



Image by: Rex Needle

August 2016

WVBKA Charity Registration Number: 517008

Honey extraction training

If anyone wants to get some hands on training please let me know and we will try and link you up with one of the more experienced members when they are doing some extracting.

Peter Woodward, 01981 240280

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Diary Dates

August 12th

- Apiary meeting 6:30pm

August 17th

- Committee meeting

August 26th

- Apiary meeting 6:30pm

September 9th

- Apiary meeting 6:30pm

September 10th

- Kington Show

September 23rd

- Apiary meeting 6:30pm

October 9th

- Honey Show

Queen Colour of the Year 2016 is: WHITE

Kington Show

This great one-day agricultural and country events show is on Saturday, 10th September. WVBKA has an outside tent stand, right beside one of the major marquees so lots of people will stop to chat and see what we're doing. I have a few free passes (car parking and entrance) for volunteers willing to give some time to helping on our stand. If you are able to come, please let me know and I will send you a pass. It really is a good day out and there is plenty to see. Just three volunteers would give us cover so that everyone can have time to look around the show. My phone number is 01497 831381. I'm looking forward to hearing from you!

Rosie Bashford



Apiary Meetings

We have now had two regular apiary meetings at the association apiary, and attendance has been good.

In addition, Val Vivian-Griffiths attended the apiary and explained about her system of queen rearing. This was an interesting practical explanation of how Val uses the Jenter system to obtain eggs and the use of the Cupkits in a rearing box full of nurse bees to get the plastic cells drawn out as queen cells. These cells are then

transferred into Apidea mating boxes to hatch and for initial egg production to begin following mating.

During August there will be two meetings at the apiary:

August 12th – Finding and marking queens was planned but this is really an exercise to carry out next spring when we will have stronger colonies to work with at the apiary. Instead we will have a discussion at the July meeting and come up with an alternative plan for this meeting. If you would like a topic added to our list then please let me know.

August 26th – Varroa: how to do a Varroa count, what treatments are available and how to use them.

There will be tea, coffee or beer and a chance for a general discussion about what is happening currently with bees after each session.

Peter Woodward



Congratulations

Cliff Rose has now passed Module 8 of the BBKA written examinations, and as a result of passing all the modules he has now achieved the Advanced Theory Certificate. Well done Cliff!

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BBKA Members: Bees & Equipment Insurance Proposal

The following information has been sent to us from the BBKA – if you have any comments please send them to Sue Quigley who will coordinate our association response.

For many years, one of the most frequently asked questions from member to our Insurance Broker and the BBKA, is whether or not the BBKA insurance policy covers their bees, hives and equipment and prior to today, the answer was NO.

However, following discussions with many insurers in partnership with our broker Towergate, we are pleased to advise Area Associations, Branches and the membership that the BBKA has been able to arrange this additional insurance cover for members. This letter is to inform you of this opportunity and elicit your comments and gauge the level of interest from your Association in the proposed scheme.

There are still some details to be defined/clarified and agreed and “Yes”, “the Devil can be in the detail” but work has been undertaken to make this proposal as simple, straight forward and transparent as it can be so in essence, the proposal available is as follows:

1. The proposal is to introduce all-risks cover on hives, bees, and beekeeping equipment through a Lloyds Underwriter and currently, the one named exclusion would be for colony loss through bee disease.

2. Such cover would be for up to 5 hives (each colony covered up to £1,000 per colony).

Stock i.e. jars, candle wicks covered up to £250.

3. The cost of this additional service is estimated to be between £5 and £10 per member per annum.

4. For those members with more than 5 hives, up to 20 hives costs an additional £10 plus insurance tax: up to 40 hives an additional £15 plus insurance tax.

5. Association apiaries – additional cover will also be available for Association hives and equipment.



Image by Simon Barnes

The BBKA has been offered the service for a fixed cost based upon the total BBKA membership. Whilst it is hoped that all Associations and members will avail themselves of the service being offered to us, we have tried to be pragmatic and therefore made calculations of cost based upon different levels of “take-up”, which is why there is at this stage, an estimated cost range for the cover quoted but that will be clarified in advance of any commitments by Associations/members.

When the levels of interest has been expressed and assessed, we can then speedily clarify the details and calculate the actual cost per member but for this scheme to be viable, we need a very high take-up by all Area Associations /Branches and members

The BBKA will undertake the overall administration of the scheme but it will be the responsibility of the AA/Branch Secretary/Treasurer to undertake the Association membership administration to submit the full details and payment to the BBKA for their Association in one transaction.

The policy will commence on the same date and therefore the whole process will have to be coordinated to meet a date which has yet to be agreed.

To move this forward, we need to know the thoughts of your Association and its members so please address them to me.

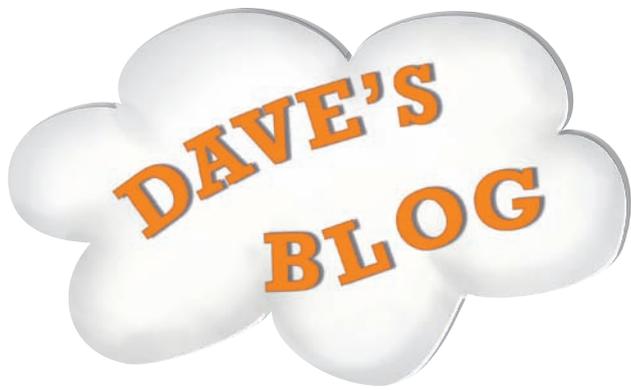
As a final point and to make things very clear, this is not a BBKA income generation project nor is it linked to Capitation. This initiative is a way of answering our members’ original question to provide an additional service to our membership albeit at an additional cost.

