

# Hagley & Stourbridge, with Kidderminster Newsletter Autumn 2010



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday 14 August 9.30am** Autumn Workshop Baptist Church Hall, Franche Road, Kidderminster  
**Saturday 4 & 5 September 9 00am** Birmingham Beekeepers' Honey Show Kings Heath Park  
**Saturday 18 September 9 00 am** The Joint Honey Show at The Free Church Hagley  
**Saturday 25 & 26 September 9 00 am** County Honey Show 3 Counties Show Ground Malvern  
**Wednesday 13 October 8 00 pm** An Alternative view of Varroa New Road Methodist Church Hall Stourbridge  
**Thursday 14 October 7.30pm** Candle Making talk and demo Baptist Church Hall, Franche Road, Kidderminster  
**Thursday 28 to 30 October 2 00 pm** BBKA National Honey Show Day 1 St. George's College Weybridge Surrey  
**Wednesday 3 November 8 00 pm** H & S Branch Annual General Meeting Methodist Church Hall Stourbridge  
**Wednesday 1 December 8 00 pm** The Christmas Get Together New Road Methodist Church Hall Stourbridge  
**Thursday 9 December 7.30pm** Social Evening & Fun Bee Quiz Baptist Church Hall, Franche Road, Kidderminster

## TOPICAL NEWS

### THANK YOU

Our 2010 outdoor meetings ended on 4 July with our last visit to the apiary where we took off the late Oil Seed Rape crop before retiring to Nick and Annette's house for a demonstration of uncapping and extracting of the honey, you can't get fresher honey than out of the hive and into the extractor, all rounded off with a cup of tea and slice of cake!

We have been so lucky with the weather this year and not missed a single meeting. Thanks to David Jewson and Justus Klaar for the excellent coaching and to Nick for answering the endless questions about beekeeping.

Thank you also to our Regional Bee Inspector, Dave Sutton, for the best meeting of the year, the Bee Safari. Regrettably this meeting was poorly attended but those beekeepers who did attend were sufficiently experienced to benefit from some pretty high-level beekeeping including Queens marked by hand. Thank you to Virginia Webb and Kim Topham for the loan of their bees and especially Barry Phillips and his wife for the excellent Bee Tea. **June Wilson**

### FOR HIRE

The branch extractor is available for hire. Please contact Nick on 01562 882145 to book it. Cost is £7.00 per day inclusive of knife and two stage stainless steel filter. Ripening tanks (£1.00 per week) are also available.

Cheques to Hagley & Stourbridge BKA please. Also available, an electric uncapping tray £4.00 per day

### 2011 MEMBERSHIP

Our beekeeping year runs from 1 January each year for twelve months. If you join or renew before the end of 2010 you will avoid insurance penalties in the form of withdrawal of cover. Why not bring your renewal to the Christmas Social on Wednesday 1 December at the Methodist Church Hall on the Ring Road in Stourbridge? Your membership form will be posted to you in November, after the AGM, and if you lose it there's a blank form on our website at [www.hsbka.org](http://www.hsbka.org).

**Julie Soley**

### 2010 JOINT HONEY SHOW



Are you a new member? Some of our new members already have bees and a honey crop so hopefully there should be a good turn out this year at the Joint Honey Show. Remember there is

such a thing as beginners luck as well as a Novices Class! If you haven't a clue what to do then go to Kidderminster's Autumn Workshop on Saturday 14 August at 9.30am at the Baptist Church Hall, Franche Road, Kidderminster DY11 5BJ where you can learn about, honey extracting and preparing honey for sale and showing.

On the day of the Honey Show get to the Free Church Hall early, booking starts at 8:30am and there's an excellent car park at the rear (drive in from Chapel Street off the Worcester Road Hagley beside The Station Inn). The signed frame which many of you had earlier this year goes in the new class regardless of what it looks like, at the time of writing, mine has not yet been drawn out, despite being in a busy hive for five weeks. There's a £5 prize for the best entry. Contributions of food for the tea tables will be gratefully accepted and contributions for the bring-and-buy table help to cover our expenses. Call me if you're unsure of what to bring on 01384 373752.

