

August 2017



News Letter

Oxford Beekeeping Association

Editorial

Assuming the local forage is just about over, this month is a good time of year to check for diseases and start preparations for the winter period. As the month progresses the colony workers will have much less to do, and may exhaust themselves flying due to the reducing volume of nectar.

Similarly house bees will have fewer larvae to feed which will reduce their aging process. This reduction in the aging process extends the life of individual bees from the normal six weeks during summer to around six months, which we expect from winter bees.

Because the workers will continue to feed on pollen, their fat bodies will develop and their hypopharyngeal glands will remain plump with brood food. This is good news for bees, but if they are diseased, the disease will progress during their longer lifespan and could be passed onto the larva they feed the following spring.

We should make sure that the winter

bees are as healthy as possible and are will nourished. In addition to the management of varroa there are other conditions that can affect the viability of a colony through the winter and into the spring. In particular *Nosema ceranae* can be a problem, this is an ideal time of year to find out if your bees are infected. The common way to do this is to collect 30 older bees, kill them, then crush the abdomens, add One millilitre of water to this. A small drop of liquified abdomens is then placed under a microscope and viewed at 400x. If contaminated the spores, which look similar to rice grains, are easily identifiable. *Nosema* is passed to adult bee whilst cleaning cells, but not present in larva.

Treatment such as ApiHerb, Vita Feed Gold, Vita Feed Green, Nozevit and thymol may help.

The best way to treat *Nosema* is to conduct a Baily comb change when the colony is building in the spring.

Please contact Mark Blanchette if you would like to check for *Nosema*.

August – Field Trip

14:30 Saturday 12 August

Please notify Janet Robinson-Wood if you plan to attend the Viktor and Lucy Zaichenko bee farm Saturday 12 August. Your notification will assist Viktor and Lucy with their preparations, they preparations. Light refreshments will be available from 02:30 PM, the afternoon will conclude approximately 05:00 PM. **Email** Janet at: janetrobisonwood@gmail.com

Location: Vine Cottage Ashburton Lane, Hook Norton, OX15 5QE.

We have been advised that a few mat-

ed Buckfast Queens may be available to purchase at £40:00 each. Please notify Viktor or Lucy if you would like one of



these queens in advance of Saturday.

Please see the following web sites:

www.honeybeesuppliers.co.uk
www.thehoneymakers.co.uk

Midland & South-Western Counties Convention

The Bee Conference Programme

The Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester



Friday 15th September

15:00 onwards	Arrival, registration, tea and coffee. Staging of honey show.	
16:15 to 16:30	Welcome address	
16:30 to 17:30	The Demeree and more.	Anne Rowberry
17:40 to 18:40	The importance of drones	Lynne Ingram
19:00 to 20:15	Dinner	
20:30 to 21:30	Beekeeping questions and answers session	Colin Pavey
21:30 onwards	Social time & bar	

Saturday 16th September

07:30 to 08:45	Breakfast for residents and day visitors reception	
09:15 to 10:15	Chemical ecology of honey bees and how it is exploited by varroa	Prof. Stephen Martin
10:15 to 11:00	Coffee / tea. Start Honey Show Judging	
11:00 to 12:00	Pollen - super-food for honey bees	Bob Smith NDB
12:10 to 13:10	Reactive swarm control	Wally Shaw
13:10 to 14:30	Lunch & set up workshops	
14:30 to 17:00	Workshops	
19:00 to 20:30	Conference Dinner	
20:30 to 21:30	After dinner speaker. Stray thoughts of an aspiring bee master	David Maslen

Sunday 17th September

07:30 to 08:30	Breakfast for residents and day visitors reception	
08:30 to 09:15	Inter-denominational service (optional)	
09:30 to 10:30	Sustainable bee improvement	Jo Widdicombe
10:30 to 11:00	Coffee / tea. View honey show	
11:00 to 12:00	How plants solve crime?	Dr. Michael Keith-Lucas
12:10 to 13:10	Bee genetics explained ... simply	Margaret Murdin NDB 1
13:10 to 14:30	Lunch followed by honey show results, prizes and raffle draw	
15:30 onwards	Depart	

Book now on line at <http://www.mswcc.org.uk/products-page/>

Midland & South-Western Counties Convention

The Demeree and More ...

Friday 15th Sept 16:30-17:30

A brief look at the history and development of the Demeree system and how it has added to the resources available to Beekeepers. This manipulation appeared to go out of fashion but the value of it is becoming more apparent. We will consider how it can be modified and adapted to serve many purposes and solve some equipment issues.

The Importance of Drones

Friday 15th Sept 17:40-18:40

Drones are important in the honeybee colony, but are often ignored in hive inspections, or sacrificed. This talk will look at the role of drones in the honeybee colony. We will also look at the anatomy, biology and mating behavior of drones, and the mysteries of Drone Congregation Areas.

Beekeeping questions and answers panel

Friday 15th Sept 20:30-21:30

Open session to ask our panel questions on beekeeping

Disease management – Workshop

Saturday 16th Sept 14:30

An overview of the ways you can proactively manage your colonies to keep them healthy and thriving. In this workshop, we will look at the common pests and disease of the honey bees and the recommended techniques available to beekeepers for their management and control.

The chemical ecology of honey bees and how it is exploited by varroa

Saturday 16th Sept 09:15-10:15

Recognition is fundamental for all behaviours, and in insect's chemical communication is the main mode of recognition. However, if parasites can mimic the smell of their host they can remain there undetected. We know this chemical mimicry is used by many parasitic ant species, so it was no big surprise to discover that honey bee parasites such as *Braula coeca* flies and Varroa mites are able to survive within a honeybee colony using the same method. The mites' ability to mimic the bees' odour in just a few hours explains why they are able to move undisturbed between bees of the same colony, as well as move between bees belonging to different colonies.

