



South Chilterns Beekeepers Association

President: Ian Wootton

The July Apiary meeting is on Saturday 17th starting at 2.30pm. The venue is by courtesy of John Westcar. See Secretary's note.

Newsletter No.19

July 2004

Forthcoming events:

The Royal Show, Stoneleigh
July 4th – 7th

FBBKA Honey Show
September 30th

Apimondia Dublin 2005

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In the Apiary, JULY

The risk of swarming should be much reduced by now – but not totally. Keep an eye on the colonies that built up slowly in the spring, they could well peak in July and produce a swarm. A swarm in July, if hived, needs a lot of attention. The flow will have virtually finished by the end of the month so the swarm will have to be fed to build it up to strength for winter. To most beekeepers a swarm in July is a nuisance hence the advice followed by skep beekeepers was “Never raise your eyes above shoulder level in July when entering the apiary”. If a swarm was hanging on a tree then the beekeeper did not want to know about it!

If you do get a swarm you can partially remedy the situation if you know for sure which hive the swarm came out of. First of all go to the brood box of the swarmed colony. You will find swarm cells in all stages, sealed and unsealed and even, if you look closely, eggs in queen cups. Break them all down with the exception of one sealed queen cell or possibly two if they are close together and of the same age. Put things back together and return the swarm into the top of the hive, but through a queen excluder, until you are left with only drones and the queen (or virgin queens) desperately trying to go through the excluder, which of course they cannot. Remove excluder and the empty super box which was placed on the excluder to dump the swarm into, en bloc away from the colony, and then sort things out. It is of course essential not to allow a queen from the swarm to get back into the top of the main colony. Five or six days later go into the brood box and break down any more queen cells that have been raised, making sure that the original queen cell(s) left are still there and undamaged.

There should be a laying queen about three weeks later and you will retain all your foraging bees for the main flow which, weather permitting, should be in full spate with lime, white clover, bramble, rosebay willow herb or even some spring-sown rape. So have supers ready to add as and when necessary. In most areas the flow will stop very abruptly towards the end of the month and you can be sure the bees will turn very tetchy for some days. This is normal. Don't think your bees have gone bad tempered and that you have to rush around re-queening for that reason alone. Once the flow has finished, robbing may be a problem – be prepared to reduce entrances.

George Butler

FROM THE SECRETARY

JULY MEETING

Two for the price of one! The July meeting will inspect both John Westcar's and Bob Booth's hives in John's garden at Elsdon, Blounts Court Road, Peppard Common on Saturday July 17th at 2.30 pm. Parking is limited so like all good offers, first come first served.
OS ref 710809.

Brian Carter

MAY MEETING

Our May meeting took place at Waltham Place Farm by kind permission of Mrs Oppenheimer. A beautifully warm day saw 15 members make the rather long journey to White Waltham. Golly Sturt, secretary of Newbury BKA gave an interesting demonstration designed to alert members to the problem of Varroa mites becoming resistant to the current treatments using Apistan or Bayvarol. Mite resistance has been detected in the West of England and isolated instances in other parts of the country due to the movement of bees from the infected areas. She emphasised that as yet, there was no evidence to show that resistant mites were present in our areas.

Golly demonstrated a simple technique to accurately determine whether mites found in your hives were in fact resistant to the active ingredients of Apistan and Bayvarol, namely fluralinate and flumerthrin. She then ran through the alternative methods at our disposal to treat Varroa when mite resistance arrives. A test was conducted with the bees on site but no Varroa were found resistant or otherwise.

George Butler (Chairman)

FROM THE EDITOR

John Vickery has informed us that **European Foul Brood** has been confirmed in his Watlington apiary. He has elected to destroy the infected colonies. It is significant that one of the infected colonies has not built up satisfactorily for the last two seasons. We recommend that if possible you should join the Apiary Tour on July 10th. If John's apiary is included, as there has been known infection, it will be the last on the list. Hopefully nothing will be found.

Pyrethroid resistant Varroa has been found in Kent and confirmed by NBU, details are on the NBU website (Hyperlinked for the benefit of Newsletter recipients by e-mail)
<http://www.csl.gov.uk/science/organ/environ/bee/varroa/Resistancetopyrethroids.cfm>

Fortunately the weather in May was better than expected but as predicted, there were a number of failed queens and a spate of swarms but some colonies have produced heavily. One comment: "two of my colonies are weak but they swarmed, can you explain?" After being told that this had been covered in one of the Newsletters, he said he did not always read them.

EDUCATIONAL APIARY TOUR (Free, of course)

The proposed "Apiary Tour" with our Regional Bee Inspector is scheduled for July 10th. Ian Homer has suggested a starting time of 10.30 am, with a suitable break about mid-day. Participants can join or leave the tour at any point. Any beekeeper or prospective beekeeper who is interested in observing or wishing to have his or her bees inspected on the tour - not necessarily an Association member - please contact the Editor, the Secretary or Ian Homer. To enable anyone to join the tour at any point a mobile phone number will be available - 07778 846335.

As far as possible bees will be inspected in logistical order. Those who wish to use the mini-bus please contact the Editor on 0118 9722315 or southchilterns.bees@btinternet.com

The NBU are conducting a very useful survey into bee viruses. We know about nosema and can get samples of bees analysed by our President, but now, by taking part in the NBU research we can have our bees examined for the presence of any adult bee viruses FREE OF CHARGE. Extracts from the NBU website are appended below.

Ron Crocker

TAQMAN VIRUS SURVEY

Would you like to take part in some original research?

The NBU are launching an investigation into the occurrence of viruses in honeybee colonies throughout England and Wales, using a novel method for virus detection called **TaqMan®**. We aim to survey honeybees from all around this large geographical area, and would like beekeepers to help by taking samples of adult bees, then sending them to the NBU.

What is involved?

The procedure is very simple. You are provided with a small plastic bottle containing a small volume of 70% alcohol. All you need to do is to scoop between 10-20 bees into the bottle, then send it to the NBU. There is also a short form to fill in.

Will I get to know the results?

The results for each beekeeper will be sent to them, so they know which viruses were present in the sample submitted. Any feedback will include which viruses were tested for and whether they were present or not. However, due to the nature of the experiment, you may not receive the results for a few months, but you will be told what we find.

If there is a positive result, does this mean my bees might be subject to disease controls?

No. None of the viruses are currently notifiable, so there are no statutory controls. Your bees will only be tested for the viruses, not for any other disorders.

I would like to be involved. What do I do now?

All you need to do is notify the NBU that you would like to take part in the experiment. (If you receive your News by e-mail you can [click here](#) to send an e-mail), stating your **name, address** and **NBU identification number** (if known). You will be sent a sampling bottle (or more if requested), a form and full instructions. If you have any questions, just contact us at the same address.

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

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

Patricia Mills wishes to dispose of her father's **hives and equipment**
Telephone: - 0118 97223748.

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

For sale: - Three Langstroth hives, two with bees, two supers for each. Apply Editor 0118 9722315.

For sale: - Two National hives with two supers each, one with docile bees. Details from Editor.

The South Chilterns Beekeepers Association cannot be held responsible for the views expressed in the Newsletter or possible errors. Any use of copyright material must be accompanied by an acknowledgment of the author(s) .

Don't Go Miles to get your bee supplies or pay expensive carriage. **Go to John Belcher** who has most of your needs in stock and every thing else at the end of the telephone. Please call any time on 0118 984 232