

CBKA Newsletter

March 2011

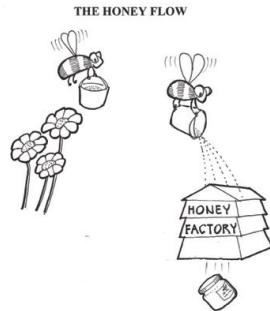
Volume 25/7 Download our Newsletters from www.teesbees.co.uk

Next Meeting

Monday 18th April, Trekking in Nepal - Barrie Bloom

April in the Apiary

In late April and early May rape will come in to flower, bee's will take rape at the expense of all else. A strong colony will fill a super every week, and if we are not ready we will have beautiful super's full of set honey!



Which Smoker?– What fuel?

The smoker is a vital piece of the beekeeper's equipment but is must be very confusing to the new beekeeper to try and choose

which smoker to buy and which fuel is best to use.

Like most things to do with beekeeping there a more ways than one to skin a cat and the use of smokers and fuel is just another.

I notice in Thorne's catalogue there are, galvanised standard, copper standard, stainless steel standard, empire smoker, Etna galvanised, clockwork etc. Where would you start? I would suggest possibly aim for something in the middle price range, ie stainless steel large.

Regarding which fuel to use in your smoker you can choose any from old sacking, rotten wood, cotton waste, bad hay, grass clippings, corrugated cardboard, proprietary cartridges, smoker pellets and so on and so on. Anything that will smoulder for a long time with a cool smoke would be fine. I have tried many of these and have found that some burn well and slowly, some burn too fast and go out at the vital time and some smell rather unpleasant not just for the bees but also for the beekeeper. At the moment I am using dry pine type dead leaves which have fallen under my ornamental fir trees in the garden which when lit seem to burn slowly and smell reasonably pleasant and don't clog the smoker up with tar. If any member has found an ideal fuel, please let the editor know and we can give it a try.

Removing honey from plastic foundation



Picture from Sal Mancina
CBKA foreign correspondent
New Zealand

Bee Bay

A place for you to buy and sell beekeeping and all related equipment

"For sale, all being well: a medium-sized colony of bees in a Smith Hive, available at the end of March -- to negotiate, ring (01642) 701832.

.....

For Sale: 5 frame nucs. local bees, last years queens. available after first April inspection. £125.00 each

Rob Andrews 01642 781639.

robandrews574@gmail.com



Beekeepers Quarterly

The Beekeepers Quarterly Magazine subscription is now due. For those members of CBKA who do not know this publication I can highly recommend it. It is a glossy full colour A4 with approx. 56 pages. The contents usually cover all aspects of beekeeping from around the world.

Besides the editorial and a very good letter page it has at least a dozen illustrated articles on beekeeping of interest to all beekeepers, The magazine is well worth keeping for future references to the articles.

The subscription for this magazine if purchased privately is £25 if ordered through me it is only £16, this includes postage to your home address.

Cheques should be made out to me Ian Brown, and sent to my home address 48 Thames Avenue Guisborough, Cleveland. TS14 8AF.

I will send one cheque for the total amount to Northern Bee Books.

February Meeting

Thanks to Phil Cunningham (shown below) for an excellent talk on bees for development and an insight in to the top bar hive, this hive as mentioned previously was developed by Abbé Émile Warré (1867-1951) and is once again becoming popular in Europe and the UK, the Warre hive is seen as a simple, inexpensive way of keeping bees, and although it will not appeal to all, it may be the answer for a beginner who is on a limited budget. Plans are available at Warre.Biobees.com



From CBKA foreign correspondent

We went along to our first meeting of the Auckland Beekeepers last week, and it was quite an eye opener. We arrived to find a few people walking around the hives without any protection at all, and we thought they were very brave, but understandable as the hives hadn't been opened yet. Very soon someone came along and said that they would be removing honey from one of the hives which had several supers on it. Everyone gathered round the hive and very few people had a veil on, or gloves or anything other than T-shirts and shorts ! A lot of the people were new beekeepers who had never seen an open hive before..... what precautions would we have taken with the sort of bees we have in the UK?

The demonstrator had two plastic buckets strapped together, one on top of the other. The upper bucket had a hole cut in the bottom and a mesh filter fitted across the hole. The bottom hive had a hole cut in the top to match the upper bucket's mesh filter. The hive was opened and the frames were removed one by one, the bees shaken out in front of the hive, and the frames were then scraped clean into the upper bucket, the warm honey quickly filtering through the mesh to fall into the lower bucket. The bees were contentedly flying about throughout this, they didn't get into the honey bucket or hang around the frames, and no one got stung, despite the lack of protection. Several things stood out as different as to how we would tackle this in the UK. The bees were not shaken into the hive as the frames were lifted out, the demonstrator saying that they would just go onto the next frames to be lifted - someone said that they shake their bees into a cardboard box in front of the hive when they do this rather than onto the grass. The frames were one piece black plastic with foundation built in, with the hexagon pattern imprinted - their idea of putting foundation on the frames is thinly brushing hot wax over the plastic foundation !

The end result was a couple of gallons of honey in twenty minutes, all filtered through the mesh in the upper bucket. All that remained in the top bucket was the wax from the frames. An open air meeting followed, where the main topic was the use of mesh floors, with some people worried that their bees would get cold during the winter. A few weeks in a North Eastern UK winter would prove that cold doesn't kill the bees, but more likely lack of food or damp.

In case you're wondering..... yes I wore a veil, but no gloves, and I didn't get stung.

Regards to you all, Sal Mancina

Secretary: Derek Herring, 8 Wardale Avenue, Acklam

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Meetings are held in the Southlands Leisure Centre, Ormesby Road, Middlesbrough,

TS3 0HG on the third Monday of the month from September to April at 7:15pm. Visitors and new members welcome.

BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

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