David
Teasdale

BBKA Trustee July 2016

Swarms season is upon us

If you want a swarm or are willing to collect swarms from peoples gardens in your area please let June know on 01981 550320.



August notes

In about a week or 10 days' time the drones will be thrown out, making it more difficult to get any virgin queens mated so from now on there probably will be no more swarming. Now is the time for you to take stock and make sure your colonies are queenright for the winter. In the event of finding colonies which are queenless you should amalgamate with other queenright stocks making sure there is no disease present. This is quite a simple process of uniting together with a sheet of newspaper. If you feel you may have a queen but you are not quite sure then put a test comb in and take a look four or five days later, from the results you will then be able to make your mind up about what to do. All these procedures need to be completed fairly quickly so the bees can be settled for the winter.

Please feed your bees as early as you possibly can, do not leave it too late. Try to complete your feeding in the first 10 days of September, this will enable the colonies to evaporate any excess moisture and settle down for winter. Of course all your treating for Varroa will have been completed in August, giving you time to carry out any procedures which are necessary. Having done all that and got your bees settled please leave them alone. There is no need for routine inspections after about the middle of August. If there are any late queens hatched then let nature take its course.

Make sure your colonies weigh approximately 45 lbs which should be sufficient to carry them through and make sure they are tied down. It is quite a good idea to create airspace underneath the hive for ventilation and to help keep the base of the hive dry. I do not recommend open mesh floors for the winter, but this is a personal thing and you must judge for yourself. Brood temperatures are roughly 92° Fahrenheit, how can a colony maintain its warmth, working harder consuming more food than is necessary to maintain that temperature? Do not put your bees under more stress than is absolutely necessary.

Beekeepers prodding around in brood nests can and do lead to premature queen failure and all sorts of other stresses which are difficult for the bees to manage. Yes, carrying out your routine examination on a queenright colony is important, but there are many occasions when it is not necessary, especially if a colony has swarmed – it is quite safe. Once it has swarmed then leave it for at least 30 days to get established with a new queen, remember the life cycle; 16 days to hatch and a further 10 to 14 days to get the queen nicely mated depending on the weather. In the intervening period you can cause serious damage by premature poking around. Loss of virgin queens is very common providing the colony is not short of food. There is no point in wasting your time looking for evidence of a laying queen, I repeat leave well alone. Of course that doesn't mean to say that after a reasonable time has elapsed you can ascertain through routine examination whether you have a queen or not. Remember to leave the queen at least until you have sealed brood to estimate if she is good or not. She may well turn into a drone layer if she has not been mated properly.

I do hope you have all had a good crop this season; this should help to set the bees up in good shape for the winter. Make sure you have carried out your treatment for Varroa and indeed brood diseases need to be checked in the autumn. Marking hives will also save you time in the event of an outbreak of any disease, back tracking is made very much easier if you have some identification on your hives. It need not be elaborate, just an initial will suffice. This will enable you to keep track on where your equipment is and what hives it belongs to or at least the particular site. To coin a common saying these days, "it isn't rocket science" and very easily achieved. I would commend this to any beekeeper and keeping a piece of chalk in your pocket will enable you to carry out this procedure. Remember chalk is removable leaving hives clean.

Important – we are fast approaching the robbing season. Please reduce entrances to avoid robbing before any honey taking procedure. This will enable the bees to defend themselves. If they are queenright this should not be a problem.

Dave

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- Jane Matthews
- Andy Strangeway
- June Williams
- Suzanne Wenczek

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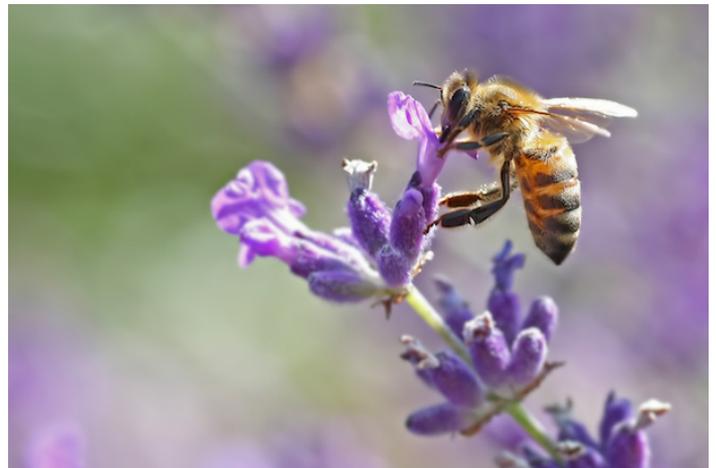
Honorary Auditor:

Mike Price

Honey extraction equipment for hire

The WVBKA has a honey extractor available for hire, as well as an electric uncapping knife.

A deposit of £50 plus a hiring fee of £10 is required for the extractor. For each subsequent hiring in the same season, a fee of £5 is chargeable. The knife is hired out at £10. Deposit for both the extractor and the knife is £50. To check if the equipment is available for hire, you can contact June on 01981 550320.



Honey bee on lavender by Kristian Poulsen



Equipment for sale

As a result of poor health Ian Hydes has passed on to me some of his equipment to sell, please let me know if you are interested.

Peter Woodward 01981 240280

There are:

- 4 National hives each consisting of a solid floor, a brood box, super and a roof. These appear to be cedar and still have a few years life in them.
- Thorne's table top extractor – 4 frame
- Plastic coarse and fine sieves
- Honey bucket with tap
- Honey tank with tap – no lid
- Small solar wax separator.

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