



# Bee Talk

Newsletter of The Blackburn and East Lancashire Branch of  
The Lancashire & North West Beekeepers Association  
[www.blackburnbeekeepers.com](http://www.blackburnbeekeepers.com)

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Registered Charity

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Education and two or three bits for beginners. Also details of Bill's Blog. Do take a look

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But then - you knew all about that, didn't you!

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Caroline's report on our annual honey show. Didn't they do well!

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John Zamorski reckons nobody reads 'em. Do you? Do take a look *THE SUBS ARE UP!*

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Never mind the meeting! The meat and potato pie was superb!

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Philip Ainsworth has Christmas Greetings with a sting in the tail. He's after your money.

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Don't get excited, you have to live in New Jersey

### MEMBERS PAGE 14 & 15

Read what your fellow members have to say. Send us your comments for the next issue - if there is one!

### BEETALK - THE FUTURE PAGE 16

Decisions have to be made about the future of this little magazine and the decision is yours

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It sort of fits with the previous article. Are you a democrat?

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How wide spread is it?

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Stay young - eat dark honey; don't tread on the queen and all about fondant

# Editorial

## ANOTHER YEAR OVER

So that is the end of another year, and what a poor year it has been as regards beekeeping or any other out door activity for that matter.

We've had the honey show there is a full report on page 9. The AGM seemed to be a success, due more to the pie and peas than any business that was done I suspect. Bee Talk was the main bone of contention, in the form it's in, it proves to be too costly to produce to be sustainable for our small society, which is a shame, we will just have to find some way around it or do away with it. Your comments would be appreciated a short Email to John Zamorski at [member@johnzamorski.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:member@johnzamorski.wanadoo.co.uk).

While we are on about Emails do make sure you tell either Arthur Bickerstaffe ; Philip Ainsworth; or myself if you should change yours.

## THE HONEY SHOW

You'll see the report on page 9 One point that did come up was how near we were to winning at the County Show. Another half dozen points or so and we would have beaten rivals Liverpool.

Its a long way off but make an early New Year resolution to enter something in both our Honey Show and most definitely in the County Show.

I suppose modesty makes us assume that we can't win but no show can consist of all winners and your entry no matter whether it's successful or not makes the difference between a poor and a good show AND - you never know you might win!!

## THE GOOD OLD DAYS

The last few issues of Beetalk seem to have had lots of articles full of woes and despondency. Talk of varroa, nosema, insecticides and colony collapse disorder seemed to take up page after page.

It is very necessary that we keep up to date with these things and learn how to protect our bees. The big danger for some of us older beekeepers is to start repeating our fathers and grandfathers and saying things like "Ay!, things aren't like they used to be!"

Of course, things aren't like they used to be - in some ways worse and in some ways (Perhaps not very many!) things are better. I try to keep reminding myself that for people who are just

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taking up beekeeping it's 'Normal'. The things we find new and disturbing, to them are, "Just the way it is"

## LOOK AFTER THE BEES

Following on from that, I wonder how many of us pay attention to the simple things like getting rid of old brood comb and replacing them with foundation. Early Spring time is the ideal time for this. What are the benefits? It's not rocket science it's just a way of clearing out old stuff that may contain disease.

The old saying "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" wouldn't be a bad motto for all beekeepers - keeping the apiary clean and tidy, shifting the rubbish and, all in all, being a good housekeeper.

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Once again it's time to wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I'd like to add a bit to that.

I hope you carry on beekeeping and what's more that you enjoy it. It's all too easy to become disheartened when you lose good stocks and the honey crop is miserably low but there's a lot more to it than that. I may sound a bit 'Twee' but you really do have an important part to play in 'Keeping things going'.

We all know how important bees are to us as humans and I suppose in a way you are guardians of at least a small part of the environment.

But when all is said and done there is a lot of pleasure in looking after our little friends and I for one get a lot of enjoyment out being a member of our small association which is a part of a much larger family.





## BASIC BEEKEEPING COURSES

Starting on February 15th at West Bradford Village Hall, David Rayner is repeating his very successful series of lessons on beekeeping.



These days the old beekeeping folklore doesn't seem to be sufficient to cope with some of the problems we now face. It can't be stressed too much that the more we

know, the better and safer will be our stocks of bees. If you are at all interested, give David a ring on 01200 426 898 - better still, come along to the association meeting on Sunday 25th January for a full explanation.

On February 22nd there will be a second meeting at West Bradford where you can find out how the lessons are going and there will be a chance to join in the course whilst there is still time.

## STARTING UP SOURCING BEES

Try to use bees from your own locality. They will be acclimatised to the vagaries of the weather in your area. Imported queen bees may carry exotic diseases, and they may not be resistant to diseases already present in the UK.

## BEEHIVES

Around 90% of British beekeepers use British Standard National beehives, consisting of: a wooden floor; a brood box holding 11 deep combs in wooden frames (Fig 1), where the queen lays eggs and the brood is reared; a queen excluder to confine the queen to the brood box; one or more supers, shallow boxes containing 10 or 11 combs where the workers store honey; a cover board and a roof. Second hand hives can be found, but they are often in poor condition. Old hives must be scorched clean with a blowlamp before housing the bees to prevent the spread of disease.



## SITING THE BEES

Any location below about 200m above sea level with hedgerows, rough grazing, and a variety of trees will support an apiary of 6 to 8 hives. The hive site should be sheltered, sunny, and accessible by vehicle at any time of year and well away from passers by.

## BILL'S BLOG

Sounds a bit as though he has acquired some sort of tropical lizard or even worse, a tropical disease. All it really means is he has created a 'Weblog' about Black Bees in Pendle. This is like an electronic journal or log book where he makes entries about his progress in improving the quality of his stocks of bees and his attempts to extend this to all the Beekeepers in Pendle and even beyond.

The big difference between a weblog and a paper journal is that you can add your comments, ideas and suggestions.

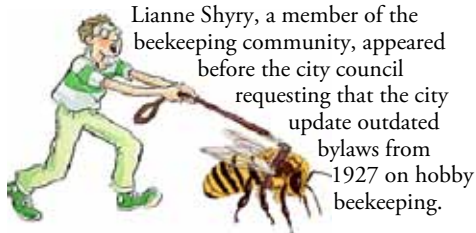
Bill hopes it will be something of a learning tell you how he is going about a form of creating healthy stocks. In return he hopes that others will project not only by commenting on the weblog but by offering even better. queen cells.



process for himself and others - he will selective breeding and his ways of give their ideas and support to the (And seeking) help, advice and,

If you have a computer, go to <http://www.arthurbick.co.uk> Take a look at what's there and get the ball rolling by adding your thoughts in the form of a comment or suggestion.

