



Bee Talk

Newsletter of The Blackburn and East Lancashire Branch of
The Lancashire & North West Beekeepers Association
www.blackburnbeekeepers.com

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Registered Charity

What's in this issue of Bee Talk

EDITORIAL PAGE 1

Bill gives Michael Birt a plug for the new website. And still more about varroa

BEGINNER'S PAGES PAGE 2

Part two of Beekeeping in a Nutshell

SUPERSTITIONS PAGE 3

'Old Wive's Tales' about bees - or are they?

A STORY FROM CANADA PAGE 4

All the way from Canada. A newspaper story about infighting amongst UK beekeepers

AN OLD FOSSIL PAGE 5

A hundred million year old bee/wasp found in Burma.

'GOOGLE EYES' PAGE 5

Basic tips for searching the World Wide Web

THE ITALIAN CONNECTION PAGE 6

Jeni remembers Jack Armistead. She welcomes back the Swallows and worries about Colony Collapse.

COMB BUILDING PAGE 7

Tricks of the trade when drawing out Comb

PROPOLIS PAGE 8

What's it for? What's in it? How did they use it in the Boer War?

COLONY COLLAPSE PAGE 9

Another point of view. Is it right? Who knows!

HE COULDN'T BEAR IT PAGE 9

If you think varroa is trouble - take a look at this

NOTICES PAGE 10 & 11

Arthur reckons not one in ten read 'em

SUBSCRIPTIONS PAGE 12

You really must read this

DO BEES HAVE EARS? PAGE 12

An intriguing look at whether bees hear or feel vibrations

THINGS YOU SHOULD DO . . . PAGE 13

. . . when dealing with a swarm

PYSANKY PAGE 13

A new idea for the Craft Show which makes use of beeswax.

HEALTH AND BEE STINGS PAGE 14

Perhaps you should watch out if you have blood pressure.

THE BRITISH BLACK PAGE 15

Bill's favourite topic - again!

FORTNUM AND MASONS PAGE 16

Honey from the roof at £10 for 1/2 lb

FROM AN 1883 BOOK PAGE 17

Enthusiasm!

HONEY CAKE PAGE 17

A good looking recipe

SOAP BOX PAGE 19

Global Warming - two points of view

SCRAPINGS PAGE 20

Finding the queen, pollinators and foundation is yours the right way up?

Editorial

EDITORIAL

JACK

The first thing is to report the death of Jack Armistead our oldest, and dare I say, "our best beloved member" yes I think so. Those who attended his funeral were surprised and pleased when Jack's coffin was piped into the crematorium by Ken Pickles a long time friend and beekeeper who was dressed in full attire, kilt and all. Some of you will remember Jack playing the bagpipes at meetings, he was very professional and played in a pipe band for many years, so the pipes were very much in keeping. Jeni Shelton our 'Italian Connection' correspondent has done a very nice eulogy for him (page 6) so I will leave it in her very capable hands.

WEBSITE

Michael Birt our 'Web Master' has really pulled out all the stops. We now have a new, simpler, more memorable and all together better web address:

www.blackburnbeekeepers.com

or you can just enter lancashire beekeepers in to google and you will find us there.

There is also a wealth of information there with links to all the pages on beekeeping that anyone could possibly want. He has also made arrangements so he can update the web page even when away in Thailand, so we won't have the three month period when it didn't get updated.

He has done a first class job and needs support. Send him your thoughts: ideas: remarks; photos indeed anything at all so long as I isn't rude. Well not too rude. Just email stuff to him, he can then put it on the web page.

THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Whilst I'm on about the web. The very latest Bee Talk will be posted on the web site before any one gets it by post. I wonder if we could dispense with posting Bee Talk to those people with broadband connection on their computers. Personally I'm not keen on reading things like Bee Talk off the Screen, I would much rather pick up

JUNE 2007

the booklet and read it as and when I fancy. I also like to study something like that in the smallest room in the house, very relaxed, quiet and without being disturbed. Tell me what you think about the idea.

COLONY COLLAPSE

This "Colony Collapse Syndrome" is a new worry for beekeepers (as if we need any more). The worst of it seems to be in America - 60% losses and professionals going out of business. Nevertheless there are reports world wide, some in this country. Bob Bradshaw reported a strange tale to the committee at our last meeting, no one could give an explanation, it fitted CCS to a tee. Personally I think it will eventually be found out to be chemicals that are the cause, either chemicals used by beekeepers or chemicals in general. Farmers; gardeners; whatever! Bees after all live by chemicals, Scents (pheromones) are their way of communication. What better way to confuse them than to interfere with their communications. No one seems to have come up with a proper solution yet. We will see! *Ed*

VARROA

The next stage in the fight against varroa has arrived on our patch, namely resistant mites found in Darwen.

Pyrethroid resistant mites [i.e. resistant to Bayvarol and Apistan] started in the South West Counties just a few years ago, but I suspect they are countrywide by now.

To continue beekeeping in the long run, a more varied control procedure will be required. This is called Integrated Pest Management [I.P.M.]

To help members, I recommend a good read of the "defra" booklet, "Managing Varroa" which should give a better understanding of the problems and the potential solutions, GOOD LUCK!!!!

Ken Gaiger



BEEKEEPING IN A NUTSHELL

STARTING OUT (PART 2)

A large part of beekeeping time will be spent handling brood frames. (Super frames are by comparison much less frequently examined.) So ease of handling of the frame may be a consideration, especially for someone who is not strong, or arthritic. The British Standard frame as used in the National or WBC is the smallest brood frame and also has $1\frac{1}{2}$ " long lugs, twice as long as the lugs on all other frames, making examination easier, particularly swinging the frame round to look at the other side.

Only with British Standard frames is the beginner offered a choice: straight sided frames (DN1) which need metal or plastic spacers slipped over the lugs, or self-spacing Hoffmann frames (DN4) with 35mm wide shaped sidebars. Hoffmann frames are to be recommended for ease of manipulation. It is significant that many beekeepers make the change-over from straight-sided frames to Hoffmann, but few make the reverse move.

BEE SPACE

In 1851 Rev L.L. Langstroth laid the foundation of modern beekeeping with the discovery of the bee space. This is a gap of about $\frac{3}{8}$ " which bees in the hive will not block up, whereas a larger or smaller space will soon be built in or glued up with propolis and wax. Today a hive must be built to maintain that space wherever possible between frames, boxes, excluders, covers, etc. In a bottom bee space hive (Mod. National, WBC, Commercial), the frame top bars are flush with the top of the box, and these frames will be stuck to the super or excluder above by propolis at the lug.

