



# WINCHESTER AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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## NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2009

### BOB's BIT

"Now is the summer of our discontent made glorious autumn".....and that's as far as I could misquote the Bard to describe this curious season. All summer my bees were indolent and lacking their proverbial work ethic, so the crop was modest to put it politely. Now that the ivy is yielding, their activity is almost frantic, and my supers are rupture-inducing. A full inspection showed that while they have wisely booted the drones out, four frames full of brood could be a toxic investment so late in the year, of a type more suited to an investment banker. No wonder everyone is working their little socks off, to provide for such strong colonies. Or do the bees know best, and are they forecasting a cold winter and an early spring flow?

If it is any comfort, conditions just across the Channel are similar. I talked to an Apiculteur in Haut Normandie, who had enjoyed spring rape but thereafter his year was similar to ours. I bought a pot of his product, ( €3 for 500gm.) and later found that its import is illegal. How to dispose of it? Spread it thicker?

We were blessed with a fine day for the last apiary meeting, and the hive which I opened was on its best behaviour, with the queen parading for our inspection. Several new members were able to handle frames, and we slew some drone brood in the interest of science. There was very little sign of varroa, so I must think about what action to take. Last year, the oxalic acid treatment was dramatically effective, or perhaps more accurately, it produced a large mite drop. But there is too much brood at present, so I must wait a month or more until it is at the minimum.

**NEXT MEETING**  
**Tuesday October 13th**  
**7.30 pm at Itchen Abbas Village Hall**

**Speaker:** John Gower on Bee Anatomy and Physiology.

**Directions:** *Itchen Abbas is on the B3047 between Kings Worthy and New Alresford. When coming from Winchester the entrance to the Village Hall is on your left in the centre of the village, immediately after a sharp right-hand bend. If you are coming from Alresford, it is on your right after 'The Trout' inn.*

### MICHELDEVER HARVEST HOME

From Pat Loftin



We were made very welcome at Micheldever on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September. The sun shone and I think the whole village turned out. Our display was very well received and John Trimmer did a fantastic job answering queries while I worked with the kids rolling

candles for Christmas. The observation hive was a big hit with young and old. Thanks to Tim for the loan of his frame with marked Queen. I discovered at 11am that the observation hive didn't take National frames so it was an SOS to Tim who fortunately was able to help. There was interest in the virtual hive as well.

## **APIARY MEETING, Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September**

With twenty seven members, new members and prospective members present, it was perhaps a record turn out, so Bob organised us into manageable groups. In addition to Bob's group, Russell and Ron took a group to examine two more colonies at [*the association apiary*] and Robin (Leonard) took another group to check out Avril's bees at her house.

After much frame examining, queen, egg and larvae spotting, and checking for Varroa, we all congregated for an excellent tea with Avril and Len, for which many thanks. Avril also provided an encore in the form of demonstrations to new and prospective members, of honey extraction and the use of a solar extractor for removing wax from extracted frames.

The weather had been superb and the afternoon provided a most successful end to the 2009 apiary meetings.

## **HAMPSHIRE BKA AUTUMN CONVENTION AND HONEY SHOW Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November**

This year the Convention will be held at Barton Peverill College, Eastleigh. Please make every effort to attend and participate. It would be nice to see some entries in the honey show from our members so if you have honey, show it off - your bees deserve it! Application form and conditions for entry for all categories in this month's Beetalk.

Tickets are available in advance from Pat Loftin at £10 each or £12 at the door.

## **BBC GARDENERS' QUESTION TIME**

During October listen out for our Chairman being interviewed by Anne Swithinbank on Gardeners' Question Time. It is being recorded on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October and is expected to be broadcast on Radio 4 on a Friday at 3.00 p.m. and Sunday at 2.00 p.m. – but we don't yet know which ones!

## **NEW FILM – Vanishing of the Bees**

This is part of the WI's 'SOS for Honey Bees' campaign and it is apparently going to be shown at The Screen, Winchester on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October.

## **NATIONAL HONEY SHOW**

**Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2.00 pm to 6pm**

**Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October 9.30 am to 6pm**

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> October .30am to 4.45 pm**

At St Georges College, Woburn Hill, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 2QS

The National Honey Show is the U.K's 'gold standard' honey show. There will be a full programme of workshops and lectures throughout the event and a wide selection of trade stands. See the line-up and show schedule at [www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk).

Become a member of the National Honey Show for £10 (or £11 via PayPal) and then entry for the duration of the show is free. Admission for non-members is £12 per day. Accompanied children of 16 years and under are free and additional family members over 16 years living at the same address can come in for £5 each. On Saturday admission after 12 noon is £5 for everyone. Join by contacting the membership secretary, Mrs Sandra Rickwood, 19 Kenwood Drive, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 5AU, email [srhoneyshow@googlemail.com](mailto:srhoneyshow@googlemail.com) or telephone 020 33 55 8716.

## **SEEDA LEADER GRANTS**

The Fieldfare Local Action Group (LAG) has been allocated over £2M in 'LEADER' funding until December 2013, by the South East England Development Agency, on behalf of Defra and the EU. This comes from the Rural Development programme for England and is aimed at assisting rural businesses, especially in the farming and forestry sector, and the communities around them. The money is available to applicants in the East Hampshire and Winchester districts. The first grants awarded total £51,000 for two local food and drink producers, both members of Hampshire Farmers Markets. The cash awards will help them to develop their existing businesses by adding value to their produce.

For information about the Fieldfare LEADER Programme, visit [www.winchester.gov.uk/leader](http://www.winchester.gov.uk/leader) funding or contact Ken Brown on 10962 848 588 or by email to [kbrown@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:kbrown@winchester.gov.uk).