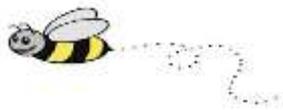


The Tivvy Buzzette

Newsletter of the Tiverton Beekeepers – May 2014

OUR NEXT BRANCH MEETINGS



Saturday 17th May, 2.30pm

Branch Apiary Meeting with Keith Owers at Bishops Farm, Kentisbeare

from Cullompton take the A373 for Honiton, after approx 2 miles turn left at Post Cross, signed for Kentisbeare (Apiary sign).

Take the first left signed for Willand (Apiary sign).

Bishops Farm is on your left (Apiary sign).

You will find Keith in the farm yard.

22nd – 24th May

Devon County Show – Branch Stand

Saturday 21st June

Branch Apiary Meeting - Uffculme

July – Bulk Buying Apiguard Orders

Saturday 26th July

Mid Devon Show – Branch Stand

Thursday 7th August

Honiton Show – Branch Stand

Sunday 7th September

Branch BBQ & Honey show

Wednesday 17th September

Members meeting

Please come out and support your branch.

Events our display is attending throughout the summer are listed below.

Beginners' Apiary Meeting Dates

Saturdays	10 th May
	7 th June
	12 th July
	9 th or 16 th August

Nosema Testing Results

This year the Branch arranged our Nosema Testing event for Wednesday 23rd April at the Uplowman Village Hall. Many members took advantage of this opportunity to establish whether their hives had infestation rates of Nosema or not. Members were able to process their own samples, look at the spores through a microscope and study the bees' anatomy through a high powered lens as well. It proved fascinating for many.

The good news is that the level of Nosema this year is lower than last year.

31 samples were submitted and only 3 showed any signs of Nosema. 2 of those were only low level infestations.

A very enjoyable evening for the Branch

Many thanks to our Microscopists, Barbara Brannam and Keith Owers, and to those who supplied the snacks.

TBKA Commitee

Tiverton Beekeepers Competition Time

We would like members to design a 'logo' for the 'Tiverton Beekeepers' to go on a club sports shirt/ sweatshirt/ beesuit, as a machine embroidered badge.

All entries (on paper please) to reach Jackie Crook by 1st June 2014

Competition to be judged by the Committee

What are you looking for in the hive?

Your bees can get on with life quite well without you poking them around, all you do is upset them, possibly make them cross and totally disrupt their day and maybe yours too. So why do we look in hives at this time of year? You could say you are curious and want to know what is going on, I did when I first started keeping bees. Curiosity is not really a good enough reason to disturb the bees. As responsible beekeepers we should always have a plan in our mind, 'A' what do we expect to see in the hive and 'B' what action we will we take if any if we find what we are looking for. Ted Hooper in his book records we should always look for:-

- 1 Has the colony sufficient room?
- 2 Is the queen present and laying the expected quantity of eggs?
- 3a (early in season) Is the colony building up in size as fast as other Colonies in the apiary?
- b (mid season) Are there any queen cells present in the colony?
- 4 Are there any signs of disease or abnormality?
- 5 Has the colony sufficient stores to last until the next inspection?

In my last article I mentioned that I thought swarming could be early this year. True to form I had my first call about a swarm on the 18th April. I am sure some people's bees will have swarmed even earlier. Swarming may be inconvenient but early swarming means once you have sorted the problem out you can reduce the number of inspections you need to make. Sometimes a poor strain of bees may try to swarm again later in the season but not often so long as you make sure they do not run short of space. The good weather has seen my bees build up well and yes some have been preparing to swarm in spite of having plenty of space.

If you would like to know how my swarm management is working, then come along on Saturday 17th May to my Kentisbeare apiary and find out.

Back to looking in the hive. Any colony that is in the process of re-queening is better left for at least three weeks. Disturbance can result in your new queen being lost. Returning queens from mating flights can easily be lost, also young queens that are not in full lay can still fly and may take off. Small colonies do not need to be inspected so often providing you check to see that they are expanding. Once we reach the end of June we should be into the main honey flow, so providing your bees have space to process and store honey you can suspend inspection and let your bees gather the harvest.

Trying to fit hive inspections in with daily life of work and shopping, holidays and visitors, let alone our fickle weather is difficult. We all kick ourselves for missing an inspection and then finding we have a swarm hanging from a neighbour's tree. One thing we should always be able to do is see that the bees have space. You can always put extra supers on when it is raining.