Pollen - super-food for honey bees

Saturday 16th Sept 11:00-12:00

Honey bees obtain all their food from flowering plants in the form of nectar and pollen. These nutrients are required in considerable quantities and there needs to be continuity of supply if a colony is to thrive. As beekeepers, we are rather keen on the nectar and honey aspects but less observant on pollen? This talk will explore the function of pollen and examine the several constituents that make it a super-food for our bees. Options will be discussed for providing nourishment when pollen is scarce.

Making pollen reference slides – Workshop

Saturday 16th Sept 14:30

This workshop will concentrate on preparing good slides for further examination; we will explore two or three ways of sampling pollen from flowers and look at ways to tackle the pollen pellets obtained from pollen traps. The transfer of pollen in honey to a microscope slide will be discussed but not practiced.

Midland & South-Western Counties Convention

Reactive swarm control

Saturday 16th Sept 12:10-13:10

The most widely used method of re-active swarm control (artificial swarming) is the so-called Pagden Method. The use of this method (with variations) over a number of years proved to be. This lecture describes the development of a much better method based on the work of L.E. Snelgrove (his Method II) and the rationale behind it.

Snelgrove method of swarm control – Workshop

Saturday 16th Sept 15:45

In this practical session we will demonstrate the Snelgrove method of swarm control and the logistics involved using colour coded hive boxes. We also hope to be able to show a short video of the method being done live on hives that have set up to swarm.

Sustainable bee improvement

Sunday 17th Sept 09:30-10:30

What is bee improvement? What effect do short-term fixes have on our bee population as a whole? Is there a more sustainable alternative to the continued hybridisation and mongrelisation of our bee stock? How can bee improvement be achieved without the continuous influx of new stock? Is a national bee improvement strategy possible? - Some of the questions that will be answered.

How plants solve crime?

Sunday 17th Sept 11:00-12:00

Pollen, and other botanical evidence, can be used to determine the timing of events, such as murders, and also placing suspects at the scene of crime. The talk will cover these topics with examples, and then move on to looking at cases closer to the interests of beekeepers, such as honey fraud and solving problems such as unpleasant-tasting honey.

Bee genetics explained... simply

Sunday 17th Sept 12:10-13:10

Like us, female bees have two sets of chromosomes; one set from the mother and one from the father. But male bees, the drones, are different: They have a single set. This is why we say that drones have no father! How does that work? The genetics of bees can seem complicated, mainly because the words used are long, complicated and difficult to remember. This talk will seek to explain the genetics of honey bees in a straightforward way - in a way that is useful to beekeepers.

Preparing for the winter – Workshop

Saturday 16th Sept 15:45

Winter can be challenging time for honey bees and in the late summer and autumn we need to ensure we manage our colonies in a way so they have the best chance of survival. In this workshop we will look at the critical tasks that we need to complete to help our bees make healthy and strong colonies for the following year.

Introduction to the new BBKA exams – Workshop

Saturday 16th Sept 15:45

Over the last year, the BBKA Examinations board has worked in developing and piloting the two new certificates (Certificate in honey bee breeding and Certificate in honey bee health), that will be added to the portfolio of beekeeping assessments in 2018. In this session we will discover the purpose and rationale behind these modules, as well as what the potential future candidates need to do, in order to prepare and be successful in taking on these assessments.

Wanted and For Sale Items

For Sale

British Standard 5 frame Nuc's for sale; £150.00 per nucleus colony. These are nice calm bees available from Kevin Mewis.

If interested please contact Kevin on telephone on 0793 594 7956 or email krmewis@gmail.com.

Delivery by arrangement or collection from Banbury area.

EH Thorne Sale



THORNE™

Thornes of Windsor

Saturday 2nd September, 10am to 1pm

Thornes of Stockbridge

Saturday 23rd September, 10am to 1pm

National Honey Show

Thursday 26th - Saturday 28th October

Orders MUST be collected from one of these sales in person or by a friend. Goods cannot be collected by a carrier. Please specify in the delivery instructions field which sale you will be attending.

[Order](#)

Apiary Site Offered

Mr Gordon Rogers, living in Long Crendon, has offered a site for bees.

He can be contacted at groggers@psa-online.com or 01844 208530.

His website is www.gordonrogers.co.uk

BBKA Convention



The British Beekeepers Association

BBKA **Spring Convention** 2018

Date: Friday 13th April to Sunday 15th April 2018

Venue: Harper Adams University, Newport, TF10 8NB

Duration: 3 Days

This event is the UK's premier educational and networking event for beekeepers and those interested in learning more about honey bees.

Lectures, workshops and trade show. Internationally renowned.

Event programme and prices available will be available nearer the time.

OBKA Contacts

The Oxfordshire Beekeepers Association is a registered charity. Number 1005846.

The OBKA website is on-line. Visit www.obka.org.uk to see details of future events, links to other useful sites and other relevant information.

Our Temp Secretary is Phil Sharman who may be contacted via his details below.

Our Chairman and Membership Secretary is Phil Shaman, Tel 01869 340626 or mobile 07912120337, email:

phil.sharman@btopenworld.com

Our Swarms Liaison Officer is Maurice Lean, Tel 01865 773626.

Our Seasonal Bee Inspector for South Oxfordshire is Philip Spillane, email:

Philip.spillane@apha.gsi.gov.uk

The Seasonal Bee Inspector for North Oxfordshire is Gordon Bull, email: Gordon.bull@apha.gsi.gov.uk

If you have any articles or information for the Newsletter, items wanted or for sale, or any comments for the editor, please contact Mark Blanchette at mblan@tiscali.co.uk