



CBKA Newsletter

September 2014

Year 29/ 1. Download our Newsletters from www.teesbees.co.uk

Chairman's Note

As we move towards the end of another beekeeping season our attention turns towards how we can best help our bees to prepare to survive the coming winter months and emerge next Spring healthy and ready for 2015. Treatment for varroa has now become a regular part of our beekeeping duties and once the last honey has been removed from the supers it is time to think

TREATMENT FOR VARROA



of which varroa treatment we wish to use on our bees.

For the past two years I have used Thymol soaked pads on my bees and which have proved very successful and at a fraction of the cost of

some of the various commercial treatments now on the market. My theory being the less mixture of chemicals we put in the hive the better it will be for us and the bees.

Our bees will not survive like us without food through the winter and giving our bees enough food is essential to help them so be generous with your autumn feeding. It is said that bees do not die of cold through the winter but mainly from damp conditions so it is important to make sure your hives are kept dry and weatherproof.

I still have some of my bees on the heather moors but hope to have them back home next week and I hope you have all had a good crop of heather honey and don't forget to save some for entry into next years shows. *by Rob Andrews, Chairman*

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In the Apiary

You should have fitted a varroa tray under each of your hive's mesh floor and checked the mite drop by now. Leave the tray in for a week or so and work out how many mites have dropped per day. At this time of the year if the drop is about 10 or more per day then you need to treat. A good tip is to use a felt tip pen to mark a 2inch x 2inch grid on the tray, it'll make counting the mites a lot easier. If you go to the Beebase website and search for "Medicines for Bees" there are instructions on how to find the currently authorised products for treating your bees. A

downloadable "Fact Sheet 44 Bee Medicaments" is also useful, it says only authorised commercially available products should be used in the hive.

Current legislation says you need to record dates, batch numbers, where you bought the medication, etc on a Veterinary Medicines Record Card, a copy of which is available for download from www.teesbees.co.uk under Beekeeping Articles.

Treat sooner rather than later as some medications work better during warmer weather.

While it is still warm feed your bees until they won't take any more, how much syrup they take down depends on how much honey they managed to pack into the brood box. Most literature says a colony needs 40-45lb of stores to last the winter. It is a race against the weather now as late feeding results in insufficient time for the bees to process the syrup and it can ferment during the winter.

Thick syrup, ie 2kg of sugar to 630ml of water, is recommended. Warm water helps to dissolve the sugar, allow to cool before feeding to the bees.

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Tips from the Honey Judge

On Saturday 26th July, Tony Jefferson came to judge the honey classes at the Cleveland Show. Part of the Show Secretary's role is to accompany him and ensure that his decisions are recorded. Much more interesting however, were the comments Tony made as he made his decisions.

I have listed some of the hints and tips he passed on as he looked, tasted, scrutinised and drank!!

- Jars are important, make sure they are a matching pair with matching lids
- Attach the labels an inch from the bottom and lined up with the glass seam
- Clean the excess wax off new seals otherwise they will deposit a thin film of wax on the rim of the jar
- Make sure older lids have not started to rust
- Medium/Dark honey needs to be clear just as light honey does – no bits!!
- Chunk honey should be presented upright in the jar
- Make sure you have the full quantity (if honey is below the threads of the jar it's not a full 1Lb – Tony called this a Yorkshire measure)
- Heather honey needs to be slightly overfilled as the air in it causes it to settle a little
- When presenting Granulated honey, leave the lid

loose to stop the honey pulling a vacuum which pulls the honey away from the side of the jar

- Make sure your honey has not started to ferment, especially if it is not a sample from this year!!
- When preparing wax cakes, filter the wax through



nappy liners to get out the majority of imperfections.

- When presenting frames of honey, take time to clean up the frame – scrape off propolis and extraneous wax
- Try to avoid using brand new display cases as, when the lid is taken off for judging, the smell of varnish can outdo the smell of the wax/honey
- Mead should be presented in bottles with white flanged corks – an old whiskey stopper is not really the done thing!!
- Generally speaking it was felt that the honey cake recipe needed to be cooked longer

Although all of these things seem to be very prescriptive, Tony was at pains to point out that strict adherence and pedantry should not stop your enjoyment of entering. These observations are only strictly observed in the big shows to allow a method of reducing the number of contenders in a class. Hopefully Tony will come and give a talk for us, he has offered to do so and it makes fascinating listening.

by Julie Saxton, Show Secretary

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Exams

Congratulations to our members who sat the Basic Exam, all three passed:

Tim and Carol Anderton
John Canning

Congratulations also to the following who passed the Module exams sat in March:

Steve Jacklin, Module 2
Sal Mancina, Module 6
John Baines, Module 6. As John has now passed Modules 1, 2, 3 and 6 he has also been awarded the BBKA Intermediate Theory Certificate. Please be advised that the closing date for the November module exams is 30th September. Completed forms and payment to Tom Rettig.
by Tom Rettig, Exam Secretary

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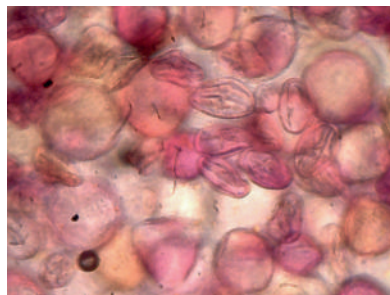
Honey Jars

Those of you that have had bees on the heather will have brought them back home by now or you are planning to do so very soon and hopefully you will have a nice heather honey crop. The association still has plenty of jars and lids for sale, both 1lb and 1/2 lb jars with lids are 30p each. Contact Billy Ellerington on 07516 341420 to buy jars.

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Pollen of the month

I have always been taught that one of the reasons bees were such good pollinators is that they stick to one species of flower at a time. This has usually been the case when I have looked at the pollen load of one of my bees. The vast bulk of pollen is one



species with maybe two or three grains of something else. This picture was taken at the beginning of September and I think I can identify five different species of

pollen (and probably one or two I can't identify). Clearly at the end of the season they will take whatever they can get. This must reduce the efficiency of pollination and is maybe part of the reason why autumn flowering plants such as Himalayan Balsam produce such large amounts of both nectar and pollen. by Graham Clarke

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Happy beekeeping!

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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.

The only reason for making a buzzing noise that I know of is because you're a bee...The only reason for being a bee that I know of is making honey...and the only reason for making honey is so I can eat it.
~ Winnie the Pooh in A.A. Milne's 'The House at Pooh Corner'

Cleveland Beekeepers

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