# ARE BEES PETS?



Lianne Shyry, a member of the beekeeping community, appeared before the city council requesting that the city update outdated bylaws from 1927 on hobby beekeeping.

Lianne is part of a movement that is sweeping the Lower Mainland seeking legalization of beekeeping in urban areas.

She first moved to North Vancouver a few years ago and was disappointed when she learned that the city requires bee hives to be on agricultural land only.

## CALL THEM PETS !

"I was told it would technically be OK if I called them pets. I felt it would be much better for the city and for beekeepers to have something much more specific than that," she said.

Allen Garr, a prominent member of the beekeeping community also spoke. He called for very specific regulations to help beekeepers and neighbours, including bears, coexist. These include a limit to the number of hives per parcel of land and construction standards that help prevent bees from disrupting neighbours.

## SWEET REWARDS

At the end of the day, he said, the beekeeping community not only wants to reap "The sweet reward of honey" but also help declining populations of bees.

*Bees work for man, and  
yet they never bruise  
Their Master's flower,  
but leave it having done,  
As fair as ever and as fit  
to use; So both the flower  
doth stay and honey run.*

# MANAGEMENT CALENDAR

## APRIL

Spring inspection. On a warm, windless day check for healthy worker brood, eggs and young larvae. See if varroa treatment is necessary. Don't take too long over inspections remember the weather may still be cold and the brood has to be kept warm.

## MAY / JUNE

Add supers for honey storage, check for swarming. Feed the bees if the weather is cold. We should still be checking for varroa which can often be the precursor of other diseases.

## JULY

Add more honey supers. This is the height of the honey Season, regular checking is essential. A good strong stock in ideal weather will fill a honey super in a couple of weeks. Swarming is still a possibility so keep a weather eye open for signs of swarming.

## AUGUST

Remove and extract supers of honey. Return the emptied supers to the hive to allow the bees to clean them out then store them securely in black plastic bags, ready for Spring time. If you suspect disease in the hive it is worth while sterilising the combs with ascorbic acid before storing. Maybe move the hives to the heather for six weeks.

## SEPTEMBER

Remove the honey crop. Treat the bees for varroa. Feed the bees sugar syrup for Winter. Feeding with syrup should be over by the end of this month and we MUST ensure that there is sufficient food for the long Winter months. That means up to 35lbs of stores for the hive. Check weight of winter stores by lifting (hefting) the hive.

## OCTOBER

Fit a mouse guard to the hive entrance to prevent mice entering the hive in winter

## NOVEMBER TO MARCH

Check that the hives are secure. The bees can be largely left undisturbed during the winter although they should be treated with oxalic acid in December.

## REMEMBER

Most beekeepers are more than willing to help others. If you are unsure about ANYTHING contact another beekeeper.

# PROPOLIS

Propolis starts as the sticky resinous sap which seeps from the buds of certain trees and oozes from the bark of others. The bees gather this “bee glue” and carry it back to the hive where it is blended with wax flakes secreted from special glands on the underside of the bees abdomen. Propolis is used to line the interior of brood cells in preparation for the Queen laying eggs.

With its antiseptic properties it provides a hospital clean environment for the rearing of brood. Propolis is a very complex mixture that varies according to the source it comes from.

## 180 COMPOUNDS

At least 180 different compounds have been identified so far in propolis. A broad analysis reveals approximately 55% resinous compounds and balsams, 30% beeswax, 10% ethereal and aromatic oils, and 5% bee pollen. Many flavonoids contribute to propolis and have a great deal to do with its antibacterial qualities.

## RUSSIAN PENICILLIN

Research shows that propolis offers antiseptic, antibiotic, anti-fungal, and even antiviral properties. It is often called “Russian Penicillin” in acknowledgement of the extensive research that has been done by the Soviets.

Unlike many modern medical drugs, propolis does not depress the immune system, but instead boosts it. Chemical antibiotics destroy all bacteria in the body including the friendly and necessary flora required for healthy functioning. An individual that constantly takes antibiotics for one condition after another soon learns that the drugs no longer work as well as they once did. As the bacteria get “smarter” the drugs become less effective over time.

## HARMFUL BACTERIA

It is a medical fact that some biologically harmful strains of bacteria develop a resistance to antibiotics. Propolis, being a natural antibiotic works against harmful bacteria without destroying the friendly bacteria your body needs. Propolis has been proven effective against some strains of bacteria that resist chemical antibiotics.

Propolis is collected by commercial beekeepers, either by scraping the substance from wooden hive parts, or by using specially constructed collection mats. The raw product undergoes secondary processing to remove beeswax and other impurities before being used in a variety of natural health care products (eg., lozenges, tinctures, ointments, toothpaste).

## THE WALL

Propolis is derived from the Greek words pro (“before”) and polis (“city”), and refers to the observation made by beekeepers in ancient times that bees often built a wall of propolis at the front entrance of their colony.

Propolis has been used by man since early times. Ancient Greek texts refer to the substance as a “cure for bruises and suppurating sore”, and in Rome propolis was used by physicians in making poultices. The Hebrew word for propolis is tzori, and the therapeutic properties of tzori are mentioned throughout the Old Testament. Records from 12th century Europe describe medical

preparations using propolis for the treatment of mouth and throat infections.

One of the non-medicinal uses of propolis is as a varnish, and it has been suggested that the special properties of Stradivarius violins may be partly due to the type of propolis used, although the claim cannot be substantiated.

Raw propolis is collected by beekeepers and sold in bulk to companies that refine the product and turn it into usable extracts.

## STORING

Propolis is a stable product, but should nevertheless be stored in airtight containers in the dark, preferably away from excessive and direct heat. Propolis does not lose much of its antibiotic activity, even when stored for 12 months or longer. Propolis and its extract function as a mild preservative due to their antioxidant and antimicrobial activities and thus may actually prolong the shelf life of some products

**Unlike many modern medical drugs, propolis does not depress the immune system, but instead boosts it**

# HONEY OF A DISCOVERY

The Bible refers to ancient Israel as the “land flowing with milk and honey,” so it’s fitting that one of its towns milked honey for all it was worth. Scientists have unearthed the remains of a large-scale beekeeping operation at a nearly 3,000-year-old Israeli site, which dates to the time of biblical accounts of King David and King Solomon.

