

# CBKA Newsletter December 2014

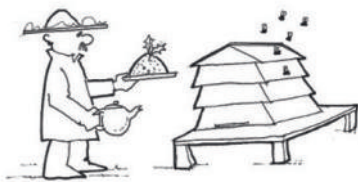
Year 29/ 4. Download our Newsletters from [www.teesbees.co.uk](http://www.teesbees.co.uk)

## Chairman's Note

I'm definitely finding that beekeeping doesn't stop at the end of September. I've finally got all my honey buckets cleaned up and got the honey room just about clean. I've also refined all my used wax, all told I've cleaned up about 18lb some of which I will be trading in for new brood foundation and the rest I am going to use to try and make my own super foundation.

As the nights close in and the temperature drops we shouldn't forget our bees. Very soon the season will

FEEDING BEES



change, the days will lengthen and the queen's laying rate will start to increase. For this the colony will need food. We should be hefting our hives on a regular basis. I like to do it at least every two

weeks and if they are feeling a bit light apply some fondant. I like to apply it in clear take away box as you can see how much they have taken. Just upturn it and place it over the hole in the crown board, with the bee escape removed. I always give the bees a present of fondant over the Christmas period anyway. Sometimes they eat it straight away sometimes it lasts till the spring. It gives you a rough idea of the stores situation in the hive. For those of you with out apiaries keep an eye on the weather. If it looks like we are going to have a prolonged period of bad weather you may not be able to get to your hives, in which case as soon as the bad weather is forecast go to your hives and give them some fondant. Better safe than sorry.

In some ways I think this part of the year is one of the most important times of the beekeeping calendar. It's when I look back over the preceding year and decide what I have achieved in the last year, what I did wrong and what I did right, and then start planning for the next year. I like to sit down on an evening with a glass of prize winning, very highly commended, mead and I start thinking about what equipment I will need for next year, which colonies I want to breed from, and where do I want to go with

my beekeeping. I have fourteen colonies at the moment and two spare hives, if they only swarm once each I am going to need at least 12 more hives - which is going to work out very expensive! So I won't be forgetting the sales. Thornes, Maisemore and Paynes all have sales which start just after Christmas, I will also be making a lot of new equipment. I already make my own floors, roofs and I will be making my own brood boxes for the first time this year. Don't forget Christmas either, dropped hints about gloves and queen marking cages etc. are often successful.

Lastly can I offer you all the best wishes of the season whatever your faith, and look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

*by Steve Jacklin, Chairman.*

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## In the Apiary

It felt as if the Indian summer was going on for ever until the last week or so reminded us that winter was just hiding. The picture was taken on the 1st of December - normally the bees are tucked away for the winter by this date, but this one was caught in

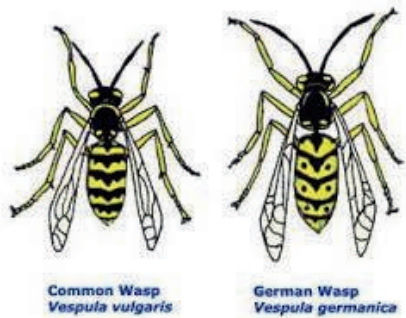


the act of entering the hive with a full load of pollen. This was probably either from Mahonia or Winter Jasmine. While this was interesting in itself, it also tells us that the bees were still flying freely so consuming their winter stores rapidly.

Sorry for repeating this, but make sure you are ready to give your bees some fondant if the hive starts feeling light.

While fetching the Christmas tree from the loft something yellow caught my eye on the underside of the black roofing felt, a huge wasp. I touched it thinking it was dead and it moved sideways away from my finger. The hives at the end of my garden were plagued by wasps at the end of the season, and as they were flying on days that were too cold for the bees to fly, they had free reign to enter as and when they felt like it and no doubt filling up on the bees' precious winter stores. One day recently I

stood and zapped over 30 wasps in 20 minutes with my electric fly swat as they attempted to fly in to



the hives (I know, I should get a more interesting life...). I felt sorry for the queen wasp, but decided that my area could do

with one less colony next year. I squashed her head to dispatch her and then examined her, she was much larger than a queen bee and beautifully marked. There are two main types of wasps in the UK, one with dots on the abdomen and one without - mine was clearly a German.

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### Situations Vacant

We still have two positions vacant on the Committee, here's a quick description of the responsibilities of these roles.

#### Secretary

- \*Take minutes at Committee Meetings and the Annual General Meeting. Type up and distribute these.
- \*Collate and publish the Agenda for the Committee Meeting.
- \*Collate and publish the Agenda for the AGM. Type up and distribute the AGM Minutes and distribute to Members.(Once a year)
- \*Provide a single point of communications with the BBKA. Supply the BBKA with an up to date list of officers and swarm catchers.
- \*Distribute to members relevant emails from the BBKA.

#### Vice Chairperson

- \*Stand in for Chairperson when required.
- \*Take over as Chairperson at the end of term of the current Chairperson.

If anyone would like to take on one of these roles please see a member of the Committee.

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### CBKA Website, [www.teesbees.co.uk](http://www.teesbees.co.uk)

Here are a few updates on the association website with the hope of encouraging some more input from you all.

One of the complaints over the years was a lack of photos on the main site and so for the past year we have had a Facebook page (click through from the home page of [www.teesbees.co.uk](http://www.teesbees.co.uk)). This is meant for photos and chit-chat of the association and its members. If you have anything to do with beekeeping that you want to go on Facebook please email it to me. Please "Like" us - and please comment on the posts that are there, this is your forum.

I have added a very powerful search box on the home page of [www.teesbees.co.uk](http://www.teesbees.co.uk) and this now allows easy access to all the archived articles in the newsletters etc. - try it - I found things I did not know were there.

There are also two newish pages.

- \* Honey for sale - if you have had a bumper honey harvest why not send me your details to put on this page - it's a great way to build your clientele.
- \* BeeMart - this is free for members. If you have bees or bee related equipment to sell send the details to me. It is also the place where we advertise the bargains we get from time to time as an association - like the honey buckets or our great price on honey jars.

It could not be easier - just email the information to [web@teesbees.co.uk](mailto:web@teesbees.co.uk).

by *Graham Clarke*

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### CBKA Membership Renewal

Many thanks to everyone who has renewed their membership.

Renewal was due from the 1st of November, so if you have not renewed please do so soon. Renewal is £25 for full membership. If you renew after 31st of December it costs £30.

by *Sal Mancina, Membership Secretary*

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### Happy Christmas and a good beekeeping 2015

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Secretary: Steve Jacklin, 34 Junction 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.

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Such bees! Bilbo had never seen anything like them. "If one were to sting me," He thought "I should swell up as big as I am!"

J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

### Cleveland Beekeepers

Visit our website at [www.teesbees.co.uk](http://www.teesbees.co.uk). You will find our programme for the coming year and all our past Newsletters.