



South Chilterns Beekeepers Association

President: Ian Wootton

The February meeting will be on Wednesday 18 February at 7.30pm at Woodcote Community Centre when the Regional Bee Officer, Ian Homer, will give a talk entitled 'No Bees, No Honey, No Money!' As well as talking about serious financial matters, Ian will also cover swarming and other reasons for colony depletion plus control procedures.

Newsletter No.14 February 2004

Forthcoming events:

Annual Dinner 10 March 2004

Honey Bee Viruses – Brenda Ball
12 Feb. (See January notes)

Spring Convention, Stoneleigh
24 April 2004

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In the Apiary: February.

Each month and indeed each season has its own problems; no doubt this month will be no exception. Probably the caption of these notes should be "out of the apiary"; there is not much to be done in the apiary this month apart from seeing that all is well. English weather is fickle and if there should be snow, do not clear it from the entrances, because as well as removing insulation there could be unnecessary disturbance of the cluster.

Your stocks should have gone into the winter with a full complement of young bees and ample stores, if you suspect otherwise a colony can often be saved from starvation by the application of candy or bakers fondant.

As well as possible snowy periods there could well be sunny spells with the temperature warm enough for cleansing flights. These flights should not be mistaken for signs of prosperity, at this time a weak colony will be more restless and fly more than a strong one using more food in the process, heavy presence of Varroa can also cause restlessness. Clusters located near the entrance tend to move sooner under a temporary stimulus of a sunny spell than do those further back or located higher up in the hive. With the late flow from the ivy, clusters could be located near the entrance and constricted for breeding space; in general, not much can be done at this stage as disturbance could do more harm than good

Hives may be moved and re-arranged at this time when the bees are still confined for a fortnight or more at a time. In order to minimize disturbance and jarring two people are required to lift and move the hives.

Climatic changes and agricultural practices could mean a first inspection about the second week of March instead of April as cited in most texts, so, be prepared by starting the fitting of new or properly stored foundation to brood combs, if your bees stored late ivy as some of mine did you will be advised to replace some of the stores to give breeding space, brood chamber congestion can result in too early swarming. Do not be afraid of getting a second opinion, each circumstance is different.

When a stock is not strong enough or the temperature is not high enough, too early an examination is uneconomical and could even be disastrous.

R. Crocker

FROM THE SECRETARY:

The February meeting will be on Wednesday 18th February at 7.30pm at Woodcote Community Centre when the Regional Bee Officer, Ian Homer, will give a talk entitled 'No Bees, No Honey, No Money! As well as talking about serious financial matters, Ian will also cover swarming and other reasons for colony depletion plus control procedures.

Sylvia Chamberlin of the High Wycombe Association under the auspices of BBKA and with the help of the Danish Beekeepers is planning a 5day event for beekeepers and their partners in Denmark in June or July. It will be on a first come first served basis.

Any of our members that are interested please contact Raymond or Sylvia Chamberlin on 01494 522082 or at w.winds@zen.co.uk (The use of <> is to avoid hyperlinking)

Apiary site: An apiary site is available at Fawley, for details please contact the Editor or myself

Reminder

The Flood Memorial Lecture is at Caversham Heights Methodist Church at 7.30 pm on Thursday 12 February. **Dr. Brenda Ball** will give a highly important talk on Varroa and pest management. With the increase in pyrethroid resistant Varroa pockets in the south you won't want to miss it!

Brian Carter

DECEMBER MEETING

The last meeting of 2003 took place on 17 December when we were privileged to hear Dr Michael Keith-Lucas talk to us on the subject of Pollination and the role of the honeybee and other insects. A fascinating subject presented with beautiful slides taken by Dr Keith-Lucas from around the world and the enthusiasm of our speaker for this particular subject was definitely infectious. The popularity of our speaker was evident in an attendance of 29 members not counting our youngest visitor ever who was still at the crawling stage!

The second half of our evening was given to our usual Christmas get together with drinks and seasonal fare ably organized by Viola Crowe and Lynn Penfold. Our thanks go to Reg Hook for organising a raffle, and to all who donated prizes. £46 was raised for the Association funds.

Our February meeting will be a talk by Ian Homer; our Regional Bee Officer entitled "no bees, no honey, no money!"

George Butler

FROM THE EDITOR

Questions have recently been raised as to the legality of using the alternative Varroa "treatments" Api-Life-Var and Apivar. It is not illegal to use either of these, it is anticipated that one or both will be approved this year. Be careful, wrong use can result in balled queens.

Wax Moth:

To control wax moth I consider the best method is to melt down affected combs. The official advice is to use B401 a biological treatment (available from bee appliance dealers) but this is only effective against larvae, it has no effect on adult moths as they do not feed.

There is a document on the subject of wax moth running to 28 pages obtainable from Northern Bee Books (Beekeeping in a Nutshell series) or it can be E-mailed to you or better still, downloaded from

http://www.apis.admin.ch/index_e.htm

Membership List: Please check your details on the membership list and notify Linda Scurr of any errors in order to produce and circulate an accurate list. If you wish to have any details excluded from the list please notify Linda.

R.F.Crocker

Date for your diary: Venue fixed for annual dinner

It's back to the Crooked Billet at Stoke Row for this year's annual dinner, on Wednesday March 10. Price is £21 for a choice between six dishes for each course, coffee and service. Make your selection on the night.