## TEL REHOV

Workers at Tel Rehov uncovered the oldest known remnants of human-made beehives. “The discovery of an industrial apiary at Tel Rehov constitutes a unique and extraordinary discovery that revolutionizes our knowledge of this economic endeavor, particularly in ancient Israel,” says Mazar, an archaeologist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

## EGYPTIAN

The earliest known depiction of beekeeping appears on a carving from an Egyptian temple that dates to 4,500 years ago. “Tel Rehov is so important because it contains a full apiary, demonstrating that this was a large-scale operation,” Mazar’s team has so far uncovered 25 cylindrical containers for bees. High brick walls surrounded the apiary. Beehives sat in three parallel rows, each containing at least three tiers. Each beehive measured 80 centimeters long and about 40 centimeters wide.

In the best-preserved beehives, one end contains a small hole for bees to enter and exit. A removable lid with a handle covers the other end. Chemical

analyses of two Tel Rehov beehives revealed degraded beeswax residue in the containers’ unfired clay walls.

The researchers are now examining pollen



remains and bee bodies found in charred honeycombs from inside the hives.

A violent fire in ancient times caused

walls surrounding the hives to collapse and destroy many of the bee containers.

## 200 BEEHIVES

Mazar estimates that the ancient apiary contained at least 75 and perhaps as many as 200 beehives. The facility held a potential annual yield of 500 kilograms of honey and 70 kilograms of beeswax.

Writings and paintings from ancient Egypt suggest beehives possessed considerable value at the time. Honey was used as a sweetener, a salve for wounds and a ritual substance. Beeswax also had various uses, including being moulded into casts for bronze objects. Only a strong central authority could have established and maintained a large apiary in the center of town, Mazar notes.

## CEREMONIES

The apiary apparently hosted ceremonies intended to spur honey production and ensure the operation’s success. Ritual finds near the hives include a four-horned clay altar that features carved figures of two female goddesses flanking an incised tree.

THE KEEPING OF BEES IS AN OCCUPATION AS PLEASANT AS IT IS PROFITABLE. NOTHING AFFORDS SUCH PURE AND LASTING PLEASURE AS THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE WORKS OF THE ALMIGHTY IN THE WONDERS OF NATURE; BUT NOWHERE DO WE FIND SUCH EXHIBITION OF THE WONDERS OF NATURE AS IN A COLONY OF BEES. IT WILL NOT BE AN EASY THING TO INDUCE A TRUE BEE-KEEPER TO EXCHANGE BEE-KEEPING FOR ANY OTHER OCCUPATION; FOR THE MORE INTIMATELY HE BECOMES ACQUAINTED WITH THE NATURE OF BEES, THE MORE WONDERS HE WILL DISCOVER, AND THE MORE ENJOYMENT HE WILL DERIVE FROM BEE-KEEPING.

THE GENIAL BARON VON EHRENFELS, WHO HAS CALLED BEE-KEEPING THE ‘POETRY OF AGRICULTURE’, COULD NOT HAVE EXPRESSED MORE BEAUTIFULLY THE CHARM WHICH BEE-KEEPING POSSESSES. BUT THE MATERIAL ADVANTAGES TO BE DERIVED FROM BEE-KEEPING, IF CARRIED ON ZEALOUSLY AND ON RATIONAL PRINCIPLES, ARE ALSO CONSIDERABLE

*Dr Ivor Davis, trustee of the British Beekeepers Association suggests ten things which everyone can do to help preserve our honey bees.*

#### **1. Ask your MP to lobby for more funds for bee health research**

Beekeepers are worried that not enough is known to combat the diseases that affect honey bees. Bee pollination contributes £165 million to the agricultural economy.

#### **2. Plant bee friendly plants**

Where there are few agricultural crops, honey bees rely upon garden flowers for a diverse diet of nectar and pollen. Encourage honey bees to visit your garden by planting single flowering plants and vegetables.

#### **3. Join the beekeepers**

Beekeeping is an enjoyable, fascinating and interesting hobby – and you get to eat your own honey too. Local beekeeping associations run courses every year to help new people to take up beekeeping, find the equipment they need and a colony of bees.

#### **4. Find space for beehives**

Many would-be beekeepers, especially in urban areas, find it difficult to find a safe space for their colony of bees. If you have some space in your garden, or know someone who has, contact your local beekeeping association and they could find a beekeeper in need of a site.

#### **5. Buy local honey**

Buying local honey helps local beekeepers to cover costs of protecting bees. Local honey is processed naturally and complies with all food standards requirements without damage to the honey. It tastes different to foreign supermarket honey and has a flavour that reflects local flora.



## **TREATMENT FOR NOSEMA**

### **AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF USING FUMIDIL-B**

Fumidil -B is normally administered to colonies by mixing it into their winter feed. The powder does not dissolve readily in water, so the Fumidil is first mixed with a very small amount of syrup before adding it to the bulk feed - rather like making proper cocoa using cocoa powder! For those using fondant as a winter feed this is not helpful, so I asked our RBI, David Sutton, if he knew of other methods of using it. This is his reply:

‘In the early spring colonies can be treated with Fumidil by mixing a colony dose in a small amount of weak syrup made to a consistency such that it can be sprayed easily from a hand-held mist sprayer. Then, on a warm day when it’s possible to take frames of bees out from a colony for a short while, spray the bees and the comb they are on, sufficiently to wet both the bees and the comb and then return them to the colony - it should only take a moment or two.

Bees will get their dose whilst cleaning each other and themselves and when dealing with the syrup and moving it around (trophallaxis [the transfer of food among members of a community. There should not be any honey supers on the hive whilst this is going on, to avoid the (remote) possibility of this antibiotic in any honey which may be being stored at the time.

Fumidil does not clean up infection on the combs, so to ‘cure’ a colony we have to remove this residual spore load. ***Soiled comb should be replaced with clean comb or sterilised with Acetic Acid as part of the treatment.***

Fumidil in the autumn feed may help by enabling bees to clean combs without becoming infected in the process, but the majority of cell cleaning takes place in the spring when the colony starts to expand - and these are the cells that are likely to have become contaminated over the winter when the bees are unable to fly.

