



BEE TALK

Warwick and Leamington Branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers

"HOLIDAY SNAPS" FROM JERSEY



Various "holiday snaps"
of the Asian Yellow
Legged hornet



Yes - these are my "holiday snaps". I have been in Jersey working under the supervision of the environment Agency for Jersey to learn about their Asian Hornet strategy. In one week I have tracked, traced, followed and stuck tinsel on Asian Hornets. Jersey has a serious Asian Hornet problem and they have a magnificent volunteer programme to address it.

This week we located an Asian Hornet nest 30 metres up at tree. It's too high for the "lance" so the tree climbers will remove it on Monday. We removed a small primary nest from a disused greenhouse and dissected the frozen nest- that was quite dramatic enough- the hornets swarm out when threatened.

I have been SO impressed with both the professionals and the volunteers who are protecting the pollinators and gardeners of Jersey. We cannot use the same strategy in the UK because we cannot trap, release and follow the hornets to locate the nests. However, when the time comes when we can, we will need to work with volunteers and I hope we can be as effective as the Jersey volunteers.

Meanwhile, we can put out a bait station, watch it, photograph and report anything you think may be *vespa velutina nigrothorax*.

See it, snap it, app it!

Jane Medwell, WLKB Chair



BEEKEEPING TASKS FOR AUGUST

August is a good time to prepare for winter (unless you have bees on the heather or Himalayan Balsam). There is a surprising amount of work this month to protect against varroa (see page 6) and make sure your colonies don't starve (the main causes of winter losses). To go into the winter with strong colonies, now is the time to decide which colonies should be united- whether to re-queen or to strengthen the colony.

I have left my disease inspections a bit late so I will combine the disease inspections with varroa tests and treat where needed. Last year I did alcohol rolls using an IKEA snack container and this year I am using boards and the new NBU advice. I used Apivar last year and the coop have it this year. It is fantastically effective, but remove supers first.

My colonies have started to create the arc of pollen and stores by "bringing it down". I shall remove all the full frames but put a super of half full ones underneath (I do brood and a half over winter).

The next job is ordering honey jars from Clive. If you want to use the extraction room you need to book and you might need to order the jars you need. I am toying with using hexagon jars, but I have a few pound jars for the Honey Show.

Now is the time to order your ambrosia and book the branch boiler to clean up the super frames.

I know I said it last year, but at this time of year I really appreciate all the Branch members who give their time to run the shared facilities- co-op, extraction room, frame boiler etc. As well as those people who give their time to staff our shows, plan our talks and run the honey show. WLBK volunteers not only keep our costs down but they take a lot of the hard labour out of this time of year. Our branch, like our bees, works together for all our benefit.

If you need help with your bees, contact me or any other member of the committee at warleambees@warleambees.org.uk.

BEEKEEPING TASKS THIS MONTH

This is a honey month and the month we prepare for winter.

- Clear your supers and take off the remaining honey for extraction
- Extract and store your honey
- Re-queen or unite where swarm control has left you with small colonies- always take your losses in Autumn.
- Close down entrances as small as possible and put out wasp traps.
- When the flow is over, feed in preparation for winter.
- Clean up the supers (get the bees to do it then briefly onto the hives whence they came, above the crownboard)
- Do a full disease inspection, if you haven't already.
- Test mite drop and treat for varroa- we have an article on the new advice in this month's edition of Bee talk on page 6.
- Order varroacides, if you need them. The co-op is stocking Amitraz, if that's your choice.
- And finally, select your entries for the Honey Show (turn to page 7 for dates) - honey, combs, mead, candles, wax, photos and cake – it's on!

Jane Medwell
WLBK chair



SUMMER CELEBRATION

Our Summer Celebration is a bring and share picnic in the garden of Kenilworth Senior Citizen's Club.

Saturday 17th August 3 – 8pm

Do join us. Bring plates and cutlery and something to share.

There will be friends, chat and drinks. No need to worry about the weather – leave that to the bees. We can use the hall if it's wet.

All welcome, partners and children included.

ASIAN HORNET UPDATE

Those of us who are avid followers of the everyday story of country folk, could not help but register the mention of the Asian Hornet twice in Sunday 28th's programme of the Archers. They were only fleeting mentions and then just the name - no details nor encouragement of public involvement - but it may just be the seed planted in the listener's mind to be developed as time goes on. Jill Archer, the beekeeper, referred to a two-page pull-out in the August copy of her beekeeping magazine - BBKA News perhaps? Perhaps she is a member of BBKA after all.

