



Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

Vacancy for a Branch Secretary

I am in my seventh year as Branch Secretary now, and feel it will soon be time to hand over the role to someone who can bring freshness to it as from the 2017 Annual General Meeting.

The prime task is to organize, in conjunction with the Chair, our six Executive Committee meetings per annum inclusive of preparing the agenda and recording the outcomes – especially policy decisions and matters requiring further action.

The person taking over will need to be elected at the AGM in February 2017. I am very keen that there is a smooth handover with minimal disruption to the operation of the branch. To that end I would like to identify a volunteer now so that I can carry out the vital induction and training necessary during the intervening months.

The ideal person will have some experience of organising meetings, understand the significance of operating to a constitution, have a reasonable aptitude for IT tasks and enjoy being pivotal to the smooth running of the branch.

I would be pleased to have a chat with those interested in taking on the role and I have a comprehensive job description to send.

Tim Foden
01926632388 tim_foden@hotmail.com

Hive of Activity Jephson Gardens – Sunday 21st August – Volunteers Required

The Jephson Pleasure Gardens, the Jewel in Leamington's Crown, is an fantastic place to be at any time but it will be even better on Sunday 21st August for the "Hive of Activity" event organised by Warwick District Council. We shall be there with "our girls", along with falcons, owls, ferrets, reptiles and insects and are now actively seeking members to share their enthusiasm and knowledge for a couple of hours promoting our craft to the perambulating public.

The event runs from 11.00a.m to 4.00p.m which we divide into two shifts 11.00 – 1.30 and 1.30 to 4.00. We could also do with some help setting things up before hand and dismantling the stand afterwards so if you can spare a few hours to indulge in a bit of "bee talk" to support the branch please let us know by following the link below which is also replicated on the branch website.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc3PtU4jnzGnnDPTL3g27XEd4huGfpdUWro7dC9jpbyKULiQ/viewform>

Benard Brown

Himalayan Balsam



Two of our intrepid members seen here "on the pull" amongst the Himalayan Balsam which has invaded our apiary at Dalehouse Lane

Beekeeping Taster Day

We are running a Beekeeping Day on 4th September at Langley to give members of the public a flavour of the joys and challenges of Beekeeping and would appreciate it if members could spread the word amongst friends and colleagues. Details are on the website as is an enrolment form at

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeATunFbSRa5si0TYHmp-vZ0x6VcUzTJCdWAjdlozK6f1AFbg/viewform>

Bernard Brown

BBKA Module Study Groups

I am sure those who studied Module 1 last Winter will soon wish to consider plans for further study and will be in communication with each other. For those intending to take the exam this Autumn, the application deadline is 30 September and the exam date is 12 November

I would be pleased to hear from any other members who wish to learn more about honey bees. In terms of theory, I am happy to guide you through the setting up of self study groups of 4 – 6 people. The normal route is to follow one of the BBKA correspondence courses, which have the benefit of a remote tutor, who will assess and comment on the answers given. The groups decide the frequency and location of their meetings. There is no obligation to take an exam at the end of the study period, but for those that wish to, the exams will be in March 2017.

This may seem early to be raising the matter of Winter study groups. However past experience shows that it takes a little time to get groups organised and acquire the course material and a tutor, with the result that groups end up getting started later than they intended.

The BBKA Basic has to be passed before module exams can be taken. Therefore if you want to learn more and have passed your Basic or are awaiting results, please get in touch.

The way that self study groups work is really quite hard to explain, but please drop me a note if you think you may be interested and we can organise a get-together for a more detailed explanation and to answer your questions

Tim Foden

Skep Making Day 2016

We are holding another skep-making day this year and are inviting you to join us.

Saturday 8th October Held at BBKA Centre, Stoneleigh



We are holding another skep-making day this year and are inviting you to join us.

The cost is £25 and this price is for the purchase of the tool and sufficient straw and binder to enable you to complete your skep.

The day will be from 10am until 4pm during which time you will be able to get well into making your skep, which you can then continue at home.

We will have an informal lunch where everyone contributes and this will be arranged at a later date. Soft drinks will be provided.

If you are interested, please complete the Google form on the home page of our website www.warleambees.org.uk and then make your payment as soon as possible.

