



## Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

### CHRISTMAS CARDS



*Linda Clements, local watercolour artist, has again designed a delightful, unique Christmas card especially for us!*

*The hives are decorated, a glass of mead and a honey biscuit are left out ..... but will Santa arrive ?????*

*Just £5.50 for a pack of 10 cards with 50p going to Bees Abroad and the remaining profit to help sick hedgehogs.*

To order contact Jane Brown (01926 843416) or [janebrown100@aol.com](mailto:janebrown100@aol.com)

### Workshop

#### Christmas Gifts with Hive Products

This workshop will show you how to use your hive products for a variety of gifts or for home use with recipes and ideas to take home.

Balms and polishes, soap and Christmas decorations, using beeswax and honey can capture something of the splendid qualities and properties of the hive.

**When:** Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2017

**Time:** 10.00 – 13.00

**Place:** British Beekeepers Association, National Beekeeping Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG

**Cost:** £25

**Number of Participants:** 14

For further information see website: [www.warleambees.org.uk](http://www.warleambees.org.uk) or email [gill@lifebalance.org.uk](mailto:gill@lifebalance.org.uk)

### Where have they been?

The National Botanical Garden of Wales are investigating which flowers honey bees forage on to inform future choices when it comes to managing habitats. By using DNA metabarcoding they are able to identify the plants within the honey. To widen their survey and understanding of honey bee foraging across different habitats they are requesting a small sample of honey from beekeepers across the UK. This sampling will enable them to widen their study and if successful the individual results of the flowers your honey bees have foraged on will be sent to you.

If you are interested in finding out more email [laura.jones@gardenofwales.org.uk](mailto:laura.jones@gardenofwales.org.uk)

## **Hints and Tips**

Many thanks to Bernard Brown for this month's tips

### **Storing fondant**

Fondant, being a gooey substance, has a tendency to spread outwards in a bid for freedom unless restrained. It relies on the enclosing cardboard box to halt this southwards march and in particular on the strengths of the joins in the said box - some of which have been found wanting in the recent consignment. So if you intend keeping your fondant for any length of time, the judicious application of a strip of duck tape on the box's vertical side joint – there is only one and it is about 3 inches long - and along the join in the bottom flaps will bring a little peace of mind and hopefully save a sticky fondant slide.

Store the fondant so that the box is fully supported on a solid surface ensuring that its is well wrapped to avoid premature drying out and in a cool, dry, vermin free place.

### **A tip to help carving slices of fondant from the main block.**

Before you start, place a bowl of hot water and one of hand-hot water within reach and place a length of cling film on a convenient table or worktop. Place your block of fondant on the draining board of the sink partly overhanging the clean and dampened bowl. Take your knife, - we use a stiff bread knife - and dip it in the bowl of hot water. Peel back the blue plastic wrapping on the overhanging bit of fondant and saw away at the fondant with the hot knife returning it to the bowl of hot water to reheat it when the sawing gets tough.

Steve Sidaway's tip of allowing the fondant to overhang the bowl causes the cut section to fall away preventing it from re-sealing with the parent block. Place the severed piece of fondant on the cling film and wrap it up ready to be transported to the hive. It is helpful to have the bowl of hand -hot water handy to wash sticky fingers in as you go along.

At the hive score one side of the cling film a couple of times with your hive tool, lift the crown board, add an eke, move the bees away from the top bars and place the fondant scored face down, directly on the top bars over the cluster. Job Done.

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 November 27<sup>th</sup> latest.**

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

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

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