Nationally, there has been only two confirmed sightings in June but locally, things have been a bit more exciting with three unconfirmed sightings. One was on the Grand Union Canal in the region of Heyford in Northamptonshire by a holidaying French beekeeper for whose identification should be treated as credible. Another one was reportedly seen at Walton Hall near Wellesbourne by a police officer, and one at Bretford by someone who knows the Asian Hornet inside and out. He was the guy inside the BBKA Bee costume for two days at the Outdoors Show in at the NEC in March. He caught, squished and disposed of the corpse before reporting it which was unfortunate. We were alerted to this sighting by the Non-native Species Secretariat via Asian Hornet Watch App. Like a well-oiled machine, our plans for such an event slid into action with the Rugby Branch AHAT Co-ordinator setting up monitoring traps and bait stations but no recurrence has been found.

The precise location of the Canal sighting was somewhat uncertain and despite monitoring efforts by the local BKA no verification has been made.

Plans are afoot at a very early stage to arrange for Asian Hornet monitoring to be carried out in each kilometre square throughout the country. This is a huge undertaking and will involve the recruitment and education of members of the public and presumably the supply of traps, bait stations and attractant not to mention the processing of the resulting data. Details are somewhat sketchy at this stage, but we will almost certainly be involved in rolling this out. More of this will be included in future issues of Bee Talk.

Do not be fooled into a false sense of security by the lack of sightings, August is the peak time of Asian Hornets to forage so remain vigilant.

Bernard Brown
WBKA AHAT Co-ordinator



STAND IN QUEEN



Beekeepers in our training apiary have located the stand in queen bee. She seems pretty calm bit not sure she'll be a good layer

FOR SALE

Everything you need to extract your honey!
All used, clean, VGC and GWO

- Thornes light weight universal 9 frame radial extractor with side handle (manual) £135.
 - Paynes uncapping tray. Plastic tray with metal frame stand. Uncapping fork and knife. £45.
 - Plastic 40 kg settling tank with nylon valve and tap. Bucket rest.
2 conical straining bags and attachment to fit the 40 kg settling tank.
Stainless steel double strainer.
£45
 - Unopened box of 72 new 1lb honey jars with new lids - unused. £20
 - Box of 60 clean used 1lb honey jars with used lids. £10
 - 38 cut comb cases. £2
 - Polythene buckets: 7 x 30lb and 3 x 15 lb. £9
- Or take it all for £225**
- Paynes solar wax extractor. £45

Jane Traynor
07512 859014
pippajane@traynor@gmail.com



Two stainless steel hive tools. £7

Ray Summers
07538 444481
raysummers81@gmail.com

UN/WANTED SPLITS

It's the time of year when the success of those swarm control splits taken as insurance against re-queening failure becomes apparent and unless you want to increase your number of stocks may well be surplus to requirements. We have learned elsewhere in this issue that it was not a good year for swarm collection and, whilst all those on our swarm wanted list who had no bees now have them, there are others who have been disappointed. Coupled with, anecdotally, poor re-queening results, there is a demand for any unwanted splits.

Again this year, we will operating a matching service between those with and those wanting splits and you can register for either on the google form at [Wanted and UnWanted Splits 2024](#). Please register before 31st August.

Bernard Brown

HERE TODAY, GONE TOMORROW— HOW TO PREVENT ABSCONDING

You are a brand new beekeeper. Three days ago, you excitedly hived your first colony of bees. A swarm maybe, a split from a friendly beekeeper or an expensive nuc from a bee breeder. Today, in your new bee suit and having successfully got your smoker going, you tentatively approach your hive. You open it up just like you were shown to in the training apiary intent on checking that things were going OK only to find that every last bee has gone. **SHOCK HORROR.** You are heartbroken. What happened? What did you do wrong?

Simply put, your bees absconded. They checked the place out but decided to look for something better.

Absconding can happen any time of year, triggered by things such as lack of food, frequent disturbance, loud noises, overheating, bad odours, parasites, predators, or the presence of chemicals. Regardless of all the possible reasons, absconding is rare.

The majority of absconding colonies leave brand new hives. It's not because the beekeepers are new, it's because the hives are new. New wood has certain odours, as does new plastic. New hives do not have that homely, lived-in smell that bees seem to crave. As a result, they leave at the first chance they get. A colony placed in a new hive is like a swarm hanging from a tree—the bees have options, they are not tied down, they can leave whenever they like. And sometimes, they do.

Bees rarely abscond from used equipment, so seasoned beekeepers seldom encounter it, but it's a fact of life for new beekeepers who are starting with new equipment.

