



Bee Talk

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

Vol. 14 No. 2

July 2008

Registered Charity

What's in this issue of Bee Talk

EDITORIAL

PAGE 1

What about the weather?, Queen rearing, selling stuff and the honey show - amongst other things.

BEGINNERS' PAGE

PAGE 2

What smoking does for you - and the bees; all you need is Honey; are you importing queens? and homing pigeons versus homing bees.

ICE CREAM FOR THE BEES

PAGE 3

Haagen Dazs make a Big donation for colony collapse disorder.

POLLEN SUBSTITUTE

PAGE 3

A recipe for making pollen substitute.

BEEKEEPERS' DINNER

PAGE 4

A few snapshots from a most enjoyable annual dinner.

WINTER LOSSES

PAGE 5

The Galtee Bee Breeding Group talk about Winter bee losses.

THE INTERNET

PAGE 5

There are literally billions of web pages for us all to look at - if we can find the right ones! Here are just a few about beekeeping.

BEAR IN THE DOCK

PAGE 5

He didn't like Serbian music.

THE ITALIAN CONNECTION

PAGE 6

Jeni tells of bee losses in Italy

CCD IN THE USA

PAGE 7

Politicians and supermarkets are getting worried.

BEES AND ELEPHANTS

PAGE 8

Bees help keep elephants away from humans and their guns.

DIFFERENT WINGS

PAGE 8

How to recognise an Eastern bee by its wings.

ANOTHER PAGE ON SMOKING

PAGE 9

Research suggest it could keep away mites.

TAKE NOTICE

PAGE 10 & 11

It has come to our notice that not many readers take any notice of the notices. Take a look at these notices and notice what they have to say.

SNIFFER BEES

PAGE 12

Bees at busy cargo ports trained to sniff out explosives.

NOSEMA CARENEA IN HERTS

PAGE 12

Robin Dartington has lost almost half his colonies this Winter.

MULTIPLE MATES

PAGE 13

The number of times the queen mates affects hive behaviour.

FROM THE MEMBERS

PAGE 14 & 15

Interesting notes from *OUR* members. We would welcome more from you - try to keep them short if you can.

I DO IT MY WAY

PAGE 16

Bill 'Sinatra' Ainsworth tells you how he deals with Varroa.

HONEY PRESERVE US!

PAGE 17

Just imagine dipping into the honey jar and finding a baby - uggghhh!

SOAP BOX

PAGE 19

Can you remember what its all about? We've forgotten already!

SCRAPINGS

PAGE 20

A round up of bits and pieces.

Editor: Bill Ainsworth 296 Scotland Road Nelson phone 01282 614015 email:- bill@scotroad.co.uk

Assistant: Arthur Bickerstaffe phone 01282 695560 e.mail:- arthurbick@btinternet.com

Editorial

THE FAVOURITE TOPIC

Let's talk about the weather. It always gives a start to any conversation.

In Nelson it's been the best April & May I can remember, so much so that my new venture in beekeeping (Queen rearing) has gone like a bomb I already have nucs with laying Queens and producing beautiful, even full brood patterns just as British Black bees should do. So it looks like the members who agreed to the "Black Bees in Pendle" scheme will have the opportunity to buy some good nucs. I think I'm well on the way to raising about twelve to fifteen.

TIME TO BUY

While I'm on about sales There is to be a sale of beekeeping equipment at the meeting on 17th August at David Bush's place. This will include equipment from the close-down of Holden Clough. Also a lot of boxes etc. old but restorable, given to us by Arthur Cunliffe. Arthur is an old time member and he still reads Bee Talk, but a bit too old at 87 to keep bees any longer.

Anyone with bits and pieces that they no longer want, are asked to bring them along on the day to the meeting and give them as a donation to add to the sell off. All monies raised will go to the societies funds. It should make a useful event.

INFORMATION

In your copy of Bee Talk you should find a loose paper asking for some info. Do fill it in and return it, It won't be very scientific but it may help us to better understand what is going on in The Blackburn Area. We will report back on it in the next issue of Bee Talk.

HONEY SHOW

There is also a Schedule for our honey show from Caroline Coughlin. She is keen to let us know that the show is important to your society and needs all the support we can give. Giving you a schedule now gives you plenty of time to get your act together.

We've just heard that Weights and Measures say we can sell honey in any size or shape jar we want from now on, instead of the preordained sizes - glad this does not apply to the honey show.

