



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

November 2001
Number 548

NEWS

Hon. Secretary
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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

November 15,16,17	National Honey Show	

From the General Secretary's office

Hodsock Priory's Snowdrop Spectacular 2002

Because of the popularity of this annual event the Winter Gardens will be open every day for FIVE WEEKS in 2002, Saturday 2nd February – Sunday 10th March.

On show in the garden for the first time in February there will be a UNIQUE WORKING VICTORIAN APIARY comprising eight remarkable beehives, some resembling Victorian follies. Bees are not very active in the winter months but on mild, sunny days visitors are likely to see them quietly collecting nectar from snowdrops and other flowers and carrying it back to the hives. Website <http://www.snowdrops.co.uk/>

Contact: Kate Garton Telephone 01427 848823 [e-mail kategarton@cwcom.net](mailto:kategarton@cwcom.net)

William Napper

REMEMBER: There will be no January Newsletter!!!

FROM THE EDITOR

This months 'In the Apiary' is the penultimate contribution from Ambrosia unfortunately, we do not have any copy to follow on. If anyone would like to "have a go" please contact the Editor, The writer does not have to have vast experience, common sense and a reasonable basic knowledge of beekeeping will suffice.

In common with many beekeepers up and down the country I have found that last years heavy producing colonies have not done very well this year, in fact many colonies did not progress into the supers preferring instead to swarm, the swarms doing exceptionally well. Except for one colony, Varroa has not been a problem, however, there has been plenty of chalk brood.

RFC

FEDERATION

The Federation Annual General Meeting is again almost upon us, (February 19th 2002); it is time to appoint a General Secretary, an Editor and a Treasurer. This time we also have to elect a Chairman, Bernhard Schumann retires in rotation, nominations or volunteers are invited.

The bees will now be settling down for the fast approaching winter, but there maybe a little pollen from the ivy, which they will eagerly collect. They will not normally defecate in the hive. If their winter feed has not fermented, their faecal matter collects in their swollen rectum and can be retained there for two or three weeks. On a day when the temperature climbs above 45° they will make a brief excursion from their hive to empty their bowel. However if they have consumed fermented food, they are likely to be suffering from dysentery and will soil the combs with dark brown streaks of faeces.

Another problem facing bees during the winter is dampness. The very action of these little insects breathing causes moisture-laden air condensing on the colder inside surfaces of the hive. This condensation must not be allowed to collect. The single walled hive must on no account be painted on the outside with non-porous paint, as the wood must be allowed to breathe. To hopefully counter the damp hive problem, all my hives are raised up on stands, tilted very slightly forward. The entrance is left fully open all through the winter. I raise the crown-board about 1/8 inch, by fitting matchsticks cross ways underneath each corner, and completely cover the cut away area where the 'escapes' are usually fitted. This allows cool fresh drying air to flow around the outside edges, and not through the middle of the colony and makes its escape from beneath the crown-board via the ventilated roof. The mouse guards should be fitted at this time and woodpecker precautions taken if these birds are a problem.

I have just borrowed a CD-ROM from our association's librarian entitled 'The Medicine from the bees' a treatise of Apitherapy produced by Apimondia. It was made in 1997. If you are at all interested in bees, and I am sure you must be, this is well worth looking at in the long winter evenings. If you have a computer running Windows 95 or later versions, it can update your machine with QuickTime player and PowerPoint viewer to allow you to view its contents if necessary. It delves into the history of our craft, back to 2,700BC and touches briefly on anatomy. It has an in depth analysis on the constituents of honey, pollen and propolis, how these can be beneficial to mankind. It includes facts about hives and bees, all mostly illustrated with photos. Why not see it for yourselves?

News from the NBU. Varroa has become immune to pyrethroid, the acting ingredient of Apistan and Bayvarol. This has been confirmed by laboratory testing in mites from an apiary in Devon and field tests give strong reason to suspect resistance in other apiaries in the same area. It has been thought that this might occur in time and is one of the reasons that it is recommended that treatment should not be left in the hive longer than six weeks to reduce the chances of this happening sooner. Beekeepers are a resilient band of people, so I am sure we will be able to overcome this problem in time to come.

There will be plenty of tasks you can be occupied with over the quieter winter months Clean up your spare equipment, attend the monthly talks by eminent experts which have been arranged by your committees, extend your knowledge by reading the many books your associations may own, and above all enjoy your craft.

