semmence at: nigel.semmence@fera.gsi.gov.uk, tel: 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, tel: 01 904 462 510, email: <mailto:nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk> .

South Eastern Region: Mr Alan Byham, fax/tel: 020 8571 6450.

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Wokingham and District Beekeepers' Association

There is not much to report this month, but I trust you all had a successful season. My own bees produced a reasonable crop, but some colonies were much less productive than others. I have a very good outlet for my honey and the young lady is always looking out for new supplies as her customers ask for local honey. If you have a lot of honey that you would like to sell, please contact me and I will give you more details.

Now that the busy part of the beekeeping year has finished, we look forward to the interesting programme which has been organised by Nigel Perkins. We start with the honey and wax competition on 12th October (see last month's Newsletter for details). At the AGM on 9th November the Club will need to elect a new Secretary as I am not standing for re-election. If you would like to be nominated for this position, or indeed any others, please let me have your name.

Derek Porter, Hon. Sec. Tel: 0118 979 0326

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Reading and District Beekeepers' Association

On Sunday 18th September, Reading Beekeepers had a good turnout for our final meeting of the 2011 summer season at David Tompkin's apiary at Juddamont Farm, an idyllic site on this beautiful race-horse stud farm at Warren Row. David has nine colonies there and has been able to get some good honey yields from Oilseed rape early in the season, followed by white clover which is plentiful in the Juddamont paddocks. Having good contacts in The New Forest, David had taken three colonies down to the heather which he has recently brought home, two filled their supers rapidly, and the other tended to fill the brood box. David has produced some excellent heather honey cut comb for his family and sold out his surplus.

We inspected 5 colonies; the colonies with heather honey were beautifully fragrant, contrasted a bit with the somewhat less pleasant smell from the ivy honey rapidly going into other hives. David is feeding syrup and has Apiguard in all his hives. David has made up very convenient crown boards for his hives with a 25mm eke fixed on one side, these were eke-side down over the Apiguard but are placed the other-way-up when an eke above the frames is not required. Also new to some of us is the 'Miller Feeder size' quick feeders that Thornes apparently now sell. These are slim in section and cover the top of the box with a quick-feeder type bee access fitment offset. Made of polymer they look extremely handy. David had fixed a short twig between the frames below into the bee access point to encourage the bees to come-up, this was working well.



David demonstrated for the benefit of newer members, good configurations of a hive to unite bee colonies, using newspaper held firmly in position with the queen excluder on top, in this way if the queen to be removed can be found at leisure if she escapes from sight at the vital moment when you are actually uniting the boxes. We found in the five colonies inspected, two queens, eggs larvae and brood in four and larvae and brood in the remaining one. One of the queens was David's Carniolan, we saw her last year, David says she's getting a bit slim and if she over winters OK he may replace her next spring.



A thoroughly absorbing bee keeping session, David invited us to hot beverages, cakes and pastries in the Juddemont Tack Room. With very many thanks to David and for a good attendance from Reading's beekeepers.

October Meeting.

Tuesday 11th October at Caversham Heights Methodist Hall. Starts at 7-30pm sharp. This is the first of our winter programme. Our speaker will be Will Steynor from Wiltshire. Subject is "Labour Saving Devices in Beekeeping", please do come along and give Will a good reception and learn some new things about our craft.

The association has also been promoting itself with the development of new marketing material to offer a more distinctive and professional approach. Our latest innovation is our Facebook page with 25 likes! Go on, take a look! Facebook Reading BKA

Martin Moore, Secretary. Tel: 0118 9677386

www.rbka.org.uk

Reading & District Beekeepers Association's Annual Honey Show August Bank Holiday

The two day Swallowfield Show was again Reading Beekeepers Venue for 'The Honey Show,' while we recognize the last days of August are not ideal for consolidation of honey stocks etc. while beekeepers are still extracting we were disappointed in a lower turn-out of exhibitors this year, we hope 2012 will bring-on a flush of entries from Reading's new membership who will have a full season's beekeeping behind them, and hopefully heavy honey supers. However the pacesetters for top quality entries in the honey classes were there, notably Mike Dabs and Martin Moore, see results below.



