



Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

Membership List

Next month I will be sending out a new membership list of all members, the list will include, Name, Full Address, Telephone Number and Email address all as held in the Master List.

The list is particularly useful to find members who are close to you and would maybe help if you have a problem.

The list will be sent out in secure PDF format.

If you would like your details removed from the list before sending it out please let me know by 27th April 2017.

Roger roger.wilkes@kenilworthhoney.co.uk

(A Warwickshire Beekeepers Association Trustee)

The new Warwickshire Beekeepers Association (WBKA) constitution is now in place. As you will see from the "County" AGM Report, this was the culmination of the work initiated by Tim Foden, - one of our two "County" trustees.

With Tim standing down, Gill Grimshaw is our remaining nominated trustee of this charity and Warwickshire and Leamington Beekeepers (WLBK) need to recruit a second member who is willing to take on this interesting role on our behalf

The "County" is effectively an umbrella organization with limited executive functions as most of the action is at Branch level. It is the registered charity of which we are one of eight Warwickshire Branches and from which we derive our charitable aims and benefit in other ways.

Maintaining wider communications with UK beekeeping happens through the "County". In particular, getting our point of view across on a range of matters, from bee insurance to disease management through many other subjects, all goes through the county. The commitment isn't onerous. Four committee meetings a year usually at BBKA, and there is always the opportunity for informal discussions about bees and beekeeping with some of the most knowledgeable beekeepers around, plus the chance to get to know our branch members and their interests better.

As you will have gathered from the adoption of the new constitution, the "heavy lifting" has already been completed and it is now onward and upward.

If you are interested in joining the WLBK executive to take on this role please contact Paul Kerr our Chairman (email: kerrbees@gmail.com or Tel 01926403212) to discuss things further.

Making an Exhibition of Ourselves.....Again!!

Spring is in the air. The bees are stirring. Summer is surely just around the corner and our programme of displays at various public events around our patch is firming up.

Bringing awareness of bees and beekeeping to the general public is part of our charitable remit and we have the kit to mount a range of different activities so we will be seeking volunteers to help man the WLBK displays.

Helping on the stand involves sharing our knowledge and enthusiasm with the public, making sales of honey and wax products (playing shop), demonstrating various pieces of beekeeping equipment (playing teacher) and answering queries. This is well within the capabilities of anyone who has been on our introductory course.



For each event we arrange the help in shifts and volunteering for a couple of hours on our stand often entitles you to free admission to the show leaving you time to sample the wider delights of the event. We seek volunteers a few weeks before a particular event and publicise this together with the arrangements for registering your interest in Bee Talk and by e-mail. There you will be able to find a link to enable you to volunteer on-line. You can also find these links on our website along with my contact details should you want further information.

The events range from village shows to those on a regional and national scale but all provide a thoroughly enjoyable day out in this delightful County of ours and, of course, plenty of opportunity for "Bee Talk".

So, if this prospect appeals to you, please note the dates of events that interest you in your diary for now and keep an eye on your in box over the next few months. A full list of these events is included in the Branch Diary section of our website but coming up in May and June are:-

Date	Day	Event	Organiser
20 th May	Saturday	Mollington Village Fete	WLBK/
4 th June	Sunday	Hatton Country Fair	WLBK/
7th-11th June	Thurs - Sunday	RHS Chatsworth	BBKA
10th June	Saturday	Kenilworth Agricultural Show	WLBK/

Bernard Brown
Public Display Co-ordinator

County AGM Round-up

Result!

We have a new constitution for Warwickshire Beekeeping Association.

This was adopted at the County AGM on Wednesday 22nd March and is the result of an initiative prompted by WLBK's Tim Foden who until recently was our County Trustee and Branch Secretary. Driven by the realisation supported by our branch committee that the existing constitution and management of the County fell short of the current needs of the membership, Tim, along with Doug Netherclef of Shipston Branch, put a proposal to last year's AGM for reform which proved somewhat controversial and, despite being defeated on a point of order, sent a message to the incoming Chairman, Celia Davis, that "something needed to be done". Celia took up the baton and the result, after much hard work and consultation with the branches by a subcommittee under her direction, is this new constitution. Based upon current Charity Commission guidelines and modified to suit the needs of our organisation, this should serve us well for the foreseeable future. The real delight, however, was to see Tim at the AGM, who as many of you will know, has been somewhat under the weather of late. He had made the effort to attend to witness the outcome of what has been a sustained effort by him on our behalf over several years and he was well rewarded by the outcome. Well done Tim. The AGM also saw Peter Spencer, a WLBK member, elected as the new President of the Association. Peter has had a long and distinguished career in beekeeping, having at various times acted as General Secretary of BBKA, Chairman of both WLBK and Coventry Branches, Seasonal Bee inspector, Honey Show Judge, National and County Honey show exhibitor and winner, and numerous other ambassadorial and organisational roles. A schoolmaster who introduced bees into the curriculum during his working life, Peter is often remembered by former pupils who stop by our beekeeping stand at the various public displays we frequent to regale us with stories of interrupted classes whilst Peter retrieved swarms. Many congratulations to Peter on this well deserved accolade and we wish him every success.

Congratulations are also due to another WLBK member, David Blower, who was elected as Chair Elect to the County.

