



WINCHESTER AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Secretary: Angela Forder-Stent 01962 712443
Hon Treasurer: Matt Avery, 01962 856423
Newsletter Editor: Russell Fairchild 01962 852333
www.winchesterbeekeepers.org.uk (Ctrl + click to link)
President: Ron Broadway
Chairman: Hugh Sykes

NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2011

BOB's BIT

So the harvest is over, and I am in a state of grace, with supers stacked waiting for the extractor and everyone fed and mouse-guarded. The yield may not be all I expected, because of a strange happening up at 't hill. My hive farthest from the track had its roof removed, the crown board left askew and evidence of a spot of robbery. While the roof is too well-fitting to come off accidentally, and suggests a human intruder, the actual looting - as is now the fashion - was the work of bees. They use their own social network to broadcast the news, without so much as a Twitter. The loot is now secreted in other hives on the hill, one of which is mine anyway, so one must be philosophical about it. The lucky recipients will call it quantitative easing.

Our bees are still basking in the light of public attention, fed by a stream of fascinating snippets of bee misinformation. I picked up a pamphlet at a reputable garden centre, urging us to plant their bee-friendly plants, and learned that "bees never sleep". But this is arrant anthropomorphism, for what is sleep to a bee? Is it "sore labour's bath, balm of hurt minds"? And it also states that "when flying, their wings beat up to 180 times per minute" Hold on, I can count to 180 in a *minute*, and any bee following this advice would fall off the alighting board with a very faint thud. Now 180 beats per *second* sounds possible (Yates says 200/250), but turn that into a sound frequency and it's certainly not a buzz. About the G below middle C.

Public curiosity about bees promotes some odd questions, including the inevitable "do you get stung?" I assure the questioner that stings are good for your rheumatics, and the secret of my continuing good health and strength. Fortunately they don't stay to see me puffing back to the car with a full super.

APIARY MEETING
Saturday 10th September @ 2.30 p.m.

With Clarissa Lodge

Directions available from the secretary

HBA CONVENTION AND HONEY SHOW **Saturday 12th November**

Once again the HBA Convention and Honey show will be held in the excellent facilities of Barton Peveril College and follow the successful format of morning lectures and afternoon 'workshops'.

Celia Davis, respected member of BBKA, author and lecturer will be extolling the virtues of 'Mr Bee'.

Mike Brown of the NBU will be updating us on the latest in bee research of practical interest to beekeepers.

Joy Wallis, Community Conservation Officer at Dorset Wildlife Trust, together with representatives from Hampshire wildlife trust will give us ideas for creating bee-friendly gardens.

There will be workshops on **simple queen rearing, bee-product cosmetics, reading the bees, encouraging solitary bees.**

A hot lunch, morning coffee and afternoon tea are provided, trade stands will be open throughout the day and gardener and bee-enthusiast **Charlie Dimmock** will view the Honey Show and present the prizes.

For all who would like to enter the show but are daunted by the competition, there are a number of new Novice classes for those who have never won a show placement. Go on, give Charlie something to admire and the judges some work to do, as you take your harvest put some honey or a 'perfect' frame aside for the show.

As well as trade stands, there will also be an opportunity for you to sell your no longer required beekeeping books.

Volunteers are needed to help with the stewarding. Please contact Janice Roper Conference Organizer Janice Roper, by e-mail at jan.roper@rya-online.net or by 'phone on 02380 845875, if you can help.

For full details of the Convention programme and Honey Show go to:

www.hampshirebeekeepers.org.uk/events/hba-autumn-convention

This annual event really does provide a highly enjoyable day out that is not to be missed. At £11 in advance or £13 on the door, all inclusive, it's a bargain. Tickets will be available from Angela in September.

EFB ALERT

On 3rd August members with apiaries on the north side of Winchester, which are registered on BeeBase, received an automated 'Disease Alert' about a confirmed case of EFB within 5Kms of their sites. They were asked to be particularly on watch for any signs of the disease.

This underlines the importance of registering with BeeBase if you haven't done so already, via the National Bee Unit web site at:

www.nationalbeeunit.com

That web site also provides a link to the latest Foul Brood leaflet so that you can refresh your memory on the symptoms to look out for and action to be taken.

A 'CLASSIC' FERAL BEES NEST



A home of choice for feral bees.

A couple of weeks ago an ash tree was blown down at a stud near Cheriton. The tree surgeons called to remove it, came in for a surprise when they cut into a bees nest, so they beat a hasty retreat.

WDBKA member John Owen, who was the last person remaining on the Swarm List, successfully rehomed the bees. He scooped them out by hand into a hive box and returned in the evening to collect them. John said they were amazingly docile to handle and the comb was still fresh with lots of sealed brood. So far they have remained in their new home in Steep, so John is optimistic that their queen is still with them.

HONEY JARS FOR SALE

Boxes of 72 x 1lb honey jars for sale @ £20.50 per box including lids. To be collected from Itchen Stoke by arrangement! Contact Clarissa Lodge on 01962 779302 or by e-mail:-

clarissa.lodge@googlemail.com