This happens much less with a top bee space hive such as Smith, Langstroth, Jumbo or Dadant. The extra ease of handling a top bee space hive is pleasant, and for a bee farmer crucial. For the beekeeper with only a handful of hives, the extra work in breaking the propolis seals is barely significant.

BROOD BOX POLICY

The amount of room that the queen needs to lay in was touched on earlier. Once the colony is established it might be felt that the area of brood comb was not large enough. The signs that would indicate that she is being cramped are brood, i.e. eggs, larvae and sealed brood cells from corner to corner on almost all the frames, with the pollen and nectar stores, which should be adjacent to the brood nest being pushed beyond the queen excluder; or an abrupt lack of young brood because all the available space has been filled and the queen has been forced to go off lay. If this seems to be the case regularly and not just a peak freak occasion, then the two options available are to go for a bigger brood box, or to run multiple brood boxes. Both methods have their fans.

BROOD AND A HALF

Beekeepers using National hives may scrap their normal brood boxes and obtain either deep broods, which take a frame 12" deep instead of the normal $8\frac{1}{2}$ ". All other parts of the hive can still be used. Alternatively the "brood and a half" method may be used. In this case the queen excluder is placed above the first super and the queen can lay in both boxes.

This method has the disadvantage that a search for the queen involves looking through twice as many frames - On the plus side, it may be that regular examinations for swarm preparations are simplified, since the colony often takes advantage of the gap between the upper and lower frames to build queen cells there. So, by splitting the two boxes and looking up into the top one, the examination can be done without removing a frame. It is more likely that the swarm cells will be visible between the boxes, but not certain, as many have discovered.

WHERE TO GET BEES?

The best course for the beginner is to see what is available and ask for opinions among local beekeepers. In recent years importations have been restricted because of the threat of varroa; now that the parasite is well established here the restrictions are no longer in force. Many think that the best bee is the British Black a bee that has been in this country for thousands and thousands of years and is very well adapted to our weather and conditions.

WHERE TO KEEP BEES

The most convenient place from the point of view of observing the colony, carrying out quick manipulations, and simply for pleasure is likely to be the back garden. Points to aim for are:- a position where the sun shines on the hive, with the hive up off the ground on a hive stand and screened by hedge, wall or fence so that foragers are not flying directly into people walking in the garden, or worse, neighbours and passers-by. Many hives are kept in urban gardens and good honey yields are frequently taken from town gardens and parks. The cat and dog usually get stung once and then stay away.

OUT APIARY

If the garden is unsuitable then the hives may be kept at an out-apiary. Polite enquiry will generally locate some quiet or derelict spot that can be used in exchange for a jar or two of honey per year. Look for a place that will not attract vandals, that is not terribly exposed or in a frost pocket, and where heavy supers can easily be carried out.

If the prospect of leaving bees at an out-apiary is not attractive, then it is perfectly practical to keep bees in a shed or bee-house. The neighbours may be quite oblivious to their presence. It can be very pleasant working hives indoors, and observations, queen-rearing and experiment can be easier.

By Matthew Allan

To be continued in next issue.

SUPERSTITIONS

Bees have often been regarded as wise and even holy insects, having foreknowledge as well as knowledge of many secret matters. In antiquity they were sometimes divine messengers, and their constant humming was believed to be a hymn of praise.

Because of their status it is still considered unlucky in some places to kill a bee. If a bee flies into the house it is a sign of great good luck, or of the arrival of a stranger.

SWEARING

A bee landing on someone's hand is believed to foretell money to come, while if the bee settles on someone's head it means that person will rise to greatness. They were once considered to deliberately sting those who swore in front of them, and also to attack an adulterer or unchaste person; it was once held to be a sure sign that a girl was a virgin if she could walk through a swarm of bees without being stung.

TELL THE BEES

There is believed to be a very strong link between bees and their keepers; bees cannot prosper in an atmosphere of anger or hatred, and will either pine away and die, or fly away. There is still a common belief that bees should be told about deaths that occur in the beekeeper's family; in past times this was extended to include every birth, marriage or other notable event in the life of the family. It was especially important to inform the bees of the death of their owner; traditionally this was done by the eldest son or widow of the owner, who would strike each hive three times with the door key and say 'The master is dead!'. If the procedure was not followed, the bees would die or fly away.

SECRET DEAL SPLITS TOP UK BEEKEEPERS

For generations, beekeeping has been one of the most genteel of pastimes - village fêtes and white-veiled enthusiasts pottering around, puffing smoke into hives. No longer. Now there is a plot to form a breakaway association. The controversy centres on a series of deals agreed behind closed doors between the country's largest amateur body, the BBKA, and four of the world's largest agro-chemicals companies.

DISMAY

To the dismay of many beekeepers, the BBKA has agreed to sponsor several pesticides that can be lethal to bees. Some firms now boast they are endorsed as "bee friendly" by the BBKA. In return, the association has earned tens of thousands of pounds, funding a Syngenta-sponsored beekeeping book for schools, a beekeeping display, and roof repairs to the BBKA's Warwickshire headquarters.

DEVIL DEALS

According to the rebels, these are deals with the devil. They allege these pesticides are to blame for wiping out hives. The Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD), the official government agency, recorded 372 suspicious poisonings of honey bees, between 1994 and 2003, with pesticides to blame in more than 120 cases. Critics claim, these figures disguise the true number of poisonings, since many others go unnoticed and unreported.

GM TECHNOLOGY

George Eames, secretary of the Durham Beekeepers' Association, said "We don't think we should be sponsoring pesticides. It's not ethically right that we should be receiving money from these multinationals, because it goes hand in hand with GM technology."

Glyn Davies, the BBKA's president, defended the deals. The products it endorsed were selected by the BBKA because they were relatively "benign" if properly used. More than a dozen of the BBKA's local associations rebelled earlier this year, demanding it scrap sponsorship deals, but the motion was defeated by 30 votes to 13. Now several rebel groups are talking to an independent group, the Mid Bucks Beekeepers' Association, about setting up a rival body.

Peter Smith, vice president of the Mid Bucks group, said: "A lot of people are against pesticides, and the way this was done. I feel we need another, good strong national organisation."



