



CBKA Newsletter April 2014

Year 28/ 8. Download our Newsletters from www.teesbees.co.uk

Chairman's Note

As the weather warms up this month so do our bees and it will be all systems go for the next couple of months as colonies expand and the urge to propagate becomes paramount in our bees. This is a great time for beekeeping as we try to manage our bees to try and control swarming, put on supers for the coming

honey flow, spend time watching our bees working and trying to keep one step ahead. I have been trying to do this for over thirty years now and I must admit that for all my good intentions and well laid plans the bees end up doing their own thing which I suppose is one of the

fascinations of the hobby.

One final note for new beekeepers, please take care when inspecting your bees to check that your veil and protective clothing are well fastened and that you wear your gloves and if using spectacles that they are on inside your veil before opening up the hive. Sometimes in the excitement we can forget to check. I know someone who has done it and it can be a painful experience.

Best regards

Rob Andrews, Chairman



In the Apiary

We have had a long settled spell of weather, if a little cool recently. The blossom is a wonder on a lot of bushes and the flower buds on many of the fruit trees are showing the first signs of colour. There are whole fields of rape in full colour, though the main flow may still be a few weeks away. The colonies have been building up rapidly and from now on we should be on the alert for the first signs of swarming. Have your spare equipment ready for use and a plan in mind for what you are going to do when the first queen cell is charged. Bees are in short supply and you don't want your precious queens to fly off with half your colony.

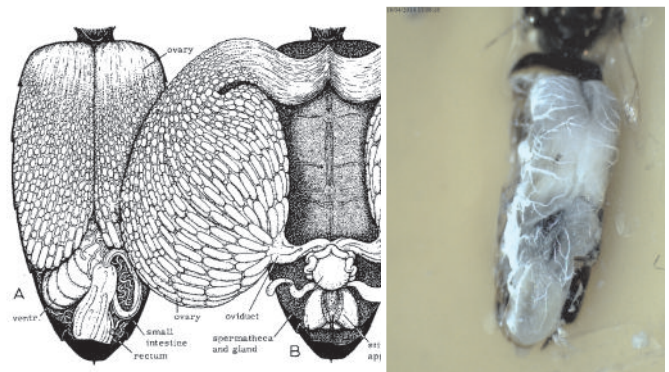
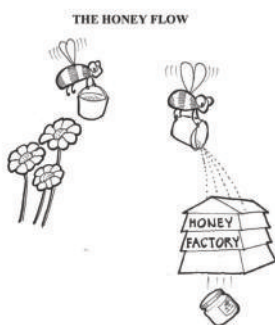


Queen Dissection

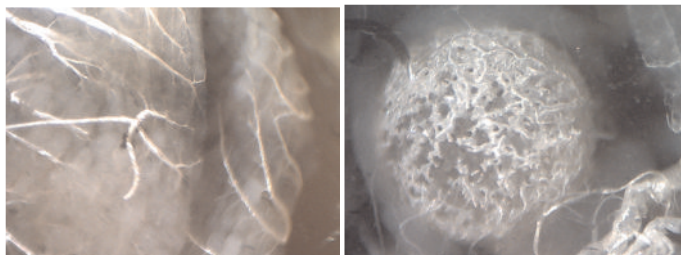
Nosema is a single celled parasite of the honey bee. The symptoms are non-specific but it is common in winter and early spring and a common sign is dysentery, the yellow/brown stains sometimes seen inside and outside the hive. Nosema interferes with the bee's digestion and will eventually kill it. Since Fumidil B was withdrawn from the market there is no medicinal treatment for Nosema. The current policy for Nosema is to improve effective management by all beekeepers to minimise the effect on colonies. To help beekeepers achieve this, the National Bee Unit currently provides best practice advice on managing Nosema which highlights the importance of monitoring, comb changing and sterilisation; completing autumn feeding by September/early October; and to avoid factors that promote dysentery (e.g. fermented stores, late syrup feeding, damp etc.) Adding a little thymol mixture into the autumn feed stops the sugar syrup from fermenting which might help.

