



Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

£500.00 Grant Awarded

Some three years ago now, it was decided that Warwickshire Beekeepers' Association would award up to £500.00 to each branch in the pursuit of its charitable objects ie promote beekeeping and educate the public about bees and beekeeping, as it had surplus funds. Many branches chose to purchase data projectors, but we already had one so we didn't make a claim at that time. I am pleased to inform you that we have now received this money, which will be used towards the cost of setting up our new teaching and community apiary in near the University of Warwick.

Tim Foden

Coop and Extraction Unit

As the committee manager of the above mentioned member's facilities, I would like to make a plea to all who use the Coop and the unit.

As soon, we will be needing to extract the reward for managing and keeping our bees in good health, it is important to turn over the use of the unit in good time. To this end I would ask that we cooperate with each other to multi occupier use, help each other to keep the room and equipment in a clean and serviceable state, report any defects and consumables needs and to return the keys back to me ASAP after use.

Also to allow the smooth running of the Wax and ambrosia product, once you have paid please phone me on 07792222251 or 01926 858528 to arrange pick up of your supplies.(normally my house or BBKA HQ).

I thank you in trembling anticipation

Clive Joyce

Kenilworth Show

"I'm afraid it's that time of year again when we will require members to man the display for the annual round of shows, we will require a number of people to help to erect the marquees etc. on the Friday (6th) for Kenilworth show, to be held at Stoneleigh on the 7th June 2014. We will then need people to help at the show itself and also to help to dismantle things at the end of the day. Kenilworth Show is usually very well attended and we plan to have the following attractions for the public to see and to take part in. Skep making, microscopy, honey sales and honey tasting and live bee handling demonstrations. You don't have to be highly experienced beekeepers to be able to engage the public in conversation, just be there to talk about our hobby and perhaps how you became involved, your help no matter how small and or for how long will be welcome, hopefully the weather will be kind to us and there will be huge crowds. Please watch you inbox for details about how to get involved and give us your help on what normally proves to be a very busy day.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1q0tnHsHjinoIBiv60HR5iheNaI5igt7f1S8ybRTCiNg/viewform>

Mick Smith

Brandon Marsh

If there are any willing volunteers to do a couple of hours am / pm at 16th, 17th May at Brandon Marsh Nature reserve to talk about the observation hive could they please let me know, if it's raining it doesn't matter it is located indoors".

Mick Smith

Bee Talk

For those members who do not wish to receive their monthly copies of Bee Talk an alternative was suggested that they could contact the Secretary to make arrangements to collect a hard copy from the next Branch meeting if they wished.

Just a reminder

If you're a novice Beekeeper and have burning questions but you don't know who to ask (and you don't want to bother your mentor again) then remember, Warwick & Leamington Novices' Forum.

https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/wlb_novices

A perfect place to get your questions answered by experienced beekeepers. Any problems just email me directly and I will send you an invitation to join the group once I have verified your membership.

ticklemoanster80@outlook.com

Rich Carribine

Summer Displays

Spring is in the air and summer is 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. We have the kit to mount a range of different activities and, shortly, will be seeking volunteers to help man the WLBK displays.

Helping on the stand involves sharing our knowledge and enthusiasm with the public, making honey sales, demonstrating various pieces of beekeeping equipment and answering queries and is well within the capabilities of anyone who has been on the introductory course. We usually arrange the help in shifts and volunteering for a couple of hours on our stand entitles you to free admission to the show and 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.

These 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, note their dates in your diary now. 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	Event	Location	WLBK Organiser
16 th May	Great Warwickshire Show and Tell	Warwick Museum/Market Place	Gill Grimshaw/Mike Townsend
18 th May	Moreton Morrell Open Day -	Moreton Morrell Agricultural College	Roger Wilkes
1 st June	Hatton Countryside Show	Hatton Country World	Bernard Brown
7 June	Kenilworth Agricultural Show	Stoneleigh	Mick Smith & Roger Wilkes
12-15 June 2014	Gardeners' World Live	- NEC	BBKA

To register to help out at Hatton Countryside Show follow this link

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BOO7IX94ghe3s0HGWZ_B-4URGI8iu8Z2S0oTvISHlk8/viewform

To register to help out at the Kenilworth Show follow this link

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1q0tnHsHjinoIBiv60HR5iheNaI5igt7f1S8ybRTCiNg/viewform>

If any member wishes to organise a beekeeping display for their local event, the kit can be made available and we can help with the planning and organising if required. Just contact Bernard Brown at

bernardnbrown@aol.com or tel. 01926843416

Bernard Brown

Where is the best place to be stung?

