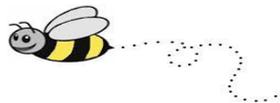


The Tivvy Buzzette

Newsletter of the Tiverton Beekeepers – November 2014

OUR NEXT BRANCH MEETINGS



Wednesday 19th November, 7.30pm.

Branch AGM & film

Wednesday 10th December, 7 for 7.30pm

Branch Christmas Dinner

Wednesday 21st January, 2015

Branch Meeting

Wednesday 18th February

Clare Densley from Buckfast Abbey

Wednesday 18th March

Chris Park and his Skep Apiary

Please come out and support your branch at our meetings.

Please keep an eye on our web site as regular updates and notices for members from the County and BBKA are placed there.

We would love to hear of any accounts of beekeeping this year from beginners to those more experienced...

Beginners meetings

12th Nov. The hive and its components.

26th Nov. The beekeeping year.

10th Dec. The history and origins of bees and hives.

14th Jan.2015 Swarms, their causes and prevention.

28th Jan. Queen rearing.

11th Feb. Pests and diseases.

25th Feb. Bee plants and hive products.

11th Mar. Getting started.

Membership renewal for 2015

Membership renewal for 2015 is due before the end of 2014, and the DBKA Subscription/Renewal Form 2015 is attached/enclosed with this Buzzette. I shall be very grateful if members will complete and return the form to me as soon as practicable. I'm happy to accept cheques as usual, but if anyone prefers to pay by online banking then **please include** as the reference your BBKA membership number (e.g. 21-19-987) so that I can identify the payment, and I still need the form to be returned to me, indicating that you have paid online. If you are a taxpayer, the value of your subscription is greatly enhanced if you complete the Gift Aid box (we reclaimed £598 in 2014...!).

Beginners Course members please note: Keith will invite you to complete this form during a meeting at the beginning of 2015, so please wait until then.

Many thanks

William Lines

Membership Secretary and Treasurer

Devon Beekeepers Association - Tiverton Branch. Official Notice

The 2014 Annual General Meeting will take place at Uplowman Village Hall
7.30 pm on Wednesday 19th November 2014

Any matter that members wish to propose for discussion should be with the Branch Secretary by the 5th November at the latest so that it may be placed on the Agenda.

The meeting will be followed by a screening of the film 'More Than Honey'.

All roles of the officers and committee members are subject to an annual election but this year we know the following will be vacant:

Show Display Coordinator - someone to take over from Tracy Lindsell to organise and produce the Branch stand for the County and other shows. It is not essential that this officer is on the committee.

Programme Secretary - produce a programme of speakers for the winter months and organising the Apiary Inspections in the summer. It is not essential that this post is filled by a committee member.

Bulk Buying Officer - obtaining discount for members when purchasing beekeeping equipment in bulk. Again it is not essential for this officer to be a committee member.

Minute Secretary - someone to take the minutes of every committee meeting in a concise and accurate manner. Must be prepared to attend the committee meetings!

The Branch is rapidly increasing in size and offering more and more opportunities to members, if you are able to take on any of the above roles please put your name forward. Whatever the role you will receive a lot of support from the committee and other members.

Thanks and kind regards Tony

Branch meeting of the Tiverton Bee Keepers on the 15th of October

Keith Owers gave his monthly advice on what to look for and jobs that need to be done in the Apiary during October/November, this month we were advised that the feeding of sugar syrup should cease as the weather cools down, as the moisture will not evaporate which will result in fermentation of the mixture in the comb, clean all equipment including bee clothing and store away in a dry place until required next spring!

The 21 members present were then introduced to our speaker for this month – Jason Wallis, whose main job is running his commercial shrub, plant and tree nursery enterprise in Somerset - a business that was awarded the contract to design a garden 45ft up in the air on the roof of the HMV store in Princesshay, Exeter!

Jason who is also an experienced beekeeper, and with the aid of slides, went on to tell us the story of the trials, tribulations and the logistics of building this beautiful creation in the middle of a busy city centre. The brief for design of the garden was pollinator friendly planting, to encourage all pollinators. Not content with a 45ft high garden his employers then decided that they would keep some colonies of bees up there as well!

After some persuasion (and remuneration) Jason agreed to manage the apiary, which he does on a weekly basis, he went on to tell us of the bee management training he does with employees of shops in the area which is encouraged by his employers.

Jason employers have installed gadgets to enable him to monitor the apiary remotely. As with all beekeeping it's not all beer and skittles though, such as the problems he has encountered with seagulls (he thinks) eating virgin queens when they are on their mating flights.

The honey that the apiary produces is sold locally and all the proceeds go to charity, which so far has raised over £1500.00!

Jonathan Gubb

What are they finding?

At our last meeting I mentioned that my bees were very active bringing in pollen of different colours. From what plants I did not know, although I could make a guess at one or two. Pollen can really only be identified by the use of a microscope, colour is only a rough guide. Samples of pollen extracted from honey can still be inaccurate as some of the larger pollen grains are filtered out by the bees for their own consumption in their gut. This tends to be the larger grains of pollen; smaller grains will nearly always find their way into honey. For a more accurate assessment of what your bees have been collecting you need to trap the pollen from their pollen baskets (corbicula). Not wishing to collect pollen from returning bees at this time of year I decided to take a walk around some of the hedgerows to see what was in flower.

Having walked about three miles of hedgerows I found fourteen species of flowering wild plants. With one exception all of the flowering plants were few and far between. Bees are canny insects and do not like to waste time or energy, they much prefer to be instructed where to find a good source of pollen. At times of scarcity they will collect pollen from odd plants but will not pass on the information where it came from. The only plant that I saw bees collecting pollen from was of course ivy, although there was more hover flies than bees feeding on the flowers. Ivy will produce pollen and nectar from October to December. Ivy nectar produces a very hard fine grained white honey that sets like concrete and is not a lot of use to our bees over winter. The honey behaves much the same as oil seed rape honey. If rape honey is stored in the brood frames you may well find in the spring that some has been uncapped and just left, hard and granular, ivy honey will be just the same. It takes bees a lot of effort to collect water to try to dissolve hard honey in winter. Providing our bees have been well fed they will not bother to collect too much nectar from the ivy. Fresh pollen is a different matter and is always welcome in the hive. Fresh is best when it comes to pollen.

From my hedgerow walk ivy was the only plant that I found of significant use to our bees three others are worked by bees when there is sufficient in flower like blackberry and dandelion and daisy but without testing you can only guess that they may have collected a little from the other plants. I could have shown off and used the Latin names for the plants some I know from my student days but remembering names becomes more difficult as you get older, for example one common flower I found was *Lapsana communis* but is much easier to remember nipplewort. May be you might be able to tell me how it was used? I can only find a reference to it being used in green salads.

Keith

Editors note – answers please for next month's Buzzette (serious or otherwise)



Note from your Buzzette Editor

Many thanks for your contributions. If you would like to send in an article please send it to arrive before the last Thursday of the preceding month as text and photos to:

Post Galleons Lap,
Plymtree,
Cullompton,
EX15 2LQ

Or pass on a note at the meetings.
Sarah Lines

<http://tivertonbeekeepers.org.uk/>