**June Wilson**

### H & S AGM

The branch AGM will take place on 3 November so please turn up and take part. All the posts are up for grabs this year and the post of News Editor needs filling! Be influential, be artistic, be involved and put your hand up and volunteer!

## NEXT SEASON

Our Secretary Richard Brookes is drawing up the 2011 program at the moment. If there's anything you would like to see included next year, please call him on 01384 263230.

## CLEANLINESS IS NEXT ...

After the spread of bee diseases, in the past year the importance of cleanliness when beekeeping has come into focus, and this isn't about having a bath before visiting the bees, it's about clean equipment. Wash your protective equipment regularly on a HOT wash; clean your wellingtons after every visit to the apiary; wear disposable Nitrile gloves over your gauntlets; clean your metal ware in hot washing soda; throw your hive tool in the dishwasher, incidentally, did you know that a queen excluder will fit into a standard dishwasher? (New dishwashers cost about £350!) Scorch empty hives with a blow torch; scrape empty brood frames free of propolis and brace wax before treating with Acetic Acid; stack supers wet to avoid Wax Moth or treat the wax with Certan to kill predatory moths. By keeping equipment clean your bees stand a better chance of keeping healthy.

With the Varroa mites now being largely resistant to the "traditional" varroacides (the Pyrethroids, active ingredients in the *Bayvarol* and *Apistan* strips), and all the alternatives available to us being less effective than the old strips, we now have to do "Integrated Pest Management", which means applying a combination of treatments and management methods throughout the year in order to keep the mite numbers at a level that the colony can tolerate. Probably the most important link in this chain of individual measures is the Autumn treatment, to prepare the colonies to go into Winter with a low mite burden.

If untreated, the mite population in our colonies will under

normal conditions have doubled every month throughout the season. Now, towards the end of the active season, the Queens will reduce their laying rate, and the raising of drone brood will usually cease altogether. Therefore, all these mated mother-to-be mites will enter worker brood, sometimes more than one mite per larva, and they and their offspring will damage the developing bees. As time goes on into Autumn, more and more of these bees will be the "Winter Bees", i.e., the ones that will have to take the colony through the Winter, and then into Spring, by bringing up the first generations of new brood and bees, generating the "Spring build-up". The Varroa damage will shorten the life-span of these winter bees, they will make poor nurse bees, and as a result, the population "explosion" from March or so will only be a feeble puff: the colony will be held back forever and may even die.

In the past, the honey used to be taken off the colonies towards the end of August or even in September. A Varroa treatment after that is now considered too late, for the above reasons. In the case of treatment with *Apiguard*, the later in the year this treatment is applied, the less likely it becomes that the day-time temperatures are high enough to guarantee a reasonably good efficacy.



This means that we ought to take the honey off at the beginning of August, middle of August at the latest, and start the treatment. That way, you may lose some of your honey crop - but what is this against losing your colony?

Apart from *Apiguard*, there are now, new to this country, *ApiLifeVar*, an Italian product that has been approved by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate earlier this year; it is a hard-foam wafer, like "Oasis" used in flower arrangements, impregnated with Thymol and essential oils (open with scissors!); and *Thymovar* (a similar Swiss product that has more recently received approval from VMD).

After the Autumn treatment comes the Winter treatment with Oxalic Acid (medicated sugar syrup), applied with the trickling method, ideally to a brood-less colony, which will most likely be the case after a spell of very cold weather. Here, dosage is important, as too much will damage the bees, while too little will not kill the mites.

***Justus Klaar***

## SALES & WANTS

### ***Loose Sugar***

Not for human consumption but fine for the bees, contact **01384 352177**.

### ***Honey Jars***

With white plastic lids BIG demand this year so don't delay £30 a gross, for H&S call **07800 856386**, Kidderminster members call **01299 823318** price may vary

### ***Apiguard***

£4.40 per colony

### ***ApiLifeVar***

£6 per colony

### ***Oxalic Acid Powder Crystals***

At low cost and includes the syringes to apply the syrup with call **01384 352177**

### ***Sugar***

STILL at 40p per kg call, **01384 352177** for H&S members or Ken Beddoe for Kidderminster Branch.

**bid4bees.co.uk**

Please note that because of the increased hire charges at the Methodist Church Hall Stourbridge, a small fee will be made for tea and biscuits enjoyed at meetings.