The foodies among us will be pleased to hear that chef Stuart Tyler won the Gordon Ramsey Young Chef of the Year award in 2002.

Recent starters included smoked haddock omelette Arnold Bennett, crispy fried goats' cheese with tapenade and orange, walnut and beetroot salad, and five oysters cooked with spinach, ham and cheese. There was well-hung steak for main course, halibut escalope with parsley mash, pigeon breasts with buttered spinach, rösti, and wild mushrooms in a red wine sauce and a vegetarian dish of aubergine layers, to name a few. Puds included treacle tart, caramel banana pancakes and dark Belgian chocolate mousse.

Details and a booking form will be in next issue or contact Lynn Penfold on 01628 825718 to reserve your space.

Lynn Penfold

Chemicals killing bees in France...where next?

In Alsace, eastern France, where 450,000 hives have been lost and honey production halved in three years, beekeepers are being regarded as disaster victims. It's all because of agrochemical giants Bayer and Aventis, according to an email I received recently.

As someone keen to protect the environment, I'm appalled yet again what the power of money is doing to help destroy our planet. Bees die...and the planet too – a fact recognised by just about everyone.

Being a new beekeeper, I hadn't heard of Bayer's chemical Imidaclopride, which sells to farmers under the name of Gaucho and is used to coat seeds to protect them from certain disease. However, it also paralyses insects such as bees even though it is officially declared non-toxic. They cannot rejoin the hive and they die. If they do succeed in rejoining the hive, their honey is toxic.

There are many products like this that seem to be poisoning the planet, yet governments rarely prohibit their use because of pressure from rich and powerful chemical giants

The email says Bayer is indifferent to all complaints and denies that its product is toxic. And now Aventis is selling a similar product, called Fipronil, under the name of Regent.

Gaicho and Regent are now being sold in supermarkets for gardens use, so watch out. Check the composition of all chemicals if you must use them. Or go organic!

As the email concluded: 'Let's remember the words of Albert Einstein – "No bees, no food for mankind. The bee is the basis of life on this earth ".

'Farmers must become aware that with Gaicho, they are cutting the branch on which they are sitting. Other solutions exist. In the meantime, the thousands of damaged hives don't give their owners the right to any compensation. Due to this, in the Lower Rhine alone, more than 100 new bee-keepers cease their activity each year.'

Lynn Penfold

Linda's Recipes

Carrot and parsnip soup

2 cooking apples peeled cored and chopped		
225g onions peeled and chopped	knob of butter	1 bay leaf
1 litre chicken stock	450g carrots peeled and chopped	a squeeze of lemon juice
450g parsnips peeled and chopped	1 tbsp honey	salt, pepper and parsley

Fry the apples and onions in a little butter,
Make up the stock, add the bay leaf and cook carrots for 3-4 minutes before adding the parsnips, apples and onions. Cook for a further 5 minutes. Remove the bay leaf and liquidize the soup. Return to the heat and add honey, seasoning and a squeeze of lemon juice.
Garnish with parsley.

Linda Clarke

Informative web addresses: - <http://www.vita-europe.com/>

Newbury and District Beekeepers' Association

Beekeeping – my way

Ged Marshall

Friday 12 March 2004 at 7.30 pm

Upper Bucklebury Memorial Hall, near Thatcham, Berkshire

Newbury Beekeepers' Association warmly invites you to the 22nd annual Leaver Memorial Lecture, to be given by Ged Marshall, a commercial beekeeper with a reputation for raising excellent native British bees, who will describe handling bees on a large scale. Ged is a prominent member of the British Beekeepers Association, is known for saying what he thinks when he believes it to be important, and represents beekeeping causes in Brussels.

The lecture is free and all beekeepers in the region are most welcome. We should therefore be very grateful if you would publicise the lecture amongst local beekeepers and colleagues – and through your magazine or newsletter if appropriate.

The lecture will be held at the Memorial Hall in Upper Bucklebury. The postcode is RG7 6QH.

Directions:-

- Take the A4 to the eastern outskirts of Thatcham
- Follow the signposting to Upper Bucklebury and Cold Ash (turning right at a roundabout if coming from Reading or left at traffic lights if coming from Newbury)
- Follow any signs for Upper Bucklebury and after 1½ miles, at the top of Harts Hill Road, the road bends to the right and becomes Broad Lane. Continue through Upper Bucklebury past Peach's garage and a pub.
- The memorial Hall is the last building on the right within the 30mph zone, before you reach Bucklebury Common.

There is ample space for car parking beside the Hall.

Newsletter deadline: 10th of the month for inclusion in the next Newsletter

Advertisements: - Small advertisements free to members. Traders £1 per issue (up to 5 lines) additional lines 20p per line. Cheques to be made payable to South Chilterns B.K.A. and forwarded to the Editor.

FREE to anyone interested! Selection of French concentrated essences to create authentic liqueurs like Benedictine and Chartreuse. Just add vodka or brandy. Ring Lynn Penfold on 01628 825718.

Wanted: - For a group of beekeepers. Small, motorized stainless steel honey extractor to take all sizes of frames. Details to the Editor

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