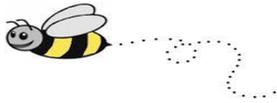


The Tivvy Buzzette

Newsletter of the Tiverton Beekeepers – July 2013

OUR NEXT BRANCH MEETINGS



Saturday 27th July
Mid Devon Show

Thursday 1st August
Honiton Show

Wednesday 18th September
Ian Homer – The Queen-less colony and its remedies

Wednesday 16th October
Dr Richard Lee – Bee Sting Allergy

Wednesday 20th November
AGM & Bob Ogden – Bee Folklore

Wednesday 11th December
Christmas meal

Please come out and support your branch at the Shows and meetings.

In this month's Buzzette:

Next meetings

Pollen in Forensic Science – notes from Dr Keith-Lucas' presentation

Polystyrene Hive Survey – email Lea Bayle as below

Report from Branch visit to the Apiary of Brahim Meraga

Meetings for Beginners

Beginners apiary:

Saturday 6th July
3rd or 17th August (tbc)
14th September

Committee News

Committee meetings:

Tuesday 9th July

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/>

Pollen in Forensic Science – Dr Michael Keith-Lucas (botanist and plant ecologist from Reading University has worked with Archaeologists, the Police, Respiratory Physicians, etc.)

At first became involved with archaeologists & used pollen to discover vegetation at times associated with archaeological finds

A bronze age man buried with a stone slab on his head had pollen from his death preserved in his nose which determined the time of year that he died

A body sealed in a box had pollen which showed when and where he died

Met. Office have pollen records of over 20 years that show when and what pollen is released all over the UK

First pollen released in the year is Yew (1 ball of pollen comb releases millions of grains of wind spread pollen)

50,000 pollen grains are found in a square cm of dust – pollen is released during daylight & therefore causes allergic rhinitis

500,000 fungal spores are found in the same area – released at night time therefore more likely to contribute to night time asthma symptoms

A study in to the cause of increasing autumn asthma symptoms found fungal spores (penicillin type) that had grown on stubble were the main cause. This was thought to have increased symptoms because in previous years they had been destroyed by burning stubble, now illegal.

In Feb – March Hazel pollen is followed by Oak and Ash

Clothes are very efficient pollen collectors due to static which attracts pollen – removed by washing

Summer produces grass pollens. A metre square of cereal crop produces billions of pollen grains. Under a microscope these pollen grains are round and very smooth sided.

Pollen calendars over the last 20 years help demonstrate where items have been left and moved to. Between plant roots and pollen they can determine to a week when a body was buried.

Pollen / fungal spores a measurable in the atmosphere (if it does not rain) for several days and nights and it can be determined when measured over the seas when and where they were released

Scene of crime pollens and placing an individual there relies more on insect pollens because these grains are more spiky to ensure they stick to insects

Different shapes of plant pollen determine which insects spread them i.e. spiky = bee, smoother round = beetle, oval = butterfly

Insect spread pollen grains vary more in size than wind spread pollens and can be much larger

Different plants pollens are released at different time of day i.e. over a couple of hours in the morning or afternoon so rhinitis symptoms should vary accordingly

Hairs and fibres from plants are also forensically identifiable

Fibres can show whether you walked through the middle or edge of a field due to different plant growth rates around the stem. Wood shows similar traits

Continued on next page...

Pollen in Forensic Science – continued...

Does a lot of work on honey fraud i.e. doctoring and mislabelling.

Named species of honey have to be 30-35% with some exceptions i.e. heather honey has to be 80% heather (most is actually 95% as there is no other crop in the 6 mile radius). Pure Lime honey only has to be 15% because it becomes toxic to bee larvae and is therefore only harvested by bees in small amounts. Bees tend to collect honey dew from the aphids feeding on the Lime trees which therefore has little pollen in and as with all honey dew honeys they contain little or no pollen

Shining a torch through a pot of runny honey shows: deflecting left = floral/ pollen honey, deflecting right = honey dew honey. Pine forests produce honey dew honey i.e. in Germany

Can tell whether pollen has been added to the honey once harvested because the honey will give the same protein reaction to the grains as happens in hay fever

Able to identify country of origin and honey that has been doctored with other things i.e. maple syrup

Honey bees flourish on organic fields as they have other flowers (weeds) to move on to once the crop is over, and can starve on non organic fields

Once tested honey for a beekeeper in the UK whose honey tasted disgusting and who felt his bees were visiting a local field full of wild flowers – the honey was 30% ‘Opium honey’

Final conclusion was the ideal way to dispose of a body is in the middle of the night, in your birthday suit, leaving it in the middle of a flood plain on the verge of flooding, then shower and ensure all the water is washed away!

Average UK pollen count calendar: <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/health/public/pollen-forecast#calendar#>

Editor – these are my notes of a fascinating and entertaining talk several branch members attended at Tiverton Natural History Society

Polystyrene Hive Survey

I am hosting a DARG meeting in October and am interested in exploring whether the losses this last winter/spring correlate in any way with the type of hive used, especially the polystyrene sort.

Many thanks and best wishes, Lea Bayly

please reply to: lea.jones2@btinternet.com

1) Do you use other hives in addition to polystyrene hives? Y/N

2) If so, what type are they?

3) Did you experience losses this winter/spring? Y/N

4) If so, how many of the lost colonies/nucs were in polystyrene hives compared to other types of hive (if applicable)

5) Have you any other comments about your experience of polystyrene hives?

Apiary meeting, Saturday 15th June.

The weather was horrible in the morning. Most people were wondering if I was able to proceed with the meeting. I was very hopeful that the weather will improve as the day goes on.

I went to the apiary at about 1.30 pm and I exhibited an empty WBC hive on the side of the road just near the entrance of East Barton property (Just to give some guidance to beekeepers who have never been there before).

At about 2 pm Tiverton DBKA members started to arrive. At 2.30 pm the number of beekeepers did not reach a dozen but we were more than six and considering the weather conditions that is not bad.

We decided to move bravely towards the first colony, before I started the manipulation I suggested that I deal with all my colonies but if one of them get a bit too 'hot' and give me grief then I would hand over the inspection command to a volunteer. I don't think my guests were keen on that suggestion. Anyway I was only joking. Luckily the bees didn't bother me.

There were about half dozen colonies to see. I went through them all; some of them thoroughly; some of them briefly. One beekeeper took photos of my activities, queens, brood patterns, eggs.... So there was a good variety of colony aspects/situations to see. I do mark my queens so we were able to see some of them.

I tried to give the history of each colony I was dealing with because believe me each hive has a history which could be different from the colony next to it.

Examples:

- One colony with a layer worker and how I dealt with it.
- Swarm-controlled colonies (Mother colony + Daughter colony)
- Newly migrated colony.
- Double-decker nuclei set-up

I have shown my guests how I do honeycomb in sections (cabana & English).

I have been keeping bees for at least fifteen years. I have learned a lot from my late father-in-law Bill Clark who was the perfectionist master of art in beekeeping (in my opinion) who left us last year and from other beekeepers through our DBKA meetings (outdoors & indoors). I do apologise for any confusion I may have caused with my methods. I do not 'stick' to the same methods all the time. I like to be adventurous sometimes and experiment other new ideas. I hope everyone understood what I was saying during the bees inspections/demonstrations because my accent is not from Devon.

We finished the apiary visit with a party (biscuits, drinks & chat).

I am pleased with the outcome of the meeting because the weather improved a bit at the right time and the bees (BEEHIVED) I mean behaved as they were outnumbered by us.

That's all folks. I like to thank everyone who attended the party.

Brahim