



Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association April 2014 Newsletter



Apis mellifera mellifera
European Dark Bee

Wendover Celebrates

This year is the 800th anniversary of King John granting a permit for the Wendover Lord of the Manor (Hugh de Gurnay) to hold an annual fair. The anniversary will be celebrated on 25th May in the grounds of John Colet School. The theme of the celebrations is Medieval and we are intending on presenting beekeeping as it was 800 years ago.

If you would like to be involved in the preparations for the day or in helping out on the stand please contact [Karen Dadswell](#)

Honeybee Communication

Bees communicate in many ways; through food exchange, various forms of dances, sound, smell and of course pheromones. Our speaker at this month's meeting on 16th April at 7:30pm is John Hendrie, Master Beekeeper and member of BBKA Examination Board. The topic of his talk is Honeybee Communication which I think we will find out is not as simple as we imagine.

This is the last of the 2013/14 Winter meeting programme. I would like to thank Karen Dadswell on behalf of the Association who has organised this and many other season's speakers. Karen is standing down from this role and has handed the baton to [Sarah Turner](#). If you come across a potential speaker (Bee or non-Bee related) please do not hesitate in passing on their details to Sarah.

BBKA Basic Certificate

Karen Smith and John Dadswell will be running a Study Group leading to the BBKA Basic Certificate. The sessions will start on Tuesday 13th May and will run for 5 weeks. If you have been keeping bees for at least a year the Basic Certificate is an excellent way of brushing up on your Beekeeping knowledge as well as working with Beekeepers of similar experience. The Study Group culminates in an Assessment by a BBKA appointed Assessor. There is no obligation to take the Assessment. If you are interested in attending the Study Group please contact [Karen Smith](#) for further information.

Swarms are Issuing

Brian Bush has taken over the role of Association Swarm Officer and is coordinating the collection of swarms reported by the public.

Brian is following in the footsteps of Sean Kirwan who has done a fantastic job over the last few years.

Brian has reported that he was called out to two swarms last weekend. This is not surprising after such a mild winter as the colonies are stronger than they might normally be at this time of year.

Space is a the crucial factor in causing colonies to initiate swarming instinct. We saw this in several colonies at the Association Apiary Opening where they were short of space and there were instances of eggs in queen cups. Space required by a colony is two-fold; space in the brood box for the queen to lay her eggs and space in the hive to accommodate the size of the colony. With the warmer weather now is the time to carry out a full inspection of your colonies. Ensure the colonies have sufficient space to expand over the coming months and if they look intent on swarming take appropriate action.

Colony Loss Survey 2014

Each year we carry out a survey on the 15th April to quantify the winter colony losses across our Association membership. The results are combined with those of the other Bucks Associations in order to give a county wide view.

Please could you complete and return the attached form or email the results to chairman@mbbka.org.uk.

Programme of Events

Wednesday 16th April

Honeybee Communication

John Hendrie

7:30pm Church of the Good Shepherd

26th April

Wendover Spring Market

Organiser Sean Stephenson

21st May

1st Summer Apiary Meeting

7:00pm Association Apiary

25th May

Wendover Celebrates

7:00pm Association Apiary

THE PUREST HONEY IN THE WORLD by Diane Oldfield

Pitcairn Island is best known as the home of the descendants of the Bounty mutineers and the Polynesians who accompanied them. The Pitcairn Island group is a British Overseas Territory. It comprises Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno islands situated in the South Pacific. It is the least populous jurisdiction in the world, with only about 65 inhabitants.

Pitcairn pure honey contributes a valuable source of income to Pitcairners, and we read, appeals to a niche market more than happy to pay for a unique product that exceeds their expectations. It has won world-wide acclaim on several occasions. The island has the most disease free bee population in the world. The rich fruitiness of the honey is attributed to the nectar from mango, lara, passion flower, guava and rose apple flowers found there.

Because of Pitcairns' isolation, the results attest that Pitcairn honey is free from herbicide, pesticide, fertilizers, bee antibiotics and other substances that can harm health.

Imagine my surprise when in conversation with Mike the beekeeper, he informs me that he used to go to 'John Colet School' in Wendover. He has lived on the island (2milesx1mile) since the inception of the project: Pitcairn Island Producers Co-operative. He is one of the team that extracts, strains and bottles the honey by hand.

The honey contains natural enzymes which aid healing by fighting infection. It's purity and absence of pollutants heightens the quality and strength of these enzymes to provide maximum effectiveness.

Autumn is in the air this month on Pitcairn island! Among the tropical fruits and flowers, apis mellifera mellifera derives honey. The worlds' most pure honey, awaiting EU certification.



Heading for Bounty Bay

Forage of Tropical Flavours

Beekeeper from Wendover

Association Visit to Milton Keynes Museum 17th May

Ken Gorman has kindly agreed to host a visit to his apiary at the [Milton Keynes Museum](#) on 17th May. The day starts at 11:00 am and will include hands on Beekeeping activities as well as Ken talking through the operation of his apiary. If you would like to attend, please contact [Sarah Turner](#) and she will send you instructions on how to locate the apiary. It is an all day event so please bring a picnic as well as your Beesuit, clean boots and gloves.

Addition to last month's Bailey Comb Change

In the text about the Bailey Comb Change I mentioned that once the queen has started to lay she could be isolated in the top box. I should have been clearer and stated that once there is larvae present the queen can be isolated. This is because if there is a cold spell the colony could abandon eggs but are unlikely to abandon larvae. If they do abandon the top box the queen could be left to die above the queen excluder.

Potential Apiary Site

We have been contacted by the owner of a small wood on Frith Hill near Great Missenden enquiring if we have any members looking for an apiary site in this area. If this is of interest please drop me an email chairman@mbbka.org.uk

Foundation For Sale

We will be selling foundation at reduced costs again this year. We are currently awaiting delivery.

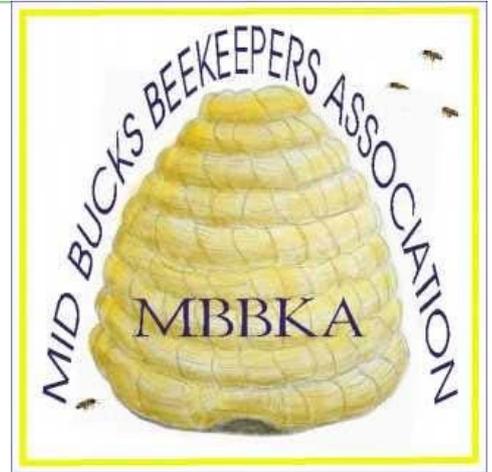
Prices are slightly higher than last year, but still up to 20% discount over list price:

14 x 12 wired	£11.50 per 10 sheets
B/S deep wired	£8.50 per 10 sheets
B/S shallow wired	£5.50 per 10 sheets
B/S thin for cut comb	£3.50 per 10 sheets
B/S shallow unwired	£4.50 per 10 sheets

All the foundation is Thorne's Premium Quality.

To order email chairman@mbbka.org.uk

Bucks County Beekeepers Association



Colony Losses Survey 2014

Name

Number of colonies on 1st November 2013

Number of live colonies on 15th April 2014

Observations about losses

Suspected reasons for losses

Please return completed form to: Sean Stephenson, Drywick, 91 Ellesborough Road, Wendover, Bucks, HP22 6ES. email: chairman@mbbka.org.uk