



FEDERATION OF BERKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATIONS

President: Miss Margery Cooper

September 2002

Number 557

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

October 26th	Federation Event and Honey Show	Gen. Secretary:- 0118 945 5094
November 14,15 and 16th	National Honey Show	

FROM THE FEDERATION SECRETARY

Organisation of the Federation Autumn Event on October 26th is going on apace. In an attempt to streamline this year's event it is intended to condense the number of classes (schedules available soon). To prevent the number of classes being condensed to zero in future, please don't forget to put aside some of your "hive products" and enter.

Remember - *If it's good enough to sell, it's good enough to show.*

Mr. Oliver Field has been booked as our speaker this year. Most of you will know him as the author of "Honey Days," "Honey By The Ton" & "Beautiful Queens And Honey Too." He will not be talking about his beekeeping in this country however, but about a lesser-known side. This is his work with development projects overseas helping to set up and advising on beekeeping projects. The recipients of this help and advice not only obtain a sustainable income from bee products but also a greater local awareness of agricultural and environmental issues, thereby helping their whole community. This is definitely a case of helping people to help themselves and promises to be a very interesting and hopefully thought provoking talk.

At the time of writing (end of July) I have received a 50% return on the survey attached to your July Newsletter. Again I would like to remind the remaining 50% still out there how important the outcome of this survey could be to you. Please don't ignore it.

Thank you,

Sandra Napper.

THE APIARY IN SEPTEMBER

My sympathies to Hon. Ed. over his dose of AFB, but more importantly, my congratulations on his courage in telling us all about it. There is no shame in having any of the brood diseases but condemnation in doing nothing about it.

THIS MONTH. -What you do this month determines how well you colonies will over winter and, consequently what sort of a season you will have next year. Neglect now will, inevitably, present trouble next year.

-Leave a single super on the stronger hives. We have had a late crop in the last few years.

-Make sure all of your queens are marked so that you can find them easily next year.

-Make last disease inspections and note which queens need to be eliminated to control chalk and sac brood.

-Unite weak hives (using the newspaper method), destroying inadequate, disease bearing or unduly old queens. Ideally all of your queens should be less than 2 years old, at this time of the year.

-Start feeding hives which are unduly light, using thick syrup at 2lb of sugar to 1 pint of water.

-Prepare woodpecker protection where required. This is another of those stable doors that get shut after the horse has bolted.

MAIN TOPIC. –Notes from an apiary disease tour. There's nothing like accompanying the disease inspector to give you an idea of how the other half lives.

-Two well-maintained hives with two derelict but occupied ones (belonging to someone else) right next to them. All wild comb and riddled with wax moth and Varroa, but still hanging on, even with no roof on one. Don't tolerate sloppy habits in your neighbours. **You** will have to pay the price in disease and swarm collection, to say nothing of the bad name that it gives the craft.

-Piles of old and neglected hive parts in operating apiaries. It's convenient to have spare hive parts on site - even if they are rotten and fall to bits when you want to use them. Keep them at home, in the dry and give them some maintenance once in a while.

-Hives booming and stacked high with four absolutely full supers each. Good news for the beekeeper, but swarms on the next sunny day. Keep plenty of clean, spare equipment and always have space available in the hive.

-Frames so propolised as to need a crowbar. Try to get each colony into a clean brood chamber each spring. Why make routine inspections such hard work?

-A two-frame colony in a twelve frame hive. With all that space to heat at night, they are never going to build up. If you don't have a nucleus box for them, at least get a division board right next to them.

-“Be careful with the second lot, they're absolute swines” They are also riddled with Varroa and have just swarmed. Don't tolerate badly behaved bees. If you can't face them yourself get help from your Association.

-“We've found these WBCs are too much like hard work and are in the process of changing to these” Damned good idea, but you could save yourselves even more work if you changed to a single large brood chamber rather than your new I have never met a professional beekeeper that worked anything but single brood chambers. At the same time ask yourself if, when the time comes to get rid of your bees, whether there is much of a market for the likes of Dadant, Smith, Commercial or Langstroths?

Garulus.

