



---

## Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

---

### Branch Web Site

Have you visited the Branch Web Site yet ? All the information about the Branch is on it we now have a Members Area to access this the password currently is: mandible.

You will need this for access to all Coop purchases

### Dalehouse Lane Training Apiary

Somewhat to our surprise, thirty members signed up to attend the practical training sessions at DHL in response to an emailed invitation.

In view of the large number we have divided the group into four, with two sub groups meeting on a Tuesday evening and two on a Thursday. I am most grateful to Mary Pemberton, Tim Geater and Bernard Brown, who, along with me, are our instructors, with Ray Summers, Colin Spracklen, Ulya Lalo and Julia Smith assisting us. We have 10 colonies between us and spent the first sessions assessing the colonies we have, followed by discussion in our new training cabin.

It must be said that without the cabin and its superb generator, we would not have been able to start the training so early in view of the time of sunset. Thanks must go to those who located and installed the unit for us.

Tim Foden

Apiary Manager (acting)

### Nosema Clinic

We invited members to bring samples of adult bees for microscopic examination on Saturday 25 April to assess whether they were infected with Nosema spores.

This was our first venture of this kind, so we were all learning! Eleven members provided 20 samples for testing. Three samples were found to be infected and we discussed possible courses of action in those instances. Members with uninfected colonies were clearly relieved to know that this was one problem they didn't have to worry about!

### Disease Inspections in May

I feel sure that all those who attended Dave Bonner's talk about how to carry out disease inspections found it of benefit.

We would like to encourage all members to inspect their colonies for disease during May as we are being encouraged to do so by the BBKA and National Bee Unit.

We should first check the outside of the front of the hive for bees crawling on the ground and any climbing the front of the hive, blades of grass etc and attempting, but failing to fly.

Next we should check the top bars of our top super to see if there are bees exhibiting an uncharacteristic shaking behaviour.

Our next port of call is the bees themselves. Are there any with "K" wings or deformed wings and can you see Varroa mites on any thoraxes?

Finally we should examine both capped and uncapped brood for abnormalities. Are the larvae pearly white, clearly segmented and "C" shaped? Is the capped brood the correct biscuit colour, even and flat rather than sunken or greasy looking?

You are advised to focus very much on the main reason you opened the hive ie to inspect for disease and not be distracted by other issues you may come across. Further, since we would all prefer not to find problems and may go into denial, why not invite a fellow beekeeper to join you for a second opinion, with the possibility of returning the favour?

If any of these assessments reveal possible problems, we strongly advise you to consult your mentor, another "expert" or check out the Beebase website. If you have any reason to believe that deformed larvae or sunken greasy cappings are symptoms of EFB or AFB, you have a legal duty to report this to a bee inspector as well as it being in the interests of all of us

Tim Foden

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

Spring is in the air. 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 honey sales, demonstrating various pieces of beekeeping equipment and answering queries and is well within the capabilities of anyone who has been on our introductory course. We usually arrange the help in shifts and volunteering for a couple of hours on our stand usually entitles you to free admission to the show and so there is 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. Here 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.

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
15th May	Great Warwickshire Show and Tell	Warwick Museum/Market Place	Gill Grimshaw
31st May	Hatton Countryside Show	Hatton Country World	Bernard Brown
6th June	Kenilworth Agricultural Show	Stoneleigh	Mick Smith & Roger Wilkes
13th -14th June	Leamington Peace Festival	Pump Room Gardens, Leamington	Bernard Brown/Richard Carribine
11th-14th June	Gardeners' World Live	NEC	BBKA

This year's season of public displays of our craft kicks off on Friday the 15th May with “**The Great Warwickshire Show and Tell**”. Staged out of doors in the Market Place of our county town over the afternoon and evening, this is a celebration of local organisations promoting our heritage and culture, and we shall be there sharing the delights of Beekeeping with the good people of the District. Last year, assisted considerably by the balmy weather and street entertainments, there was a distinct cosmopolitan atmosphere as families turned out to take the air and browse whatever took their interest from an impressive array of stands, so why not come along and, if you do, do stop by our stand for a chat.

This will be followed on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May by the **Hatton Country Fair**, a village show held at Hatton Country World. This is their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary show and as well as ourselves there will be the usual village show attractions of sideshows, plant and cake sales, tug-of-war competitions, face painting, and some more unusual ones such as belly dancing, a companion dog show, dog agility demonstration, beagles, ferrets, rabbits, cats, greyhounds PLUS their now traditional fresh egg throwing and catching competition!!! .....could get messy!. If that is not enough to keep you entertained then delights of Hatton Country World itself are on hand to sample.

The week after Hatton, on Saturday 6th June, is the **Annual Kenilworth & District Agricultural Society Show**. Held at Stareton, in a field immediately opposite the entrance to Stoneleigh Park, in terms of foot fall, this is one of the more significant events in our programme and with the gates opening at 0930 we are seeking help not only on the day itself but also on the day before to set things up.

Following the success of last year's event we will be displaying again at **The Leamington Peace Festival** held over the 13th and 14th June in the Pump Room Gardens. Described as an event aimed at people of all ages wanting to find out ways of living life in a more harmonious way with each other and the environment, this Festival provides a mix of family friendly activities, including workshops, talks, free music and other entertainment, vegetarian food stalls and environmentally conscious stands. Our stand proved very popular last year with the visitors stretching the support we had mustered so we are seeking more help this year.

