



West Sussex Beekeeping Association
Wisborough Green Division

Newsletter - November 2008



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Apiary Meetings

Dounhurst Farm, Skiff Lane, Wisborough Green

1st November 12.00pm and 2.00 pm

Beginners will start at 12.00 and Advanced at 2.00pm.

Winter Evening Meetings

The Chapel, Spy Lane, Loxwood

20th November. 7.30pm - Norman L Carreck BSc, Cbiol, MIBiol, FRES, NDB

“The origin of bees and their classification as an indigenous species”

Norman Carreck has been keeping bees since the age of 15. He read Agricultural Science at Nottingham University and joined Rothamsted Research in 1987 as an agronomist working on nutrient uptake in cereal crops. Between 1991 and 2006 he was apiculturalist in the Plant and Invertebrate Ecology Division, with responsibility for maintaining about 80 colonies of honey bees. He was also fully involved in the two research groups, on pollination ecology with Prof. Ingrid Williams and Dr Juliet Osborne; and bee pathology with Brenda Ball. He obtained the National Diploma in Beekeeping in 1996, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Entomological Society in 2004. He is a member of the Technical Committee of the British Beekeepers Association, a Committee Member of the Central Association of Bee-Keepers, Secretary of the Examinations Board for the National Diploma in Beekeeping, and Senior Editor of the Journal of Apicultural Research.



ADVANCE NOTICE – Fuller details in subsequent Newsletters

11th December 2008 – Monica Lucas speaking on flowers and bees

15th January 2009 – Christine Stevens speaking on marketing, product development and creative packaging and labelling

WGBKA Supper 2008

The traditional supper took place in Pulborough Village Hall on 11th October, organised and managed by Judy Knight with the able assistance of Diana Briault, Karen Clemens, “The Ready’s” and Suzanne Tilley. Gordon Allan and Tom Moore, aptly referred to on occasions as “G&T”, undertook management of alcoholic refreshments. Home cooked cold meats and salmon were backed up by an enticing display of salads and puds, provided by members.

As in previous years, presentations were made to members both for success in BBKA examinations, and in the Wisborough Green Honey Show. Ray Noakes presented Certificates in respect of the Basic Assessment to Tom Moore, Gordon Allan, and Mike Bunyan, and for success in passing Modules, to Rosanne Blacklock and Daisy Day. It was also a big night for Roger Patterson, who proudly received his certificate for success in the Basic Assessment and is now all set to broaden his beekeeping skills! Derek Ready was presented with his certificate for successfully completing his examination and assessment in Beekeeping Husbandry.

Rosanne Blacklock received the “P N Burch Cup” for attaining the greatest number of points at the Honey Show, and Judy Knight was awarded the George Wakeford Memorial Rose Bowl for the second year in succession, for entering the best exhibit.

Stars of the evening were William and Rosie Knight and Matthew and Emma Clemens who were tireless in selling raffle tickets, “waiting” at tables and doing so many other essential jobs. Sincere thanks to them and to Judy and all other members who contributed to the success of a very enjoyable evening.



Patterson in Print

I look after four colonies for someone else, and throughout the summer they have been strong. At the end of August when the main crop was removed all the colonies were still very strong, and I fed them all immediately because they were very short of stores. I treated with Apiguard and 6 weeks later one was still very strong, yet the others had dwindled, two to about 5 frames of bees, and one to only 2-3 frames of bees. In this colony they had lost bees so fast they had abandoned much of the brood and it had perished. I don't know the reason, but suspect *nosema ceranae*. I understand that *nosema ceranae* behaves differently than *nosema apis*, being a problem during the active season, rather than the inactive season as *nosema apis* is. There was also a high level of sac brood, so I took the opportunity of asking Alan Byham to look at them with me.

Interestingly in all the dwindled colonies there was still a very high level of varroa in the brood. The weak colony was abandoned as there was no way it was going to survive the winter. One winter loss, 25% already, and two that only have a 50/50 chance of survival. These are the worst colonies I have seen this autumn by some distance, but they are derivatives of "New Zealand" Italians, and Italians are notorious for not coping with *nosema*.

The message is check your colonies regularly. As you know we have probably had *nosema ceranae* for some time now, although it was only recently detected. In the last couple of years I have seen sac brood for the first time at a high level. Up until now I have only seen the odd case of sac brood, and only then a very light infection. I suspect the immune systems of the bees have been affected by the various things that have been thrown at them, and this has caused weaknesses that allows other diseases to thrive. Can I suggest you look on the web for information and photo's of these diseases so you know what to look for in your own bees?

I believe many of the current problems with our bees are due to the introduction of pests and diseases on imported bees. Unfortunately we will have these problems forever.

I recently spoke at the Cheshire BKA Honey Show and Convention, and it is clear they are having queen performance problems in their area as well. There seems to be a rift between those who readily import queens, and those who don't. Even the importers were complaining about poor queen performance, and it was pointed out to them by several people where the blame lies. The Honey Show was a county affair and attracted 180 entries, just over double what the WG total was, and although the standard was overall quite high there were the usual errors e.g. not reading the schedule properly, odd jars, underweight, etc.