Worried about whether your stuff is worth putting in the Federation Show? **Slough** show is a fortnight before on **Tuesday 8 October at All Saints Parish Hall, Alexandra Rd, Windsor**. All classes will be judged in front of you and you will be able to identify YOUR entries while they are being judged. The whole affair is light hearted and you will be able to question the judge (no nasty remarks, please) as she goes along. All-comers welcome, and a cup for the “stranger” earning most points. No need for pre-registration. Classes as below to usual show standards.

Classes.

1. 1 454gm jar of **LIGHT HONEY**.
2. 1 454gm jar of **MEDIUM HONEY**.
3. 1 454gm jar of **HEATHER HONEY**.
4. 1 454gm jar of **GRANULATED OR CREAMED HONEY**.
5. 1 portion of **COMB HONEY OR SECTION**, packed for sale.
6. 1 **FRAME OF HONEY SUITABLE FOR EXTRACTION**.
7. 1 bottle **MEAD (sweet or dry)** 75cl colourless bottle with plain cork.
8. 2 beeswax **CANDLES** in holder(s), one to be burnt by judge.
9. Cake of **BEEWAX** as close to 8oz as practicable.

10. **PHOTOGRAPH** on a beekeeping subject, titled. No larger than 7"x 5".

11. **SOMETHING MADE WITH HONEY** as a major ingredient

12. **HONEY CAKE**

For a schedule or just queries try Bernhard Schumann. 01189 343501 or Email

bernhard@schumann2.freeserve.co.uk

Who knows? You might have something worth putting in the National!

BERKSHIRE FEDERATION FOULBROOD JULY 2002

Number of infected apiaries in 10km squares
[Number in brackets () = Number of infected colonies]

SU29 Buscot	SU39 Stanford in the Vale	SU49 West Abingdon	SU59 Dorchester AFB 1(1)	SU69 Benson	SU79 Stokenchurch	SU89 High Wycombe	SU99 Amersham	TQ09 Rickmansworth EFB 4(6)
SU28 Bishopstone	SU38 Letcombe Regis	SU48 East Wantage	SU58 Blewbury EFB 2(8)	SU68 East Wallingford	SU78 Henley on Thames	SU88 Marlow	SU98 North Slough	TQ08 Uxbridge
SU27 Aldbourne	SU37 Lambourn	SU47 Chieveley	SU57 Yattendon	SU67 Pangbourne	SU77 Reading EFB 3(4)	SU87 White Waltham EFB 2(2)	SU97 Windsor	TQ07 Staines
SU26 Great Bedwyn	SU36 Inkpen	SU46 Newbury	SU56 Thatcham	SU66 Burghfield Common	SU76 Shinfield EFB 1(1)	SU86 Crowthorne EFB 2(4)	SU96 Ascot EFB 1(1)	TQ06 Weybridge
SU25 Ludgershall	SU35 Hurstbourne Tarrant	SU45 Litchfield	SU55 Kingsclere EFB 1(2)	SU65 Basingstoke	SU75 Hook EFB 1(1)	SU85 Farnborough	SU95 West Guildford EFB 3(9)	TQ05

28.07.02

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

Appointed Bee Inspectors: -

Mr. Julian Johnston. Oxfordshire & North West Berks:

Telephone number 01993 850432

Mr. David Purchase. Hampshire & South West Berkshire:

Telephone number 01256 781288

FROM THE EDITOR

Quite a mixture of comments this month from huge crops to poor crops, drone laying queens, laying workers, queenless colonies, spray damage, etc. I also had the question "what is the reason for bees with two pairs of wings?" pardon? Two pairs of wings? - You know what I mean! Wings like a dragonfly. Could be a genetic defect where the bee is unable to hook its compound wing together (faulty queen) Varroa damage or an adult bee disease such as Nosema. Without seeing the colony I felt unable to advise any action other than to have a sample of bees examined. Examination by the Bee Unit for suspected damage from insecticide or other poison is free but a charge is made for examination for other adult diseases.

Many of you will have known Denis Harmsworth, President, and former Chairman of Wantage Association who died recently. He has been of great help to many of our members and particularly to me with computer problems.

