



WINCHESTER AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2010

BOB's BIT

"All is safely gathered in" as the hymn goes, but how is it with you? I have no complaints, unlike last year, and have seven (mostly) full supers to extract.

What it consists of, and its viscosity, remains to be seen, but in case some is a bit stiff then stack them up over an empty box containing a warming lamp. Having had my disasters in the past, I shall put a sheet of plastic on the floor, and a remote thermometer in the lowest super. I am not going to trouble to put the wet supers back on to be cleaned up. The ivy is about to flower, and I can do without that problem. Supers store ok wet, provided they are wasp-proof.

In view of the imminence of the ivy, which the little dears will stuff into every corner of the brood-box, I am going to feed everyone at once, so it will be stored in the brood areas and hopefully eaten before the space is needed for brood in January. I am going to put a box on my most vigorous stock, with all my undrawn foundation, and ask them to draw it out using ivy honey. Then at leisure I can wash it out.

We don't hear about the pests and diseases which were the concern of past years, such as nosema and acarine, all our attention being on varroa and its associated viruses. In fact, Bayvarol etc. have kept them subdued, but they are still there and likely to make a come-back without pyrethroids or older treatments like Fumidil (now banned). I am adding Thymol to my autumn feed, against acarine (another mite) and varroa as well as chalk brood, of which we

NEXT APIARY MEETING

**SATURDAY 11th SEPTEMBER
2.30 p.m.**

With Astra and Stephen.

Directions: [Available from Secretary]

see a lot around here. Dissolve the thymol in alcohol and it will last for years. To my shame, I was once dismissive of an old beekeeper who put a matchbox full of thymol on top of his brood, with the lid slightly open. Now Thornes sell a dummy frame gadget to do this!

INTECH BEE DAYS

Saturday and Sunday 14th and 15th August

A big 'thank you' to the fifteen volunteers who helped man our stand over the weekend and to Hugh Sykes, Ron Broadway and John Cleverley who helped with the setting up and clearing away. About a thousand visitors came to Intech over the weekend, with over six hundred on the Saturday

(which was wet!), most of whom visited our display.

We had an almost continuous stream of interested people of all ages, and during the peak hours of late morning through to mid-afternoon, we were almost rushed off our feet. The observation hive was arguably the star attraction, with the candle rolling and honey tasting a close second.



Ron explains some of the mysteries of beekeeping to an attentive audience.



One size fits all!

The Intech team were very appreciative of WDBKA's support.

MERIDIAN OPEN LECTURE

Thursday 21st October

The Meridian Beekeepers invite you to their open meeting on Thursday 21st October at 7.15 for 7.30 p.m, at St Peter's Church Hall, Free Street, Bishops Waltham.

The speaker will be the very eloquent Tim Lovett, recently retired President of the BBKA. He will be speaking on what is going on with research and bring us up to date on and what the BBKA relationship is with the government and FERA.

Tickets are £5/head and the lecture will be followed by a finger buffet with a glass of wine.

Contact Nina Jetten on 02380 767956 or e-mail: ninajetten@btinternet.com by 18th October.

DID YOU KNOW?

From 'Beekeeping Study Notes' by Yates and Yates.

From 6.18.7: *"Experiments have shown that the colony temperature increases by about 10⁰C if it is disturbed during the winter. This behaviour pattern is understood to be a defensive mechanism. The bees on the outside of the cluster are incapable of flying and extend their stings; this will produce the alarm pheromone. The temperature rise is to warm the flight muscles ready for flying in defence of the colony. High temperatures shorten the life of a bee; it is for this reason that it is undesirable to disturb a colony in winter."*

So there is a trade-off judgement to be made when considering winter prophylactic treatments, for example. oxalic acid for Varroa. If the colony has been prone to Varroa infestation during the summer, the treatment could be of real benefit in preparing the colony for the following spring, greatly outweighing the adverse effects of disturbance. However, If there has been no, or minimal, Varroa infestation, it is probably better to leave the colony undisturbed.