ABSURD

Their campaign is being supported by the environmental group Pesticides Action Network. Alison Craig, its co-ordinator, said it was "completely and utterly absurd" for Mr Davies to claim the association now had any real influence over the industry. "Its whole motivation is to sell

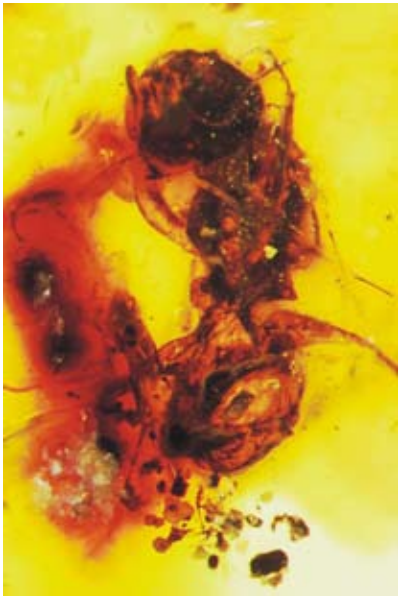
as much of their product as they can. "If the BBKA wanted to get close to any industry, it should be the farmers and sprayers by asking for a routine system where every spraying is notified in advance. "The BBKA is being used by the pesticides industry.

They've totally lost their credibility by doing this. They should be the protectors of bees, but instead, they're selling them down the river."

From The Canadian Honey Council Website

OLD FOSSIL

A discovery this year of the oldest bee fossil, supports the theory that bees evolved from wasps. The 100 million year old fossil was found in a mine in the Hukawng Valley of Myanmar (Burma) and preserved in amber. It shares some of the features of wasps, But overall it's more bee than wasp, and gives us a pretty good idea of when these two types of insects were separating on their evolutionary paths.



WASP

The 6 mm long fossil has traits in common with the carnivorous wasp such as narrow hind legs while also exhibiting branched hairs on its leg, a characteristic of the modern bee that allows pollen collection.

POLLINATION

The fossil dates from the period when plants that relied on mechanisms other than the wind to spread their seeds started expanding and diversifying. "Flowering plants are very important in the evolution of life," They can reproduce more quickly, develop more genetic diversity, spread more easily and move into new habitats. But prior to the evolution of bees they didn't have any strong mechanism to spread their pollen,

GOOGLE EYES



For those of us of a certain age "Google eyes" used to mean something like an

amorous or flirty glance, these days it means someone who spends too much time staring at a computer screen searching the World Wide Web.

If you are familiar with looking round the Web you can move on to the next page of Beetalk but for anyone who is new to computers or has never heard of Google, here are a few, very simple bits and pieces.

Google is a wonderful FREE way of searching the tens of million websites that are available to anyone with a computer and Internet access.

Right, let's switch on the computer, go to the Google page and because we are beekeepers, enter beekeeping in the search box. Quick as a flash it will show you a list of over one and a half million pages which have some reference to beekeeping. So let's thin it down a bit. We will try to get rid of most of the foreign pages. Back to the search box and after beekeeping leave a space and then type +uk. Now search and we are down to a mere half million pages!

Here are a few more search results:

beekeeping +varroa	160,000 pages
beekeeping +lancashire	16,000 pages
honey	66,000,000 pages
(be careful with this, there are a lot of nubile young women called Honey!)	
honey +bee	1,500,000
british black bee	1,500,000
british-black-bee"	204

To explain the last two. The first search finds all the pages with the words british, black and bees in any order. The second search with the hyphens finds only pages with the words british black bees as a phrase..

You can get the same results by using 'quotes' i.e. "british black bees".

For more take a look at

http://google2.dot.gov/user_help.html

THE ITALIAN CONNECTION

JENI'S JOTTINGS

29 April 2007



Jack in 1934

This season has started sadly with the news that Jack Armistead has died. Jack was for many years the Chairman of the Blackburn and East Lancashire Branch of the Bee Keepers Association and spent a lifetime keeping bees.

His expertise and knowledge helped us tremendously when Jake and I started keeping bees and I'm sure he inspired and helped many others like us. What impressed me was his drive and enthusiasm, thus he earned the title "Mr. Beeman", whenever we (Jake and I) referred to him.

ANGRY BEES

Some of you will know the story of how in our naivety we bought two hives with bees, but with no frames, just natural comb and very angry bees. Jack was then in his early retirement and only too willing to come to the rescue and get them sorted out.



A recent picture of Jack

GOOD FRIENDS
After this

escapade we remained good friends. His other interest, in woodwork lead him firstly in to helping Jake with furniture repairs and then later on he turned his hand to making all sorts of occasional furniture, many examples of which I still possess and use in my home here in Italy. At this moment I am sitting next to a flowering yellow broom shrub also some bluebells are flowering in the tub next to it. These are descendants of plants from Jack's garden, so even here in Italy he won't be forgotten. My Sincere condolences to all his family and friends.

EMPTY COLONIES

My heartfelt sympathy also goes out to all those who have lost many colonies of bees this Winter, it seems pandemic. I was devastated at the loss of all last years swarms, I lost ten. All had plenty of stores, all were in new or clean hives, on new frames and bought in foundation. It wasn't a sever winter so on first inspection I found no small dead clusters of bees, just empty hives.

So are my bees now suffering "Colony Collapse Disorder" like in many other parts of the world?! And are mobile phones to blame?! Very worrying because who would give up there mobile phone if it was? It's like asking people to stop using their cars. Any way the result of so many dead stocks has meant a massive clean up again and all surviving stocks into clean hives and frames changed were possible. I thankfully had a bit more time this spring as I didn't need to do any wood clearing as I still have enough wood for next Winter, rather depressing work though.

THE SWALLOWS ARE BACK

My spirits were lifted a bit when the swallows came back and I captured the first swarm of the season. The hatching of new chicks and I can't help but smile at the 'starling' that says "piove, piove". ("rain, rain") like some old women, just before a storm. All these little things help to dispel the doom and gloom, so on an optimistic note I wish you all a very good season.
TANTE SALUTE Jeni.

COMB BUILDING DRAWING OUT

This aspect of our craft – getting foundation drawn out - calls for a bit of care and timing. One must read the situation and anticipate the subsequent development as, unless a few factors come together at the same time, foundation can be abandoned then frequently chewed away in places, resulting in spoilt comb. The aim should be to get all foundation drawn out to perfection.

