



**FEDERATION OF
BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS**

President: Miss Margery Cooper

August 2003
Number 567

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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

11 th October	Federation Event & Honey Show	
13th-15th November 2003	The National Honey Show	

From the Federation General Secretary:

No further news on our Federation Event at present, we have an excellent main speaker booked.

There will be more to report in the September newsletter with schedules, timings for the day, and a map of how to get there.

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In the meantime, don't forget to take your families along to The Wokingham & Reading Agricultural Association Annual Show on 7th September at Spencers Wood, Nr. Reading.

It's a good day out with plenty to see.

Show schedules & entry forms available from Jane Kelly, 11, Laburnum Road, Winnersh. RG41 5XL. Telephone No. 0118 977 1035.

There are not just Honey and Honey Product classes, but also Cookery, Preserves, Art, Flower Arrangements, Children's classes etc.

Why not give it a go?

Sandra Napper

In the Apiary. August

THIS MONTH - I thought we might have a June gap this year and for the first two weeks things were a bit slack, but they soon started bringing it in again. By the end of the month I had to extract again in order to have some empty supers to put back on. What lovely light clear, golden honey it is to be sure! If YOU have any of it, save it or showing. It's a certain winner.

-Get most of your honey crop off in the first week of the month so as not to risk contamination during Varroa treatment. The honey doesn't NEED to be extracted now provided that you can

store it in a warm mouse proof place. If the hives are strong make sure they have room by putting a super of empty comb on top.

-When you have extracted put the wet supers back on the hives for the bees to clean up. Then sort through and put the tatty combs together in supers or use on the ivy later on.

-I haven't seen any notification of an official Varroa treatment week, but the first or second weeks in August have been usual in previous years. Put in the strips as early as you can and note the date so that you can get them out again on time. Eight weeks is the maximum.

-Do Varroa counts when you first put in the strips to give you a realistic assessment of any control methods that you might have used early in the year.

-Unite weak stocks to give them one last chance to establish some strength before the nectar supply dries up altogether.

-If you want a jar for show, remember that the clearest honey comes at the middle of a jar-filling run. Unlike rape honey mid-season honey will usually go through muslin without heating and makes for better clarity. Before bottling give the honey at least 24 hrs in the ripener for the air bubbles and tiny wax particles to rise to the surface.

-Have a walk round and look out for wasp nests. Most of them are in old mouse holes in the ground. Like bees, wasps can usually be killed by petrol fumes. Wait until dark when they are all home and then put on your beekeeping gear. Thoroughly wet the earth around the hole with at least one wateringcanful. This helps the petrol to go further down the hole and not soak into the soil at the top. Using a funnel pour a pint of petrol into the entrance hole and stop it up with a clod of earth. Come back the following morning and see if you have been successful.

MAIN TOPIC -Your turn! As Hon Ed pointed out last month my term as "In the Apiary" man is coming to an end. If you are to continue to be confused, irritated, mystified, etc we need someone else to do the job. On the other hand anyone should be able to do better than I have.

When I started, a few years ago, I sought advice from George Hawthorne and he told me to stick to the textbook stuff and not be controversial. I took his advice and my first few articles brought a storm of criticism from the letter writers, who were much more vigorous than they are these days. I then started reading the textbooks and things settled down a bit.

There are no strict rules about what should go into "In the Apiary" except that it should be as topical as possible and guide the reader through the year in the apiary. I considered that beginners were for George Butler and fairy godmothers from the Associations. I saw a greater need to remind the less active beekeepers of what they should be at and still hold to that view. I also felt that the changing climate made most of the textbook methods liable to leave things too late for beekeepers in the south of England and made that point as often as I could.

If you take on the job (and I can't think of anyone better) you can do it any way you like. Ambrosia had her own style, and very welcome it was.

It takes me about an hour each month and the hardest part is not repeating last months effort. Don't feel that you have to provide illustrations or even keep to one format all the time. Be controversial occasionally, it keeps Hon Ed and the editorial panel on their toes. Hon Ed is not a hard taskmaster, but he does fret terribly if you are a bit late, as I am this month.

High Wycombe and District Beekeepers Association

Recycled Bees

Children

Do you like making models? Why not try to make a model of a bee using material that has previously been used for something else.