*Peter Edwards Stratford on Avon Beekeepers*

### **HYPOPHARYNGEAL GLAND**

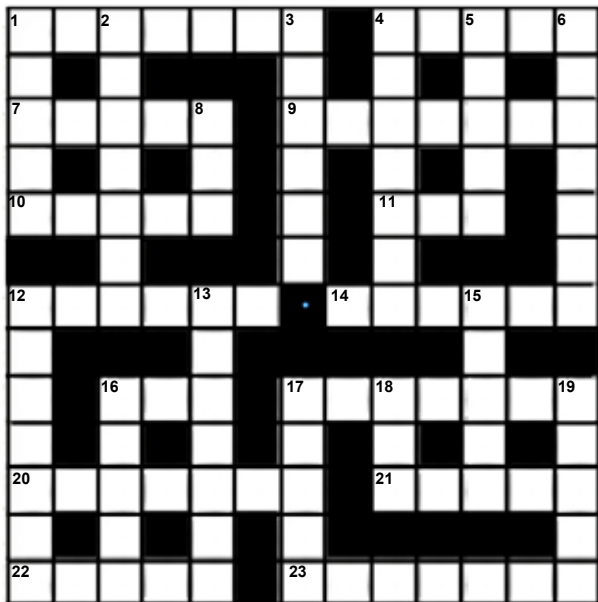
The hypopharyngeal glands of young workers are fundamental to the development of the colony, the rearing of queens and the survival of the colony over the winter period.

Large numbers of young bees, with their hypopharyngeal glands full, will be able to feed many larvae and, as a result, the colony will grow quickly. As they age those same bees will be able to forage for pollen for the next generation of young bees. In the winter the hypopharyngeal glands of a large population of bees will remain full of brood food, providing a food store which can be tapped into at the appropriate time.

The aim of every beekeeper should therefore be a strong colony with a plentiful supply of pollen at all times. The spring, when the colony is building up, and the autumn, when the bees are preparing for overwintering, are particular danger points, and we should all recognise that a shortage of pollen at either of these key points in the colony life cycle will have a detrimental effect upon the development of the hypopharyngeal glands, the colony, and, finally, on honey production.

## JUST FOR FUN

From Wellington Beekeepers Association in New Zealand.  
Something new for Beetalk. Answers on page ??



### ACROSS

- 1 Behaviour caused by prolonged cold weather
- 4 Units of space inside a beehive
- 7 Type of power which must be used carefully
- 9 Beekeeper who raises queens
- 10 A drone can't manage this
- 11 Item of equipment that's never there when you need it
- 12 Something to set on your target
- 14 Calamity eg when hives fall off your truck...
- 16 American SIS?
- 17 Early stage of a new colony
- 20 Early stage in the career of a beekeeper
- 21 Early stage in the life of a honey bee
- 22 How a beekeeper feels about lots of honey
- 23 Equipment for gaining exclusive possession of honey crops

### DOWN

- 1 Bees live on these
- 2 Action taken to strengthen weak hives
- 3 Bee collecting from the wrong source
- 4 Plant which may be a problem for beekeepers
- 5 Describes a successful forager
- 6 Different types of bees
- 8 Action of foundation when it gets too warm
- 12 Honey taken from beehive
- 13 Person providing tuition to 20A
- 15 Bees don't do this
- 16 For holding woodware together
- 17 Early stage in the career of a honey bee
- 18 It fits on cells...
- 19 Old style of beehives

## 6. Do not keep unwashed honey jars outside

Believe it or not but honey brought from overseas can contain bacteria and spores that are very harmful to honey bees. If you leave a jar outside it encourages honey bees to feed on the remaining honey.

## 7. Bee friendly

When kept properly, bees are good neighbours, and only sting when provoked. Beekeepers wear protective clothing when they are handling bees. If a bee hovers inquisively in front of you when unprotected, do NOT flap your hands. Stay calm and move slowly away, best into the shade of shed or a tree.

## 8. Protect swarms

Swarming is the natural process by which colonies of honey bees increase their numbers. If you see a swarm contact the local authority or the police - they will contact a local beekeeper to collect the swarm.

## 9. Encourage local authorities to use bee friendly plants

Some of the UK's best gardens and open spaces are managed by local authorities. Many recognise the value of planning gardens, roundabouts and other areas with flowers that attract bees. Encourage your authority to improve the area you live in by adventurous planting schemes, and offer to help look after them if resources are in short supply

## 10. Learn more about bees

Beekeeping is fascinating. Honeybees have been on this earth for about 25 million years and are ideally adapted to their natural environment. Without honey bees the environment would be dramatically diminished.. Invite a beekeeper to come and talk to any local group you support and give an illustrated talk about the honey bee and the products of the hive.

# THE ITALIAN CONNECTION.

## JENI'S JOTTINGS

Nov.5th 2008

### BATTEN DOWN THE HATCHES

Another Season is over and all the bees are batted down for the Winter. Only the Oxalic Acid treatment still to do next month.

I say **battered** down, as last week this area suffered a mini hurricane. I've never experienced such a wind here before, blowing from the South and South West mainly but like a tornado at times. It had started in the night and I had to get up to batten down the hatches, closing banging shutters etc. Sleep was then impossible listening to the roar, bangs and crashes and worrying about the bees.

At first light I was up and out to see to them. Even with rocks put on previously some of the hive roofs were off. So some more rocks quickly found and piled on and a glance round at the damage being done, decided me to keep all the live stock indoors, as anything loose was flying about violently. Twelve hours of mayhem!

I've not come of to badly compared to a lot of other people in the area, who have major damage to there roof, and of course, we've had monsoon type rain afterwards just to add to it. I've only lost minor things like the sheep's little shed were they were fed, slates off the wood shed, fences and gates down, broken trees and the loss of things like feeding bowls and corrugated iron sheets.

Someone, somewhere will be wondering where all the stuff has come from! It was certainly a bit scary at times and now a lot of cleaning up and repairing to do.

I presume it's what you get when after an extremely long warm, dry Autumn, Winter finally arrives, but every thing does seem to be more extreme now.

The bees did do well in late Summer, as there was a very good crop of Herba Medica (alfalfa) so good in fact most of it was cut by the local farmers. I have a large meadow close to the bees which always does well. I leave this as long as possible for the bees and other insects, so that they can benefit from it before the Winter. Local farmers would have had it cut and bailed, and I often get asked about it and have to explain, I'm leaving it for the bees. I do cut it when it's more or less finished flowering for the sheep and horses.