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

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1SkBL3-FOmQIHq-nymFRCelR7XrgKnjoZXISxuPWz\\_Ks/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1SkBL3-FOmQIHq-nymFRCelR7XrgKnjoZXISxuPWz_Ks/viewform)

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

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1gvccCKTNzjhgf2lv4miWJDOvokAxFjaMjMguYPiO-vQ/viewform>

To register to help out at the Leamington Peace Festival please follow this link:-

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1FRrwBKRqR7knzl8c-ZzIEvGWLXihrmFYpvdY8RrI4fk/viewform>

Should any member wish to organise a beekeeping display for their own 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](mailto:bernardnbrown@aol.com) or tel. 01926843416

Bernard Brown.  
Display Co-ordinator

## **WLBK Branch Co-op purchasing.**

Want to save money, lots of money, then follow this article and find out how.

Last year Liz and I saved around £50 per hive on regular purchased items, when compared to Thornes list prices. That reduces to around £30 per hive when compared to better buying elsewhere but it is still a significant sum for the 20+ hives we were managing last year. So how does it add up?

We use Ambrosia syrup both for Autumn/Winter feed ,for Spring feeding and for feeding nucs. That works out at about two 12.5kg cans per hive, Thornes price would be around £57 and the best local we could find was £32. Through the branch we paid at the time just under £20 i.e. £10 per 12.5kg container.

We also bought jars and lids, and at around 27p through the branch or 55p from Thornes, that makes a saving of 28p per 1lb jar and at 40lb per hive that is £11, or for those even more productive say at 60lb per hive that is a £17 saving.

Wax foundation for our 14x12 hives is around £12 per pack compared to the £18 at Thornes so another saving, say equivalent to £3 per hive per year on a 3 year replacement cycle.

Further savings can be made on Apiguard, buckets (our price £1.40, Thornes £ 4.43) , nitrile gloves and fondant. For further information look at the branch website, members area, co-op purchasing:  
<http://www.warleambees.org.uk/co-op-purchasing/>

Stephen Bates

## **Free to a good home**

David Evans is moving away from the area and having a clear out of unwanted beekeeping equipment. He has (or will) stored this in the lock-up container at Dale House Lane. It includes at least 5 nucleus boxes, some roofs, floors and 'fat dummies' for use during queen rearing. This equipment is homemade, but still perfectly serviceable despite his truly awful woodworking. Although the equipment is available on a first come, first served basis, David would prefer it went to new beekeepers to encourage them and in recognition of all the help and support he received from the experienced members of WLBK when he was starting out.

[David@fatshark.co.uk](mailto:David@fatshark.co.uk) 07766 601824

David

## **Deep Brood Box**

I have a deep brood box (pre-used but scorched and sterilised) and 11 frames made up with foundation (unused) for sale.

I would like to ask £75 complete (this compares to just over £120 as flat pack from Thornes.)

There is a genuine reason for the sale, having inadvertently bought a deep box I thought it would be ok but I am struggling with the weight of the frames to do the weekly check. [bspraggett@btinternet.com](mailto:bspraggett@btinternet.com) 07976 921146

Bronwen

## Hints and Tips

Many thanks to Mary Pemberton for the following recipe:-

### **Ginger/Honey Crunch** (Kids can make during holidays – so easy)

6 oz. Flour (I mix wholemeal and self raising white)  
4 oz. butter  
2 oz. caster sugar  
1 tablespoon ground ginger  
1 tablespoon honey

Put in blender, mix all together, until breadcrumb consistency. Put in 7" square tin, push to edges. Not too thin.

180c oven for 10-15 mins.

Whilst cooling make topping

2 oz. butter  
4oz. icing sugar  
2 teaspoons honey  
2 teaspoons ground ginger

Cream all together in blender, and when shortbread biscuits are cold, spread over the top.

Cut into squares or fingers and enjoy...!!

When carrying out your weekly inspection remember the 5 things you should be checking for.

1. **Space** (*need for supers?*)
2. **Stores** (*need for feeding?*)
3. **Queen right** (*queen or eggs spotted?*)
4. **Queen cells** (*swarming imminent?*)
5. **Disease** (*look for signs on the outside and inside of the hive, bees and brood*)

When you have done all that try this tasty snack, it comes highly recommended by Chris Kehrer.  
Liven up a piece of toast by adding a large dollop of goat's cheese with a swirl of runny honey on the top-  
delicious!

A large swans feather is a really useful tool for gently moving bees around a frame.(Thanks to Liz Bates for this handy tip)

To collect a sample of bees put a towel over the entrance to the hive. Foraging bees will collect on the towel.

Take a empty honey jar with a mere wetting of honey solution in the bottom. Scoop the bees up using the jar and lid being careful not to squash any. The bees will be attracted to the bottom of the jar so you can repeat the scoop to collect more without the first sample flying out!

If you have any hints or tips that you would like to share, please send them to [h.essex@virgin.net](mailto:h.essex@virgin.net)...

Thank you Helen Essex

Editor Roger Wilkes, email address is [roger.wilkes@kenilworthhoney.co.uk](mailto: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 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.org.uk](http://www.warleambees.org.uk)