So, how can you prevent your bees from absconding?

Here are a few suggestions that may help:

- Whether wooden, plastic or poly hives and frames, put them outside to dissipate any residual odours in the fresh air as soon as they are assembled.
- Do not paint the inside of your hive. If you have already painted it, let it air out completely before installing bees. New paint smell may overwhelm any other attributes of their new home.
- You can put a queen excluder under the brood box so the queen cannot leave. Don't forget to take it out after a few days, however, because drones won't be able to go through it either.
- While morning sun is a good thing, afternoon sun may cause the temperature to spike inside the hive. When the colony is just getting started, it may not have enough members to keep the place cool.



- Put the hive on a hive stand so it is less likely to be bothered by hungry predators.
- Do not open the hive more than necessary, especially in the first few days.
- Do not run a lawnmower, rotovator, leaf blower or other loud equipment near the new hive. Once a colony is established, it will put up with these disturbances on occasion. But early on, when the colony is first settling in, any of these annoyances may cause it to leave.
- Used comb, even just one, can go a long way toward making your bees comfortable. If you have a disease-free drawn comb, by all means put it in your new hive.
- Feed syrup. The presence of syrup will stimulate the workers to build comb, and the sooner you have comb, the less likely your bees will abscond. Some say spiking the syrup with a scent they like—a drop of lemongrass or anise oil works well.

Absconding is relatively uncommon which makes the disappearance of one of our established colonies on 6 frames with one full and one half full super, all the more perplexing. It just goes to show that if they want to go, they'll go. It's hard to be philosophical about it but that's beekeeping for you

Based on and published with the consent of the Honey Bee Suite.

HONEY SHOWS

A week after our Branch Honey Show on **21st September** is the County Honey Show, which takes place on **28th September** at Kings Hill with many of the same classes as ours so look after your exhibits and submit them for the County Show.

Class specific to the County show is the inter-branch Composite Display on a given theme. The display has to be the joint creation of at least three branch members, one of whom must be a novice. The exhibit must have a base not exceeding 600mm by 600mm and be of any reasonable height consistent with stability and safety. It must also include FIVE different items selected from a specific list of eight hive products including one beekeeping item. There are other conditions which must be observed details of which are on the [County Website](#). The last time WLBK won this competition was in 2012 when the theme was the Olympics so it's about time we did so again.

The theme this year is "**200 years of Cadbury's Chocolate**". We want to give this our best shot, so we are seeking members with the creativity to combine together to develop an exhibit to represent the branch. Assistance in sourcing top quality products from the membership can be arranged. If interested please contact me on secretary@warleambees.org.uk

Branch and County Honey Shows lead on naturally to the National Honey Show at which Branch members have been successful in the past - so give it a go. You have to be in it to win it! The National Honey Show runs from **24th – 26th October** at Sandown Park and the schedule of classes is on their [website](#).

Chris Cox

WLBK Honey Show Manager



AUGUST BEE SAFARI

Tim Newcombe, who runs a smallholding in Pillerton Priors as well as being a beekeeper, is welcoming safari goers to his enterprise on Thursday **29th August** 7pm to 9pm. As well as seeing how Tim manages his hives, safari goers can sample his hospitality. Booking as usual via the website. Please remember: clean bee suit, boots and gloves.

AUTUMN/WINTER TALKS PROGRAMME

Monthly meetings start again on **19th September** at 7.30pm. Gerald Collins will be giving some timely advice on: The successful overwintering of bees. We have a new venue, Kenilworth Senior Citizen's Club, Abbey End CV8 1QJ – directly on the Abbey End Car park. And of course, there will be tea and cake!

Judith Masson, WLBK Meetings Secretary

ROAD TRIP



WHAT: A grand day out to Thornes

WHEN: Saturday 12th October 2024

TIME: 7:45am or 8:30am

WLBK has booked a 34 seater coach to take members and friends to Thorne's at Rand in Lincolnshire on the day of the Grand Sale. There will be a trip round the factory, opportunity to buy kit and a visit the museum.

Bring a picnic or eat in Thorne's café.

Cost is £25 per person.

Pick up from Johnson's depot in Henley in Arden (free parking) at 7.45am or Kenilworth Railway Station (parking £2.00) at 8.30am. Return to Kenilworth 5.35pm, and a bit later at Henley. Booking via the website.

