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TAUNTON BEE-KEEPERS E Mail FORUM

tauntonbeekeepers.org.uk/joinlist.html

**TBK can also be viewed on Facebook
and Twitter**

SBKA website at :

www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

FUTURE MEETINGS

Saturday 3rd September

EXTRACTING DAY

10.00 am at Haddeo,
Bathealton

Please ring David Pearce
before hand to book a Fish
& Chip lunch
01984 623851

Saturday 24th September

2.30 pm Heatherton
Park

MICROSCOPY

Simon Jones and colleagues
will introduce the uses and
insights into the bee's
anatomy through the
microscope

This promises to be a fascinating
afternoon.

Wednesday 5th October

ANY QUESTIONS ?

7.30 pm Air Cadets Hall
to the right of Castle School, Taunton

This is a change from the
normal Year in Retrospect
Meeting. Questions please
a.s.a.p. to editor

BEE LINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE TAUNTON & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS

September 2011

Number 73 Vol 10



'Bee Yard' in Milverton

Last year, Milns Priscott and myself moved all our migratory hives back to a central site in his orchard for the autumn and winter. There was 30 colonies altogether. This was the first time we had had so many on one site but there were quite a few advantages with such an arrangement. All the wet supers could be returned in one go as can be seen in the picture. This saved us travelling, there and back, to a number of sites. All the varroa treatments could be administered at the same time. The big advantage was that all the colonies could be fed at the same time without much carrying. In the spring it was easy to load the single brood hives onto the truck and distribute them to the various oil seed rape and fruit orchard sites. It is something that we will do again this autumn.

ED

HOW DO THE BEES SURVIVE IT???

The following excerpt is taken from a scientific paper reporting on research in the U.S. and gives an insight into how one of their largest (if not the largest) beekeeping operation manages its colonies.

‘Standard beekeeping management practices for an operation of this size were employed. Treatment regimes throughout the year were as follows:

- (1) anti-mite treatment April 2009, just prior re-queening – amitraz;
- (2) antibacterial treatment May 2009 - oxytetracycline hydrochloride (OTC) (Terramycin™);
- (3) anti-fungal (*Nosema sp.*) treatment August 25, September 12, and October 13, 2009 - fumagillan;
- (4) antibacterial treatment late August, early September, 2009 - tylosin tartrate;
- (5) anti-mite treatment September 12, 2009, after harvesting honey;
- (6) anti-mite treatment – early November and early December 2009 - essential oils from lemon grass and spearmint (Honey-B-Healthy™).

Thanks to Stratford –on-Avon BKA and e bees

CONTINUATION COURSE

Once again, the Division is running a ‘Continuation Course’ to which all members are invited to attend. The course is aimed at those beekeepers who have completed a year or more with their own bees and is the next stage after the ‘Beginners Course’. Attendance will help those members considering taking the B.B.K.A. Basic Exam in 2012, an exam that helps bees and beekeepers alike.

The course starts on October 12th and runs to six sessions. Details of dates and venue are contained within the application form being sent out with this newsletter. Registration, together with fee should be sent to the treasurer Jenny Gammon.

Beekeeping A Novices Guide

words and pictures by David Wootton
(130 pages in full colour £19.99 incl. Postage)



Being a bee book addict, over 300 at the last count, I was drawn to David Wootton’s table at Stoneleigh earlier this year. Now I’m not a novice, but this book was a ‘must buy’ for the photographs alone. David is a professional photographer and many of the images are stunning.

The text is written for those taking up beekeeping for the first time. David relates his experiences from a few years ago when he took up the craft and has ensured that the explanations are simple and easy to follow. There are a few actions that the more experienced beekeeper may frown upon but that is true across the whole area of beekeeping.

Participants at ‘Beginners Classes’ must at times be bemused by the speakers quoting descriptions of the bees and beekeeping. Here is a book that will tell you the difference between supering and supercedure, a cast and the caste and other confusions.

This is a book that can be read by all the family and will no doubt stimulate even more people to learn about the craft.

More details can be found on www.beekeeping-book.com or from:

David Wootton Photography, East Farm Cottage, Nordelph, Downham Market PE38 0BG

EDITORIAL

This issue has a few extra pages as there has been a lot happening in the Division. I have also added, I hope, some useful tips for this time of the year and the winter tasks ahead. I am grateful to my fellow editors across the U.K. for providing us with a wealth of interesting articles that we are able to pass on to others in our areas. Some articles in **Beelines** by our contributors have been put to such use by the editors in other areas.

It was decided to change the 'Year in Retrospect' meeting to an 'Any Questions' event. I am sure we all have plenty of unanswered questions so please forward them to me if you like by post or e mail by the end of September. Now that we have even more members with qualifications we can have a knowledgeable and experienced panel to try and give answers.

Before then however there is the Microscopy afternoon and later the start of the Continuation Course.

