



WINCHESTER AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2012

BOB's BIT

To Chelsea in search of bee-related exhibits, such as one might expect in a show devoted to flowers. But the RHS desk were again nonplussed by my enquiry. However I found a stand devoted to pollination in general, which was the nearest thing on offer. Now a farmer in Oxfordshire tells me he has planted a self-pollinating variety of rape. Is nothing safe from the march of science?

With the improvement in the weather, all talk is of swarms prevented and swarms captured. I attended one in a conifer hedge, and put a box over them. They started to march upwards, so I left them to get on with it. But the box blew over, leaving me with the Conservatives in a box on the ground and the Lib-dems faction still in the hedge. I gave the latter a smaller box, and in the morning formed a satisfactory Coalition. In another case, I actually succeeded in using a bait hive to tempt a swarm away from the hollow wall which their scouts were recommending. I shall be glad when the rape is over, as it seems to give my bees an erratic temper.

I have spent an afternoon cleaning up frames and fitting new foundation. It is a mentally undemanding task, leaving the mind to ponder who assembled the frames in the first place, and why they nailed the wedge bar with self-rusting nails, and in the way most difficult to dismantle. A warm day is unhelpful, making the sheets of foundation soft and wangey. There is a part of Hell reserved for the makers of tin spacers. Make up your supers with Manley – or at least Hoffman-, sidebars and wide bottom bars, and

APIARY MEETING Saturday 9th June @ 2.30 p.m.

With Hugh Sykes bees at
16 Lakewood Road, Chandlers Ford

Directions: From J12 of the M3, follow Winchester Road towards Chandlers Ford. After approximately 1 mile pass the Eating Inn (formerly the King Rufus pub) on your right and immediately take the next right turn (Merdon Avenue), then third left into Lakewood Road. No. 16 is about 100 yds on the left.

you will continue to bless me long after my smoker has gone out.

I don't often endorse a product, but I have discovered Bee-Quick, a repellent spray that does not smell of vomit, but sends the little dears running while you do a small job like peek into a super to see how its filling, or fit a Porter escape.

APIARY MEETING – 12th May

It was a perfect summer afternoon. Amanda had organised bee related displays and games for the children and Matt had five colonies to show us, in WBC hives.

With the help of Hugh Sykes and Stephen Tompsett we were shown different feeding methods, marked queens, eggs, larvae and sealed brood, play cells, drone brood and chalk brood.

There was an artificial swarm developing in hive 3 and a very strong colony on double brood in hive 4. We were warned that the fifth colony was hyperactive, but in the event they behaved well.



Young Max Avery checks out the bees watched by Joe Romans.

When everyone had had their close encounters with the bees we adjourned to a summer house for tea and biscuits *ad lib*, kindly provided by Amanda. She had also provided display boards showing different aspects of beekeeping and bee related games for the children.

Many thanks to Matt and Amanda for a very successful and enjoyable afternoon.

HEADS UP! – JULY APIARY MEETING

This will be on 7th July at Hookpit Farmhouse in Kings Worthy at 2.30 p.m, with Trish Bright. Detailed directions will be provided in the next newsletter.

SWARMS

Remember, if you need a swarm, or can give a home to one, please put your self on the Swarm List via:

http://www.winchesterbeekeepers.org.uk/html/swarm_list.html

INTECH BEE DAYS

Many thanks to everyone who has volunteered to help with stand duties at Intech during the 6th and 7th June. The final schedule now has been sent out to all concerned.

For this event we need bad weather! – then it usually gets really busy at Intech.

MVBKA AUCTION - Saturday May 5th at Greatham Village Hall.

The number of lots and visitors seemed to be quite a bit lower this year. Not only were there fewer lots for sale, prices were also generally lower and, unusually for this auction, a number of lots remained unsold.

National hives with two supers were selling at about £30, a solar wax extractor sold for £30, 72 new 1lb honey jars with lids for £26, a large stainless steel smoker for £25, and a trio of three National supers for £20. £15 was the best offer for a large Thornes bees suit in good condition, so it was not sold. But nucleus colonies of bees in returnable boxes, with clipped and marked queens were sold for £210 and £215 respectively.

In spite of a pessimistic weather forecast, the rain stayed away, and MVBKA's usual excellent organisation and a wide range of inexpensive refreshments including hot soup and bacon baguettes, and a wide range of home made cakes, made it a thoroughly enjoyable event.

FINALLY A LINK FROM ROS MEDD..... to make a change from media stories about pesticides.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/17854061>

Also have a look at the related stories listed on the same page.