FRESHNESS

Firstly then, the foundation should be kept in its sealed polythene wrapping, to retain its freshness, until used. Then, bear in mind conditions under which foundation is most likely to be drawn out to perfection: suitable temperature mid 90s° F; around the brood area, a sufficiency of bees to cover the foundation and a flow. These are the conditions needed to stimulate those entrusted with the task of wax secretion. Soon combs with foundation will be needed for:

- (i) Hiving a swarm
- (ii) Building up a nucleus for example into a full-sized colony or
- (iii) Replacing old comb in a full size colony.

(I) HIVING A SWARM

The prime swarm can be given a full complement of frames fitted with foundations, and to stimulate it, given a generous feed of syrup, if the swarm is from one's own hives - or after about two days if its origins are unknown. This creates excitement, heat too, and gets those of a wax secreting age going.

(II) BUILDING UP A NUCLEUS

On transferring say a five frame nucleus to a full sized brood box, give one frame and close up with a dummy board and feed syrup. A close watch has to be kept on the rate of build-up here – a second frame may be needed within a couple of days. The aim is to get the bees to occupy the foundation and begin work on it straight away.

(III) REPLACING OLD COMB

This being a strong colony, a frame of foundation will normally be drawn out without problems, especially if a nectar flow is on. Probably the best place to put it is next to the outermost comb of the brood and in from the comb with stores.

Of course, much of this can be overcome in a very satisfactory way by having a few deep combs already drawn out. To have such on hand for (ii) and (iii) would be ideal. Such combs are readily secured by giving a box of brood foundation over the queen excluder as a super and, after extraction, store away until we need them.

Jack Cox, NDB Courtesy BEES

THE OLD ONES ARE THE BEST

One day a woman went for a walk and came across a boy with some puppies. 'Would you like a puppy? They aren't ready for new homes quite yet, but they will be in a few weeks!'

'Oh, they're adorable,' the lady said. 'What kind of dogs are they?'

'I think these are bee inspectors.'

'OK. I'll tell my husband.'

So she went home and told her husband. About a week later he came across the lad and the puppies were very active.

'Hey, Mister. Want a puppy?'

'I think my wife spoke with you last week. What kind of dogs are these?'

'Oh. These are beekeepers.'

'I thought you said last week that they were bee inspectors.'

'Yeah, but they've opened their eyes since then.'

WHAT IS PROPOLIS?

Propolis is a dark substance that is collected by bees from leaf buds, twigs, and tree bark. It is used in the beehive to repair holes and cracks, embalm intruders, and to line cells before the cells contain eggs.

PROPOLIS IN HISTORY

Propolis is nothing new. Hippocrates recorded the use of propolis to treat wounds, sores, and ulcers as early as the fourth century B.C. The Roman scholar Pliny extolled the benefits of propolis 400 years later in his writings, explaining how: "It extracted all substances embedded in the flesh, reduced swelling, softened hardened areas, soothed pain, and healed sores when it appeared hopeless for them to mend."

BOER WAR

Propolis use was recorded between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries as a health aid. In the early twentieth century during the Boer War, propolis was mixed



with petroleum jelly and used as a wound healer. Flavonoids, an important component of propolis, were identified in the 1950's. Scientists now believe that propolis is an antibiotic and antiviral substance that enhances the effectiveness of the immune system.

WHAT'S IN PROPOLIS?

Propolis contains approximately 55% resins and balsams, 30% beeswax, 10% etheric oils, and 5% pollen. Propolis also contains a variety of flavonoids.

WHAT ARE FLAVONOIDS?

Flavonoids are antioxidants. They maintain the integrity of cells by trapping free radicals that otherwise cause damage and hasten the ageing process. Flavonoids also bind heavy metals such as lead, mercury, and cadmium to prevent these metals from causing damage to the body. It is believed that the flavonoids contained in propolis should be a regular part of our diet in order to stimulate the immune system against potentially harmful microbes. Flavonoids also help prevent cell damage and improve the absorption of certain nutrients.

THE USES OF PROPOLIS

Some of the benefits of propolis are that it fights diseases of the oral cavity, along with ear, nose, and throat illnesses. In addition to these benefits, propolis also prevents inflammation of the intestines, speeds cell growth, and improves skin problems and burns. Another benefit of propolis is its effective use against inflammation of the intestines. Propolis has been known to activate the thymus gland, thus stimulating the immune system and can augment antibiotics. Propolis also can be taken as a pain reliever. Propolis has antifungal properties that inhibit infections, allowing bees to live together in close conditions in a beehive.

It is imperative: if you want to keep your bees alive that you undertake some form of monitoring of your Varroa levels and check your mite drop after treatment. It is important to take action before the injury or economic threshold level is reached (See Managing Varroa leaflet for details obtainable from DEFRA)

This item was taken from our Lancashire and North West beekeepers Annual Report. I think it is so very very important and so little taken heed of, that I felt an urge to remind every one, yet again. Bill Ainsworth

NOSEMA CERANAE

Because the 'Colony collapse Syndrome' seems to be featuring in the news more prominently, and because a possible cause could be *Nosema ceranae*, it may be worth reminding readers of the relatively new phenomenon which was identified in *Apis mellifera* in Europe by Spanish scientists in research that was a response to increasing bee losses.

DEAD BEES

Symptoms of the problem are seen when strong colonies lose their work force in a matter of weeks even though the hive has food stores, capped brood, and no outward appearance of a serious disease or parasitic condition. No build-up of dead bees occurs in front or inside the hive. Food stores are not immediately robbed by hives in the vicinity and attacks from wax moths and small hive beetles are noticeably delayed. The adult bees remaining in the small cluster are newly emerged and are reluctant to consume feed.

TREATMENT AND CONTROL

N. ceranae and *N. apis* have similar life cycles, but they differ in spore morphology with *N. ceranae* having smaller spores.

WEAK COLONY

Without doubt, the most significance between the two types is just how quickly *N. ceranae* can cause a colony to collapse. Bees die within 8 days after exposure to *N. ceranae* which is faster than bees exposed to *N. apis*. The foraging force seems to be affected the most. They leave the colony and are too weak to return, therefore die in the field. This leaves behind a small cluster and a weak colony. There is little advice on treatment but it has been suggested that the most effective control of *Nosema ceranae* is the antibiotic fumagillin as recommended for *Nosema apis*.

