



# WINCHESTER AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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## NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2008

### BOB's BIT

Anyone know where I can get a Tomes Queen Bee Detector? It was the invention of Gilbert Tomes (obit. Times 28 July 2008), a multi-talented engineer and entrepreneur, who worked with Baird on pre-war television, made a film about the making of wooden wheels, and used his knowledge of radiation detectors to produce his queen-finder. He put a minute amount of radioactive paint on the queen, and then located her with a Geiger counter. The Radiation Protection Authority would curl up its toes in horror, but in those days even luminous watches were radioactive. And it still doesn't find the queen in the first place!

If you find taking your honey crop to be hard work, spare a thought for the honey-hunters of Nepal. The recent BBC program had excellent coverage of how the hunters dangle on rope ladders to cut out the natural comb and hoist it up in baskets, 200ft. up on an overhanging cliff face. The Himalayan bee, *Apis laboriosa*, makes large sheets of comb containing a rather watery honey, rich in enzymes and amino acids. It also contains poisonous nectar from the rhododendron, which fortunately loses its toxicity when stored. But the honey hunters take it fresh, producing sensations like an acid trip. You can read an excellent account in "Honey and Dust" by Piers Moore Ede, published by Bloomsbury.



### **NEXT APIARY MEETING** **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September**

*The next meeting will be at Ros Medd's house, with an excursion for some to Fawley Down to inspect Russell's bees. Meet at 2.30 p.m at:*

*Littlebourne Cottage,  
Hazeley Road,  
Twyford SO21 1PZ*

#### *Directions:*

*From Twyford X roads 0.3 mls east on Hazeley road. Before 0.3 mls pass a field on the right and driveway with a cream painted lodge. Littlebourne Cottage is the next house on the right. There will be balloons!*

*Plenty of parking on the gravel and grass in front of the house.*

My bees had noted the passing of the harvest by the first week of August. They have shared a stand with a bait hive, containing a frame of stores, and until then had ignored it. But suddenly they were going in and clearing it out,

(which is just what I want). On the one or two nice days, they have been working hard at something, but I have no idea what might be yielding now. So it was a call to clean out the Porter escapes and empty last year's buckets. May your honey run as fast as a wax moth.

### **ALLOTMENTS OPEN DAY** **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> August**



**Bob welcoming visitors to our stand.**

Happily the weather forecasters were wrong when the Park Road allotments day arrived. The sun shone and there was much interest in our stand. There were informative posters and photographs, Alan Johnson's observation hive complete with Avril's bees, candle rolling, and Erica demonstrating frame making.

It was judged to have been a very worthwhile event and thanks are particularly due to Bob, Pat and Hugh Loftin who had done all the organising, setting up and taking down.

## HBA CONVENTION AND HONEY SHOW

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2008

To be held at Jubilee Hall, Bishops Waltham. Full details are included in the latest issue of Hampshire Bee Talk.

A few tickets are still available from Pat Loftin (Tel 01962 861176) for £10.00 (in advance) or £12.00 at the door.

## BASIC ASSESSMENTS

Congratulations to Hugh Loftin and Malcolm and Margaret Rittman on passing their Basic Assessments. David Nield passes on his thanks to WDBKA for its continuing support and successes.

For those who haven't yet taken the Basic Assessment, how about doing it next year? Also, now is the time to start planning to take one (or more!) of the written exam modules next year. We have copies of the Study Notes for all the modules in the WDBKA library (c/o Hugh Sykes).

## BEEES FOR PINGLESTONE FARM?

The following e-mail has been received from Ben Emmett, Vitacress Salads Ltd.

"I am the entomologist with Vitacress Salads Ltd., at St Mary Bourne. We are involved with the Sainsbury and Syngenta project on bumblebees and wildflower meadows. I was asked today if I could locate someone who would be willing to site a colony (or more?) of honeybees at Pinglestone Farm in Alresford."

Contact Ben at:-

[Ben.Emmett@vitacress.co.uk](mailto:Ben.Emmett@vitacress.co.uk)  
or via Pat.

## STORAGE AND USE OF POLLEN

From **Beekeeping Study Notes by J D & B D Yates**  
**Module 6 - Bee Behaviours.**

"When the foraging pollen collector returns to the hive it unloads the pollen directly into the cells on its own; this is unlike the unloading of nectar, water or propolis where .... a second house bee is involved. It dangles one of its hind legs with a load of pollen into a cell and pushes it off with its middle pair of legs. It then does the same with the other load on the other leg.

These pollen loads are then packed down into the cells by house bees. A cell of pollen can contain many types and colours of pollen and no attempt is made by the bees to segregate the loads into different types. During the packing process small quantities of honey are added to 'pickle' the pollen or preserve it. When the cell is full of pickled pollen it is sealed with a wax capping.

During the spring and summer when pollen is being used in large quantities for brood rearing very little is stored and pickled. It is towards the end of the active season that the bees start storing pollen for use in the following spring... One of the problems of practical beekeeping is the tendency for the colony to store pollen in the first super if the brood chamber is inadequate ... for the laying capability of the queen, causing pollen clogged supers.

The honey bee colony uses pollen as its only source of protein, .... for the development and repair of animal tissue in the adult and larval form. Specifically, (*some of*) the uses can be listed as follows:

For feeding to worker larvae at the correct time in larval development.

For mixing with wax to make brood cell cappings porous to allow the larvae to breath.....

Consumption by worker bees for the development of their glands, particularly the wax glands.

Other points on pollen:

Pollen that is not pickled and sealed for winter very often develops a mould.... Similar to chalk brood....it is not harmful to bees but is rendered useless as a food source.

Fresh pollen has the highest nutritional value and pollen that has been stored over winter has a protein value about 50% of its fresh value. Early fresh supplies of pollen in the spring are essential to satisfactory colony build up.

Colonies that are short of pollen suffer from protein stress which is a trigger for chalk brood."

## FOR SALE AND WANTED

Rob Parker has some items for sale with suggested price:

1. 5 BSS Wire queen excluders - £5 each.
  2. 2 Glass fibre large rapid feeders - £10
  3. Copper smoker - £10
  4. 25 New flat pack BSS shallow self spacing frames with short top bar, plus a few deep side bars - £10
  5. BSS Wired foundation, 12 deep, 38 super - £12
  6. 1 lbs glass honey jars, 43 with lids plus approx 72 lids.
- All items unused.

Telephone;- Rob Parker 01962 890160 or e-mail:  
[rxeparker@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rxeparker@yahoo.co.uk)

Ros Medd is still looking for a second-hand small electric extractor for Langstroth frames. If you can help, please contact her on 01962 712463 or by e-mail at:

[Ros.medd@btinternet.com](mailto:Ros.medd@btinternet.com)