Places are limited to 20 and there are always more people wanting to come along than there are places. So if you want to join us, please don't delay.

Ambrosia has arrived



Who's that at the door.....?

Sitting watching the evening news last night, Wednesday 20th July, Pat and I were pleasantly surprised when there was a knock on the front door and there stood one of our former members in the shape of David Evans. Some of the newer members of the branch may not know David, but he is a Professor of Virology conducting research into viruses associated with varroa affecting our girls. During his time at Warwick University, he became a very valued member of our branch. Along with another former member David Blower, they created several queen rearing events which proved to be very successful. We were very fortunate to have him here with us in Warwick & Leamington and his move to St Andrews University was sadly our loss but their gain. We sat and talked at length and, not unsurprisingly, the talk was mainly about beekeeping. He was telling us about the poor beekeeping year in Fife and how the beekeeping year in general in his area is quite short compared to ours, literally May to September.

The conversation came around to ways of dealing with drone laying workers (DLW), a problem which can be prompted by prolonged absence of brood pheromone in the colony. His experience has shown that, once workers start laying it is difficult get them to revert. David was saying that there may well be several in the colony and they can fly, so shaking the bees off some distance away from the hive doesn't necessarily cure the problem. With a low level of DLW's he has had some success with shaking the bees out and letting them return to a fresh hive on the old site containing a frame of eggs, young larvae and open brood. Success is indicated by the returning workers starting queen cells on the frame added. If this doesn't work – usually indicating large numbers of DLW's - he has concluded that the best way to deal with them was to just move the hive away from the original site altogether, shake the bees off and let them go into other hives on site. The laying workers will not lay in the other colonies as there will be a laying Queen and plenty of brood pheromone.

David went on to say that sometimes we find drones or eggs in the supers and it has been assumed that the bees carry eggs up there through the Queen excluder but it could well be that a laying worker is the culprit.

David has asked me to pass on his good wishes to everyone who knows him and hopes to catch up soon at various events where he may be speaking. For those of you are not aware David's blog is extremely interesting. It is well worth signing up to it at <http://theapiarist.org/>

Mick Smith

Hints and Tips

Having recently decided to fumigate rather than freeze my frames this year I purchased acetic acid. Some bee suppliers will not deliver but I found the service and efficiency from www.thesoapkitchen.co.uk very good and for £10.13/L delivered competitively priced

Combs can be sterilised to destroy the spores of chalkbrood, wax moth, and Nosema spp. disease of adult bees by using the evaporation fumes from acetic acid. There is no evidence that this treatment is effective against AFB or EFB. Begin treatment by stacking the brood and/or super boxes containing combs to be sterilised on solid surface such as a board or solid hive floor. Note that acetic acid is corrosive and will attack metal and concrete. It is also important to block off hive entrances, as acetic acid fumes are heavier than air and will travel from the top to the base of the stack, leaking out of any gaps or holes at the bottom. Place a non-metallic dish (saucer or similar container) on the top of the frames of the top box. Very carefully, put 80% acetic acid into the dish, allowing 120 ml acetic acid/box (e.g. 600 ml would therefore treat 5 boxes). Then, place an empty hive box on the top of the stack. Close off the empty box on the top of the stack with a hive cover. Seal any joints between the boxes with wide adhesive tape to stop fumes escaping. Leave the stack for about one week to copyright. ensure sufficient fumigation. When the treatment is complete, the dishes of acid must be removed with caution and boxes should be thoroughly aired (at least two days) before they can be used again. When using this system you must wear suitable protective clothing, protect your eyes and use rubber gloves. (National Bee Unit Food and Environment Research Agency Sand Hutton, York. YO41 1LZ Telephone 01904 462510 email nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk NBU Web site: www.nationalbeeunit.com)

Thanks to Tim Foden for the following contribution;

If an introduced Queen Cell is not accepted by a colony then they tend to attack the cell from the sides to tear it down. Wrapping the cell in foil is a cheap, yet efficient way to preserve it. Remember not to get carried away and leave the point of the cell uncovered so she can still get out!

Whilst you are preparing your bee produce remember to put the best to one side for entering into the **Annual Branch Honey Show on October 20th**.

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 August 27th, latest!**

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

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