A recent article in the Daily Mail reported undergraduate Michael Smith had conducted a one man experiment which part of the body is the worst place to be stung by a bee.

Five times a day for 38 days he entered the laboratory grabbed the bee by its wings and pressed it against the desired sting location, to make sure the results were consistent he applied the bee sting to each part of the body three times before logging the average pain on a scale of one to ten.

The three most least painful locations were the skull, middle toe tip and upper arm all scoring 2.3, scoring just above this was the buttocks with 3.7.

The most painful locations were the nostril, upper lip and penis shaft (9.0, 8.7 and 7.3 respectively), the only one place that was out of bounds to the bees the eye ball he was talked out of this by his supervisor.

So now you know

Roger

A 'twinstock' two x three frame poly nuc

The poly nuc marketed by Paynes can be usefully converted into an eight frame box by getting rid of the internal (infernal) feeder as discussed in a previous article. I'd hoped to divide these into two, adding a second entrance, to use for queen mating. However, the eight frame box is fractionally too narrow to split down the middle to create two four frame nucs, even using a thin sheet of Correx. The central entrance - at least in the original versions of these boxes - is also poorly designed and would have needed modification.

Until 2014 there were no generally available National poly nucs other than the Paynes offering (Thorne's have recently introduced one this year). I therefore purchased some Langstroth poly nucs from ModernBeekeeping in the sales.

These are very high quality poly nucs. They are the Paradise Honey Bee Box's, made out of very dense poly, with a separate removable open mesh floor. They also have a good thick roof - far superior to the Paynes box. They have the additional advantage of being **designed to be divided**, with lugs in the end panels, a shallow slot in the floor and twin entrances at opposite ends. The only real drawback to these boxes is the sculptured exterior which makes painting them tiresome. I used 2-3 coats of thinned masonry paint.



I wanted to retain the option to use these as standard 6-7 frame nucs in the future, so designed a removable divider that (non-destructively) created two x three frame nucs. Being Langstroth's, they're significantly bigger than a National box. However, with a little ingenuity, this extra space can be used to create an internal feeding compartment for fondant or sugar. In the first boxes I converted I blocked the top of the feed compartment with a removable scrap of perspex and drilled through the end panel. I'm going to try some this year without the perspex ... simply allowing the bees to clamber over the end panel to access the fondant.



I used these boxes for queen mating late in the season in 2013. I divided a strong colony - with the addition of a few frames of stores - to create five three frame nucleus colonies, four of which were queenless and housed in these three frame poly nucs. The queen from the donor hive went into a dummied down standard nuc with a frame of stores and brood. I moved the poly nucs to a separate apiary, added a sealed queen cell and got them all successfully mated. These small colonies were appreciably stronger than a mini-nuc and were better able to defend themselves against wasps (mini-nucs in the same apiary were robbed out by wasps). The bees did well in these boxes, soon built up and were moved on to larger colonies. Since it's possible to overwinter



colonies in Kielers, I see no reason why a strong three frame nuc - or rather two of them - wouldn't be OK in anything but the harshest winter in one of these modified hives.

Construction



Construction is relatively simple, requiring little more than a sheet of 6mm ply, some offcuts from the scraps box, some softwood, a couple of G clamps, wood glue, screws and - inevitably - Elastoplast. I used the central divider as a sort of spine, to which I attached 15mm ply end panels, spaced the correct distance apart to fit a National frame. The easiest way to do this is to add some 8mm - beespace - softwood to the sidebars of a brood frame and then just mark where to attach the end panels to the divider. The top edge of the divider is widened by the addition of two thin strips of softwood (3mm x 15mm) which extend to create the lugs that separate the original frame rests of the

box. The four end panels need to be glued and screwed in place, using a set square to ensure they are perpendicular to the divider, and clamped until secure. It is easiest to make all the modifications (below) to these end panels **before** fitting them in place.