Speaking of success, WLBK was well represented in the bevy of members who, having passed the BBKA exams, were awarded their certificates by the new President. These were:- Ray Summers (pictured here being congratulated by Celia Davis), Gillian Bhandari, Julia Smith, Charles Smith, Mary Martin, and Nicki Maritz. Special mention and congratulations were also offered to David Blower on receiving the Wax Chandler's Award which we reported in February's Bee Talk



VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED TO STAFF THE BBKA "SWARM LINE"

The British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) headquarters is situated at the National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh. During the swarming season they receive many telephone enquiries from the general public about bees and insects in general. The administrative staff are inundated with the calls and are constantly being interrupted in their work. They would welcome assistance again this year from Warwickshire members during weekdays in dealing with these calls.

It involves manning a telephone at the Headquarters and dealing with the enquiries relating to swarms ('Swarmline'). Last year it was extremely successful, we covered a majority of the sessions, and BBKA have asked if we would do the same again this year.

To do this we require volunteers who would be prepared to spend a half day, morning or afternoon, sitting at BBKA HQ taking telephone calls from the general public and advising accordingly. It is envisaged that we would be required from the beginning of May until mid July, but this will be dependent on the weather. Please do volunteer if you feel that you have the time. Identify a vacant half day slot from the diary accessible via the link on the home page of our website www.warleambees.org.uk and email Peter Stanworth, who will make an entry in the diary – peterstanworth@btinternet.com or Chris Cox - secretary@warleambees.org.uk.

Our experience has been that it has been good fun, interesting and enlightening.

The BBKA staff are very grateful for our assistance and it will go some way in thanking them for the help in return that they give us.

Peter Stanworth
March 2017

Swarm Prevention and Collection Workshop Monday 10th April at BBKA 7.30pm

Honey bees are social insects. They are unable to survive unless they live collectively in a colony. In order to maintain the species they have to reproduce by colony division. A large part of a colony will exit the hive together with the queen, set up home elsewhere and form a new colony. This is known as swarming.

If swarming does occur, it means the beekeeper may lose a large part of his colony and also a large part of his potential honey crop. Swarming is a very basic instinct in the honey bee and therefore is difficult to control. Even in the best managed colonies, swarming will occur. However with appropriate measures, the proportion of hives that swarm can be minimised. Clive Joyce, who has a wealth of beekeeping experience and has dealt particularly in this field for many years will discuss the dynamics of a swarm that will aid in their control. He will also go into detail of collection of swarms.

The branch has also developed an organisation whereby volunteer branch members collect swarms when notified of their presence, often by members of the general public. Ray Summers will discuss its organisation and how the swarm is offered to other branch members.

The programme for the lecture:

7.30pm Swarm prevention and collection – Clive Joyce
8.30pm Branch swarm collection organisation – Ray Summers
8.45pm Refreshments
9.00pm Questions

This lecture will include many slides. It has been given over several years and has proved extremely popular. It is aimed at all levels and will be of interest to all beekeepers.

Peter Stanworth

Kitchen

If anyone is planning to replace their kitchen units, or knows someone who is, BBKA HQ at Stoneleigh would love the old ones. As many of you have used the kitchen will know, we could do with some new work top. Rather than just fit a new worktop over the vintage units we would love to upgrade them with some from this century.

Please contact Leigh Sidaway 02476 696679 or LeighS@britishbeekeepers.com

Hints and Tips

Many thanks to Bernard for reminding me of these tips that Mike Townsend put together some time ago. Very apt as the weather gets warmer and we remember we have a garden out there somewhere!

If a few simple steps are followed honey bees are quite tolerant of gardening near a beehive.

- Observe the beehive before starting work and be aware of the route the bees take so that you can avoid their flight path to and from the hive. The flight path may vary daily depending on where their food source is so make this observation every time you work near the hive.
- Bees are less active on cool, gloomy days and early in the morning when the temperature is lower so plan your work when their activity is lowest.
- Bees, along with most other insects including wasps and other stinging insects generally are highly sensitive to body odour. Also their eyes work quite differently to ours having a high 'flicker factor' which means they are also highly sensitive to movement. With these points in mind make sure you are well washed, and in clean clothes, but avoid scented hair and body washes. Plan work around the hive for the morning before working up a sweat elsewhere in the garden later in the day.
- Carry out tasks such as weeding close to the hive by kneeling, working slowly and steadily and only work standing up, for example when hoeing, when you are well away from the hive. When standing you may be in their flight path and a bee may bump into you accidentally so wearing a hat is helpful. Bees will try to avoid or go around you. If one gets into your hair do not try and tease it out as the bee will become anxious and entangled; smartly smack your head and kill the bee instead.
- Working close to the hive may lead a single bee to come and investigate you; just move steadily away from the hive and do not wave your arms about trying to 'swat' it as this will make the bee more anxious. However if following persists it should be reported to the beekeeper.
- A swarm issuing from a hive, with lots of bees in the air can be quite an alarming sight. The bees are however in a benign state simply dividing their nest to start another colony somewhere else. The intense activity lasts only a few minutes before they fly away or land in a bush or tree nearby. Keep the public away and tell the beekeeper.

If you have any hints or tips that you would like to share, please send them to h.essex@virgin.net...
Thank you Helen Essex

Editor Roger Wilkes, email address is roger.wilkes@kenilworthhoney.co.uk or hard copy can be posted to him at:

12 Mercia Avenue, Kenilworth CV8 1EU. **Content to him for next month by April 27th latest.**

Please send in plain text, unformatted, using Microsoft Word or another common program.

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