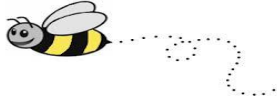


The Tivvy Buzzette

Newsletter of the Tiverton Beekeepers – August 2013

OUR NEXT BRANCH MEETINGS



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.

Meetings for Beginners

Beginners' apiary:

Saturday 3rd August Extracting in the kitchen
2 Upper Putson Cottages
Uplowman Road
Tiverton EX16 4QT
any time between 10.00 and 12.00 or 14.00 and 16.00

Saturday 17th August Preparing for winter,
treating varroa

14th September

Breaking News Tiverton Branch Teaching Apiary - Your Support Needed

Many branches both nationally and within the Devon Beekeepers Association maintain and support a Branch Apiary. Many years ago the Tiverton Branch had their own Apiary but unfortunately this couldn't be sustained. Recently our own Committee stated their intention to set aside funds for the provision of a Branch Apiary and this was reported at last year's Annual General Meeting. A prestigious and exciting location has now been made available to the Branch and your committee are keen to pursue this opportunity.

A Branch Teaching Apiary would have many benefits for members, new and not so new. Its primary use would be to train new Beekeepers and educate the public about the value of bees. There are also many other opportunities that could be possible including research, queen rearing, promoting bees with the public, trialing different types of hives; the list is as long as you want to make it.

As you would imagine, managing a Branch Apiary would need a lot of support from members so we would like to hear from you.

Should the Branch set up its own Apiary? Can you provide some time to support it? How would you like to see it used?

Please let us have your views, for or against, it's important we know how our members feel about setting up an Apiary.

My contact details are in the Yearbook.

Tony Lindsell. Branch Secretary.

Time to start thinking about next season

By the time you read this your bees may well have finished bringing in their stores for the winter; that is until you start removing sealed honey. Your queen will most likely already have started reducing her egg laying and all the bees will be concentrating on dealing with storing the harvest.

This year it looks to me that the harvest may drag on a bit longer as the Blackberry is still two to three weeks late flowering but if at all possible do not delay your preparations for winter. August will see Varroa at its maximum numbers. The mites will therefore be searching out a reducing amount of young brood to hide up with, as the cells are sealed. Once sealed the mites then lay their eggs inside the sealed cells. The emerging mites will then feed on the young larvae possibly infecting them with virus diseases and certainly weakening them, and they are your winter bees which have to look after your queen till next March. It is for the above reasons that it is important not to delay treating for Varroa.

If it is your practice to count mite drop with your Varroa wire floor it may be possible to avoid treatment at this time of year but it sometimes means that if you get it wrong you will have to treat with Oxalic acid in mid winter. My preference is to treat all my colonies in mid-August with Apiguard although this year I will also be treating some with MAQS. If you are going to use Apiguard you will need to remove all of your honey supers before treatment starts. With MAQS you can start treatment before all of your honey crop has been removed. Whichever treatment you decide to use you will find that your queen will most likely stop laying for a short while so don't panic if you are unable to find the queen, should you look.

With my own bees inspections are reduced in July to concentrate on checking for space only in the supers. August sees me only inspecting colonies that may be queenless then after my first feeding round in September check to see that all colonies are queen right for the winter. Following the first feed the queen is often stimulated to increase egg laying. You may prefer to leave a super of honey for your bees on Nationals but be warned, if there is insufficient honey in the brood box, many a colony is lost in March because the weather is cold and your bees are reluctant to cross the gap to enter the super for food.

Small colonies and doubtful ones.

Small colonies or nucs must be watched to see that they are still building, feeding if necessary. Varroa treatment still has to be considered, in the case of Apiguard you can cut the trays in half and give them two half doses but it will put the queen off lay for a while. If you are trying to build the colony I think a better option would be to use Bayvarol or Apistan, both materials are Pyrethroids, some of your Varroa mites may be resistant but your queen will carry on laying.

Should you find you have a drone laying queen or a colony that is just not responding, action must be taken. It is a waste of time treating for Varroa or feeding such colonies. If you think they are not diseased you could unite with a good colony or unite with a good nuc. Trying to introduce a new queen at this time of year often meets with disaster unless you have first united the queen with a small nuc.

Keith

Show Stand wins Second Prize at Mid Devon Show

Once again the Branch took its County Show display to the Mid Devon Show on the 27th July. The stand was enhanced with a display of honey comb, wax, stained glass and other items ancillary to honey production together with a sales table of quality local honey and wax. We were greatly surprised and delighted when show officials turned up and awarded our stand second prize in the whole show. Many members helped out on the stand, eagerly talking to interested members of the public and even heavy showers of rain could not dampen the enthusiasm on the stall. It was also good to see many of our members who dropped in to the stall to say hello.

Many people contributed to the success of the day and the list is too long to mention them all here, thanks from the Branch goes to all of them.



Thank you

A big thank you to all the members who have represented our Branch at the Devon County Show, Mid Devon Show, Cullompton Fayre and the Honiton Show. Our stand was a great success, gaining a 3rd in the Stevenson trophy and a 2nd in the Display Stand competition at the Mid Devon Show. There are so many I could name, but a special thank you to Tracy Lindsell for the design and art work for our stand and Tony Lindsell who has organised the setting up and taking down of the stand. It is the enthusiasm and commitment of our members that takes our Branch to the forefront in educating the general public in our area about beekeeping and encouraging others to join us. I feel honoured to be your Chairman, thank you, Barbara Brannam

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/>