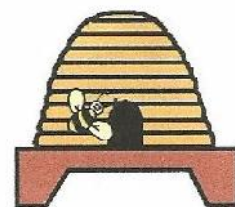


Herefordshire Beekeepers' Association



Newsletter
August 2017

Forthcoming events:

Saturday August 12th Honey Harvest, Cradley.

Friday August 18th - 6pm Saturday August 19th Honey Harvest, Cradley.

Tuesday August 22nd North LAN Apiary Meeting, Lucton.

Friday-Sunday September 15th-17th MSWCC Cirencester.

Saturday October 14th HBKA Honey Show, Hellens Manor, Much Marcle.

The parterre and lake at Brinsop House



The gardens at Brinsop House



Association Garden Party

Friday August 18th from 6.00pm

All members, together with partners and children are welcome to the Garden Party which this year is hosted by Anna and James Spreckley. Brinsop House, has a spectacular garden, with lake, and parkland. There is plenty of parking.

Please bring a small contribution of nibbles to share. It will help with catering if you let Anna know if you intend to attend, . Bring a clean beesuit, gloves and boots if you would like to look at the bees.

Bob Cross will be coming so contact him if you wish to order equipment or varroa treatment.

Honey Harvest days Cradley

Saturdays August 12th and 19th

Bob will be demonstrating his methods of harvesting honey, showing how to uncap frames and extract the honey.

There will be 3 time slots on each day, 09.30 to 11.30 am, 13.30 to 15.30 pm and 18.00 to 20.00 pm. Places are limited and must be booked in advance by phoning Bob or Kath.

The last of the Honey Hunters, a short video shot in Nepal.

The Himalayan cliff bee is aggressive and can sting through a normal beesuit. Not much fun if you are hundreds of feet up a sheer cliff face! Nepalese honey hunters collect the honey with no protective clothing.

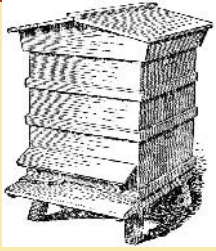
<https://vimeo.com/223495819>



Association Library

After a long stint looking after the books Anthea has handed over the library to Steve Utley. The list of books that can be borrowed is on our website. Contact Steve if you would like to borrow a book.

Each LAN group has a set of Yates Study Guides and a few other volumes. The Association can also lend out extractors and protective clothing. Contact your LAN coordinator for more information.



Bob's Beelines

Our Bee Keeping Year will soon be over and a new year starting.

The weather this year could have been better, too cold at the wrong time and then too hot drying up everything for our bees.

I have found some hives queenless, some drone laying queens, this year these problems seem general with most beekeepers.

It is time to take your honey off (in the east of the county) BUT remember most colonies are still very strong so make sure they have plenty of stores, and think of varroa treatment in August.

For New Comers and Beginners:

Remove your supers at the end of July, down to the Brood Chamber, I would feed 4 pints syrup, then treat for Varroa with Apguard, 2 packs per hive, you will need an eke for this treatment. Or Api-life var, this is a 4 week treatment (no eke required) . M.A.Q.S. is another treatment BUT seek advice before using it.

Kath and I represented Hereford Beekeepers' at Bodenham Open Gardens 16th July.

That's all for now

Bob and Kath Cross

Topical Tip

Wasps have been a problem this year, a vulnerable colony can quickly be robbed out by these unwelcome visitors. Narrow the hive entrances down to one bee way. If a colony is being over run with wasps act fast. A sheet of glass lent across the entrance may help- the bees will find their way in but it might be enough to deter the wasps. Old-fashioned wasp traps, jars filled with jam mixed with water with a hole in the lid, work well. A strong colony can protect themselves as long as their home is secure, so make sure that there are no back entrances that the wasps can exploit.

Bromyard Gala- June 24th-25th

Oh dear what happened !!

First of all I would like to thank Bob Cross for his suburb display of bee/honey items together with a fantastic revolving observation hive, which attracted visitors old and new all day, all eager to spot the Queen and exchange bee stories.

But WHAT happened to the produce entries. I know that Dave Sutton had not been to the last few meetings nagging everybody but it is advertised locally. The only entries were the ones I had entered in Dave and my name. Because Dave Sutton was away Bob had to do the judging and therefore could not enter or I am sure he would have given us a run for the money. We can at least say we were Gala winners, but not how we would like to do, it would have been nice to of had a bit of competition !!

Lets hope for a better showing at the Honey Show in the Autumn and next years Gala.

Sue Garrett



Midlands and South Western Counties Convention

The MSWCC this year is being held at the Royal Agricultural University at Cirencester 15 – 17 Sep. with the overall theme of “BETTER BEES”.

The full programme runs from Friday mid-afternoon through to Sunday lunchtime, but you can come for one or more days if you prefer. Bookings can now be made on-line at <http://www.mswcc.org.uk/products-page/>

Accommodation can be provided at reasonable cost at the RAU.

If you book for the day the cost of the meal (be it Friday evening, Saturday lunch or Sunday lunch) is included. It is up to you whether you eat it!