Ambrosia

BEE INVOLVED Follow Manufacturers instructions implicitly – do not under- dose

The Newsletter can be sent by e-mail by the first of the month, requests for this service should be through your Association Secretary thereby saving your Association postage. Contributions or photographs for the Newsletter can be sent by e-mail but the name of the sender must be included but need not be published. berksbees@lineone.net

Editor

There has been a heated discussion on the Irish beekeeping list concerning the correct dosage of Bayvarol strips for the control of Varroa. Would it be possible for you to send an e-mail to the list (or to me which I will then forward) giving the manufacturer's recommendations.

Does the dosage depend on the size of the brood boxes? Langstroth versus National or Race of bee? The e-mail address of the Irish list is irishbeekeeping@yahoogroups.co.uk

Ruary Rudd

You are quite right in your ascertainment that the number of strips to treat a colony does relate to the size of the colony. A normally developed colony in a National hive requires 4 strips whereas a nuclei or swarm usually requires 2 strips. Where the colony is such a size that 2 brood boxes are used then 8 strips may be required.

The background to these recommendations is that it is necessary to provide sufficient surface area of medicated strip for the bees to crawl over and pass the acaricide from one to another in a short period.

I hope this answers your enquiry, if I can be of any further help please contact me again.

Best regards Kevin Stevens

DISEASE

Your Regional Bee Inspectors are: -

Dr. Beulah Cullen. Hillingdon, Middlesex.

Fax/Telephone number 01895 810469

South Eastern Region:- Mr. James Morton

Fax/Telephone number 020 8571 6450

READING and DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

September 13th we learnt some tips on showing hive products. Our National judge, Hazel Blackburn, judged some member's honey and explained what she was looking for as she went along. There was some light-hearted banter issuing from her audience and much laughter during the proceedings. The prize for the winner was a bottle of wine and the presentation of the Association Silver Plate.

At the end of the session, there was a slight problem. After the points were added up both Robert Kiff and John Davey tied for the highest number of points. This was resolved by allowing each winner to keep the plate for six months. Hazel promised to bring another bottle of wine for the joint winner at the next meeting.

- There are four events for your attention during November. On Thursday the 8th, at our usual venue.
- Our AGM will take place. I don't have to remind you that we must elect a Chairman at this event for our Association to survive.
- Sandra Napper will demonstrate 'Cooking with Honey'
- The National Honey Show at the Kensington Town Hall, London will be held on Thursday 15th through to Saturday 17th November.

Our Annual Dinner will be held at the Packhorse, Mapledurham on Thursday 30th November at 7.30pm, doubtless you will have booking details in due course. Members of other associations will, as usual, be welcome please book with Michael Blackburn on 0118 9479450.

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

SOUTH CHILTERNS BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATION

By the time that you read these notes the AGM will have taken place and the future of our Association will have been determined. If the vacant posts for our officers have been filled the winter programme will proceed as advertised beginning on Wednesday 21st November with "An Evening with Beeswax". John Savings a Wantage beekeeper will amaze you with the uses beeswax can be put to other than just candles. I have seen John in action and he really is a craftsman.

Hon. Secretary: - George Butler 0118 983 2735

WOKINGHAM & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Members should note that the date of the AGM is **14th November** and NOT 7th November as printed in the 2001-2002 programme.

Hon. Joint Secretaries: Sylvia Smallbone & John Edwards 0118 934 0238

SLOUGH AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY

The next meeting will be the AGM and Supper on Tuesday, 13th November at 8pm at the All Saints Parish Hall, on the corner of Frances and Alexandra Roads, Windsor.

Your nominations for officers may be sent to the Secretary, Michael Sheasby - his address is on the back of your annual programme, or call him on Slough (01753) 642656 for details. We look forward to a good turnout again this year and hope you will all be able to stay on for the usual social evening to be held after the formalities are completed. Please remember to bring along a contribution for the table.

The meeting for the following month, on Tuesday, 11th December should be another very interesting evening. We will be welcoming John Furzey, whose talk is entitled 'A Year on the Bee Farm' and we hope you will all join us then.

Newsletter items to: Joy Dodson. Burnham (01628) 664091

Newsletter "Deadline": - Contributions to arrive with the Editor by the First Post 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

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