by Sal Mancina

Queens are valuable and thus it is unusual for one to be available for dissection. When our chairman asked if I would look at one of his queens which had failed I jumped at the chance. The queen looked healthy but had stopped laying eggs. The basic dissection is the same as for any worker bee. The bee is killed - in this case by freezing, the legs are cut off, the bee is set in wax about half way up the thorax and the wings are cut off. The bee is then covered in dissecting fluid (water with a little alcohol). This is to support the internal organs and to stop them deteriorating quickly. You then cut round the abdomen with a small pair of scissors at the level of the wax and remove the cut piece. On the left, below, the anatomy as drawn by Dade and



the equivalent dissected bee on the right. On the left, below, is a close up of the ovaries. On the right the spermatheca where she stores all the



sperm she uses throughout her life.

Several areas of this dissection were discoloured and this would be consistent with Nosema which is a known cause of failing fertility in Queens. I took a sample of the dissecting fluid around the discoloured areas and stained it with Nigrosin dye. Once stained I could see the presence of Nosema spores. *by Graham Clarke*

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Basic Exam

Last year six of our members sat and all passed the Basic Assessment Exam. If you want to sit the exam this year please contact our Education Officer, Tom Rettig, as soon as you can. Depending on numbers applying, the exam might be held on several dates during the summer, and the last date for applications is the end of July. It is a BBKA prerequisite that you have a full year's experience of keeping bees, please don't apply if you don't have this. If it is your first attempt at the exam and you are a member of CBKA, the association will pay half the cost of the £15 fee, so it will cost you only £7.50. Application forms and syllabus are online on the BBKA site.

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Honey Jars and Extractors

Last year we ordered a pallet of 11lb honey jars and quite a lot of 0.5lb jars. As we ordered so many we negotiated a very good price direct from the suppliers and passed the saving on to our members. This year we intend to do the same, and sometime in the next month or two we will again make a bulk purchase of jars. We will put a message on our

website when they arrive and I will email everyone. The association now has two honey extractors for the use of our members only. As usual please plan your extraction so that you don't have the extractor for more than a day or two, and return it washed ready for the next person to use. See the website for contact details to borrow an extractor.

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Summer is coming

Maybe not quite yet, but this is the last newsletter until September, and the April meeting is the last indoor meeting until the Autumn. Make sure you check on the website for last minute changes to events and venues due to unforeseen circumstances. Sunday 18th May, 2.00pm Stock Assessment, Association Apiary, Newham Grange
Monday 9th June 6.15pm, Bee Breeding, Jeffersons Ellerby Apiary
Sunday 29th June, Bus Trip to Chainbridge Honey Farm, Berwick, Cost £15. Book with Rob Andrews.
Sunday 13th July, 2.00pm Health Check of Stock, Association Apiary, Newham Grange
Sunday 20 July, Beekeeping Display, Fairy Dell, Coulby Newham
Saturday 26th July, Cleveland Show, Entries to Show Secretary, Julie Saxton
Sunday 24th August, 2.00pm, Apiary Visit on the Heather, Wayworth Farm, Commondale
Please keep some of that wonderful honey your bees are going to make for you over the next few months and enter a couple of jars in the Cleveland Show (26th July). There is a novice class for those who have never shown before, for which a single jar of honey is required.

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Bee Equipment For Sale

Have you looked at the BeeMart page on our website? One of our members has pre-cut mesh for varroa floors for sale and another member has a large quantity of second hand hives for sale. www.teesbees.co.uk

Happy beekeeping!

Secretary: Steve Jacklin, 34 Juntion Rd, Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, TS20 1PL Tel: 01642 866240

Winter meetings (September to April) are held on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7:15pm in the:

Middlesbrough Bowling Club, Cornfield Rd, Middlesbrough TS5 5QL (Near the Little Theatre). Visitors and new members welcome.

BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

Allan, Tony & Richard Jefferson

Stonelea Apiaries, 1 Dalehouse Bank, Staithes, Cleveland, TS13 5AN

Tel 07749 73 1945 or Tel/Fax 01947 893811

stoneleabees@yahoo.co.uk

Suppliers of all beekeeping equipment.

Honey bought and sold.

Cleveland Beekeepers

Visit our website at www.teesbees.co.uk. You will find our programme for the coming year and all our past Newsletters.