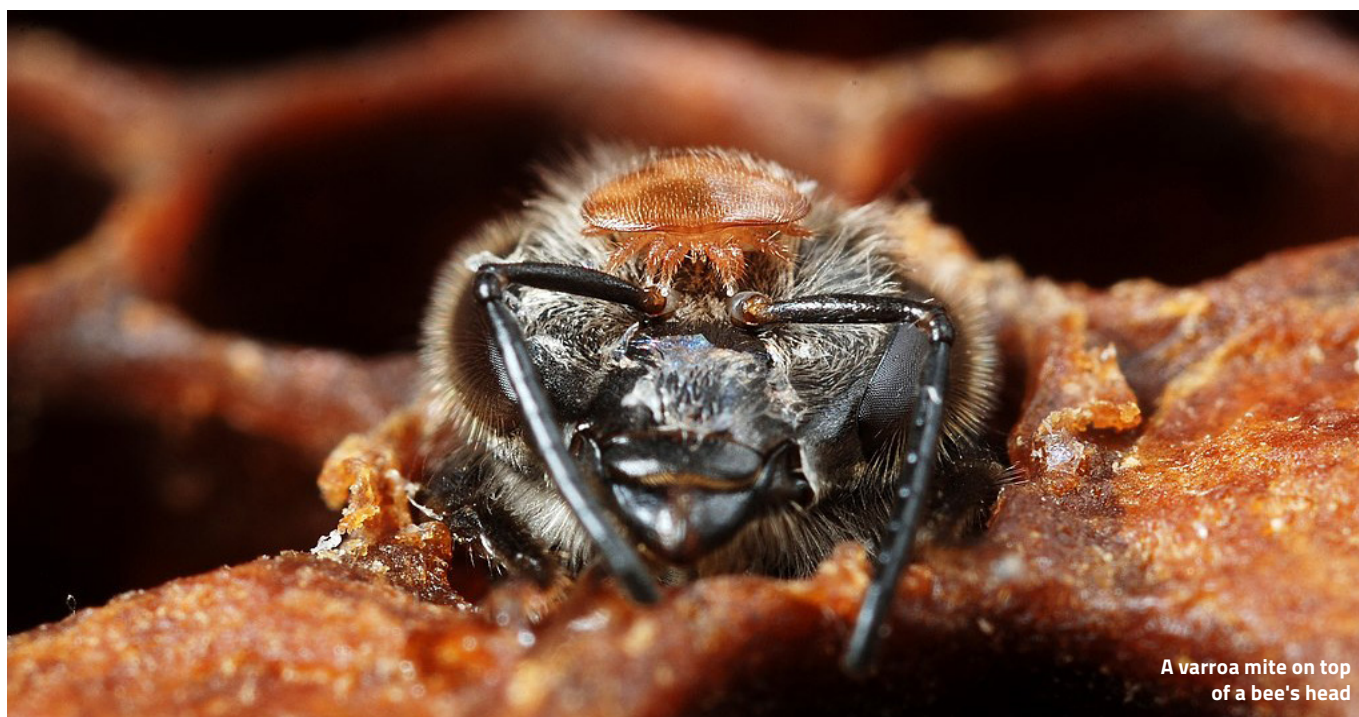
WINTER WEBINAR

At this, the hottest time of year when our bees are luxuriating after what has generally been accepted as a disastrous Spring weather-wise, it may seem somewhat premature for our thoughts to turn to next winter, but our bees will shortly be doing just that, building up their stores, reducing their numbers, giving the drones the heave-ho and producing the winter bees. There is much we, as beekeepers, can do to help them survive whatever the weather may throw at them and the BBKA have arranged a webinar on **20th August** at 7.00pm on "**Preparing for Winter**." Aimed at reducing winter losses, the talk will be given by Dave Bonner, master beekeeper and chair of Coventry Branch. Held on Zoom at the following [link](#). It will also be streamed on [BBKA's YouTube channel](#). Definitely an event for your diary.

Bernard Brown



UPDATED VARROA GUIDANCE



A varroa mite on top of a bee's head

Now is the time to test and treat for varroa. The NBU information and advice on [beebase](#) has been totally updated and the **new advice** is really helpful. It has a much better explanation of the life cycle and harmful effects of varroa. Back in Warwick and Leamington, our public awareness campaign continues albeit at a slightly reduced intensity because of pre-occupation with managing our own hives but talks to schools and at an ecology themed festival have taken place.

In the UK the advice is to keep the varroa population below 1000 mites per colony. Above this level, the risk of damage from the mites and associated pathogens can quickly become significant. The way to do this is to **monitor** and **control** varroa levels.