I've not seen any official reports on how the bees are fairing generally in Italy as yet, but I do know that locally losses are still very high. I suppose this is something else we've got to come to terms with. Also I know that in England You've had an extremely wet Summer (if you can call it that) so obviously this has been very detrimental to your bees too. All I can say is lets hope next year will be better for all!

Tante Salute Jeni.



- *In Wales a bee buzzing around a sleeping child means the child will have a happy life and a virgin can always walk safely through a swarm of bees.*
- *Bees are symbolic of sexuality, chastity, fertility, purity and care. They are also considered to be an image of a human soul due to their natural ability to find their way home from great distances*
- *In ancient times it was believed that bees were attracted to the sounds of clanging metal and thus bees were associated with the love of music.*
- *The Egyptian sun god Re was believed to have created bees and humans from his tears. Burying the nobility in honey was a common practice in Egypt as a form of embalming the dead. The Egyptians also placed bees and honey in tombs as offerings to spirits of the dead.*

# REPORT OF THE HONEY SHOW FOR 2008



The 2008 Branch Honey Show took place at Castle Cement, Clitheroe, on Sunday 5th October.

The Judge was Mr. Dennis Atkinson (Senior Judge) from Garstang, near Lancaster, who was delighted at the quality of the exhibits, and encouraged all participants to submit exhibits at the County Show. There were 91 exhibits from 18 entrants (an increase from 2007), and over 40 people attended.

The Ken Preedy Memorial Cup for the Best Exhibit in Show was for the Bees Wax Craft exhibited by

The Challenge Cup was awarded to for the most points in the show.

Besides the four classes he won, David came 2' & 3rd in a number of other classes.

Congratulations to all of the winners, and thanks to all the exhibitors for the time and commitment put into showing, as the Branch Honey Show would not be possible without your continued support.

Special thanks must go to John Zamorski for arranging the use of the excellent facilities at Castle Cement, and to Lynne Zamorski, who along with John, set up the rooms, prepared the refreshments and tidied up after us all once we had finished.

Once again, congratulations go to all of the successful prize winners.

*Caroline Coughlin. Honey Show Secretary.*

## THE WINNERS OF EACH CLASS :

|    |                                               |                |
|----|-----------------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1  | Light Honey                                   | Lawrie Ball    |
| 2  | Medium Honey                                  | Brian Jackson  |
| 3  | Dark Honey                                    | no entries     |
| 4  | Ling Heather Honey                            | no entries     |
| 5  | Naturally Crystallised Honey                  | John Zamorski  |
| 6  | Soft Set Honey No 1st place awarded 2nd place | Bob Fulton     |
| 7  | 2008 Honey                                    | David Barrett  |
| 8  | Novice Class                                  | Laurie Ball    |
| 9  | Blacked Out Jar (Best Taste)                  | David Barrett  |
| 10 | Frame of Honey Comb                           | Phil Ainsworth |
| 11 | Beeswax Cake                                  | John Zamorski  |
| 12 | Beeswax Candle                                | John Zamorski  |
| 13 | Wax Craft                                     | John Zamorski  |
| 14 | Mead                                          | Bob Fulton     |
| 15 | Honey Fruit Cake                              | Brian Jackson  |
| 16 | Honey Fudge                                   | David Barrett  |
| 17 | Honey Desert                                  | David Barrett  |
| 18 | Photographic Print                            | John Zamorski  |



# Notices

**DOWN WITH  
VARROA**

**INFORMATION ABOUT  
'BEE TALK'**  
Planned Publication  
Dates: March 2009, June  
2009, September 2009,  
December 2009

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## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

**SUN 25TH JAN**

**12NOON TO 2PM**

**DAVE RAYNER**

Beekeeping Education (See page 2 for details) and sale of Ken Gaiger's effects. There is a  
considerable amount of beekeeping equipment from books to beekeeping boxes.  
At West Bradford Village Hall

**SUN 22ND FEB**

**12NOON TO 2PM**

**DAVE RAYNER**

Update on Beekeeping Education and sale of Ken Gaiger's effects  
At West Bradford Village Hall

**WED 25TH MAR.**

**7PM FOR 7.30PM**

**JOHN ZAMORSKI**

The annual Dinner at Hill Crest Tea Rooms, Mytton. Please contact John as soon as you  
can to book your places

# MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

**REGISTERED MEMBER.** Subscription will be £18.00

**PARTNER MEMBER.** This is for partners of registered members living in the same household wishing to keep bees and includes full insurance cover. However they will not receive their own copy of BBKA News or Bee Talk . Subscription will be £11.00

**COUNTRY MEMBER.** This is for people who do not keep bees, but wish to receive BBKA News and Bee Talk. Attend branch meetings etc. This class of member does not include any insurance cover. Subscription will be £10.00

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER.** A member of our branch only, without any benefits from the BBKA or County. Will receive Bee Talk. Subscription will be £9.00

## FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES

Under the new constitution, prompt payment is essential. Basically, payment will be required by the 31 December each year as **insurance** is now based on the current years membership. New and lapsed members insurance cover, will not start until six weeks after paying their subscription.

To help members, a reminder will be sent with December's Bee Talk. That for **insurance** purposes their subs will need paying right away. Bee Talk itself is also tied in with subscriptions. So if you don't get Bee Talk you probably have not paid your subs. and you will not have third party insurance