Please take note the AGM this year is on 5th November. This time a number of long serving officers and committee members are 'calling it a day'. Members sometimes say they would be interested in serving on the committee but are not asked. Take this as an invitation to put yourselves forward.

David Morris Editor

NATIONAL HONEY SHOW 2011

27th, 28th & 29th October 2011
St George's College Weybridge,

HIVE WATCH

September sees the end of the extraction and the preparation of the bees for the winter months ahead. Good wintering will result in strong colonies in the spring. This time of the year is often described as the 'beginning of the beekeeping year'.

Good wintering entails the varroa treatments, and if necessary, the nosema treatments to have been undertaken. Also ensure the colonies have sufficient food for the months ahead and this must include some pollen, a source that will still be available to them from the balsam and ivy.

Ivy honey some years produces a surplus but granulates quickly and can be difficult for the bees to make use of in the spring. It also has an unattractive taste. Another honey with a taste like 'tom cats' is privet honey. However, I gather if left for a year in the tubs the unpleasant side of this honey disappears.

If there is an amount of honey beyond immediate bottling needs then the honey is best stored in tubs. Store the tubs in an area with a constant temperature of 10°C.

Finally, don't try and get those weak colonies through the winter. Even if they do survive, they will still be weak in the spring. By uniting with stronger colonies you will save on treatments as well as sugar syrup and have a colony from which to make an increase in the following year. A piece on uniting is contained in this issue.

Editor

PRESIDENT'S DAY 16th JULY AT HEATHERTON PARK

This year a new face was invited to the annual 'President's Day' David Morris as President introduced David Packham the seasonal bee inspector for East Devon. He gave an entertaining talk on his way of beekeeping and he was helped by the many questions asked by the audience as the talk proceeded. Amongst the practices that he incorporates into his beekeeping is to have full length entrances of just a bee space height throughout the year. He also takes off his honey at the end of July, any honey produced in August and September being left for the colony. Marking his queens in the spring is only undertaken when drones can be seen to be present. The vote of thanks was given by Milns Priscott.

After an excellent tea, David accompanied a group of members, opened up a number of hives in the apiary.

It was an enjoyable afternoon and as President, I would like to reiterate my thanks to those who attended, to Dave Packham and most important, to those who contributed and arranged the tea.

Cleaning the smoker

You know the problem - smoker gets gunked up with tar, sometimes to the extent that the lid won't close properly. Action is clearly required, but what?

Over the past years I have tried a number of chemical cleaners, ranging from beach tar removers to heavy duty oven cleaners - all have been reasonably effective, but at the cost of stinking out the utility room and the cats leaving home for the duration. There must be a better way - and I think I have found it!

The science, for those who are interested, is that wood shavings, which are my main smoker fuel, burn at a "cool" temperature, (better for the bees), but produce a lot of tar. Anyone who has a woodburning stove will have come across the problem of the chimney getting tarred up and the stove smoking.

The solution, according to my friendly chimney sweep, is to burn a certain amount of coal each time - this raises the temperature in the flue and burns off the tar deposits (but don't do it as a one-off or you will set the chimney alight...).

No. I am not suggesting coal-fired smokers - but when you are scorching your floorboards with the flame thrower, spare a few minutes to scorch your smoker. The tar will catch light, burn up and turn to a powdery ash which can be knocked away. I have tried it and it works!

from 'An Hes', the West Cornwall BKA Newsletter Courtesy of e bees

UNITING COLONIES

Swarm controls will have resulted in an increase in numbers, Getting back to the number you thought of first is simple: put two colonies together but do it carefully. The accepted way to unite two colonies is using a sheet of newspaper. The books will tell you to move the colonies close together, moving one of them a yard at a time each day, but my experience is that this is unnecessary.

Simply wait until the bees have stopped flying in the evening, remove the crown board from one hive and lay a sheet of newspaper directly over the frames of the brood box (use a broadsheet not a tabloid) then place the second colony over the top of the newspaper, You can make a few small holes in the paper but I never do. Close up and leave for a week before inspecting and reassembling into one unit. If there are supers, ensure that there is a sheet of newspaper wherever adjacent boxes contain different bees.

A few precautions: loosen all hive parts and take any brace comb off the bottom of the frames of the top box beforehand, preferably earlier in the day. At the same time, remove the queen that you do not wish to keep. Put a queen excluder on top of the newspaper so that the queen is confined in one box and also to hold down the newspaper. I find that a fine water spray will keep the bees in the bottom box immobilised for the short time they are exposed.

Written by Celia Davis for the Warwickshire BKA. to whom we acknowledge the article via e bees

HIVE PRESERVATION

Last November I told you that the new formulations of Cuprinol (with BP as a suffix) have not been tested for use on hives and should not therefore be used.

I have now had confirmation from Ronseal that their 5 year wood stain is safe and can even be applied to a hive with bees in residence.