SEED DRESSING

More trouble with pesticides, in Germany this

JULY 2008

time, some sort of seed dressing on sunflower seeds that had been wrongly constituted by the manufacturer. The German government banned it immediately and out of hand, which is a good thing, it's nice to hear some governments are on the ball and quick off the mark. The down side seems to be that the manufacturer is one of two, I think, who give monies to the BBKA. If this is all true it puts BBKA in a bad light again.

THE EXTRACTOR

Michael Birt has gone back to Thailand again (Think he is having a house built there) he is not going out there permanently and will be back amongst us for most part of the year. He will also continue to act as web master for us from Thailand (The wonders of science) However, he won't be able to keep the associations extractor and make it available for members to use.

Can we get a volunteer, somewhere around the middle of our area to store and care for it, and keep an eye on who has borrowed it and when it came back? It would be much appreciated.

THE DINNER

The photos taken by John Zamorskie at the Annual Dinner (Page 4) were so good we felt we just had to use them. John is available for Weddings, Masonic Evenings, and Bar Mitzvahs I'm only kidding.

Page 3. Has a recipe for pollen substitute. This year I have used a propriety made, pollen substitute, for the very first time, it is to do with Queen rearing. I've never thought I needed a substitute before, as the hedge rows around me are full of pollen.

Now is it the substitute or the brilliant weather that have made my bees, and brood in particular, so good? Maybe time will tell.

NOT FISHING - HONEST!

We're not fishing for complements but we sometimes wonder if we have the content and tone of this little magazine, as you - the members - would like it.

An email or phone call to Bill or Arthur just to let us have your views would be much appreciated.



AN ARTICLE FOR SMOKERS

Smoke is the beekeeper's third line of defence. Most beekeepers use a "smoker"—a device designed to generate smoke from the incomplete combustion of various fuels. Smoke calms bees;



it initiates a feeding response in anticipation of possible hive abandonment due to fire. Smoke also masks alarm pheromones released by guard bees or when bees are squashed in an inspection. The ensuing confusion creates an opportunity for the beekeeper to open the hive and work without triggering a defensive reaction. In addition, when a bee consumes honey the bee's abdomen distends, supposedly making it difficult to make the necessary flexes to sting, though this has not been tested scientifically.

THINGS ABOUT HONEY

Honey is the only food that includes all the substances that you need to sustain life, including water. Honey attracts and absorbs water, so makes it wonderfully soothing for minor burns and even is said to prevent scarring. Next time you are out and about and spot a bee, wish it well – bees need to visit over two million flowers to make one pound of honey.

QUEEN IMPORTS

We were perturbed to learn of the number of queens that are being imported into Northern Ireland and the border counties from Eastern Europe and other places. Apart from the danger to our native bee stocks, there is also the all too apparent danger of introducing all sorts of pests and diseases that are not yet known here.

These include resistant varroa mites, now present all over Britain. Then there is the small hive beetle and *Tropilaelaps clarea*, another mite that is deemed to be far worse than varroa. Next come deadly viruses, some of which are widespread in Europe and have been found in several counties. These include Kashmir bee virus and Israeli acute bee paralysis virus, which have been associated with colony collapse disorder. Finally, there is *Nosema ceranae*, which has been identified in most of the dead stocks in the USA and is also present in Britain. What beekeeper would be mad enough to allow bees or queens to be imported into their area from abroad?

*Lets all Stick to British black Bees!
and LOCAL B B Bs at that. Ed.*

PIGEONS AND BEES

January 28, 1889, Wisconsin
A Pigeon fancier of Hamme, Prussia, made a bet that a dozen bees liberated three miles from their hive would reach it in better time than a dozen pigeons would reach their cote from the same distance. The competitors were given wing at Rynhern, a village nearly a league from Hamme, and the first bee finished a quarter of a minute in advance of the first pigeon, three other bees reached the goal before the second pigeon, the main body of both detachments finished almost simultaneously an instant or two later. The bees, had been handicapped in the race, having been rolled in flour before starting, for the purposes of identification.

Stratford-upon-Avon Beekeepers Association

HÄAGEN-DAZS DONATES \$225K TO CCD RESEARCH

Häagen-Dazs recently launched a monumental campaign to increase awareness of the importance of honey bees to pollination and funding for Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). According to Häagen-Dazs, it is “Putting all its marketing might behind the issue and will launch a website, and print, television and online advertising dedicated to educating Americans about the problem and seeking their help to spread the word and join the campaign.”