RESEARCH

A pointer to research workers looking into the 'disappearing bee syndrome' or 'colony collapse disorder', was a huge increase in the detection of microsporidian spores in Spanish honey bees in recent years. To help look in this direction, molecular

tools were developed to improve accurate diagnosis of nosemosis in the laboratory. Most samples studied were sent from colonies suffering unexpected decreases in bee population per hive or lower honey production as reported by the beekeepers during the last two/three years.

AND YOU THINK VARROA'S A PROBLEM!

A Kamloops beekeeper who shot a bear and buried it in his backyard says he killed the animal out of concern for the safety of neighbourhood children.



But Orwall Smith conceded he was also upset the bear was targeting his beehives, each of which was worth about \$250.

"I would do that again if it was going to save a child's life, but I don't have a gun now to do it," Smith said after the hearing.

The 79-year-old pleaded guilty in provincial court Monday to shooting a firearm in city limits and failing to report the killing of an animal, violations of British Columbia's Wildlife Act.

He was fined \$2,000 and lost his .303-calibre rifle. Smith said he'd buried the bear because he knew it was wrong to shoot the animal in the city and was looking to avoid trouble with authorities.

"You're damned if you do and damned if you don't," said Smith.

Prosecutor Jonathan Oliphant said "Beehives are very obvious attractants for bears. He knows as well as anyone that in September and October bears come into our yards, it is a constant part of life in this part of the world,"

From 'The Province' Vancouver



Notices

DOWN
WITH
VARROA

INFORMATION ABOUT 'BEETALK'

Planned Publication
Dates: March 2006,
June 2006, September
2006, December 2006
**LATEST TIME FOR
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FORE THE MONTH OF
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publisher is £24 - from our treasurer only £16.00 with a
slight profit to our society.

Talk to Ken Gaiger phone. 01282 778887.

Library. There is an extensive range of bee books etc.
that may be borrowed.

Our librarian, David Rayner brings some with him to
our meetings. Contact him on 01200 426898 for special
requests.

KEN FOR
PRIME MINIS

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Clitheroe	01200 428152
David Bush	01200 427661
John Zamorski	
Nelson	01282 614015
Bill Ainsworth	
Colne & Barnoldswick	01282 870147
Tom Jarvis	01282 862129
Helen Howarth	
Burnley & Padiham	01282 778887
Ken Gaiger	

For all swarm collectors in the County,
ring John Zamorski who has the list
01200 427661

Payments for THE BEE-KEEPER'S QUARTERLY are due so £16 would be appreciated. CHEQUES SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO L. & N.W.B.K.A. AND SENT TO KEN GAIGER, 2 HIGHAM ROAD, PADIHAM, BURNLEY BB12 9AP
Telephone 01282 778887



NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES
Subscriptions for the 2007 season were due in November. The new full membership rate will be £15 and £2 for each additional family member. Associate membership is £5.00. At the 2006 AGM it was agreed that the basic subscription will be increased to £16 in 2008. Prompt payment would be a big help and reduce the number of reminders.

The rates for Bee Disease Insurance (B.D.I.) Are:-
First 3 hives are covered by subscription
up to 5 hives £2.00 extra up to 10 hives £5.25 extra
up to 15 hives £7.75 extra up to 20 hives £9.50 extra
up to 25 hives £11.10 extra Above 25 hives See Treasurer
Please forward your subscriptions whilst its fresh in your mind, it will save me a lot of trouble. Also early renewal is necessary to assure you have the public liability (third party) insurance which is included in your subscription

LETTER FROM THE HON TREASURER.

As an alternative to Bayvorol/Apistan I have purchased some Apiguard to treat for varroa. The cost per treatment for one hive will be £3.50

Apiguard is a thymol based product. The treatment consists of two foil trays filled with a thymol impregnated gel. Each tray contains 50g of gel which is equivalent to 12.5g of thymol.

Apiguard is best applied in late Summer after the supers have been removed. (Similar timing as Apistan /Bayvorol. However it can be used in Spring time, provided that the temperature is above 15°C. note a maximum of only two treatments per year should be applied.

To apply, pull back the foil lid on the first tray and place it on top of the brood frames over the brood nest, gel side uppermost. Ensure a minimum clearance of a bee space exists above the tray, use an eke or empty super. After two weeks, replace with the second tray and leave for a further two weeks. When you have removed the second tray the treatment is complete. **Ken Gaiger.**

FUTURE MEETINGS

SUN 22ND JULY 2.30 PM PREPARING FOR THE SHOW

at Mr & Mrs Bush's, Upbrooks, Clitheroe. A professional judge will be there to talk to us and would like us to take a couple of jars of our honey (Nothing special) for him to comment on and explain the judging process

SUN 19TH AUGUST 2.30 PM HONEY LABELING REGULATIONS

at Mr Ken Gaiger's, Higham Road, Padiham. It doesn't sound very exciting but we shall be covering other more interesting and up to date subjects.

SUN 2RD SEPTEMBER 2.00 PM THE BARBECUE

at Mr & Mrs Moyle's, Pendle House, Twiston. The usual jolly good do. Try to bring something for the raffle. The food is provided but please bring your own drink

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Everything is a changing. In the immediate past, membership lists etc at county and national levels have been running 12 months in arrears. [Except, for the addition of new members] This is no longer acceptable, due mainly to the requirements of the insurers. They require up to date membership lists.

To meet these new demands, numerous administrative changes have and are occurring.

The main changes are listed below:

- [a] Membership lists for the current year need to be submitted at the beginning of the calendar year.
- [b] Membership cards will be issued based on these lists.

These changes unavoidably increase the workload on myself and the county's membership secretary. To make the system work, subscriptions need to be paid before the 31st December each year. [note, Our beekeeping year starts on the 1 November] Late payment will seriously inconvenience myself and other officials, so please show some compassion.

Summarising, what is required, is payment of subscriptions no later than December 31st each year.

Regarding this year, any member with subscription outstanding, early payment is vital. I need to submit this list soon, it's already late.

Ken Gaiger May 2007

CAN BEES HEAR?