RFC

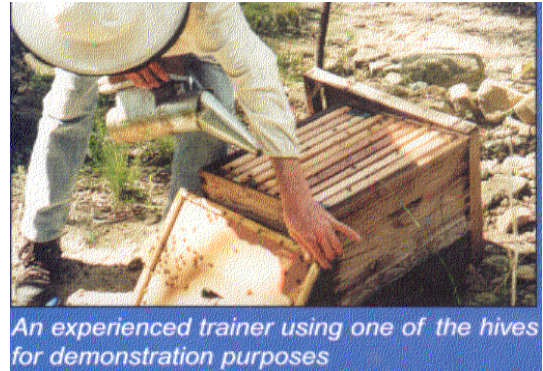
GOLDEN HARVEST

Families in Lesotho are beginning to harvest their first honey from bees provided by Send a Cow last year. Each household was given one hive, which they have kept in a protected area in their farm compound. Several of the 20 families will have delayed harvests, because heavy rain has diluted the nectar, and kept the bees confined to their hives, but all the hives should have been harvested by April.

Average harvests are five kilos of honey, which they expect to sell at £6 a kilo. The delighted new beekeepers have already agreed what to do with their £30 extra income: they will divided into 4 £7.50 shares, paying one into a health fund on which each family can draw if they need medical treatment, investing another in a second hive, and using the third for their own needs. In addition, that £7.50 is enough to pay for six months education for a primary school child.

As for the 4th, that will be repaid into their community fund, to provide bees for other poor families. They will repeat this payment for the next three years until they have repaid the original cost of their hive and bees. This is the equivalent of the "pass on " system we operate in other countries, but there is an extra element in this case. The group have put " catch boxes " all round the village, so when the bees swarm some lucky villagers will be receiving a free gift of bees, courtesy of the sky and the wind.

Courtesy: Send a Cow. Website: www.sendacow.org.uk



SLOUGH AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' SOCIETY Incorporating Windsor, Maidenhead and adjoining communities.

By the end of July, the apiary appeared to have recovered enough with the help of the donated nukes and a swarm to be heading for winter in much better shape than had been thought earlier in the year. This year seems to have produced mixed fortunes, so how have you fared? The first meeting of the winter programme will be the time to find out how others have coped with the conditions. Join us on Tuesday, the 10th September at the All Saints Parish Hall, which is on the corner of Frances and Alexandra Roads, Windsor when the Review of the Year will get under way at 8 o'clock.

You will all have received the schedule for this year's Honey Show with your August newsletter. This is to be held on Tuesday, the 8th October at the above venue, so decide which Classes you can enter and notify Bernhard if there will be more than five. If not, please come along in good time to enter and stage your exhibits on the night. Bernhard will be there from 7 o'clock. Please note that the committee meeting advertised in the programme as also being on this date was an error and is being re-scheduled.

Newsletter items: Joy Dodson Burnham (01628) 664091

READING and DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

We spent a pleasant Sunday morning at the home apiary of Cyril McCombe in July. Mike Blackburn in his usual gentle style went through three hives. All appeared to have some Chalk brood. The colonies at either end of the row showed a remarkable difference in temperament. The one on the left was extremely docile and sat well on the comb, it was a treat to handle. However its opposite number was rather aggressive, and although very populous did not seem quite so happy. This was something of an enigma, as the docile colony had been formed from an egg from its livelier companion. This hive of bees aping 'butterflies,' was on a single brood WCB and was pushing for more room as evident by comb being built up through the porter escape hole in the crown board.

This was proof of a young fertile Queen in residence and was promptly remedied by adding a Queen excluder and empty super. Mike suggested that the excluders would better if framed so that they were more rigid.

An onlooker, a complete beginner, was most interested when introduced into the wonders of a beehive and was shown the difference between a drone a worker and the various comb cells and their contents. Unfortunately the Queen could not be found but she was there somewhere doing her stuff as shown by plenty of eggs and brood.

Our next meeting is in September and will take place at the welcome reappearance of the Wokingham and Reading show on Sunday, the 1st day of the month, where we will be having a Honey show. Schedules can be obtained from Jane Kelly, 11 Laburnum Road, Winnersh, Wokingham. Tel 0118 977 1035.

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

SOUTH CHILTERN BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATION

The July meeting was held at one of Ron Crocker's out apiaries at Park Corner, Nettlebed with approximately 20 members attending. The apiary was situated on the edge of a wood belonging to a livestock farm and there were many blackberry bushes in full bloom adjacent to the bees, which did not appear to be working them despite the fact that they were very busy. Most of the six hives had been used in previous years to take bees to orchards /heather and were therefore fitted with appropriate ventilation discs and travelling screens and also had their floors and bodies stapled together.