The 'entrance' end panel must be proud of the floor, the other one must reach all the way to the floor. The entrance end panel also needs 6mm softwood spacers on the back to protect the small poly lugs that hold the central divider in place. The other one can have a hole drilled through it and covered with a scrap of queen excluder (though see additional comments above as to whether this is necessary - work in progress). Both end panels will need frame rests on the upper edge - those horrible plastic ones provided with Thorne's second quality supers are just fine. The original boxes are top bee space and this is the way I've arranged mine.



Running two colonies side by side is straightforward, but you need to ensure that each side is bee tight and that you can work with one colony without disturbing the other too much. I use a thick plastic sheet as a crown board, fitted to the central divider with drawing pins. The bees can't propolise this stuff down too easily, I can see through it well enough to see colony expansion and it's easy to peel back and hold down with you hive tool when you need access. Don't purchase the entrance blocks from ModernBeekeeping ... use Correx offcuts instead, with different colours to help the bees orientate back to the colony.

Next month ... Buster, the hivebarrow

Dr. Bodgit

In the Branch Apiary

April was a terrible month for the apiary, as reported in April I was feeding syrup to get the hives to build up for the queen rearing, I then put on supers early to give them plenty of room to build.

All was fine when the apiary was used for the new beekeepers on the 12th April then things started to go horribly wrong

Well it has not gone to plan, one hive swarmed very early after only five days after my inspection the good thing was it was sitting on the fence so I was able to collect and hive, the next hive the queen has lost her sperm and is laying blanks so will move and unite with another hive, the other two hives which were used for the basic course on Sunday were found to have queen cells so have had to do artificial swarms on both of them, which leaves me with just one usable hive.

This unfortunately means I will have to delay starting the weekly apiary sessions, as soon as I am able to do arrange this I will send out an Email to you all as to when the first night will be.

Roger

For Sale / Wanted

6 pairs of unused 11 slot, galvanised metal, castellated spacers for supers. £2.30/pr from supplier, a snip at **£1.50/pr**
Contact Bernard Brown, 01926843416.

I have the an under counter fridge which can be adapted for use as a honey melter if anyone would like to collect it.

Mick Ross on 01926 811130 or email mickross@live.com

WBC hive in cedar wood comprising 4 lifts, one with porch & entrance blocks, crown board, Queen excluder, 2 porter bee escapes, brood box and four supers. This assembled from Thornes would cost in excess of £400.00.

On offer now for £200.00 ono 07767244539 Mick Smith.

Table Top Extractor very good condition hardly used £200.00. - Thornes price new £224.00.

Uncapping knife brand new £12.00. - Thornes price £15.00.

Uncapping knife electric new £80.00. - Thornes price £90.00

40k polythene settling tank with valve new £20.00. - Thornes price £27.00

15k polythene rectangular settling tank with valve £15.00. - Thornes price£19.00

Roger Wilkes 01926 852076 – 01785535488 roger.wilkes@kenilworthhoney.co.uk

Check the security of your hives and equipment

Coventry Branch have had a break in with several items (listed below) stolen

Nuc Hive complete with Bees (1)
Honey Extractor (1)
Bee Suit (1)
Smoker (1)
Bees Wax and Frames (40)
Super in Flat (1)
Electric Generator (1)
Spade (1)
Fork (1)
Shears (1)

You can see that this is quite beekeeping specific and would have needed some knowledge of Beekeeping.

We have alerted Coventry members that this has happened and to review security of their equipment etc.

Also if any one hears of 'cheap' equipment being sold then perhaps you would let us know.

Editor Christine Kehrer, email address is ckehrer@gmail.com, or hard copy can be posted to her at:
13, Brookside Avenue, Kenilworth, CV8 1ES. **Content to her for next month by May 27th, latest!**

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

BeeTalk is: Designed, produced, printed and distributed by Roger Wilkes

Warwick and Leamington Branch
of Warwickshire Beekeepers Association
Reg Charity No. 500276 www.warleambees.com