Your model will go on display at the Environment Centre at Holywell Mead on the Rye and maybe win a prize?



***You can do this by making an entry for our
Children's Competition***



You are allowed to use glue, sticky tape and colouring that is new.

It would be good if you could write notes about how the things you used, were used previously.

There will be prizes for bees with written notes and also prizes for bees without notes. Your age will be taken into account.



Children's competition organiser

Sylvia Chamberlin, 61 Wordsworth Road, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP11 2UR Telephone 01494 522082

The show takes place on August 16th & 17th and Entries marked with your name, age, address and telephone number must reach the Children's competition organiser by Thursday August 14th.

From the Editor

Reports of honey crops are generally, that many are bumper; there are also reports of poor or non-existent. I have an apiary like this, there seems to be no bees working the flowers in the immediate vicinity, last year there was a good crop. Colonies that swarmed in the latter part of June seem to have given up on nectar collecting while others are storing heavily.

CSL are worried about the small hive beetle coming into this country via imports, not only in bees from the Antipodes but in timber, particularly to Ipswich. Having seen the vast stacks of timber on the smaller docks at Harwich, (also on the Orwell), I can quite understand the concern.

I feel that any imports of bees from the southern hemisphere or the Americas pose a risk; we can reduce this risk by not importing bees from these areas. Imports of timber we can do

nothing about. Keep an eye out for this pest, if it is here the sooner we detect it the sooner that it can be combated and damage limited.

R.F.C.

Your Regional Bee Inspectors are: -

Southern Region: - Mr. Ian Homer. Fax/Telephone number: 01308 482 161
South Eastern Region: - Mr. James Morton Fax/Telephone number: 020 8571 6450
(Mr. Morton is now the National Bee Inspector)

Appointed Bee Inspectors: -

Mr. David Purchase: - Hampshire & Berkshire: Telephone number: 01256 781288
Mr. Will Messenger: -. Oxfordshire & South Bucks: Telephone number: 01608 674429

SLOUGH AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

Incorporating Windsor, Maidenhead and adjoining communities.

The apiary meetings continue to be well attended this year and a number of new faces are now regular attendees. The bees have been reasonably well behaved and as of the end of June, we have eight colonies of varying sizes. The best colony has a double brood and five supers in place and we have already extracted a further two supers from it. We have also now successfully bred from this queen. Our thanks to Don Church for making up some new brood frames, which the bees have already drawn out and are enjoying the benefit of fresh comb.

We suspected a case of foul brood in one colony and sent a sample off to the National Bee Unit for analysis. The all clear was received within 2 days, which gave us great peace of mind and we would recommend that any member who has the slightest doubt about their bees' health make use of this excellent service. We now believe the problem with this colony was sac brood and it has improved immensely since.

In the not too distant future, the extraction of this year's crop must begin. Volunteers to help with this backbreaking task will be greatly appreciated.

My sincere thanks this month to the new apiary supervisor, Jim Cooper, for the above comprehensive report on the society's apiary. The final scheduled visit this year will be on the 10th of August at 3pm. Normally, soon after this the extracting would start, though since at the latest inspection (end of June), there was already a large crop, this may have started already. Therefore, I'm sure the call for volunteers would be even more welcome

We look forward to this year's new addition to the end of the summer programme - a barbecue and visit to Bernhard Schumann's apiary at his home, on the 17th of August. Reminders were sent out with July's newsletter; so hopefully, you were able to return them in time to be included and are joining us there. Any last minute changes may be possible, so please contact Michael Sheasby on 01753 642656. We expect a good turnout, already sixteen have replied at the end of June.

Don't forget the upcoming Honey Shows when extracting and bottling, put aside some of your best for exhibiting. The first is on **Saturday, 30th August**, when the **Windsor Allotments and Home Gardens Association** will be holding their annual show at Gardeners Hall, St. Leonards

Road, Windsor. There are 9 honey classes. For a schedule, contact Mr Eric Grant on 01753 853657. Then **SDBKS' own show**, this year to be held on the **14th October** – plenty of time to prepare your entries! These are followed by the **Federation and National Honey Shows**, on the dates as advertised in the newsletters.