An intriguing article recently described experiments by Dr. William Towne at Kutztown University in Pennsylvania. He has proven that bees can hear. Although



the scientific proof may be Dr. Towne's, beekeepers always figured bees could hear based on the practice of "tanging," making a loud clanging noise which was

thought to make swarms stop and cluster. This notion has now been discredited by most authorities, but the tradition no doubt continues .

According to Dr. Towne, bees were considered deaf because they were only tested with loud sounds which produced high pressures. Yes, people could hear them, but honey bees don't hear like humans. Whereas we have a pressure sensitive membrane (ear drum) which is stretched over a closed cavity, the honey bee relies on particle movement. Thus, they hear things only in the near field, very close to the source.

RESPONSE

Dr. Towne and a colleague in Germany (Wolfgang Kirchner) trained bees to come to a two-sided sugar-water feeder based on tones emitted from a speaker. When the frequencies were the same (250 cycles per second) as the bee's famed waggle dance, about B below middle C on the piano, the insects consistently responded. According to Dr. Towne, bees clearly can tell the lowest sounds from the highest; they also distinguish mid-range tones from higher and lower ones.

The next step is to search for the honey bee's ear. In this quest, Dr. Towne has taken to applying drops of glue to various honey bee structures. The glue does not hurt the bees. This attempt to "deafen" bees has met with variable results, and for Dr. Towne, the question has become more and more intriguing. He concludes: "I guess I'll have to train a few more bees to find out for sure..."

THINGS TO DO WHEN DEALING WITH A SWARM.

1. It is best to have the swarm in late afternoon or evening.
2. Put the swarm back on the old stand, take supers off parent stock and put them on the swarm
3. Put the parent hive to one side of swarm (min. 5 ft.) This will move the flying bees from the parent hive into the swarm.
4. Do not feed any swarm for two or three days.
5. Five days after swarm has issued open the parent stock, look for vacated queen cells, if one or two are found Destroy All queen cells. More than one virgin running about the hive, is no problem. If no vacated queen cells are found. Select an open queen cell that is well advanced with a big fat grub in, mark it with a pin on the top bar. Destroy all remaining queen cells. Selecting an open cell ensures there is a queen in there.
6. Make certain the parent hive has sufficient stores, there will be few foragers , and a lot of young bees and brood to be fed.
7. If the swarm is hived on all, or mostly foundation, **with no supers**, feed heavily, after three days.
8. One week after the swarm issued. If there were no vacated queen cells at operation 5, just the one you marked with a pin. Put the swarmed stock to the other side of the swarm, to move more bees to the swarm. If there were vacated queen cells at operation 5 leave every thing alone until we have a new laying queen.
9. **Check the new stock is free from varroa. It is an opportune time to sprinkle the swarm with icing sugar to get rid of any varroa they may be carrying. There is no brood with the swarm - so no varroa hiding there. Check for other disease.**

USES FOR BEESWAX- - PYSANKY

Pysanky is an ancient and beautiful form of folk art from the Ukraine. It consists of decoration of eggs using beeswax and dyes. Hot beeswax is applied to the egg using a kistka. The kistka is a tool whereby hot wax can be essentially drawn onto the egg.

Kistka can be purchased, or built by the user. Some are simply a stick with wire holding a tiny stick perpendicular at the end of the larger piece. The design begins by drawing on a plain white egg with hot beeswax.



These lines will protect the white when the egg is dyed. When the designs to be white are complete, the egg is dipped into yellow dye and then dried.

The kistka is used to draw the designs to remain yellow and then the egg is dipped into the next dye bath.

The process continues, alternating waxing designs and using dyes that progressively get darker.

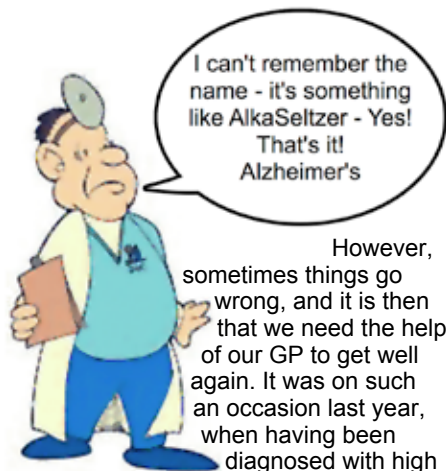
Once the black dye is dry, hold the egg over the side of a candle flame and gently continue to wipe off the melted wax revealing the beautifully designed multicoloured egg. The final process is to seal the egg with a coating of shellac or varnish.

HEALTH ISSUES AND BEEKEEPING

Generally speaking, beekeeping is a healthy pastime, though many of you will have discovered,

HOT AND SWEATY

Particularly last summer, it can get rather hot and sweaty at times in a bee suit, and if you are fortunate enough to get a good crop of honey, those supers, when full can also very heavy. By taking it easy, this exercise and fresh air is considered generally good for all.



However, sometimes things go wrong, and it is then that we need the help of our GP to get well again. It was on such an occasion last year, when having been diagnosed with high blood pressure that

I went to see my doctor for tablets, to help with this condition.

THE SMALL PRINT

While reading the small print of the leaflet which came with the pills, I discovered that if should be stung by an insect, while taking this medication, I should seek immediate medical attention.

REPLACEMENT

My curiosity aroused, I enquired through a hospital pharmacy about this, as being a beekeeper, I do get stung, and more frequently than most of 'Joe public' non-beekeepers. I was told that the new super efficient and economic blood pressure tablets, which the government wanted to replace the old beta-blockers with, had an unusual and not well known side effect.

REDUCED PRESSURE

This was caused by the way that they work. They basically work by dilating the blood vessels of the body making it easier for the blood to flow around the body and thus reducing the pressure. This dilating action causes stings to have a much greater potency and effect and so increases the chances of going into anaphylactic shock! As all of these new drugs work in the same way, they all potentially can result in the same thing, but not all apparently mention it on their leaflets.

MAKING THE GP AWARE

The old beta blockers, however, work in a different manner, and don't have this particular undesirable side effect for us beekeepers. Once I had discussed these facts with my GP - who was also not aware of these problems, nor for some strange reason knew I was a beekeeper and had been for the past 16 years - I was immediately put onto beta blockers and all was well.

The moral of the story is; make sure your GP knows you are a beekeeper (give them a jar of honey on your next visit) and do read all the small print on your medication and do seek further advice about it from a pharmacy.

Andy Willis, Southampton

With thanks to:

B.E.E.S. and Hampshire Bee Talk

HONEY FOR BABIES?