Philip Ainsworth Hon. Treas. Phone 07713161480



| COMMITTEE MEMBERS CONTACT DETAILS       |                   |              |                                     |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| MEMBER                                  | POST              | PHONE        | EMAIL ADDRESS                       |
| Brian Jackson                           | Chairman          | 01535 634503 | bmjackson1@tiscali.co.uk            |
| Bill Ainsworth                          | Vice Chair        | 01282 614015 | bill@scotroad.co.uk                 |
| John Zamorski                           | Hon. Sec          | 01200 427661 | member@johnzamorski.wanadoo.co.uk   |
| Philip Ainsworth                        | Hon. Treas.       | 0771 3161480 | philipainsworth@btconnect.com       |
| Caroline Coughlin                       | Honey Show Sec    | 07702 824920 | caroline.coughlin@reebok.com        |
| David Rayner                            | Librarian         | 01200 426898 | davidrayner1@yahoo.co.uk            |
| David Rayner                            | Education Officer | 01200 426898 | davidrayner1@yahoo.co.uk            |
| Pauline Roberts                         | Programme Sec.    | 01282 438615 | paulpaulineroberts@talktalk.net     |
| Robert Bradshaw                         | Member            | 01254 261216 | bob.bradshaw@sky.com                |
| David Bush                              | Member            | 01200 428152 | david.bush2@talktalk.net            |
| Ron Dempster                            | Member            | 01282 699881 | swicks580@btinternet.com            |
| Bob Fulton                              | Member            | 01254 772780 | home.brew@talktalk.net              |
| Joe Wrigley                             | Member            | 01200 447621 |                                     |
| Annette Hawkins                         | Member            | 01282 859745 | annette.hawkins1@ntlworld.com       |
| John Wilsdon                            | Member            | 01254 886120 | john@wilson6457.freemove.co.uk      |
| <b>DELEGATES TO THE CENTRAL COUNCIL</b> |                   |              |                                     |
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# THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM this year was held at the Colne Masonic Hall and we had a turnout of 47 members and families. Pauline Roberts had organised a potato pie and peas spread and this went down very well. All for free too.

Bill Ainsworth and Paul

Roberts gave a guided tour after the AGM meeting was held and that was very well received. We all learned a lot about this organisation and many were pleasantly surprised that it was not the “secret society” many had believed it to be. Thanks very much to you all for your efforts. Thanks also to the ladies who did all the washing up and clearing away afterwards.

The AGM itself only took 25 minutes to get through and I think the most important thing was the discussion on the future of Beetalk. Now if you are reading this article you will be one of the members who actually do. I very often talk to people about articles that have been included and get blank looks because they have not actually read it. Considering that it costs the Branch in the region of £800 per year, (yes eight hundred pounds) we have to seriously consider its future. Some of the suggestions include only having it online and downloading it yourself, only having A4 sheets in black ink, or making a charge for it, this would work out at £10 per year per member so would increase the cost of membership dramatically. The committee will be meeting soon to discuss the options so watch this space.

The poor beekeeping year was mentioned and also the details of the turnout to both honey shows. I hope we can have some support next year from everyone so we can do well in the County show.

I will finish by saying thank you to all our very generous hosts throughout the year because you are the people who keep this club alive. To all the committee for the work you do on the background and the support you give me also a big thank you..

Have a wonderful Christmas and a happy new year and look forward to a great season. Thanks very much.

*John Zamorski*





## IT'S THAT TIME OF THE YEAR AGAIN

No! not Christmas – but the time when your own Treasurer comes asking you to bear gifts to him. This year it is more IMPORTANT than ever that you get your subs paid on time because if I don't get a cheque or cash by 31st December then you will not be insured for your hives or bees !!! Not until one month after subs have been received.

You will notice that with this copy of Beetalk is a form – all you need do is fill in all the relevant sections and post it back to me with a cheque ASAP and all will be well for the next 12 months. If you are adding a Partner member onto one form please remember to fill in both names.

On a lighter note. Thanks to all those that attended the AGM. For those who couldn't make it you'll be glad to know that I reported that once again the club is solvent – but looking forward, the costs of Beetalk are becoming an issue. There are other articles about this in the rest of the magazine but if you have any thoughts please don't hesitate to contact one of the committee.

I have once again agreed (with my arm twisted behind my back) to continue this year as Treasurer. I look forward to the swift payment of Subs so that at the next AGM in 2009 I can again report good news.

*Many thanks Phil*



## NEW BEEKEEPERS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GRANT TO PAY FOR START-UP EQUIPMENT AND ASSISTANCE

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture announced a program to encourage new beekeepers in the state. "Honeybees are vital to New Jersey's fruit and vegetable industry through their pollination of crops, such as apples, blueberries, cantaloupes, cranberries, cucumbers, squash and pumpkins, which account for about \$200 million in revenue each year," said New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Charles M. Kuperus. "With continuing threats to our honeybee population, we hope this cooperative venture will result in more beekeepers to help sustain the fruit and vegetable farmers who depend on honeybees to pollinate their crops."

The program will offer up to \$300 worth of beekeeping equipment and bees for first-time beekeepers that successfully complete the three-day 2008 "Bee-ginner's Beekeeping" course. Participants must be New Jersey residents, over 10 years old, and register their apiary with the Department of Agriculture's Division of Plant Industry.

"We at Rutgers are delighted to be partnering with the Department of Agriculture in this important service to beekeepers, fruit and vegetable growers, and the consumers of New Jersey," said Robert Goodman, Rutgers University Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources. "Pollination by bees is essential to agriculture in the Garden State, and so we need to expand the number and the success of our beekeepers throughout the state."

The program was made possible through a grant from the Department of Agriculture's Division of Agricultural and Natural Resources. The first 50 people who meet the requirements will be able to purchase up to \$300 of beekeeping equipment and bees from registered New Jersey bee supply dealers. Participants will not be given cash, but will have credit with the dealers, who will then submit itemized bills to the Department for reimbursement.

**MEMBERS ONLY !**

## Bits and Pieces from the Members



*Balsam.*

*There is a body of opinion that Balsam and Rose Bay Willow Herb are exotic plants from this County.*

*This is a costly job but it seems the people who have this "Bee in their bonnet" don't care. The use of herbicides doesn't worry them either. Both these plants are prolific yielders of nectar both for honey bees and all other insects.*

*I hope you will confront these people when ever they raise the subject, whether it be face to face or though the press. A recent article in the local Telegraph asks us to join in the debate - how about doing just that.*



### ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR BEE VIRUSES

|                               |      |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Nosema ceranae                | Nc   |
| Nosema apis                   | Nc   |
| Acarapis woodi (Acarine)      | Aw   |
| Deformed wing virus           | DWV  |
| Black queen cell virus        | BQCV |
| Kashmir bee virus             | KBV  |
| Sacbrood virus                | SBV  |
| Acute bee paralysis virus     | ABPV |
| Chronic bee paralysis virus   | CBPV |
| Israeli acute paralysis virus | IAPV |
| Apis iridescent virus         | IV   |
| Anon                          |      |

### WASPINATOR

*I have this summer used a wasp deterrent called Waspinator. I came across the product whilst ordering some pest products for the business. It made bold claims and was relatively inexpensive at £9.95 (cost is £13.95 if ordered alone, i.e. inc P&P.) so thought I'd give it a go.*