Finally, the winter meetings commence on the 9th of September, when we shall be reviewing the year so far. We expect reports of bumper crops this time - along with the assortment of unusual happenings often mentioned. This is a valuable opportunity to tell those newer to bee-keeping how you have handled something a bit out of the ordinary. Join us for this start of the winter schedule, held as always at the All Saints Parish Hall, on the corner of Frances and Alexandra Roads, Windsor.

Newsletter items: Joy Dodson. Burnham (01628) 664091

WOKINGHAM & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Apiary Visits

Five of us inspected Bob Loades' two Dartington hives on a warm Sunday 29th June. It's interesting to see how easy these hives are to work and even more impressive to see 20 frames uncovered at once with probably 60-70,000 bees at home. A very active queen was obviously in evidence and the supers were quite full of honey and in some cases brood. The only criticism levelled at this technique is the fact that queen excluders are not used and one is even less sure than usual as to where she is hiding.



Two conventional hives were also checked and these showed strong colonies with lots of honey ready for removal. After a good afternoon's work we retired for an excellent tea with sandwiches and cakes. Our thanks to Rosemary, Bob and Linda for a lovely outing.

Rosemary's Book of the Month

Ron Brown knows a little about bees – he's kept bees for the past 50 years as well as lecturing about them in various places worldwide; he's also a past editor of 'Beekeeping'.

He also knows how to write a concise but comprehensive manual called 'Honey Bees- a Guide to Management'.

When you're a beginner and you want some advice, you don't want a lot of anecdote about the writer's own experiences. You want to know quickly what's happening, what's gone wrong and what to do now. This book tells you in plain English.

It gives a clear, simple idea of what beekeeping is, what bees do and what you need in the way of equipment. It goes through the different seasons and suggests what you can do with your crop. There is a brief chapter on bee diseases (the section on Varroa is surprisingly accurate considering it was written in 1988 just before the pest arrived here) and a notice on the legal aspects of beekeeping. It finishes with a small glossary of beekeeping terms.

It is not a very long book, just over 100 pages, and I would recommend it to anyone who has started

beekeeping within the past couple of years or who is interested in getting some accurate knowledge about the craft out of general curiosity.

It's in the Association library with Bob Loades.

Secretary John Edwards 0118 934 0238

READING and DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

On Sunday June 15th we met at Tim and Hilary Whittaker's apiary in Mapledurham in glorious summer weather. Tim has WBC hives overlooking open fields with Thames beyond, tall structures on a hard standing in front of a pristine dry ditch. After the inspections the bees, being (habitually according to Tim) spread rather thickly on the hard standing were given ladders of tall plant stems to crawl back into the hives.

We found cells clean and shiny, ready for eggs and though we had sealed brood and larvae, some very small we failed to find eggs in the two biggest colonies. A three-week collected swarm however had eggs a plenty and this rather small new colony seemed to be having trouble in drawing-out new wax to keep up with the queen. However the bees in the main colonies were docile and if there are no eggs in the next days Tim has plenty to transfer in the swarm colony.

We did valuable work in clearing a number of supers by the shake and brush method and Tim removed these from the vicinity of the hives and plans prompt extraction.

A nearby field of rape had been sprayed at 5 percent flower in the early hours that morning with still air conditions, presumably against pollen beetle. The spray would be fatal to any bees caught in it; however, it was nice to know that this grower was working to DEFRA recommendations in respect of time, conditions and growth stage for spraying. No ill effects were seen on Tim's bees and we hope it stays that way!

After the beekeeping we had the greatest pleasure in the Whittaker's hospitality with a barbecue in their gardens with the wonderful extensive lawns. Family members and children, life members and friends, all enjoyed an idyllic summers afternoon. Many thanks to Hilary and Tim.

On Sunday August 10th at 11.30 is our Chairman's meeting at Jon and Jill Davey's apiary at 107 Northcourt Avenue, Reading. This is a typical small garden apiary, with plentiful forage from the extensive plantings and the trees in the avenue and at Whiteknights. No rape nearby so no granulation problems in the hives: except for the dreaded 'ivy years'!

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

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 1st 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

Honey for sale, surplus to requirement in 30lb containers at £1.25 / lb Telephone. 0118 9479450