



Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association March 2017 Newsletter

April Meeting Short Talks

We are going to be trying something new for our last Winter Meeting on 19th April at the Church of the Good Shepherd. There is going to be a series of short talks, 15 minutes each including questions, by members of our Association and Chalfonts BKA.

The talks we have lined up so far are:

- How swarms and nuclei can be turned into productive colonies
- Plants and bees
- Bee pest—The Pygmy Shrew
- Grafting larvae made simple

I am sure we will have time on the night for one or two more talks so if you are interested in having a go please contact me at chairman@mbbka.org.uk.

Water is Important to Bees

Especially at this time of our bees need a good supply of water within a short distance from the hive. The queen within the colony will be increasing her lay rate and brood food for the older larvae can have up to 70% water content. The nurse bees, as well as maintaining the temperature within the brood nest, ensure the humidity is kept consistent by spreading water on the sealed cells. Water is also needed to water down the remaining winter stores.

Water is not stored within the hive so water foragers are the first foragers to leave the hive in the morning and you will see them searching crevices, drinking from puddles and manhole covers. Their ideal source of water would be warm water (in the sun) with some organic material for instance decaying leaves.

Water is collected in their honey crop and cold reduces the body temperature of the bee, so on cold mornings, pour some warm water into their regular source, I am sure the colony will pay you back in honey!



Water foragers drinking warm water from the top of cover of a hot tub.

International Meeting of Young Beekeepers 2017

The UK will be hosting the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers this summer in Marlborough. Each county Beekeeping Association will be contributing £1 for every BBKA member. If you would like to find out more and/or make an additional contribution to the running of the event please go [here](#).

Programme of Events

7th-9th April 2017

BBKA Spring Convention

Harper Adams University

8th April 2017

Woodworking Day

New Beekeepers

9:30am

Drywick

19th April 2017

Association Meeting

Short Talks

7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd

22nd April 2017

Apiary Opening

11:00 am

Association Apiary

27th April 2017

New Beekeeper Apiary Sessions Start

6:00pm

Association Apiary

29th April 2017

Chalfonts BKA Auction

2pm-5pm

Chorleywood

Organiser [Fiona Matheson](#)



Flowering currant, early source of bee forage.

MBBKA Events

Your association needs you!

During the year MBBKA are contacted by various clubs, committees and associations with requests for displays at fetes and fairs.

It has been increasingly difficult in the last couple of years to be able to put teams together to man these events. We have had a few disappointed enquirers when I have had to turn down an invitation.

Usually, but not always, the events are on a weekend during the spring and summer and are within MBBKA's area. Events attended over the past couple of years have been at Waddesdon Manor, The Lee, Monks Risborough and Wendover to name but a few.

So that we can accept more invitations and spread the word about MBBKA, I'd really like to set up a list of members who would be willing to give up one or two afternoons during the year in order to help out.

The more volunteers we have then the easier it is, as we usually split the events over shifts so that no one has to be around for more than a couple of hours. Any one offering to help would be contacted to discuss event location and potential availability.

Talking to the public can be very rewarding and enjoyable. We often find that people are very interested in beekeeping and meeting novice beekeepers can inspire them to join the association and perhaps attend the Beginner's Course.

When I first joined MBBKA I found that helping out at these events was a great way of getting to know some of the association's members as well as picking up knowledge and tips from other beekeepers. If you would like to be part of the team then please e-mail me at: Secretary@mbbka.org.uk

I hope to hear from you! **Liz**

Equipment for Sale

One of our members has a hive, settling tank and extractor for sale, photos and contact details can be found [here](#).

The Chalfonts Beekeepers Association will be holding a bees and equipment auction on 29th April in Chorleywood 2pm- 5pm. For further information contact [Fiona Matheson](#).

BBKA Special Offers at the Spring Convention

The Spring Convention will soon be upon us 7th-9th April at Harper Adams. The programme of workshops and lectures can be found on the BBKA.org.uk home page.

The BBKA have a stand at the Spring Convention where you can meet the Association Trustees and benefit from great deals on purchasing BBKA publications. Full details can be found [here](#).

March in the Apiary

Looking back at the March newsletters from [2015](#) and [2016](#) there are articles concerning Bailey comb change and Spring feeding.

Out Apiary Sites

If you are looking for an out apiary site please contact [John Dadswell](#). John maintains a database of members of the public who have offered sites for beekeepers. Currently we have sites near Winslow, Prestwood, Aylesbury, Great Misenden Terrick and Marsworth.

Bee Stings

As we enter the Spring season it is worth reminding ourselves of what to do in case of a bee sting. The BBKA have written a good note on the matter and it can be found [here](#).

When a person is stung there are several things going on in the body which can cause differing reaction dependant upon circumstances and the person being stung.

The key element of the bee venom is Melittin, it causes a specific type of white blood cell called a mast cell to release histamine and heparin which initiate the allergic reaction to the sting.

One of the effects of histamine is to lower the victim's blood pressure. By taking an anti-histamine such as Piriton generally the reaction to the sting can be reduced. Piriton is a useful item to be included in a beekeeper's tool box.

A normal reaction to a sting includes a swelling and itchiness less that 10cm in diameter surrounding the point of the sting.

A severe reaction can include hives and swelling away from the sting area on pulse points. The victim may also feel palpitations, panic is likely to be experienced.

A severe reaction may but not necessarily lead to Anaphylactic shock where the victim has difficulty in breathing, experience vomiting and possibly becomes unconscious. Under these circumstances contact the emergency services immediately. For further information on symptoms and actions check out the [NHS Choices website](#).