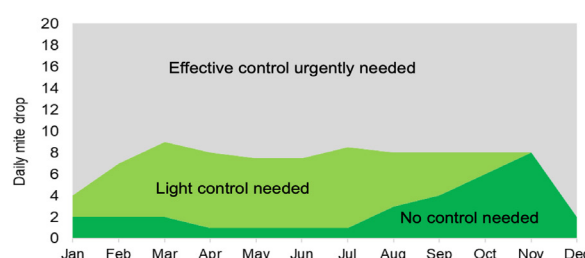
Monitoring is the first important step and the new advice is MUCH clearer. It gives detailed advice about using a varroa drop board, an alcohol wash or a sugar roll and there are useful videos about what to do and what to look for. There are new charts (shown right) to identify the levels at which you need to treat for varroa and daily mite drop using a varroa board (see NBU Managing Varroa).

The next step is to **control** varroa levels. The advice includes biotechnical methods (shook swarm, comb trapping, OMF, drone brood sacrifice)- all chemical free. However, at this time of year you might use a chemical treatment to protect the precious winter bees being produced now.

This is a quick summary of your chemical treatment options- recognising that chemicals may be just a part of a wider package using biotechnical methods like shook swarms or queen trapping.

All the chemicals available at the moment recommend removing

Figure 44: Using daily mite drop to determine whether to apply controls



	Proportion of infested drone brood		
April, May, June	Less than 2% No action needed	2% to 4% Plan controls	Over 4% Consider control
June, July	Less than 3% No action needed	3% to 7% Light control	Over 7% Effective controls needed
August	Less than 5% No action needed	5% to 10% Light control	Over 10% Effective controls needed

the supers before use. There are three main types of approved treatment for use now.

Formic Acid is a powerful organic acid which does not taint honey or wax and only takes eight days but must be treated with respect. If you are using Formic Pro (the newer form of Formic Acid which has replaced MAQS) you need to use sturdy gloves and mask, and avoid

inhaling anywhere near them. Place the two strips onto the top of the brood box for eight days. When you remove them you can put the old strips into your compost heap as this organic acid decomposes. Formic acid is only suitable for full colonies, not nucs. Formic Acid is highly effective.

In the **co-op** we have Apistan, whose active ingredient is **Amitraz** a neuro-toxin. Hang two plastic strips in the brood box for 8- 10 weeks after the removal of the supers. Handle the chemical strips with care as they are toxic and dispose of them as per the advice - very carefully. Or take them to a pharmacy/vet and ask them to dispose of them. Apitraz and Apivar are both Amitraz products and will cause mite resistance so NBU and other sources advise you should not use this varroacide in successive years. If you used Apistan last year, choose something else this year. These products are also highly effective.

The older pyrethroids Bavyrol and Apistan are no longer available because the manufacturers did not renew their licences - and the mites are resistant in many areas.

Apiguard, is a **thymol** gel in a metal tray. Two trays are placed on the top of the brood box and the bees take it down. We have this in the co-op. Similar Thymol products and alternatives include: Apilife Var and Thymovar. These products work in a similar way to Apiguard, by placing impregnated pads or trays on the top of the bars of the brood

box. Handle the trays or pads with gloves and dispose of them in the packaging. Thymols like Apiguard are a good choice to alternate with Amitraz products like Apistan or Formic Acid, but are less effective than these products. Thymol products are only very effective.

You might like to **treat in the winter broodless period** to "kick the mites when they are down" as David Evans ([The Apiarist.org](http://TheApiarist.org)) puts it. For late December or early January we have Api- Bioxal (Oxalic Acid powder) available in the co-op. This can be mixed into a syrup and trickled or vapourised through the hive quite quickly. Now is a good time to snap it up if you are going to do this in a broodless period later in the year. It is very effective on parasitic mites (not mites in brood) and highly effective when sublimated.

If you use any of these products, remember to keep a record of what, when you use it and where you got it from in your Veterinary Medicines Records. There is usually a serial number of the packaging and you should keep a record of it- or take a photo.

Some useful links regarding varroa treatment:

[Beebase](#)

[New Varroa Managing Varroa advice](#)

[The Apiarist](#)

[Jane Medwell, WLBK Chair](#)

SEPTEMBER'S TASTER DAY

We are looking forward to welcoming some new folks who will no doubt be excited to experience the bees and to learn a bit about them. We now have the speakers all lined up and ready to pass on their pearls of wisdom to the delegates.