The Gala Dinner (if you are not a full residential participant) has to be booked separately

Lecturers include:

Marin Anastasov
Prof. Stephen Martin
David Maslen
Margaret Murdin
Colin Pavey
Anne Rowberry
Wally Shaw
Bob Smith
Joe Widdicombe



Workshop leaders:

Marin Anastasov
Colin Pavey
Liz Gardener
Nick Lambert
Wally Shaw
Bob Smith
Margaret Murdin



A study of the bees efficient visual system could revolutionise the way robots and drones view the world.

Bees possess a pair of large compound eyes, as well as three light sensitive ocelli on the top of the head. The function of these sense organs is not altogether clear, although bees with ocelli masked with paint fly later and return to the hive earlier than normal bees, and their orientation responses are not so accurate.

The colour receptors in the ocelli have been studied by scientists in Australia. The information from these organs is integrated with the colours sensed by the two compound eyes. Unlike us, colour looks the same to bees regardless of the ambient light levels. Sight is important to the bees and helps enable them to forage efficiently for nectar yielding flowers. The Australian team studied the mathematical principals used within a bee's brain to process data collected by the ocelli about the surrounding light and how adjustments are made to integrate with the sensory input from the compound eyes.

The information gained from these studies could be used to design and programme cameras, robots and drones to perfect their ability to judge colour. For example a light sensitive drone could fly around an orchard and accurately determine the colour of the fruit so that the optimum harvest time could be predicted.

"Improved color constancy in honey bees enabled by parallel visual projections from dorsal ocelli." J E Garcia et. al. Proc Nat Acad Sci, 2017 114, 7713-7718

Thank you to Bob and Pam Mendy for alerting me to this interesting article.

Report on the meeting of the HBKA East LAN Cradley 4th July 2017

New beekeepers swelled our numbers at the East LAN meeting on 4th July at Bob and Kath Cross's house. We split into two swarms as we entered Bob's orchard to make routine inspections of various hives.

First was the hive that we had attempted a Bailey comb change on at our first meeting. The queen had upped and gone, but Bob had then put a couple of queen cells in the brood box. There was now plenty of brood in all stages to be seen. Next we had a peek at the hive to which the Bailey comb change queen had absconded. It too was doing well.

Bob had done a shook swarm on 13th May and we opened the resulting hive to see a colony alive but not thriving well. The tell-tale pepper pot brood pattern suggested chalkbrood and this was confirmed by the debris on the hive floor and inspection of sealed brood.

In preparation for populating a 'Flow Hive', Bob had prepared a Langstroth with his own adaptation to a nuc on top. This was building up well and we spotted the queen. Another hive we looked at was doing so well it already had three supers of honey. Plenty of brood in all stages was to be seen, but the eagle eyed Dave Sutton did manage to spot a case of deformed wing virus.

Devotees of *Through the Looking Glass* were thrilled to learn that our last inspection would be opening a recently acquired emergency hive, put together from recycled weatherboard, in search of a red queen (marked in 2015), reported to be particularly big. We opened, we looked, we saw some eggs, some sealed brood but not a lot of larvae. Then we spotted the large lady strutting her stuff, but perhaps in her old age no longer as productive as she may have been in her heyday. It just confirmed that size is not always everything.

So to tea, having, we hoped, given the new crop of beekeepers the chance to see and handle frames and bees, and all of us a chance once again to learn more. Thanks, as always, to Bob and Kath for their hospitality and for insight into the ways of beekeeping.

Roger Gill



Chalk brood mummies:

North LAN Meeting July 19th

Our regular pub get together at Bush Bank was a pleasant occasion with several questions on the various problems we have encountered this year. New member Richard Krauze has been busy collecting bees and now has a thriving apiary. The highlight of the evening was the short video he showed us of a newly emerged queen destroying her rival still within her queen cell. Another queen emerged in the same shot, but I am not sure what befell her!

Although the books say that the first queen to emerge will kill her sisters this does not always happen, and casts may contain multiple queens. If your colony has swarmed and you discover several queens about to emerge, the safest course of action is to shake the bees off every frame, find all the queen cells and release the virgins. The colony will not swarm again without leaving at least one intact queen cell (Hooper).

I remember Dinah Sweet recounting the tale of a cast swarm on an old tyre. One queen had gone through the bees and systematically killed all her rivals.

Mary Walter



If foul brood is suspected, contact our RBI, Colin Pavey on 07775 119471 - or email colin.pavey@apha.gsi.gov.uk. At present, we do not have a local SBI.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

President Peter Furneaux

Chairman Andy Tatchell

Vice Chairman Debbie Smith

Secretary VACANCY

Treasurer John Robinson

Membership Sec. Mary Walter

Committee Robert Cross
Mike Healey
Steve Utley
Charlie Taylor

LAN COORDINATORS

South LAN: Geoff Blake

North LAN: Mary Walter

East LAN: Chris Stowell,
Marlene Hewitt

Newsletter Editor VACANCY

Examinations Sec. Louise Sheppard