Now we have some good handlers of bees I think we can use more of them for demonstrating. This will give the regulars a break, and will give us the chance to do some different things, perhaps on a one to one basis. These should be interesting, but will be ad-hoc depending on the state of the bees. There will be an email list made and we can inform the members at short notice. With this newsletter there should be a membership form. Please clearly put your email address even if we already know it. If you are not on the list we can't inform you.

Roger



IT'S TIME TO THINK ABOUT YOUR 2009 MEMBERSHIP!!

Yes - already - and not a single Christmas card received yet! A membership / renewal form is attached to this newsletter, and although it has been greatly revised from last year, BBKA memberships and others may still confuse. If you have any doubts or queries, please give me a call (evenings 0103 752169) and I will advise.

MOST URGENTLY, If any of you wish to start or continue to take BEECRAFT, then I need you reply BY RETURN PLEASE! in order to qualify for our discounted rate, I must reply before the end of November !!!! Thank-you!

Judy

BBKA Exams.

The long evenings are upon us.

This is a good time to increase and update your beekeeping knowledge.

There is no better way to focus that learning than to set yourself a deadline.

Those who have been keeping their own bees for over a year, can take their

Basic Beekeeping Assessment

This takes place at the apiary and is in two parts, handling a hive and theory.

This Basic Assessment is the gateway to all other qualifications.

To continue on the pathway, there are modular exams.

In 2009, the Modular Examinations will be held on 21st March.

Applications have to be in by 10th Feb. 2009.

For further information, please contact:

Rosanne Blacklock

Harmony

Melrose Place

Storrington RH20 3HH

or e-mail: rosanne@beesandhives.co.uk

Notices

We have a member in Rudgwick who is giving up beekeeping on her patch due to pressures of time, but would be willing to let someone else have the space to keep their bees if they are looking for a safe location. Anyone who is interested should contact **Rosemary Townsend** on **01403 822672**.



WEST SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION



Website www.wsbka.org.uk

County News –November 2008

County Diary – Around the Divisions – all Members are most welcome at all Meetings

Chichester – Contact John Stevens. – Email ieem@compuserve.com

Meetings will be at the Bader Arms in Tangmere and will commence punctually at 7.30pm.

Wednesday 19th November - “What does the Team think”?

Questions answered by a team of “expert beekeepers”.

Advance Notice - Programme Change

Our 10th December meeting was to have been “How was your Season”, but since compiling the programme we have been able to persuade Margaret Thomas to come and talk to us. Margaret is a nationally acclaimed speaker and has the National Diploma in Beekeeping. Her lecturing style is lively and engaging and she will be talking on the creation of nuclei and also (something totally different) on the preparation of jams, mar-malades, chutneys, fudge, mustards, polish, vinegar, lemon curd and jelly —ALL with honey

Help and Advice Welcomed

We have a problem and the way we deal with it, in due course, may be of interest to others. In the early Spring time this year, we were called to remove some bees from someone's garden in the next village. We found a strong colony had taken up residence and over-wintered in a stack of old WBC boxes and lifts.



They had built wild comb from the roof downwards, through several supers of old, broken frames and had propolised everything together. Their entrance was through a small hole in the totally rotten roof. We managed to remove the lifts and consign them to a bonfire and to pick up the stack of old boxes, with contents, and bring them home. The weight was as much as two people could lift with difficulty.

We detached the old roof and found that the nest was firmly attached to the boxes below, so we placed a brood box of frames with new foundation above, hoping that they would draw it out and the queen might move up and start laying. Draw it out they did and then filled it with stores and they worked beautifully through the summer, without swarming. We treated them with Apiguard and the whole lot weighs a ton (a slight exaggeration perhaps). We shall leave them for the winter, safe within a rebuilt WBC, but how can we get them into a proper, manageable hive next springtime without breaking up this very considerable nest?

Suggestions please to ieem@compuserve.com and we will write more about it in due course.

John Stevens on 01243 533559 or email: ieem@compuserve.com

Worthing Contact Brian Tolworthy on 01903 241369

Website www.worthingbeekeepers.fsnet.co.uk/org.uk

Winter meetings at Ferring village hall. Arrive at 7.15pm for 7.30pm start.

Thursday 13th November – AGM followed by a social occasion and if time permits, a quiz.

National Honey Show

The 77th National Honey Show takes place at its new location in Weybridge from 30th October – 1st November.

Smokers in Whitehall - Wednesday 5 November

(Text from BBKA Research Campaign Bulletin)

This event will mark the end of the petition stage of the campaign. It is essential that we get a substantial turnout from across the country. Permissions have been granted by the Metropolitan Police for us to assemble, demonstrate (i.e. show placards), deliver the petition and then go into the Houses of Parliament to lobby our MPs. Wednesday has been chosen because that's the day when all MPs are in Westminster for the fun and games of Prime Minister's Questions. It is vital that you contact your MP before the day to tell him/her that you will be there to lobby on the bee health research campaign. Don't worry if fellow beekeepers who share the same MP will be coming; the more the better. The timing of the demo and lobby should allow even our most distant Associations to be present and then do a little shopping/sightseeing before returning home. Once you have decided to take part please contact Stoneleigh by e-mail register@britishbeekeepers.com or phone 02476 696679 giving

