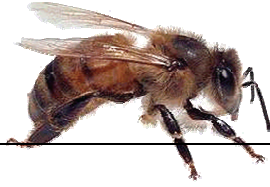


Hagley & Stourbridge, with Kidderminster & North East Worcestershire Beekeepers' Associations' Newsletter. Winter 2006



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 17 January 20:00 Regional Bee Inspector Dave Sutton The Diagnosis And Treatment Minor Bee Diseases Methodist Church Hall Stourbridge

Wednesday 21 February 20:00 Julian Routh His Dartington Hive Experiences At The Sutton Coldfield Apiary" Methodist Church Hall, Stourbridge

Tuesday 23 January 19:30 North East Worcestershire Branch's Social Evening Gate Hangs Well Woodgate Road Stoke Prior

Tuesday 27 February 19:30 North East Branch Annual General Meeting Finstall Village Hall

Sunday 4 March 10:00 Volunteer and Members A Day For The Queen, To Tidy And Clean The Apiary Branch Apiary, Iverley

Tuesday 6 March 19:30 Annual Beekeepers' Dinner The Whittington, A449 Kinver

Saturday 10 March 9:30 Kidderminster Branch Spring Workshop Baptist Church Hall, Franche

Saturday 11 March 09.30 (Date & time may change) The Bees Go On Holiday To The OSR A Lesson In Migratory Beekeeping Branch Apiary, Iverley

Tuesday 13 March 19:30 Tony Little "Alternative Varroa Treatments" Methodist Church Hall, Stourbridge

Saturday 14 April 14:00 County AGM Pershore College Evesham

Saturday 21 April 9:00 BBKA Spring Convention National Agricultural Centre Stoneleigh

TOPICAL TIPS

This is hardly the time of year to expect to receive any topical tips, but beekeeping is full of surprises and there are many tips! So as not to use up too much paper this edition will concentrate upon the important ones!

It's a logical idea to provide packing above the crown board and beneath the roof to keep the bees warm, BUT this will become wet because of the heat conducted through the material and such covers will actually cool the bees.

Warm moist air rising from tile bees' cluster must be allowed to escape to the outside. If not, the water may drip back onto the bees and cool them. By raising tile crown board a fraction, the thickness of a one-inch round nail is enough, this will allow most of this moist warm air to escape and the bees and their stores will stay dry.

A well fitting Entrance Block with a quarter inch high slot will exclude all mice from the colony. Get those blocks in position when the honey comes

off in the late summer and you are safe.

Give the bees a full super of honey (without an excluder) instead of feeding. In the spring put this box UNDER the brood box. The bees will gradually move up into the brood box, and then the super can be used as a super again, being free of brood. Combs which have had brood in them will have the larval skins and the accumulated faeces of the larvae which are voided when the larvae ceases to feed. Just leave an old brood frame in the wet for a few days and then go

and smell it! You will quickly appreciate why this super spends its life on the hive!

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL BEE UNIT

For some time now, the opinion of the experts has been that it is almost certainly inevitable that the **Small Hive Beetle (SHB)** will eventually arrive on this island. Just to make this threat more real: middle of November I had an e-mail from Dave Sutton, my Regional Inspector, saying that they thought they had found the SHB in Portugal (again!), and that this had alarmed all of Europe's bee institutes. He went on to say that during the 2007 inspecting season, there would be an even greater emphasis on the detection of the Small Hive Beetle (SHB) than had been previously planned. The first meeting of the Bee Inspectors (York in April) will focus on the SHB and in addition, there will be a rehearsal in each Region, with the aim of sharpening best practice if SHB actually arrives in the UK.

The French Institute of Apiculture has analysed the Portuguese samples and are now pretty sure it was not SHB, but a closely related insect, not harmful to bee colonies. See the relevant article in the December edition of **BeeCraft**.

More serious for us at the moment are dreaded Pyrethroid-resistant Varroa mites! The general impression is that they have been spreading across the region for longer and faster than expected, resulting in larger numbers of "unexplained" colony losses. In practical terms, this means that you can't use Bayvarol and Apistan strips indiscriminately any more; if you want to use them then you have to make sure the mites still respond to this treatment; i.e. you have to carry out a resistance test and then use

the strips only if you find your mites non-resistant!

As Varroa has been taken off the list of Notifiable Bee Diseases, Inspectors are no longer required to carry out resistance tests, however, as I still have a number of test kits left from last season, I will do the odd test myself; but would also encourage you to borrow a kit and test your own mites, it's not difficult.

If no resistance is found, you might still want to treat with the strips, as they tend to be more effective than Apiguard or Exomite Apis.

I would also like to encourage you to come to our winter meeting in March (13.3.07, **19:30**, not the usual 20:00!), when Tony LITTLE will give us his talk on "**Alternative Varroa Treatments**" – organic acids and things, that is. With the Pyrethroids losing their effectiveness, we need to inform ourselves about all the alternatives that there are

Justus Klaar. (Your Seasonal Bee Inspector currently in hibernation)

FOR HIRE

The branch extractor is available for hire. Please contact Nick on 01562 882145 to book it. Cost is £6.00 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 and wax honey separator at £4.00 per day

FOR SALE

Loose sugar not for human consumption but fine for the bees, contact Justus Klaar.

Honey Jars with white plastic lids. Contact David Mills or

Nick Templar. Stocks low so don't delay branch member £26 a gross, non members £37

DEAR SANTA

Do you know anyone who has an interest and the equipment for Macro photography? **Macro photography** is the photography of the very small and I need photos of Queen, Drone and Worker bees similar to Club Bee who appears here (but may be copyrighted). Uncopyrighted images are also very acceptable!

H&S has started a website at www.hsbka.org. The skeleton is in place and pages are being written slowly. Images are always difficult and copying other people's images often results in a \$1000 invoice from the images owner, hence the plea above. Your suggestions are always welcome on what you would like to see on a beekeeping website, anything is possible. Email admin@hsbka.org

MORE, DEAR SANTA

An editor for this publication would be good. See your branch secretary!

EVEN MORE DEAR SANTA

Has a member got access to commercial wood working machines, so H&S can construct a solar wax extractor body?

AND FINALLY

Merry Christmas to everyone