The Taster day is to be held at BBKA headquarters, Stoneleigh on Sunday **1st September**. We currently have 17 people signed up so there are still spaces available. If you know of anyone who has an interest knowing where their local beekeepers honey comes from or just wants to know a bit more about beekeeping please point them in the direction of the club home page or let them have the link below.

You no doubt remember your first experience of opening up a hive and how impressive the sight of thousands of bees in one place was like. Get your friends relatives work colleagues to join and experience the bees during the afternoon session (weather permitting, of course). Here is the [link](#).

I have still yet to confirm help in the apiary during the afternoon session to demonstrate opening a hive to the delegates but once I have an idea of the numbers taking part I may need some additional experienced beekeepers to help out. We aim to have 4/5 delegates per hive being demonstrated.

If you think you might be able to help with the above, please do get in touch with us: paul@paulday.co.uk or jane@J-Richmond.co.uk

Paul Day

Jane Richmond



Attendees at last September's Taster Day



LOW BUDGET 'MICROSCOPEE'



Fig.1

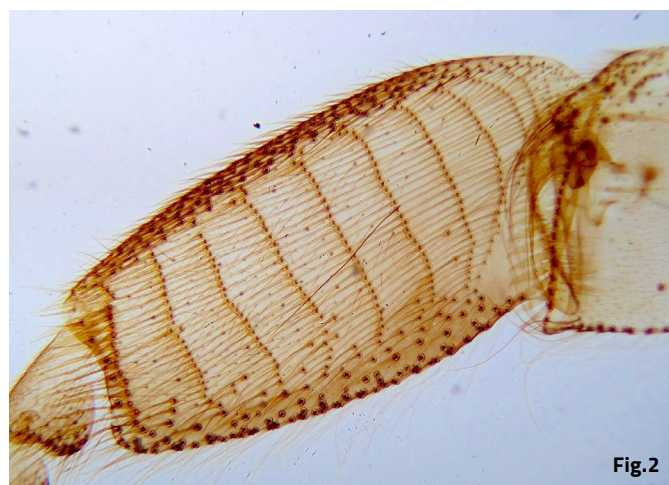


Fig.2

Most beekeepers are familiar with the basic structure and anatomy of their charges. Bees are typical insects with three major parts to their bodies, namely the head, thorax and abdomen, they have a pair of wings and three pairs of legs that enable them get around the hive and to forage for pollen, nectar and water to maintain the working colony. But how closely have we looked to see how those bits of anatomy are adapted and structured in order for them to function efficiently – the antenna cleaner on a front or the 'pollen basket' on a back leg for example?

Human eyes are amazing pieces of equipment but if we want to get up close and see things in more detail they need a little help. A hand lens of x10 magnification can do this but needs a steady hand and a bit of squinting – not always comfortable.

The next step up would be to use a microscope – and microscopy can open up a whole new dimension of how we observe and study bees. Serious microscopy can be an expensive and specialist activity and out of reach of a beekeeper who just wants a closer look, but there are cheaper, but effective, alternatives.

Fig 1. Shows a 'USB camera microscope' connected to a laptop to produce an image of a front leg (the antenna cleaning 'notch' is easily seen). These cameras are available on a well-known Internet auction site for no more than a modest bottle of wine*. As the name suggests it plugs into the USB socket of a computer (like a free standing webcam) and onboard software, such as 'PhotoBooth' on a Mac, can be used to capture images as JPEG files. The camera body houses a knurled cylinder that is used to adjust the magnification and the focus.

However, focusing is easier if the camera is mounted on a stand (metal ones are best – as shown in Fig. 1) with a rack and pinion system adjusted by a knob. These are also available online at around the same cost as the camera.

Fig. 1 also shows the inbuilt (LED) light source in action, the brightness of which is controlled by a knurled disc on the USB lead. The same set up was used to produce the pollen basket shown in Fig. 2. The LEDs can be turned off and supplementary lighting used to produce different effects.



Fig.3

In Fig.3 the specimen slide (a freshly dissected sting and its venom sac) has been placed on a black card and an LED ring-light used for side lighting to produce more contrast.

The magnification claimed for these devices is a speculative and unlikely x1000, but it is the resolution (the ability to capture detail) that is more important in microscopy than magnification. The normal working range and the 2MB specification are more than adequate to produce detailed images for general interest or for presentation purposes.

The good news is that the Branch has a few of these cameras that can be borrowed on short-term loan to play with! Contact me if you're interested.

* A 'modest' bottle of wine = approximately £15!

Barry Meatyard

Adapted from a previously published article in 'Bee Craft' by the same author.



