

The Tivvy Buzzette



The newsletter of the Tiverton Beekeepers ~ February 2017

Tiverton Beekeepers are a branch of The Devon Beekeepers Association. Registered Charity No 270675.

Branch Meetings.

Wednesday Feb 15th – “Alternative to wedge bar & nails” with Keith & Baruch.

**Wednesday March 15th – “Pheromone Communication” with Claire Densley
Uplowman Village Hall 7:30.**

Beginners & Improvers Courses

Please see Keiths article in this months edition.

**We still have a vacancy on the committee for a Branch Secretary, to replace Tony. Interested?
Then please contact the Chairman Malcolm Jenkins.**

Attached to this months email is a Bulk Buying Order Form for you to download and print if required. There is also an order form on the website which can be downloaded and emailed if you wish. Also attached is a Calling Notice for Devon County Show from Barry Neale, please see his letter in this months Buzzette.

January Meeting Report

The first meeting of the Tiverton Beekeepers for 2017 took place at Uplowman Village hall on Wednesday 18th January.

After Club business and announcements had been dealt with our Chairman Malcolm Jenkins welcomed the speaker for the evening who this month was the area seasonal Bee Inspector David Packham.

There were 35 members present to listen to the topic of Davids talk about the Asian Hornet, which is classed as an alien species and is a very serious threat to Honey Bees and other important pollinators in the UK. It is widespread in France and has had a detrimental effect on the countries pollinators. In September last year an Asian Hornet colony was found in Gloucestershire and eradicated. The threat of further infestations is ever present and Beekeepers are being asked to be extremely vigilant and to set up traps to catch them. One single Asian Queen Hornet can produce up to 350 more queens in one season and this can potentially lead to 350 further colonies the next year and so on....

The threat is very real and serious, at the moment very little study into this pest has been done in Europe, so Beekeepers and non Beekeepers alike can help by building Asian hornet traps which need to be set up during March to May to catch the Queens.

After Davids presentation our fellow member John Knowles gave us a demonstration on how to make an Asian Hornet trap using an empty modified soft drinks bottle.

David & John were thanked by the Chairman on behalf of the members who then broke for refreshments, the meeting closed at around 10pm.

Improver's Course 2017

This will be our fifth year of running an improver's course. I have often been asked by members who have completed the beginners course, that since keeping bees they realise that there is a lot they have forgotten. We can help you. With a small group, maximum of twelve, it makes for a friendly group that quickly gets down to the real world of beekeeping problems. Last year for the first time we had an extra evening using microscopes, looking at bees and other hive residents.

The course will be at Uplowman village hall at 7.30pm till 9.30pm starting February 14th then the 21st and 28th, 14th – 21st -28th March. The course is informal but consists of a structured series of questions which you can answer if you can, what you cannot answer we will fill in the answers and much more. For example, what can you learn from watching the hive entrance, can you read a comb and tell what has been going on? How good is your swarm management and are you up to date on pest management?

If you are thinking of taking the BBKA Basic Assessment the course will cover all the points you need to know but it is not a condition of doing the improver's course.

The cost of the course will be £20 payable at the first meeting. Should you wish to proceed to take the BBKA Assessment; the £20 fee will be paid by the branch. Places are limited to give you the attention we think is necessary. To register please phone or e-mail Keith Owers on 01884 254977 or keith@kaowers.eclipse.co.uk by the 6th February.

Baruch & John -A tale Of Colony Re-location

We were called out to an old house in Lurley near Tiverton after bees had been found in the roof. The roof was being replaced and the roofers had disturbed their nest and the bees had come out and stung one of the workers under his eye. Access was gained by climbing up a ladder onto the scaffold. We carried up our equipment and got into bee suits. One of the roofers was given a suit and he removed some more tiles and some timbers.

The bees were remarkably good-tempered, considering we were dismantling their home, which was under the eaves next to the chimney stack. The comb was cut out piece by piece and put into a box together with the bees. The queen was found and placed in a small queen introduction cage, and a few workers added to look after her. I popped this into my pocket to keep her warm.

Removing all the comb was difficult because of the depth of the nest, but, right at the bottom, another queen was found. (This is not that uncommon when an old queen has been superseded. Beekeepers look through a hive to find the queen, and then, having found her, often stop looking, but when researchers systematically searched through a large number of hives, quite often two queens were found.)

We collected as many bees as we could, although I think a Bee-Vac would have made the job easier. Coming down from the roof we gave the lady of the house some honey comb and went off to the Knightshayes apiary. The sections of comb were placed in frames, taking care to orient them correctly, and held in place with rubber bands. The frames and both queens were placed in a brood box, covered with a crown board and some random bits of broken comb placed on top for stores and then the bees were left to get on with it.





This hive had not been free of disease - some bees with deformed wing virus had been seen and when examining an area of comb with sunken cappings I found unhatched pupae with varroa mites attached. We will add frames of comb to the hive when the season starts and hope they will do well.

John Knowles

An Important Message From Barry Neale

Folks, it appears that the calling notices for this year's Devon County Show will not be in the February Beekeeping magazine. A summary is attached which I ask that you circulate to all your members.

At the BBKA ADM on Saturday it was announced that a 'Just Giving' page has been set up for the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers (IMYB); the page is 'Our Future in Young People'. It is there for personal contributions to be made in support of IMYB. It does NOT replace the £1 per head levy on DBKA that will be collected by BBKA in the not too distant future. Please let your members know about the Just Giving page.

To the Secretaries of all Area Associations and Branches admitted as Associations 14/1/17.

Would you please notify the secretaries of all your branches that the Spring Convention website is now live to book tickets, accommodation etc. Could you please encourage members to book as soon as possible as tickets for seminars and workshops sell really quickly.

Many thanks for your help and I hope to see as many of you as possible at the Convention.

Kind Regards, Leigh Sidaway. General Manager, BBKA

An Invitation From DARG

This message to invite your members to come to a DARG Meeting about the BeeGYM.

The meeting is to be held at the Uplowman Village Hall on Sunday February 12th 2017. Meet up at 1.00.p.m. for a start at about 1.30.p.m.

Directions to this location will be found on our website www.dargbees.org.uk

The speaker will be Stuart Roweth who is the inventor of these devices. Many of you will know of the floor device but he has developed a new device to fit inside the brood nest.

Any of your members will be very welcome to attend, all we ask is a contribution of £2.00. to defray the costs of tea, coffee and hall hire.

If any of your members intend coming, could they let me know in advance at buzzybeeball@yahoo.co.uk

Good beekeeping for 2017, Richard Ball, Chairman DARG. Tel 01 395 567 356

If you have any interesting articles relating to Bees & Beekeeping, please do not hesitate to forward them to me by email to jon.gubb@voddens.co.uk by the 27th of the month for inclusion in the next months edition of the Buzzette.