Keith 28/04/2014



You clever lot!

Congratulations to those who were able to take advantage of the branch Wax Foundation bulk buy! In total we placed an order for £835.60 and received a discount of **£208.70** – bringing the total that we paid to £626.70! Now we all know that we have clever Bees – we can now confirm that we have both clever and thrifty Beekeepers to look after them!

If you want to be a clever and thrifty Beekeeper keep your eyes peeled for our next stunning offer coming up – Apiguard!

Robert Fyfe

Don't sell all your honey yet

Devon County Show honey sales needs your honey and other hive products to sell at this years County Show. Jars of Honey always sell well. Containers of cut comb usually sell out rapidly (83 sold last year). Honey fudge, Candles, Wax bars, Wax polish and other hive products all sell at the show. So get making and use this opportunity to promote your products. Our customers usually purchase honey from the area where they come from, so take the opportunity to promote your honey by donating some jars for the Taste of Honey Stall; sampling your honey is the best way to sell it!

The County retains 20% of the selling price as commission.

Please look at the DBKA website for a list of this year's prices, and offer form,

<http://www.devonbeekeepers.org.uk/Honey%20Sales%20%20price%20list%202014.pdf> OR contact Jack Mummery with your offers of produce by 4th May 2014.

Jack Mummery

(Devon County Show Honey Sales Coordinator),
Jabeda Barton, West Buckland, EX32 0SG; 01598-760209;
e-mail: jackmummery@mypostoffice.co.uk

Swarm List

The following members of the Tiverton Branch are registered with the BBKA as Swarm collectors.

Colin Wellard, Sarah Lines, Bob Ogden, Malcolm Crook, Dave Stone (Halberton), Jon Gubb and me.

With our warm early spring weather many bees are now swarming and our collectors are already getting calls from the public. Where we can, the Branch is committed to providing these swarms to our new members and existing members who have lost colonies. If you are interested in having a swarm please let me know and I can put you on a list which I will share with the other swarm collectors.

Tony Lindsell – Branch Secretary

2014 Branch Show Display Programme.

The theme of our stand this year is The Swarm and many of our members are already busy making bees!

These are the events we are intending to visit:

- Saturday 10th May Uffculme Green Day at Magelake, Uffculme
- Thursday 22nd – Saturday 24th May **Devon County Show** at Westpoint
- Sunday 29th June Cullompton Town Fayre at Cullompton Rugby Club
- Saturday 28th July Mid Devon Show at Showground, Tiverton
- Thursday 7th August Honiton Show

We always need help on the stand from members just to come and talk to the public about keeping bees; you don't need to be an expert.

If you can help at any of the above events please let me know.

Tony

April Apiary Day

Eight brave souls were happy to experience the coolish wind on Saturday and attend the apiary visit at my cottage. The weather forecast was true to its word and all week I had been trying to think of jobs to do if it wasn't warm enough to open the hives.

The first job was to rehouse and overwinter 14 x 12 NUC into a National hive with an Eke fitted. This created quite a lot of discussion over the pros and cons of using this size frame. A keen member instantly spotted the queen but by the time we had tried to mark her, she had fled to the base of the NUC. Unfortunately the NUC has a side entrance, so enticing her into her new home took some doing.

I had cleaned and prepared two WBC floors and overhauled a stand ready for the new season. Some jobs are much easier with help and this was one of them. The extra help soon had the new stand in place and then it was time to house an overwintered NUC into a waiting empty WBC. Some members haven't come across this type of hive before, so it was a good opportunity to get 'hands on' experience. The next job was to replace the old floor on the other WBC and again having to dismantle and rebuild the hive caused some discussion.

The external jobs had now been completed and the cold breeze occasionally relented, so we used the time to have a quick look inside. The bees remained relatively quiet whilst different members examined the frames. Fortunately, there were no big surprises, with open and sealed brood evident. There were also some sealed drone but nothing excessive yet, so I'm hoping the queen cell building is still a couple of weeks away.

I was extremely happy with the help that afternoon and I duly paid their wages in tea and cake.

Malcolm Crook

Note from your Buzzette Editor

Many thanks for your contributions. If anyone would like to send me an article on 'My life with bees, and how it all started' or anything else you would like to share please send it 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/>