DID WE SPOT ANY DRONES?



originally planned date 28th June, was a propitious one. On that day in 1792, Gilbert White first noted hearing in his diary that he heard a strange sound, an entry now interpreted as the sound of a DCA.

No queens could be risked in our endeavour – so we approached Stephen Fleming from Bee Craft for some synthetic queen pheromone as a drone lure. So, with fine weather, some lure and an idea of where to look, hopes were high – dangling like a butler cage from the end of each fishing pole.

The fates or at least the drones were against us. The GPO failed to deliver the lure, the weather was cool, windy and damp – our expectations fell. It seemed likely that the drones were still holed up in their hives, saving their lust for another day, or at least not willing to make a display without the slightest whiff of queen pheromone. The only deep rumbling sound we heard

Nine intrepid members met at Cobb's Farm Shop, on Kings Lane, intent on finding the famed Snitterfield Drone Congregation Area (DCA). Equipped with two four-metre fishing poles (thanks to David Stott for the loan of these), local intelligence and a will to succeed, we set off for an afternoon of drone hunting and bee chat. We were told that the

was traffic on the A46!

Nevertheless, an enjoyable afternoon was had by all. We had lovely (if bee-less) views from the Snitterfield Memorial, some strange looks from drivers passing by and lots of interesting bee chat.

Judith Masson



UPDATE ON SWARMS



Whilst we can still have swarms we are now at the end of the season. It's been a strange year with the main period unusually quiet with a July surge, an attempt to catchup. However, a number of people with no bees have received swarms from our collectors.

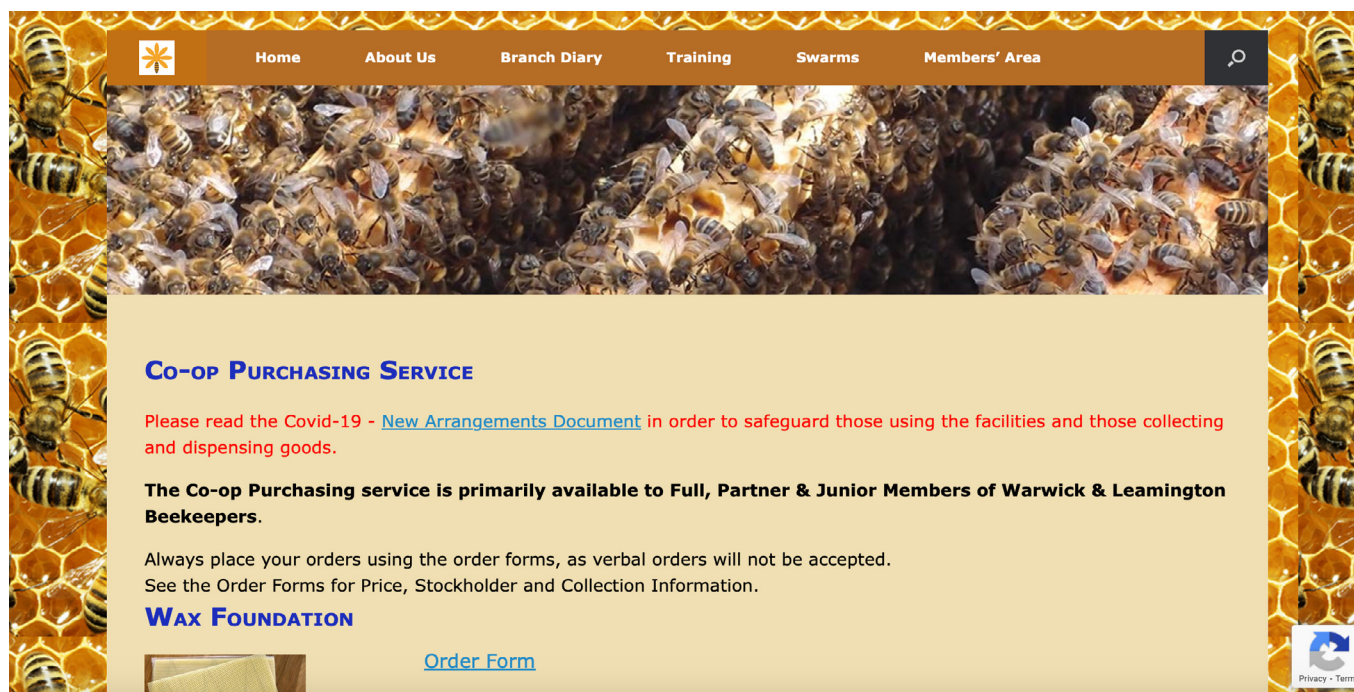
We end the season with 40 swarm collectors in our branch. Each one of you deserves a big thank you for being available, on a voluntary basis, to serve the public. You will have experienced the gratitude and often relief, from the people who have called you.