WHAT'S KILLING OUR BEES

“Häagen-Dazs ice cream is made from the finest all-natural ingredients, and the plight of the honey bee could mean many of the ingredients used in our top flavours would be difficult to source,” Said brand manager Josh Gellert. “To discover and prevent what's killing our honey bees, we are launching the Häagen-Dazs loves Honey Bees™ campaign to fund sustainable pollination and CCD research at Pennsylvania State University and the University of California, Davis.”



NEW FLAVOUR

“More than 40 percent of its all-natural ice cream flavours include ingredients dependent on honey bees for pollination. As part of its honey campaign, Häagen-Dazs has introduced a new ice cream flavour - Vanilla Honey Bee.

The website includes considerable information educating consumers about the importance of pollination and the effect of CCD. The site also provides tools to help consumers spread the word about these issues.

Take a look at
<http://www.helpthehoneybees.com>

The site includes sections for: The Honey Bee Crisis, How We're Helping, Why We Care and How You Can Help. Additional sections include Make & Send a Bee and The Bee Store, where t-shirts with a variety of save the bee messages may be purchased.

POLLEN SUBSTITUTE RECIPE

2kg (4.4 lbs) Soya Flour- low fat type (or soy powder)

1kg (2.2 lbs.) Brewers Yeast

500g (1.1 lbs.) Dried Egg Yolk

250g (.5 lb.) Dried Skimmed Milk

2kg (4.4 lbs.) warmed Runny Honey (liquid honey)

Enough water to make a soft dough

The Soya flour should be reduced fat (approx. 5% fat) The skimmed milk and egg yoke are optional. Soya and brewers yeast with as much saved pollen as possible is preferable.

Dried pollen should be ground in a pestle or blender and moistened with water/syrup, or your own honey. Never buy pollen in from unknown sources as, like honey, it can contain brood diseases. Look on the Internet at: <http://www.rirdc.gov.au/reports/HBE/05-054.pdf> link to “Fat Bees, Skinny Bees” for good information about bee nutrition.

Be sure honey and pollen are from a safe source and not carrying foul brood spores.

By Peter Dight of Cambridge



**I'LL WIN EVERYTHING AT
THE HONEY SHOW WITH
THIS**



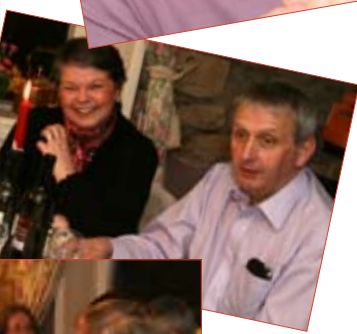
BEEKEEPERS' DINNER

Our annual dinner was held at the Hillcrest tea rooms Mitton on March 26th. It is a small place so numbers were limited, But the food was spot on and the service was perfect.

We had a full turn out, with every seat filled. I personally had a jolly good time and from the noise of the nattering that went on all night so did ever one else, and it was not just bee talk. On the tables near to me talk ranged far and wide, there was a lot of laughter as well. I'm certain it will all have given John Zamorski who organised it all, a great deal of satisfaction.

I'm in favour of doing it again next year - - any takers? Bill A.

(Photographs by John Zamorski)



GALTEE BEE BREEDING GROUP

The night is still young and our drinks are yet long,

The fire's burning bright and here, brave is the throng,

So now I will sing you a sooth little song

Of the busy brown bee - with a ding and a dong.

J. R. R. Tolkien, Natura Apis (A drinking song)

REPLACING WINTER LOSSES

Before the advent of varroa, an acceptable level of losses over winter would have been about 10%. Since varroa arrived, this level of losses has increased considerably and especially so in the early years. In former years, these losses could be attributed to acarine, nosema, dysentery, dampness, severe cold, or starvation. In recent years we have had a rather high incidence of queenlessness or drone-laying queens in spring. We also find occasional colonies with no bees either alive or dead even though there may be abundant stores. At present, much research is being carried out in other countries to find the reason for those strange phenomena but no definite cause has yet been determined.

We can only conclude that these severe losses are due to the presence of varroa and the related viruses that seem to persist for some time after the mites have been diminished by treatment. When control over varroa becomes maintained and mite numbers are kept at a low level throughout the year, thereby preventing the build-up of viruses, we do not seem to suffer as many losses

WEBSITES

Most computer users will have favourite websites which they visit from time to time. Here are one or two more for you to browse.

