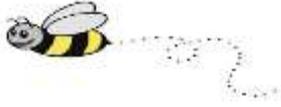


The Tivvy Buzzette

Newsletter of the Tiverton Beekeepers – November 2013

OUR NEXT BRANCH MEETINGS



Wednesday 20th November

AGM & Bob Ogden – Bee Folklore

Wednesday 11th December

Christmas meal – if you have missed booking give Sarah a phone we may still be able to fit you in.

Wednesday 15th January, 2014

Bee Anatomy – Dr John Carr

Wednesday 19th February

Bee Behaviour – Basterfields

Wednesday 19th March

To be confirmed, details in next edition.

Please come out and support your branch at our meetings.

Important Membership notice

From the Membership Secretary: The DBKA Executive Committee have asked that members note the following about membership renewal: “The annual Subscription for all existing members renewing shall be payable in advance and cover the period from January 1st to December 31st of each year. Members shall not be entitled to the benefits of the DBKA until their subscription has been paid.” I therefore request that you complete the renewal form and return it to me, with payment, before the end of December.

May I also point out that for those members who do not receive the Buzzette by e-mail the cost of postage exceeds the membership subscription received by the Tiverton Branch (the majority goes to DBKA and BBKA). As last year, I request that members who receive the Buzzette by post consider making a £5 donation to branch funds to assist with the postage costs.

Many thanks

William Lines

Bee Sting Allergy: a personal view – Dr Richard Lee

Over 40 of us met at the October branch meeting to hear Richard (and his wife Sandra) talk about his experience of anaphylaxis, subsequent investigations/ reading and treatment. He is a retired Consultant Hematologist at the RD&E Hospital and started keeping bees on his retirement – mentored by a beekeeper with 30 years experience.

This is a summary of a fascinating talk...

Richard and Sandra became very active members of the Exeter Branch, serving on the committee and swarm collecting. They kept bees at the end of their garden so were restricted as to the number of hives/nucs they could keep.

Looking back Richard realizes that his reaction to the inevitable stings increased over time. He would feel mildly unwell for a few days after a sting but would treat himself with antihistamines and carry on. Having not had a day ill in his memory, he was not too concerned.

Continued over...

Bee Sting Allergy continued

One day he collected a swarm and put them in a nuc quite close to his greenhouse, as there was really no more room in the garden. Two days later in the greenhouse he was stung on the top of his head so went back to the house and asked Sandra to remove it. Sting now removed he was about to go back outside when Sandra, now elsewhere, heard a thud and found Richard flat on the floor. He was still breathing so she raised his legs on pillows, knowing his blood pressure will have dropped, and phoned 999. While on the phone a quiet voice piped up from the floor saying he was alright now and would she put the phone down.

Richard now realizes that he should have let the ambulance come as he was unwell for 48 hours. His GP had to treat him the next day and made him feel like a naughty boy for not getting help.

We were then presented facts and figures on stings and numbers who actually suffer from an anaphylactic reaction. To put it in proportion WHO statistics from 2010 for England and Wales, showed there were 5 deaths a year from wasp/bee stings where as there were 99 deaths a year from falling out of bed!

If you are wondering when to seek help over bee stings Richard presented this very clearly explaining 3 types of reaction:

1. Localised – only at the site of the sting even if it is a large swollen area
2. Mild systemic – hives (rash), itching, rhinitis (runny nose), conjunctivitis
3. Severe systemic (anaphylaxis) –includes hives and swelling (elsewhere on the body), hoarseness, wheeze, shortness of breath, nausea, cramps, diarrhea, dizziness, fainting etc

Treatment:

1. Localised – it is a good idea to keep antihistamines to take after you have been stung
2. Mild systemic – antihistamines and consult you GP
3. Severe systemic – dial 999 and get help. If you or the person who has been stung has a prescribed Epipen® (Adrenaline) then do not hesitate to give it, However this is a prescribed medication and should not be given to any one else.

Anaphylaxis usually occurs within 15 minutes of the exposure but can be several hours later. It was explained to us how and why some people build up this type of reaction in their body, which can occur on the second or any subsequent exposure to the allergen (sting).

Richard now has an emergency kit which includes his Epipen®, antihistamines, steroids, and an alert bracelet. He is receiving Immunotherapy (desensitization treatment) which takes 3 years to complete and is 80% effective for bee stings. He does not currently keep bees but it sounded as though he was trying to keep this option open with Sandra!!!

For further reading try: www.bbka.org.uk/files/library/bee_stings-1002_1342858887.pdf , www.epipen.com , www.bsaci.org , www.resus.org.uk

A Bad influence or just bad beekeeping?

I have recently read Bill Turnbull's book 'Confessions of a Bad beekeeper' loaned from the club library. It is a humorous account of mistakes that could be made when keeping bees. Alas I appear to have been influenced by the read.

Before sorting the hive ready for winter I thought carefully through what I would need to do to change the order of the boxes. Some years ago I was advised to put the super of honey to be left for the bees to see them through the winter, under the brood box. I stacked all equipment that I might need near the hive & began work.

Having taken off the roof & crown board I lifted the super of honey off & put to one side. The brood box along with the floor was carefully moved from the original site. So far so good!

A clean floor was placed in position, the super of honey placed on top & the brood box now separated from the original floor put carefully on top of the honey store. The hive was closed as normal. A lot of bees had congregated on the front & on the back of the hive. At first I was unconcerned. After all I had just dismantled their home. But the confused bees still clustered on the front as well as the back. Oh no! I had put the floor on the stand the wrong way round. Their front door was no more. So much for careful planning!

It is no easy thing to turn a hive through 180 degrees. I have the bruises to prove it.

I am pleased to report the bees took it all in their stride & were soon going about their business as if nothing had happened. I obviously have very tolerant, trusting bees!

Janet Franklin

Note from your Buzzette Editor

Many thanks for your contributions. Please keep sending them in to:

Post Galleons Lap,
Plymtree,
Cullompton,
EX15 2LQ

Or pass on a note at the meetings.
Sarah Lines

<http://www.bbka.org.uk/local/tiverton/>