*The information states that it mimics a wasps' nest. Wasps being territorial and will aggressively defend their nest against wasps from another colony. When a foraging wasp sees an enemy nest it will rapidly leave the area for fear of being attacked by the nest's defenders. Wasps have a vision range of over 6 metres, and at that range they only see shape and colour not detail. It has won awards, silver at 2008 Earls Court Garden Show and selected as one of the '50 Best Things to Take Camping' by The Independent newspaper. It was designed in 2005 and new into UK this year.*

*Nonetheless, being a cynical so and so, I did not expect it to work.*

*There were wasps around at the time I fitted the Waspinator - I would guess about half a dozen. I popped back 20 minutes later as suggested and still around the same number of wasps about. I left it for the best part of the day, say 6 hours, and still there were wasps about. My thoughts were being realised!*

*However 48 hours later I looked and could not see a single wasp, I have since checked many times and hey presto no wasps!*

*I have left it in place for a few months now and it still appears to be working. I'm not a salesman for this product or anything like, but it is not often you come across something that really does do what it says on the tin.*

*If anyone is interested in this product information and ordering is on line at <http://www.waspinator.co.uk/>*

*Lloyd Tredell*

## LET NATURE TAKE ITS COURSE

*There has been much in the press about the plight of honey bees and petitions to the Government for taxpayers' money to be spent on the problem.*

*As a simple countryman and third generation bee keeper, it seems to me that the remedy may lie with bee keepers themselves. My grandfather's bees died as he went to France in 1914 some said it was a portent of the war. 99% of British black bees died, but a few survived. These bees were well acclimatised, having been here since before Roman times. But since then, these islands have been flooded with bees imported from around the globe. What we have today are largely the mongrel descendants of those bees. Perhaps the experiment has run its course and it is time for drastic action.*

*If bee keepers stop medicating bees and allow them to stand or fall, we would be a step nearer a solution. Re-colonising these islands from the survivors may take time but could work in the long run.*

*In the 1950s, 99% of rabbits died in Britain and, within 10 years, had reestablished themselves over the whole island.*

*Forget the selfish commercial interests; give the bees time to recover under their own steam; it will pay dividends in the end. All species suffer set backs from time to time but medication is not the answer.*

**KEN PICKLES LEEDS**

*Letter from a Nov. 08 edition of the Independent*

*Sent to Beetalk by Annette Hawkins*

*The above is a lovely idea. It really did work for the rabbits but the snag is our bees are semi domesticated unlike the wild and free rabbits.*

*If like the rabbits we lost 99% of the bees, I feel there would be a grave danger of losing all. Ken Pickles says re-colonising would take time in the long run - how long is long, a hundred years?*

*Like it or not, beekeepers seem to be necessary for the survival of the bees that's why, in this County at least, there are no genuinely wild honey bees. The beekeeper and domestication affects the genetic makeup of the bee.*

*We are constantly told that through selection, there are already *apis mellifera* bees which are resistant to the varroa mite - my question is "Where are these bees?"*

*Bill*

## IS THERE A FUTURE FOR BEETALK?

Take a look at this letter which Michael Birt sent to Bill.

He seems to put the options very clearly. The only thing I would add about producing an electronic version for the computer owners is this: *I have been using computers since they were steam driven and I still find it so much easier to read paper than a computer screen.* However, I am sure I can speak for Bill when I say we will do our best to fit in with whatever decisions you make.

*Arthur assistant editor*

Dear Bill

Beetalk?

If it costs £800 a year to produce and we only have a £1 left over from the subs after capitation is paid to BBKA there's something wrong.

That's why I have become an associate member and pay £6 a year. At least our club gets all my money instead of any going to the BBKA.

If we have 100 members BBKA get £1700 and we get £100 and the committee is talking about finishing with Beetalk. For me what we should be talking about is finishing with BBKA, keeping the subs the same and keep Beetalk.

Beetalk is far more important than the BBKA. That's my opinion for what it's worth. Whatever the committee decide is up to the committee - that's what they were voted in for but to me if it costs £800 to produce Beetalk, produce and pay any money left over as a donation to BBKA.

That is one idea but I very much doubt if it will happen.

Another idea is to produce Beetalk but simply put it on the internet. Anyone who wants it printed out can do it themselves. With proper software it can come out just as it does now If any member has no computer, perhaps another member can print it out for them.

I suppose the association could charge for it but I doubt if many would want to pay £8 extra a year for it. I for one would and I guess you and maybe a few more members who realize the importance of it and who bother to read would but as for the rest, well that's another matter.

Lastly I suppose Beetalk could be stopped altogether, which would be a crying shame. I suppose we lived without it all those years before Ken Preedy started it and you and Arthur improved on it to make it the finest magazine that any Association Branch produces anywhere in the country in fact maybe the world - just take a look at others the websites and see what \*\*\*\* they come out with.

Anyway Bill, those are my thoughts for what they are worth. If the thoughts have any value, good. If not Mia pen Lai as we say in Thailand which means never mind.

Michael

# LIFT ME ONTO MY SOAP BOX

## DEMOCRACY RULES - OK!



Arguments and opinions about politics and religion can be a bit explosive so I will try to tread gently.

Democracy is a system of government by which political sovereignty is retained by the people and either exercised directly by citizens or through their elected representatives. I guess our system is the second one where we rely on our elected representatives to represent our

views and wishes. Do you think it works?

## PUB DEBATES

There could be room for debate as to whether our elected representatives actually do represent the views of the majority. Without getting involved in the actual argument, I do wonder what the majority view would be on the European Union, capital punishment, the Law, immigration, politician's expenses and a whole raft of other popular 'pub' debates.

## MOB RULE

I think most of us can see the dangers of deciding everything by referenda. We could finish up with something like mob rule. We see examples of this when local inhabitants decide someone is a paedophile - there was even a case of a paediatrician being hassled. "Do they not know the difference between a paedophile and a paediatrician?"

Nevertheless, there does seem to be a gap between popular opinion and the what is officially accepted.

## PROPAGANDA

In the early 1940's, during the Second World War, part of British anti German propaganda was promoted with newspaper reports of German Citizens being prosecuted after their children had reported them for speaking aloud critical thoughts

they may have had about the 'Party line'.

## SAY IT OUT LOUD

Can you honestly say you have no opinions which you would be nervous of saying out loud for fear of "being out of step" or even facing prosecution? When you do express such thoughts to acquaintances you can trust, do you not often find they are in total agreement with you?