<http://www.honeybeequiet.com>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/bees/update.html>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honey>

www.blackburnbeekeepers.com

<http://apitherapy.blogspot.com>

www.swarms.net

www.britishbee.org.uk/faq.php

<http://outdoorplace.org/beekeeping/citybees.htm>

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Beekeeping/weblinks.htm>

If you have found a site that's a bit different or has interesting information, please email it to Bill or Arthur at: bill@scotroad.co.uk or arfur3@mac.com.

NEWS REPORT

March '08

The taste of honey was just too tempting for a bear in Macedonia, which repeatedly raided a beekeeper's hives.

Now it has a criminal record after a court found it guilty of theft and criminal damage.

But there was an empty dock in the court in the city of Bitola and no handcuffed bear, which was convicted in its absence.

The case was brought by the exasperated beekeeper after a year of trying vainly to protect his beehives.

For a while, he kept the animal away by buying a generator, lighting up the area, and playing thumping Serbian turbo-folk music.

But when the generator ran out of power and the music fell silent, the bear was back and the honey was gone once more.

"It attacked the beehives again," said beekeeper Zoran Kiseloski.

Because the animal had no owner and belonged to a protected species, the court ordered the state to pay for the damage to the hives - around \$3,500 (£1,750; 2,238 euros).

The bear, meanwhile, remains at large - somewhere in Macedonia.

THE ITALIAN CONNECTION

JENI'S JOTTINGS

It's early May, has Summer come? I know they say "One Swallow a Summer does not make", but when I see one inspecting the stalla, it gladdens the heart, its the same when I see a swarm of bees, I've just hived twelve, all of a good size and they probably haven't finished yet!



MILD WINTER

After a very mild Winter in which they didn't suffer much they have built up very quickly. In early March I managed to swap them all over into clean hives but left the frame changing as it seemed a bit early. It was probably as well I hadn't disturbed them too much as mid March onwards for a good while was cold and wet with snow now and again.

The bees of course were stuck in and probably using up a lot of their stores. Last year I changed a lot of frames due to the heavy losses, so most hives aren't too bad which is a blessing as I've had no chance to mess about as with the weather changing the bees have been swarming. I've even stopped going through hives to kill off queen cells after they have swarmed, as it never seems to make any difference!

LOST STOCKS

This winter I lost a few stocks but that's to be expected, no nasty surprises as I had last year. I count myself one of the lucky ones as I know many beekeepers are having a hard time and experiencing very heavy losses. One poor chap in the Borgotaro area, which is not far from here, has lost 295 out of 300! There has also been a lot of publicity on the

"One poor chap, not far from here, has lost 295 out of 300 stocks!"

media about the plight of the bees, so now every one asks "How are the bees doing?" It's good it has been brought to the forefront at last but will it do any good, I wonder....

NO REAL ANSWERS

The regional magazine I get sent has done a two page spread on the problem but there's no real answers. They reckon the losses are between 30% and 40%, I suspect that it is probably double that. There's much talk of Varroa, Nosema, insecticides, climate change etc, but nobody really knows - - A warning!! Some good may come out of it though. I was pleased to see France is banning a lot of insecticide, perhaps other countries will follow suit. I hope so as it's not just the bees but also many beneficial insects that are being destroyed. Then there is the knock on effect to every thing else, including swallows!

NEW DOG

Other news from here is a Border Collie, 18 months old, arrived from England. She's fitted in a treat but doesn't think much to beekeeping after quite a few stings while trying to help me!

Once again my heart felt sympathy to all those who have lost their bees, we can only hope things improve.



US FEARS OVER CCD

Last Updated: Tuesday, 25 March 2008

The pollination of crops by bees is responsible for a third of the food produced in the US.

One in every three mouthfuls has been touched by their tiny feet; but our six-legged friends are in trouble.

They are getting sick and leaving their hives. Without bees, food gets more expensive - some products could disappear altogether.

In a world so dominated by man it may come as a big shock to realise there are some things we cannot do without nature's help.

90% LOSSES

Colony collapse disorder (CCD) emerged last year, and by spring 2007 bees were dying in huge numbers - over the year as a whole the total bee population fell by 30%. Some beekeepers lost closer to 90%, and the fear is it will get worse.

Beekeeper Gilly Sherman says: "It's worse than last year, and last year was worse than the year before, so it's bad, and there are a lot of good big beekeepers that are having a lot of problems. "I think we're coming in for a big train wreck."

He has moved his bees to Bakersfield, California. The state's Central Valley is home to the largest managed pollination event in the world - 1.5 million hives are transported there on trucks. That is almost every commercial hive in the country. Without bees there would be no almonds, and it's the same for many other crops. Apples, strawberries, even onions, all depend on bees.