*Snippet in Stratford BKA August 2011 Newsletter by the editor Peter Edwards
Thanks to e bees.*

WAGGLE DANCE



Photo Neil Arnold

We were fortunate to have another glorious summer evening for this year's 'Waggle Dance' at the newly refurbished Neroche Village Hall. The event was well supported with 110 tickets being sold. Many people chose to sit outside and enjoy the evening sunshine while others put on their dancing shoes and took part in the traditional country dancing under the watchful eye of caller Alex Cummings and the band.

This was obviously thirsty work as John Smales-Cresswell and Malcolm Drakeford were kept busy filling up the jugs of Pimms, and halfway through the evening it was necessary to send out for more supplies. As usual, the hog roast was delicious along with the superb spread of salads and accompaniments that Jayne Bevan kindly prepared. Thanks must also go to everyone who kindly made puddings for the evening and to the team who worked so hard in the kitchen.

June Harries did an excellent job organising and selling draw tickets which raised over £200 – many thanks for all the donated prizes.

All in all it was an excellent social evening that raised over £800 for the new apiary building; but what was more important, was to see everybody having so much fun!

Thanks for this Simon and to Louise for all your hard work.

Ed

THE UK HONEY MARKET

Once again Alan Byham, S.E. Regional Bee Inspector, has done an excellent job in collating data on average honey prices across the country. The regions are those used by the NBU (we are in 'Western') and the data relates to 2010.

	Flower	Flower	Flower	Cut comb	Maincrop
Region	Wholesale	Direct Sales	Bulk Sales		Yield (lbs)
	£/lb	£/lb	£/lb	£/lb	
Western	3.07	4.35	2.30	9.20	88
Wales	3.90	5.40	2.50	8.48	22
Northern	3.94	4.30	2.66	10.05	48
South East	3.71	4.31	2.43	7.40	46
Southern	3.54	4.13	3.00	6.85	33
Eastern	3.25	4.50	2.20	6.00	40
South West	3.50	4.32	1.82	7.73	44
North East	3.62	4.29	2.25	6.16	70
Average	3.57	4.45	2.40	7.73	49

Courtesy 'The Essex Beekeeper' via eBees

Forthcoming Social Events

SKITTLES

22nd October at Lamb & Flag Blagdon Hill

Contact Rosemary 01823 283482 to book supper and further details.

SBKA LUNCH

30th October at Olive Mill, Chilton Polden Hill on A 39

Bookings with Neil Trood 01458 241368

ANNUAL DINNER

10th December at Taunton Vale Golf club.

Details to follow

AGM

I came across this in the **August 1987** edition of the Somerset Newsletter. With our AGM not far away it may be appropriate.

A Member

Are you an active member the kind that would be missed? Or are you just contented that your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings and mingle with the flock? Or stay at home in comfort to criticise and knock?

Do you take an active part and help the work along? Or are you merely satisfied just simply to belong?

Think it over Members you know right from wrong Are you an active Member OR DO YOU JUST BELONG?

And from the **Autumn 1984** edition:

Harry Harrison of Taunton is resigning as Secretary after 25 years of service to his Association. Harry was a dedicated Bee Man and maker of hives. His Association will be sorry to lose his expertise, yet happy in the thought that anyone could give of his voluntary service for a quarter of a century!.

Ed

TAUNTON AGAIN HAS TWO MEMBERS WITH A NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BEEKEEPING

Many congratulations to **Simon Jones** and **Dan Basterfield** upon achieving the highest qualification in beekeeping.

They would have both started by passing the BBKA Basic exam and it is anticipated that we will have another half dozen members with the basic qualification this year.

In the meantime, congratulations must also go to the following members and associate members who gained further modules earlier this year:

Pat Hopkins
Bridget Schneiders
Ken Edwards
Eleanor Burgess
Rosemary Burgess
Dan Basterfield

As a result, Pat Hopkins (credit) and Bridget Schneiders (Distinction), have gained their Intermediate Theory Certificate whilst Ken Edwards has gained his Advanced Theory Certificate .

Extracting Equipment for Hire

An Extractor and settling tank can be hired by contacting

Jason Wallis on 01823 667338

2011 HONEY SHOW

This year Neil Trood, our Honey Show Secretary was unable to be with us as he was under-going a successful operation in the week of the show. However, Neil had done sufficient preliminary work to ensure the show ran smoothly. There were over 150 entries and a pleasing aspect was the fact that there will be some new names on the silverware. Congratulations go to Gail Johnson, Mary Adams, Lynn Ingram, Sid & Jenny Gammon, David Pearce, Keith & S Reid, Anne Halpin & Adam Robbins and Rosemary and Eleanor Burgess as trophy winners. An excellent exhibit in the schools class was rewarded by every student involved from Staplegrove Primary School receiving a Somerset BKA certificate of merit. No show would be successful without the contributions of the exhibitors, the helpers before, during and after the event and the members who ensured we had a regular refreshment. The winners of the honey tasting class was Keith Reid with David Pearce and Sid & Jenny runners up. Many thanks to all those involved and I think it safe to say, Neil would have been proud of you.



Honey Sales and taking down the demonstration screens