Beulah Cullen gave the demonstration; as well as going through the hives, Beulah also demonstrated the testing for pyrethroid resistant Varroa mites. In the test a volume of approximately 200ml of bees, excluding the queen, were shaken into a clear plastic container fitted with a special Apistan strip and left for 4 hours after which the mites 'knocked down' were collected on a sticky white surface and counted. The bees were then washed with soapy water and the remaining mites counted. The total number of mites was then compared with the remaining mites knocked down. Beulah was able to demonstrate both parts of the test because Ron had previously prepared a sample. The test showed that the Varroa mites were not resistant to pyrethroid (Apistan). If less than 50% of the mites are knocked down it indicates a resistance problem. To date, pyrethroid resistant mites have been found in Devon and Cornwall and Bee Inspectors are keen for local associations to carry out a few voluntary tests. The General Secretary should be able to provide a testing kit for anyone wishing to do his or her own test. Further information including complete details of the test can be obtained from the National Bee Unit at Sand Hutton or by telephoning 0194 462510.

Secretary: Brian Carter. 01491 680226

WOKINGHAM & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Demonstration of the Dartington Long Deep hive

Some 10 people turned out on a hot Sunday afternoon to watch Bob Loades go through his Dartington Hive. Bob took the Long Deep hive apart and showed off some of the design differences. The entrance block can be reversed to close in the bees for transit. There are no openings on the crown boards as the entire floor of the hive is a Varroa screen. The supers are small only five standard frames wide. The Central brood chamber has 14" deep frames, and there is no Queen excluder

The hive is currently split down the middle with a colony in either end, both entrances are open and the bees are leaving from either end. This is the result of artificially swarming the main colony earlier in the year. After the crop is taken off the colonies will be united, with the stronger Queen to head up the colony for next year. Everyone agreed the colonies were very strong, and producing good honeycomb. Part of the crop comes from the brood chamber as the colony is reduced from 22 combs to 10 over winter. This is replaced with fresh comb in the spring as the colony expands, ensuring the colony is always on fresh wax, has plenty to do, and is kept as clean as possible, so cutting down on disease.

The artificial swarming (because the Queen is still in the same box and can be faintly smelt) tends to encourage the bees to supersede rather than produce swarm cells everywhere. That's the theory... there were a few swarm cells in the face of the comb, so we are interested to see if these are really supersedure cells.

The bees were in a good mood (no one got stung!) and they didn't follow the spectators back to the house, so they all sat out in the shade and had a very civilized cup of tea with cake and biscuits. People began to drift off around 5:30.

There will be a talk just before Christmas (December 11th) by Robin Dartington (the creator of the Long Deep hive). Please support this and bring along your questions... after running this hive this year Bob says that he will certainly have a few questions for him!

Show-buzz

Think **October 26th**. Yes, it's that time of the year when you start shilly-shallying about whether your honey is good enough to show. Of course it is, or the bees wouldn't have bothered to make it. So stop shillying now and while you are extracting and bottling, keep the Show in mind and your entries will be prepared without any extra effort. You probably give some of your best honey away to friends as little presents from time to time. Well a showable jar of honey is exactly the same thing – honey as clear as you can get it, in a clean jar with a shiny lid. That's all the judges ask for.

Books of the Month

In his book, '*Honey Production*', ROB Manley gives some good advice on warming and straining. He stresses that you always warm very gently and never beyond 140°F (about 60°C), which you can test by holding a hot jar in your hand without discomfort. You should always keep the honey covered while warming to preserve the aroma. Mr. E B Wedmore, in his indispensable '*Manual of Beekeeping*' says much the same and he includes a table of the points honey judges are looking for.

Our librarian, Bob Loades, has shown me some pamphlets produced by the National Honey Show that he is prepared to lend members. Tonsley's '*Judging Honey in the Jar*' gives an insight into the way a honey judge works, looking at appearance, colour, and taste. Ron Brown in his 'showing Honey Products' goes into the preparation of honey, beeswax, mead and items for the honey cookery sections. If you want to show comb honey, there is Robson's '*Production and Exhibition of Comb Honey*'

Remember the success of our Show depends on you. No entries, no show.

Secretary John Edwards. ejedwards@btinternet.com 0118 934 0238

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

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