I hope we will be able to count on you next year.

Richard Pierce
Swarms Co-ordinator



WLBK WEBSITE SAFARI 1 – CO-OP PURCHASING



Originally the brainchild of Clive Joyce, the co-op purchasing scheme is managed by a small subcommittee of members headed by Clive and includes stockholders and finance support. It is a not-for-profit scheme run to support members in the craft of beekeeping.

Located within the password-controlled Members' Area, this facility is primarily available to Full, Partner & Junior Members of the Branch.

The products currently on offer include Wax Foundation, Honey Jars and Lids, Ambrosia and Buckets, EFB Test Kits, Fondant and Candipolline Gold. Some limited life stock (e.g. varroa treatments) are made available on a pre-order basis, so it is very important to react promptly to emails requesting details of requirements for such items to avoid disappointment.

Each product has its own order form which contains details of Price, Stockholder and Collection Information.

As a guiding principle in selecting the range of goods to stock, a significant discount that bulk purchasing can realise is key, but shelf life, storage space and someone to act as Stockholder are also taken into account.

Typically, nine tonnes of ambrosia and 14,000 jars are ordered in a year and the total value purchased across the range of products was nearly £23,000 last year.

The order forms require the total payable to be calculated by the purchaser and a surprising number of these are incorrect. Please take extra care when you're calculating the cost! Payment is requested via bank transfer and is processed by Val, our treasurer. The stockholder then awaits the purchaser to contact them to make collection arrangements. Please allow 48 hours from paying for your order before collection to allow the payment to be checked and recorded. If an arranged collection cannot be met at the last moment, please be considerate and notify the Stockholder. Delays in collection cause problems with the very limited storage space available and orders for goods that are ordered but not collected cannot be held indefinitely and may be cancelled.

Please remember that this facility is operated entirely by volunteers and your consideration and co-operation in adhering to the above arrangements is key to its operation.

Next month we will visit the training pages on the website

Ivan A Perry

HINTS AND TIPS

Smoker lids

Do you get fed up with smoker lids that are difficult to close and even more difficult to open? I find the following works for me. Next time you de-coke your smoker pay special attention to the outside of the rim of the body of the smoker and to the inside of the rim of the lid and get them squeaky clean down to the metal. I use one of those stainless steel wire scourers liberated from the kitchen. Keep the scourer in your bee box and each time after you have emptied the smoker and after leaving it to cool for a couple of minutes and before the goo dries, just run the scourer round both rims and hey presto! It's ready for next time. It takes about 30 seconds to do and is time well spent. It just goes to show that cleanliness is next to goo-lessness!

Thanks to Bernard Brown for this little gem of an idea



And another from Bernard...

" When hosting a bee safari, make sure you invite Mike Townsend or Clive Joyce. That way you'll get all the problems with your girls sorted and the attendees shown how to do things correctly."

Autumn feeding

Opinions vary! But on average a colony requires 20kg(45lb) of stored for the winter. With this in mind it is useful to know that a British Standard brood frame holds just over 2kg or about 5lbs, so nine full frames, of stores will be needed. If you decide to leave a super of the colony's own honey then remember to remove the queen excluder until spring so that the cluster is able to move into the super easily as it will not leave the queen behind. There is a view that putting the super below the brood box is the best but..... again opinions vary!

Watch out for varroa

The eggs that the queen is laying in mid to late August will develop into the winter bees and will need to live for about 6months. So it is important for the survival of the colony that these larvae are as disease free as possible. When the honey has been harvested put in the varroa board and count the mite drop and treat as necessary .

Keep an eye on robbers

When inspecting colonies in August take care to reduce the chance of robbing occurring. This may be by wasps or other bees. Try to keep supers covered by a crown board and place them behind the colony, as robbers will be looking for the entrance. Work quickly and put in entrance blocks.

Now it is your chance! If you have any hints or tips that you would like to share, please send them to h.essex211@gmail.com

Helen Essex



The editor of Bee Talk is Tanya Weaver.
Please send content for the newsletter to her by the 28th of each month:
tanyaweaversa@yahoo.co.uk

WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON BRANCH
OF WARWICKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
REG CHARITY NO. 500276
WWW.WARLEAMBEEES.ORG.UK