



Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association August 2015 Newsletter

Nature Detectives at Bucks County Museum

The Bucks County Museum opened the doors to a new exhibition on 25th July, "The Nature Detectives". The exhibition focuses on nature in Buckinghamshire and runs through to the end of October. As part of the exhibition our Association has provided the material for a display on beekeeping in Bucks. According to younger members of my family the exhibition is well worth a visit.

The museum is running a series of events throughout the summer/autumn. We will be at the museum on the 19th August with our observation hive as part of "Busy Bees and Beautiful Butterflies" family workshop. On 5th September I will be giving a talk on "Beekeeping in Bucks". The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday 10am–4pm and Mondays throughout the holidays, further information can be found [here](#).



Preparing for Winter

The last summer meeting at the apiary will be held on 19th August starting at 19:00. As in previous years the theme will be preparing for winter and we will have apiguard for sale. Thank you to everyone who turned up last month and have made the meetings this summer such a success.

Best Use of Oxalic Acid

The speaker at our meeting on 16th September will be Hasan Al Toufailia a PhD student at Sussex University based at the Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects (LASI).

Hasan's research degree is under the supervision of Professor Francis Ratnieks and is focusing on honey bee diseases: management, resistance (hygienic behaviour) and ecology.

The talk will cover; the best time to treat varroa by oxalic acid, different methods and doses of oxalic acid treatment, the effect of the hygienic behaviour on the varroa mite population and the presence or absence of DWV symptoms.

I know that within our Association opinion can be divided on the use of oxalic acid, this talk will present a scientific view on its use from which we can make our own choices.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Programme of Events

19th August 2015

Busy Bees and Beautiful Butterflies

Observation Hive at County Museum
1:00pm

19th August 2015

Association Meeting

Preparing for Winter
7:00pm

Association Apiary

27th August 2015

Bucks County Show

Sean Stephenson Organising

chairman@mbbka.org.uk

16th September 2015

Association Meeting

Best Use of Oxalic Acid
7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd

10th October 2015

Autumn Gathering

County Honey Show and more
10:00am

Hosted by Chalfonts BKA

21st October 2015

Association Meeting

AGM and Honey Show
7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd

18th November 2015

Association Meeting

Eureka Moments—Ian Holmer
7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd



Vespa vulgaris, enemy number 1 at this time of the year

A NEW TWIST ON A BROOD AND A HALF

By Sarah Turner

My hives live in my front garden surrounded by a high hedge, fruit trees, soft fruits and shrubs and I can observe them daily from my upstairs windows in between their hive inspections.

From time to time, I weed between the loganberries, vines and the shrubs so this is when I discovered another colony happily living under one of my hives on 9th July. These bees went under the stand, while those living above went through the hive entrance.

I keep my bees on 14x12 frames so the thought of trying to tie the combs into these frames in the evening was not a task that I thought possible. So I phoned another beekeeper. He had recently re-homed an established swarm which had taken up residence in a compost bin. He had cut down the combs from the bin lid and propped each comb between undrawn frames. It had been a sticky job!

So armed with my instructions, that evening I placed my swarm sheet under the hive and then transferred my swarm colony to its new home. They were not very happy to be disturbed and my bee suit and swarm sheet went straight into the washing machine after I had finished.

Two days later, I checked if they were drawing out comb and I started feeding them. Three weeks later, they have drawn out comb on the frames and there is sealed



Bucks County Show

A quick reminder that there will be a county Beekeeping Stand at the Bucks County Show on 27th August.

If you have produce we can sell and/or would like to be involved on the day, please drop me a mail at chair-man@mbbka.org.uk

Honey Show

Class 7 One frame of capped honey for extraction

I know it is still a long time before our honey show on 21st October, but please as you remove frames for extraction this year remember Class 7. The Association has purchased several frame show cases for members to borrow for the Honey Show. If you see a suitable frame please consider entering it in the show. The frame will be judged for ease of extraction, which includes evenness of cappings, which should be proud of the frame edge and fullness. The frame will also be judged on the cleanliness of the frame and the even colour of the wax i.e. no propolis staining. Any questions, ask Helen, the Honey Show Secretary honeyshow@mbbka.org.uk

Winter Meetings 2015/2016

Thanks go to Sarah Turner who has done an excellent job in organising the winter programme for our Association Meetings. As well as the fixed events we have a couple of new talks and a new type of event for the last meeting of the winter season. A summary of the programme is given below:

| Date | Event | Synopsis |
|----------------|---|--|
| 16th September | Best use of Oxalic Acid by Hasan Al Toufailia | The best time to treat varroa by Oxalic acid, different methods and doses of oxalic acid treatment, the effect of the hygienic behaviour on the varroa mite population and the presence or absence of DWV symptoms |
| 21st October | AGM and Honey Show | |
| 18th November | Eureka Moments By Ian Homer | A collection of good ideas that suddenly dawn on you and, once discovered, make beekeeping more enjoyable and profitable |
| 20th January | MBBKA Annual Quiz | Fish and Chips with questions before and after |
| 17th February | Winter Bees By Frank Rickett | |
| 16th March | Asian Hornet By Julian Parker | |
| 20th April | Beekeeping Olympics | A series of team tasks relating to beekeeping to help prepare for the new season |

MBBKA Bee Health Advisors

Recently, an outbreak of American Foul Brood occurred in the South of Buckinghamshire, traced back to a colony moved from the north of the county. National Bee Unit inspectors were quickly able to contain the outbreak but to be certain that the disease had not spread any further they had to check all apiaries within a 3 kilometre radius of each affected site. This was quite an undertaking.

The workload of the regional and seasonal bee inspectors has been steadily increasing, partly because of budget cuts but also because of the increasing numbers of beekeepers in our area. So that they can work effectively in dealing with major outbreaks, help from local beekeeper associations is essential to assist in diagnosing less serious disease problems.

The National Bee Unit has therefore set up a scheme with Beekeeping Associations where one or two experienced members are given training in disease recognition and have volunteered to act as local Bee Health Advisers (BHAs).

The aims of the scheme are two-fold:

- Provide advice on good husbandry methods and assist local beekeepers in the recognition and control of disease.
- Provide liaison between the beekeepers and the National Bee Unit inspectors and sometimes act as first point of contact for the local beekeepers if they are concerned about possible disease in their colonies.

Any local beekeeper who is concerned about disease in a colony is free to contact a BHA. This can be by phone, text message or email. The BHA will then discuss their concerns and, if they cannot be resolved easily over the phone, may offer to come and visit the apiary. It is important to be aware that a BHA has NO power to enter an apiary without the beekeeper's consent. They will only come if invited.

The brood problems can be alleviated by good management. If foul brood is suspected, the BHAs are equipped with lateral flow devices to test for EFB and are trained to recognise AFB. Should either of these be suspected it remains the legal responsibility of the beekeeper to contact their local Bee Inspector who will visit the apiary and perform further tests to confirm whether the disease is present or not.

We all hope that we never see foul brood in our colonies but if an outbreak should occur it is in everyone's interest that it is diagnosed early to prevent the disease from spreading.

At the MBBKA, Brian Bush and Frank Rickett have volunteered to act as Bee Health Advisors and have undergone training by the National Bee Unit. They can be contacted by email at bha@mbbka.org.uk or by telephone as follows:

Brian Bush - 07767304067 Frank Rickett – 07720 713 373

Please make use of your local Bee Health Advisors if you have any concerns about