Very occasionally, honey may contain low numbers of naturally occurring bacterial spores, which cannot be removed during honey processing.

These are harmless to older children and adults. However, the young infant's intestines may not be developed sufficiently to cope with these spores, so there is potential for them to grow and produce toxin. Honey should not be given to infants under twelve months of age.

THE BRITISH BLACK BEE

From the book 'Bee-keeping for All' by Tickner Edwards. Published in 1923

Prior to the year 1907, when the fatal 'Isle of Wight' disease came amongst us, my answer to the question, "What is the best variety of honey-bee for the small professional man?", would unhesitatingly have been, "The British Black."



Through long years the old native race of honey bee had withstood the competition of imported races, Ligurians, Carniolans, etc., and had, in my conviction, come out victorious on all the main issues. She had proved her self more capable of standing the ups and downs of our fickle climate, there was no evidence that her prolificacy was second to any, nor that she had any superior in honey making powers.

If our bee breeders had been wide awake enough to concentrate on the improvement of the native strain, I believe that a supremely hardy, disease resistant bee would have been evolved and possibly the "Isle of Wight" disaster would never have befallen us.

But the culture and propagation of the native race of honey bee was left severely alone by our home breeders. Next to nothing was done in the way of importation of new blood as between county and county, or selective breeding from stocks

showing exceptional characteristics, with the result that every where the stamina of the English bee had declined and she fell an easy prey to the great epidemic when it came along.

If the British black bee is not practically extinct at the present time, at least I do not know of any district where it can still be obtained of pure blooded quality.

Seeing, therefore, the futility of any longer recommending the old native strain as the best bee for this country, I have to fall back on one or other of the imported races, and I have no hesitation in saying that the most suitable, all round variety for the small professional man, now available in quantity and at a reasonable price, is the Dutch.

I do not say that the Italians, both pure and

cross-bred, are not splendid honey makers, and fully equal to Dutch bees under normal favourable conditions; but on one score the vital one, I think, from the smallholder's point of view the Dutch bee undoubtedly stands first. This is her resistance to acarine, or "Isle of Wight" disease. In my own experience it amounts to what seems absolute immunity.

So going back to the 1900s we get the opinion that the best bee of all was the British black, and that is, from a real old time expert. In my opinion the British black still stands as the premier honey bee for our country. It is just a shame Tickner Edwards did not know that his precious bee was not made extinct but survived in small pockets in the mountains of Wales and Ireland and in the dales of Yorkshire We all know it is still with us - so lets stick by it,

Ed.

HONEY ON THE ROOF OF FORTNUM AND MASONS

DESIGNER HONEY

Honey tends to be worthy and I wanted to make it fun with a design element,' says Jonathan Miller, Fortnum and Mason's chief buyer for the sweet grocery and bakery department. He ran his idea of keeping hives on the roof of Fortnum's past Steven Benbow, a honey expert and urban beekeeper, who said it was possible.

DESIGNS

Kim Farley-Harper, who has specialised in property restoration for 30 years, had never seen such designs before. 'His designs were amazing. I had never seen anything like them and I certainly hadn't made



anything so elaborate.' After nine months and many phone calls to make sure every detail was perfect, four unusually high 6 x 2ft beehives were handmade by Farley-Harper, each costing £1,500.

All are made from oak with copper-clad roofs with gilded finials and finished

with a coat of Fortnum's signature colour, eau de nil.

CABINET MAKER

The classical hive features reflect the trade Fortnum's was doing in the 18th century. Miller proudly confirms, 'You can turn the hives inside out and they would be just as beautiful. What you can see is good cabinet-making, not just joinery.' In 2005 the beehives were complete. Benbow delivered the bees in his car, a London cab. 'The booth's window protects me if any escape,' he explains.

ECCENTRIC PROJECT

For Benbow, who used to visit Fortnum's regularly to ogle the jars of honey, working on Miller's faintly eccentric project was a privilege. 'It was lovely to meet someone so passionate and excited and as knowledgeable as myself.'

Extensive building work at Fortnum's means that the hives haven't yet been able to go to the home they were designed for. In 2006 the hives were re-located to a Shropshire garden until next spring. Only then will they be taken to their final resting place facing south for warmth on Fortnum's rooftop. Both Miller and Benbow are anticipating the flavour of the honey once the hives are in London. Bees can fly up to a three mile radius from their hives and will be able to forage for pollen in places as diverse as Buckingham Palace Gardens, Regent's Park and innumerable squares, gardens and window boxes scattered around central London.

ONLY 700 JARS

The honey is collected in late summer when the hives are at their fullest (these particular ones can house up to 50,000 bees). The honeycomb is extracted, then replaced to be used again. Only 700 jars will be produced per year, each labelled with the name of the beekeeper, hive location and the year it was made.

£10 FOR A HALF-POUND JAR.

At the end of May the beehives will feature at the Chelsea Flower Show, where Fortnum's is sponsoring a show garden to celebrate its 300th anniversary. Before the hives have even reached their Piccadilly rooftop, Miller is hatching a plan to build more and to take them on tour around Britain, locating them in beautiful, architectural settings. The irony lies in the fact that Miller lacks a sweet tooth 'I find it helps me to be more critical. When I taste the honey I use all my senses. I like having constraints and facing a challenge.' The price of the honey is quoted as £10 for a half-pound jar.

From The Sunday Telegraph

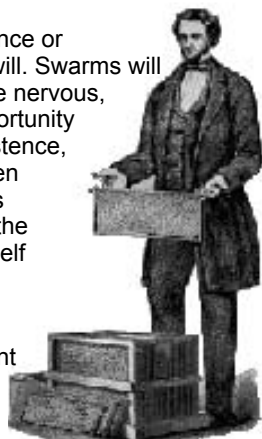
MANUAL OF THE APIARY 1883.

J. Cook, the author, offers some timeless advice on what successful beekeeping requires.

ENTHUSIASM

or an ardent love of its duties, is a very desirable, if not an absolute, requisite to successful apiculture. To be sure, this is a quality whose growth, with only slight opportunity, is almost sure.