1st place	2nd.	3rd.	
Light Honey	Martin Moore	J. Davey	Hazel Blackburn.
Dark/Medium	Mike Dabbs	Robt. Kiff	J. Davey
Granulated/soft set	J. Davey.	Hazel Blackburn	Robt. Kiff.
Honey for Sale	Hazel Blackburn	Chris Gower	J. Davey.
Novice Class	Mike Dabbs	Martin Moore	-
Beeswax Blocks	Hazel Blackburn	J. Davey.	Robt. Kiff.
Beeswax Candles	Hazel Blackburn	J. Davey.	-
Chunk Honey	Mike Dabbs	J. Davey.	Nick Matenga.
Cut Comb	Mike Dabbs	Nick Matenga	J. Davey.
Honey Cake	J. Davey	Liz Crow.*	Hazel Blackburn.
Honey Nut Biscuits	Robt Kiff.	Hazel Blackburn	J. Davey.
Honey Plum Preserve.	-	J. Davey.	V. Crossing*
Bee Fodder Display.	Hazel Blackburn	Alison Daniel*	Robt. Kiff.

* Non beekeepers.

Judges: Margaret and Alan Johnson from Southampton.

Congratulations to all who were placed, and to our winners. Trophy awards will be made at our AGM in November.

South Chilterns Beekeepers' Association

September 17th meeting at Greys Court Rotherfield Greys.

Thirty five members attended this delightful venue marking the end of our summer programme. Greys Court, a 16th-century mansion and gardens was home to the Brunner family, and is now run by the National Trust.

It was a pleasure to have Mr Wimbury with us to share our meeting. He is the benefactor of the two hives, of bees in memory of his wife. It was the first time he had seen inside a hive, bees and queen close up.

The 5-hive apiary is a recent initiative. Rachel, Jane and Colin run 3 WBC hives, and Jemima has a National and a Commercial. Reg Hook kindly handled the bees, and the threatened rain did not materialise.

Two WBC hives were of dark, native bees which started as nuclei in June this year. Both were strong with good stores, plenty of brood and eggs. The marked queens were shown to the members. The 3rd hive was in its second year and contained New Zealand bees, which were a very light sandy colour. They had only just survived last winter and clearly, despite being well populated, this was the least successful colony. No honey had been harvested yet and a number of wax moth larvae were removed.



Jemima's two hives were both queen-right and with brood and stores. In the commercial we saw the 3-yr-old queen and a surprising amount of brood for so late in the season. Reg thought that so much brood may indicate supercedure and a young laying queen in the hive. All hives had been treated with Apiguard or Api-Life-Var.



Reg reminded us that as the wasp numbers tail off, we need to remove entrance brocks and fit mouse guards. For those of us with mesh floors, we need to remove the trays over winter to improve ventilation. The crown board openings can then be covered and insulated carpet placed above.

He said that if we hadn't done so already, varroa treatment should be started without delay' Heft the hives to check 40 - 50 lbs. of reserves for the winter. Finally prepare wire netting woodpecker guards to enclose each hive.

Thanks go to Reg for his valuable input and to Kate and Linda for organising delicious refreshments.

A note from Reg:

In a nutshell the bees must be treated for varroa, have adequate stores and a dry hive for winter, not forgetting mouse guard and woodpecker proofing. For how you prepare your bees now will determine your next year's harvest.

Remember the beekeeping year starts now!!!

Max Vine

Our next meeting will be at Woodcote Village Hall on October Wednesday October 19th
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We will require nominations or volunteers for Chairman, vice chairmen, secretary, treasurer, programme organizer and other committee members.

Please send nominations and volunteer names to the secretary at

Shanagher@talktalk.net or southchilterns.bees@btinternet.com

Followed by a talk on BEE"S WING"S by association member Dave Moss.

Joanne Shanagher, Secretary. Tel: 01189 721067

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

Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead Beekeepers' Society

Our winter meetings resumed on Tuesday, 13th September, with our Annual Review of the Year. It was held, as usual, at All Saint's Parish Church Hall in Alexander Road, Windsor SL4 1HZ. Our apiary meetings, at the site about a mile north of Wexham Park Hospital, will continue fortnightly throughout the summer. For details about meetings, please see the website. For information 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 website, www.britishbee.org.uk/local/slough-windsor-maidenhead and on the website www.wherecanwego.com. - click SL4 + gardens + nature (boxes).

Newsletter items: Liz Juby, tel: 01753 859382 Michael Sheasby, Chairman, tel: 01753 642656

lizjuby@hotmail.com

michaelsheasby@lineone.net

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

Watch bees online at: <http://www.sysonby.com/beecam>

Contributions, including emails, to arrive with the Editor by the 20th of the month for the following month. Contributions received after this will be held over for a later month.

Advertisement entries, to be received by the Advertisement Manager in advance of the 20th of every month. Rates: 2 Lines for £1.00; Commercial rates: £1.00 per line. Please make cheques payable to FBBKA. To be sent to the Advertisement Manager: Mr Jon Davey, 107 Northcourt Avenue, Reading RG2 7HG. Tel: 0118 975 0734.

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