



Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association January 2015 Newsletter



1st Forager of 2015

Speakers at the Bucks County Seminar

We are lucky to have two excellent presenters for the Bucks County Seminar on 28th February.

Following his successful talks at the 2013 National Honey Show, Michael Palmer has been invited back to the UK to give a series of lectures. The timing of his visit means we are able to invite him to the annual seminar. Bob Smith NDB, a favourite speaker on many beekeeping topics will split two talks by Michael.



MICHAEL PALMER

WILL BE GIVING TALKS ON:

1. The Sustainable Apiary and;
2. Queen Rearing in the Sustainable Apiary

Michael has always been fascinated by the plants and insects and animals living in his suburban New York City environment. Now living in Vermont he is able to follow his passion.

As beekeeping became more difficult with acarine and varroa and replacing stock was expensive, he made a decision.... to cut back on the total number of production colonies in the apiary, and focus on raising the best queens possible. With a thousand nucleus colonies of various configurations to help support the seven hundred honey producing colonies, French Hill Apiaries produces, on average, some twelve hundred queens and thirty to forty tons of honey annually.



BOB SMITH NDB

WILL BE GIVING HIS TALK ON:

A Whistle-Stop Tour of some Flowers Useful to Bees

Bob spent six years as a Seasonal Bee Inspector in Kent. He is deeply involved in the NDB short course programme and a member of the Government's Bee Health Advisory Forum. His current interests are botany, pollen, microscopy and varroa.

Bob has adapted this talk for us from some of the lectures he gives on the National Diploma in Beekeeping (NDB) course.

19th Annual Seminar Bucks County Beekeepers

As well as the speakers described above there will be stands presenting information from National Bee Unit, National Trust, BBOWT and the National Honey Show, as well as the Andrew Beer quiz and blind tasting competition plus a second hand equipment stall. All this and lunch for only £12 if you book in advance. For further information and to reserve a ticket go [here](#).

Quiz Night 21st January

If you have not already registered with Liz Tice at secretary@mbbka.org.uk to come along to the quiz please do so as soon as possible. The cost is £6.00 and includes a fish or chicken supper plus a raffle ticket. Full details of the evening are attached.

Programme of Events

21st January 2015

**MBBKA Annual Quiz
with Fish and Chip Supper**

7:30pm Church of the Good Shepherd

18th February 2015

Biodiversity in a bottle:

**The story of the traditional English
orchard by David Curry**

7:30pm Church of the Good Shepherd

23rd February 2015

**New Beekeepers Course Starts
every Monday for 6 weeks**

7:30pm Church of the Good Shepherd

28th February 2015

Bucks County Seminar

10am Memorial Hall, Wendover

18th March 2015

**Biology and the management of
swarms by Andrew Gibbs**

7:30pm Church of the Good Shepherd

Membership Renewal

Those members who have not yet renewed their membership could they please do so as soon as possible. The renewal form can be found [here](#). If you have any questions about membership please contact John Dadswell at membership@mbbka.org.uk.

Microscopy Group

The microscopy group met for the first time last weekend, it great fun to be able to dust off our microscopes and get back into calibrating the instruments, dissecting bees and looking at some pollens. Some of the group intend to study for the BBKA Microscopy Module, others are there for the experience. Next month we hope to make up some fresh pollen slides from plants in flower in February. The meeting will be at 11:00am on 7th February. If you would like more information on the group please drop me a mail at chairman@mbbka.org.uk. Below are a couple of photos taken at the weekend:



The honeybee trachea exposed in order to check for the presence of acarine. This is viewed through a relatively low powered dissecting microscope.

A slightly blurry image of a hazel pollen. The hazel pollen consistently measures 25µm and is used as a standard when gauging the size of an unknown pollen. A compound microscope with magnification up to x1,000 is required to view pollen.



Practical Beekeeping Course

We will be running for the first time this year a Practical Beekeeping Course. The course is being run as a county event and will be split across two weekends. The first date 28th March will be classroom based covering Small scale queen rearing, disease recognition and management, honey processing and manipulations. The second session will be over two days, 27th and 28th June and will be based in the apiary with the focus on manipulations, disease recognition and management and the practical aspects of queen rearing.

The course is aimed at Beekeepers who have been keeping bees for a few years and have previously taken their BBKA Basic Assessment. The course will be very much hands on and attendees will benefit from working with like minded Beekeepers in small groups. Further information can be found [here](#).

New Beekeepers Course

The New Beekeepers Course gets underway on Monday 23rd February and runs for 6 weeks. We already have 25 candidates signed up for the course. The course takes a lot of organising and we are grateful for all the work that Caroline Windley puts into ensuring it runs smoothly. If you would like to help out during the course, even if it is for one evening making the teas, please drop Caroline a mail at:

beginnerscourse@mbbka.org.uk.

Biodiversity in a Bottle

David Curry, Chairman of the [Hertfordshire Orchard Initiative](#) will be the speaker at our next meeting on 18th February at The Church of the Good Shepherd. He will be talking about the story of the traditional English orchard. David is the only non-beekeeping speaker of this winter's programme, but the topic is highly relevant because pollination of apple blossom is synonymous with insect pollinators.

Annual Habits of the Green Woodpecker

I could say that I am carrying out a long term study into the habits of the Green Woodpecker, but in reality I have been punished for my laziness over the last two years.

In my home apiary I have 15 hives, all Nationals except for one which is a WBC. The WBC sits away from the main apiary as it forms a "feature" in the wild garden. The theory being, the WBC has an outer casing formed by the lifts and an air gap to the brood/super boxes within so any woodpecker would not sense the bees and be deterred by the enormity of task penetrating a WBC. Obviously nature does not think like a Beekeeper! Last year the only hive to receive woodpecker damage was the WBC and it was repaired. This year the same woodpecker seems to have returned made a nice hole beside last year's repair, when a stick was inserted into the hole as a temporary repair the bird moved along the hive! The Nationals again seem immune to woodpecker curiosity.



Quiz Night

Wednesday 21st January 2015

7:30 pm in The Church of the Good Shepherd

For the Quiz Night we have made arrangements with the local fish and chip shop to provide either fish and chips or chicken and chips.

You don't have to order food if neither option is to your taste but we must place the orders with the shop earlier in the day. We need to have numbers by **6 pm on Tuesday 19th January at the latest.**

Please order for me:

_____ portions of Cod and Chips & £6.00 each

_____ portions of Chicken and Chips & £6.00 each

Total:

Name:

Phone Number:

To save us having to handle lots of small cheques, would you pay cash on the night but **PLEASE** let us know in advance if you cannot come and need to cancel your order as all food will have to be paid for.

Tea, coffee and water will be provided on the night, please feel free to bring along other beverages if you so desire.

You can place your order by email or phone

to: Liz Tice

Tel: **01296 612618**

email: secretary@mbbka.org.uk

If you order by email and do not receive an acknowledgement from Liz, please try again. Liz will confirm receipt of all food orders.