MYSTERY

The causes remain a mystery even after a year of intense publicity. Part of that is due to lack of funding, say researchers, who rejoiced at the news that Haagen-Dazs, the ice cream maker, is donating \$250,000 to their cause. Bees are collected to show up viruses, bacteria and other pathogens - basically anything that causes disease.

Many different types have been found, so it is proving difficult to know what the main cause is. A parasite called *Nosema ceranae*, which infects the bee's guts, has been found too.

Raj Singh, who made one of the most recent discoveries, says: "We have found some of the honey bees that are un-infected bringing in pollen pellets from the field, that were actually infected - that's one of the routes of virus transmission that we've found." But he admits they are far from

finding the "silver bullet" and even further from knowing how to stop it.

LIMITED FUNDS

Entomologist at Penn State, Diana Cox Foster, says it is an urgent problem. "We do feel that we need additional monies to come in from grants

to work on this problem," she said. "We also need to have collaboration internationally to address what the role of different pathogens is." She acknowledged that a quarter of a million dollars from Haagen-Dazs isn't much when faced with such a mysterious problem, but says better offers from higher authorities are few and far between.

SUPERMARKETS

At the Senate and at the House of Representatives, at the federal level, they have said that they are



'quite interested and they would like to help a great deal' but we haven't yet seen the monies being released yet.

"It is of concern, and hopefully other people will start to see it that way before it hits us in the supermarkets." Bees' influence on supermarket shelves is vast. As well as fruits and vegetables, it could get as far as beef and dairy products because cows are fed alfalfa - another bee-pollinated plant.

MORE MONEY

Of course honey would disappear altogether without bees. More money and more commitment to research are called for to keep this essential industry going. In a world so dominated by man it may come as a big shock to realise there are some things we cannot do without nature's help.

CAN BEES PROTECT ELEPHANTS?

Elephants' fear of angry bees could help to protect them at a time when encroaching human development in former wild life areas has compressed African elephants into ever smaller home ranges and increased levels of human-elephant conflict, a study in *Current Biology*, suggests that strategically placed beehives might offer a low-tech elephant deterrent and conservation measure.

SOUND OF THE BEES

The researchers found that a significant majority of African elephants fled immediately after hearing the sound of bees, providing "strong support" for the idea that bees, and perhaps even their buzz alone, might keep elephants at bay. By contrast, the elephants ignored a control recording of natural white-noise, the authors reported.

"We weren't surprised that they responded to the threatening sound of disturbed bees, as elephants are intelligent animals that are intimately aware of their surroundings, but we were surprised at how quickly they responded to the sounds by running away," said Lucy King of the University of Oxford. "Almost half of our study herds started to move away within 10 seconds of the bee playback." Earlier studies had suggested that elephants prefer to steer clear of bees. For instance, one report showed that elephant damage to acacia trees hosting occupied or empty beehives was significantly less than in trees without hives, the researchers said. In Zimbabwe, scientists have also seen elephants forging new trails in an effort to avoid beehives.



THE BUZZ

In the new study, the researchers tested the response of several well-known elephant families in Kenya to the digitally recorded buzz of disturbed African bees. Sixteen of the seventeen families tested left

their resting places under trees within 80secs of hearing the bee sound, the researchers reported, and half responded within just 10 secs. Among elephants hearing the control sound, none had moved after 10secs and only four families had moved after 80secs. By the end of the 4 min sound playback of bee buzz, only one elephant family had failed to move, whereas eight families hearing the control sound had not moved.

This behavioural discovery suggests that bees might very well be a valuable addition to the toolbox of elephant deterrents used by farmers and conservation managers across Kenya, King said. She added that such innovative approaches are sorely needed "to avoid extreme solutions such as shooting problem animals." She cautioned that the use of beehives to shoo elephants away might prove to have limited application and that more research is needed if we are to understand its effectiveness. "But if we could use bees to reduce elephant crop raiding and tree destruction while at the same time enhancing local income through the sale of honey, this could be a significant and valuable step towards sustainable human-elephant coexistence."

We don't see many Eastern bees but just in case !



DISTINGUISHING WESTERN (LEFT) AND EASTERN (RIGHT)
HONEY BEES FROM THEIR WINGS

MORE FOR SMOKERS

SMOKING OUT BEE MITES

Beekeepers have a long-established practice of using smoke to calm their bees before opening the hive. Now U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists have found another potential benefit from smoke: Some plants, when burned, give off natural chemicals that control honey bee mites.