It only demands perseverance. The beginner, without either experience or knowledge, may meet with discouragements -- unquestionably he will. Swarms will be lost, colonies will fail to winter, and the young apiarist will become nervous, which fact will be noted by the bees with great disfavour, and, if opportunity permits, will meet reproof more sharp than pleasant. Yet, with persistence, all these difficulties quickly vanish. Every contingency will be foreseen and provided against, and the myriad of little workers will become as manageable and may be fondled as safely as a pet dog or cat, and the apiarist will minister to their needs with the same fearlessness and self possession that he does to his gentlest cow or favourite horse.



PERSISTENCE

in the face of all these discouragements which are so sure to confront inexperience, will surely triumph. In soothe, he who appreciates the beautiful and the marvellous will soon grow to love his companions of the hive, and the labour attendant upon their care and management. Nor will this love abate until it has been kindled into enthusiasm. True, there maybe successful apiarists who are impelled by no warmth of feeling, whose superior intelligence, system and inpromptitude, stand in lieu of, and make amends for, absence of enthusiasm. Yet, I believe such are rare, and certainly they work at great disadvantage.

From Beemaster. Notts. Beekeeping Mag.

HONEY CAKE

INGREDIENTS

170g/6oz clear honey
140g/5oz butter
85g/3oz light muscovado sugar
2 eggs, beaten
200g/7oz self raising flour, sieved
water

FOR THE ICING:

55g/2oz icing sugar
1 tbsp clear honey
hot water

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 180C/350F/Gas 3 and butter and line the bottom of a 7in/18cm cake tin.
2. Measure the honey, butter and sugar into a large pan. Add a tablespoon of water and heat gently until melted.
3. Remove from the heat and mix in the eggs and flour.
4. Spoon into the cake tin and bake for 40-45 minutes until the cake is springy to the touch and shrinking slightly from the sides of the tin.
5. Cool slightly in the tin before turning out onto a wire rack.
6. While the cake is still warm, make the icing by mixing the sugar and honey together with 2-3 teaspoons of hot water. Trickle over the cake in whatever design takes your fancy.

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LIFT ME ONTO MY SOAP BOX

A SORE BEHIND



I am spending too much time sitting on the fence. Let me explain.

A fairly firmly committed believer that we were warming the climate at an alarming rate, I watched and read everything even vaguely related to Global Warming

I Suppose like most people I tended to pick up on newspaper articles

and news items which supported my non-scientific beliefs whilst, at the same time, ignoring anything that didn't fit the current theory.

Then I saw a Channel 4 TV programme which spent something like ninety minutes debunking the whole fashionable line of thinking on this subject.

Now I am a cynic. I firmly believe when I read an article in the press telling me not to eat butter that the author has probably been paid by the Association of Margarine manufacturers (I don't think they really exist!).

So this where I climbed up on to the fence. It's a bit uncomfortable but it does allow you to look down into both back yards. The dedicated believers in man made global warming and those who have opposing ideas.

The snag is, I am stuck up here. There are so many 'facts', graphs, statistics, expert opinions, pundits, 'Greens', big businesses and scientists of every kind that I become totally confused.

I am shown a beautiful graph made from the study of ice cores over umpteen thousand years. It shows a distinct correlation between CO₂ and rises in temperature. 'Aha!' I say to myself 'That proves it. We burn fossil fuels, pump carbon into the air and the temperature

goes up'. Then I read another eminent scientist who says "Look again. CO₂ levels go up AFTER the temperature rises".

But I'm not stupid (At least I don't think I am) Just look at the way we are burning oil. We must be pumping out Carbon Dioxide at a staggering rate. Then I read: "Of all the Carbon Dioxide emissions into the atmosphere, 51 percent is from plants and trees, 45 percent from the oceans, and only three percent from the burning of fossil fuels!"

And how about this: "Nature produces far more greenhouse gases than we do. For example, when the Mount Pinatubo volcano erupted, within just a few hours it had thrown into the atmosphere 30 million tonnes of sulphur dioxide— almost twice as much as all the factories, power plants and cars in the United States do in a whole year. Oceans emit 90 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas, every year. Decaying plants throw up another 90 billion tonnes, compared to just six billion tonnes a year from humans."

The big problem is, I don't know what to believe. I suppose in the end you just have to come down on one side of the fence or another.

I once knew a District Judge - he's the sort that sits on Civil cases where there is disagreement between two parties. I asked him how he arrived at the truth. He said that usually there were at least two truths, firmly believed by the opposing parties. His job was not to decide on the truth but to make a judgement.

When I worked with antiques we used to tap a porcelain bowl to see if it rang true in other words to see if it was flawed or cracked. I shall try to do that as I spend too many hours on the internet, browsing websites full of conflicting evidence - I shall listen out for the ring of truth.

In the meantime if I just shift my position on the fence - could you pass the ointment?

Scrapings

FINDING THE QUEEN (*THE Desperate way*)

When you have to get rid of an unsatisfactory queen, don't put your foot on her but put her in a matchbox and place her in the freezer. Whenever you want to find a queen in a colony, take this old dead queen out of the box and pin her to the top bar of a centre frame. Close the hive. Wait 10 minutes and then open up quietly. The queen you want to find will be there, busily trying to get rid of her (dead) opponent.

POLLINATORS

As the field bees forage for nectar, pollen sticks to the fuzzy hairs which cover their bodies. Some of this pollen rubs off on the next flower they visit, fertilizing the flower and resulting in better fruit production. Some plants will not produce fruit at all without the help of honeybees.



In the United States, it is estimated that honeybees accomplish a quarter of the pollination needed for all fruit produced for human consumption - an estimated \$10 billion worth of work!

The field bees stop periodically to groom themselves and collect the pollen onto their pollen baskets. They remove this load from their legs when they return to the hive and the house bees store it in a special comb. The pollen provides protein and other essential nutrients for the bees.

HONEYCOMB

The central feature of the bee hive is the honeycomb. This marvel of insect engineering consists of flat vertical panels



of six-sided cells made of beeswax. Beeswax is produced from glands on the underside of the abdomens of worker bees when they are between 12 and 15 days old. House bees take the beeswax and form it with their mouths into the honeycomb. The cells within the comb will be used to raise young and to store honey and pollen.

The comb is two-sided, with cells on both sides. As you can see, the cells are perfectly uniform in shape. Not only that, but the combs are built a precise distance apart depending on whether they are meant to contain food or young bees. The nursery area of the hive is called the brood comb, and that is where the queen lays her eggs.



Compare this image with the one at the top. If you have to cut a comb or foundation the cells must have two sides vertical when placed in the hive



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