I read recently about decision making in the bee hive. The queen doesn't make the decisions, there is no 'Ruling party'; no hierarchy' no elder statesmen (Or women!) If the little creature from outer space landed at the hive entrance and said

to a worker bee "Take me to your leader!" Where would he be taken? Things seem to happen according to the will of the hive. Our actions on the other hand seem to be prompted by parents, teachers, Gods, politicians, dictators and 'Wise men'.

## WHICH IS BETTER

Which is the better system? Bit of a paradox really. Everything in the hive is for the benefit of all but there is no place whatsoever for original thought; no art forms of any

sort, as far as we can see; no music; no great minds; no emotion; no innovation. Whilst we have passion; cruelty; great music; mass wars; works of art; genocide; great thinkers; torture; innovation and invention; criminals; love of all things natural and even abuse of our children.

## WHAT DO YOU RECKON?

So what do you reckon? Should we stick with what we've got or go for a benign dictatorship; take up mob rule, go for religion; try to emulate the bees or just leave it to take care of itself?

## WE COULD STILL EVOLVE

I have heard it said that a honey bee found fossilised in amber some sixty million years ago was very much like today's bees whilst at that time our ancestors were little four legged, rat like creatures running round the forest floor. Who knows, in another sixty million years we might evolve and catch up with *apis mellifera* - is that something you would look forward to?



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## NOSEMA CERANAE—THE “NEW” KID ON THE BLOCK

*Nosema ceranae* grabbed headlines in the U.S. in April of this year when Drs. Joe DeRisi and Don Ganem of U.C. San Francisco were given samples of CCD bees by the Army virologists working with Dr. Jerry Bromenshenk. DeRisi, who had helped solve the SARS disease mystery. He analyzed the bees, and was surprised to find that they contained considerable DNA from *N. ceranae*—a parasite previously unreported in North America.

At that point, the USARS CCD team announced they had already been preparing a paper to formally announce that *ceranae* had been in the U.S. since at least 1995 (based upon analysis of stored samples of bees). This new bug had only been first named in 1996 by Dr. Ingemar Fries, but wasn't detected in *Apis mellifera* until 2004 in Vietnam, then in Taiwan, and by 2006 was reported to be widespread in Europe, Asia, Israel, the Caribbean, and North and South America (Paxton 2007, Klee, et al. 2007). Amazingly, in a few short years *N. ceranae* appears to have supplanted *N. apis* throughout much of North America and the world! In many areas, it is now difficult to find the previously common *N. apis*!

So *ceranae* snuck in under our noses, spread widely, and now researchers worldwide are scrambling feverishly to find out answers about this new, and apparently different acting, species. Once again, just as with varroa, our poor bees are being forced to evolve yet another new host/parasite relationship (not to mention Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus). How did *ceranae* get here? Cox-Foster (2007) found it in imported Chinese royal jelly used by queen producers, but Williams's (2007) genetic sequencing indicates that the likely origin was from Europe.

The full account of this article is new and very interesting and instructive. However it is far to long to be printed in Bee Talk, so any one who needs it, can get it from me or by clicking on [http://www.scientificbeekeeping.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=48](http://www.scientificbeekeeping.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=48). I think this disease is important to us and is difficult to diagnose it is not something that can be observed, as the bees die away from the apiary. It could well be the cause or a big contributor to CCD. It is controllable with Fumidil “B” so all is not lost.

*Bill A.*



# Scrapings

## DARK HONEY FIGHTS DISEASE AND AGING .

We are told about a study that concluded that extra-virgin olive oil, because it contains a chemical called phenol, offers protection against some diseases.

But you don't have to pour olive oil on your oatmeal to get a super-healthy breakfast. Scientists at the University of California, found that honey also has a high amount of phenols. Researchers said a small amount of honey in a diet helped "augment defences" against free radicals, which are damaging compounds "implicated in contributing to the processes of aging and disease."

In the study, researchers used buckwheat honey, one of the darkest honeys available. And, in fact, the colour of honey is an indicator of its phenol content. So, while honey coloured honey may be the tastiest, the darker, stronger-tasting varieties are apparently the best disease fighters.

*Item from "The New York Times"*

## FINDING THE QUEEN

First method: 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.

Another method: For this method you need two queen-right hives. To find the queen in hive 1 take a frame of emerging brood from hive 2 and shake off the bees. Exchange it for a similar frame from hive 1. Close the hives and wait 20 minutes. The queen will be on that frame (because it smells different to her).

Courtesy of BEES scheme and Ludlow BKA

## FONDANT

*Peter Edwards Stratford on Avon BKA*

There seems to be no clear definition of the terms 'candy' and 'fondant', with many beekeepers using them indiscriminately.

Beekeeping literature is not particularly helpful, giving recipes for 'Soft Candy' and 'Hard Candy', whilst Morse and Hooper (Encyclopaedia of Beekeeping) define candy as a 'soft, fudge-like sugar solid'. A range of boiling temperatures is suggested, from 234-240F

Johansson suggests adding glucose, 1 table spoon to 3lbs sugar, in their fondant, but state that 'candy makers' use 15% glucose for 'excellent' fondant.

Some sources suggest using cream of tartar in the recipe, but both of the above point out that acid-inverted sugar is toxic to bees and that if inversion is desired then only enzyme inverted sugar should be used.

I telephoned my supplier of Bakers' Fondant (used by many large-scale beekeepers in the UK) to establish the technical specifications and method of production. They tell me that the fondant consists of: sugar 74.5%, glucose solids 14.5%, water 11.0%. The ingredients are heated just to boiling point (approx 221F) and are then stirred in a creamer until cool. This produces a soft, fine-grain sugar paste.

I would suggest that the term 'fondant' should be used only for this type of sugar paste and the term 'candy' be used where the mixture is heated to a higher temperature (typically above 234°F) in order to evaporate some of the water

### CROSSWORD ANSWERS (PAGE ??)

Across: 1 Cluster, 4 Cells, 7 Mains, 9 Breeder, 10 Sting, 11 Pen, 12 Sights, 14 Crisis, 16 CIA, 17 Nucleus, 20 Learner, 21 Pupae, 22 Super, 23 Escapes.

Down: 1 Combs, 2 Uniting, 3 Robber, 4 Creeper, 5 Laden, 6 Strains, 8 Sag, 12 Surplus, 13 Trainer, 15 Sleep, 16 Clamp, 17 Nurse, 18 Cap, 19 Skeps.



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