THEY FALL OFF

Frank A. Eischen, an entomologist with USDA has found that smoke from certain plants either kills varroa mites or causes them to fall off the bees.



This mite began infesting honey bee colonies in the United States in the 1980s, was discovered in 1987, and has since become the biggest threat to managed honey bees. The mites attach to bees and feed on their blood. If the infestation is severe and left untreated, the mites usually kill the colony. The standard treatment for the mites is fluvalinate, a synthetic pyrethroid harmless to the bees. Beekeepers put fluvalinate-impregnated strips in their hives to kill mites, but they can use the strips only during times when bees are not making honey. Otherwise, the chemical could contaminate it.

Another problem with fluvalinate is that European researchers have reported that mites are developing resistance to the chemical.

CREOSOTE BUSH

Several years ago, Eischen began looking for alternative controls for mites. So far, he has tested smoke from about 40 plants. The first one he tried was a desert shrub called creosote bush, native to Mexico, Texas, and other areas of the Southwest. A Mexican beekeeper, David Cardoso, had recommended that Eischen test the olive-green plant, known in Mexico as gobernadora.

Eischen set up a standard lab test, placing 300 to 400 mite-infested bees inside a cage and covering the cage with a plastic container. Then he put the plant material inside his smoker, lit it, puffed the smoke into the container, and corked the plastic container opening to prevent the smoke from escaping.

LO AND BEHOLD

He kept the smoke inside for 60 seconds, then removed the bees. Next, he placed the bees over a white, sticky card to catch any mites that fell off the bees. "Lo and behold, the smoke from creosote bush was knocking down mites right, left, and centre," Eischen says. "It gave us the idea to start looking at other plants that, when burned, give off chemicals that removed the mites without harming bees."

Among the 40 different plants Eischen has tested, the most promising plants are creosote bush and dried grapefruit leaves. Creosote bush smoke achieves a 90 to 100 percent mite knockdown after 1 minute, but Eischen says that excessive exposure can harm the bees. "It's similar to burning tobacco in that respect," he says. "It's hard to find chemicals that remove mites without harming bees."

THEY'RE CONFUSED!

Grapefruit leaves fit that description. After 30 seconds, smoke from the grapefruit leaves knocked down 90 to 95 percent of the mites in the cage test. With grapefruit leaves, however, few of the mites are killed. Most simply fall off the bees.

"The smoke chemicals either irritate the mites or confuse them. We aren't exactly sure," Eischen says. "But we do know that the grapefruit leaf smoke doesn't seem to have any bad effects on the bees at all. The bees come through fine."

Eischen stresses that the findings thus far are preliminary. "These are crude experiments, and we haven't yet analyzed the active chemicals in the smoke that knock down the mites," he says.

"We're not yet telling beekeepers to use these methods for controlling varroa mites," says Eischen. "We're using these experiments to try to identify and isolate the chemicals that act as miticides."

By Sean Adams, ARS.



Notices

TECH
BEEKEEPING
IN PRIMARY
SCHOOL!

DOWN WITH
VARROA

INFORMATION ABOUT 'BEE TALK'

Planned Publication
Dates: March 2008, June
2008, September 2008,
December 2008

**LATEST TIME FOR
COPY - 2 WEEKS BE-
FORE THE MONTH OF
PUBLICATION.**

Please contact Bill
Ainsworth, 296 Scot-
land Road Nelson BB9
7YS Telephone 01282
614015 .

MEMBERS SERVICES

These chemicals for treating bees can be
obtained from
Bill Ainsworth phone. 01282 614015
(Bill will also have them available at
beekeepers' meetings)

Bayvoral
Apiguard
Oxalic Acid
Acetic Acid
Thymol
Fumidil 'B'

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.



FUTURE MEETINGS

SUN 22ND JUNE 2PM

THE DARLINGTON HIVE

Helen howarth

At Helen Howarth's, Overdale, Red Lane, Colne BB8 7JR

SUN 20TH JULY 2PM

QUEEN BREEDING

Bill Ainsworth

At Hodge House Allotments, Holland Place, Off Reedyford
Road, Nelson BB9 8HD

SUN 17TH AUG. 2PM

WAX CRAFT

John Zamorski

And sale of surplus equipment

At David Bush's, 2 Upbrooks, Clitheroe BB7 1PL

MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

REGISTERED MEMBER. Subscription will be £17.00

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 £10.00

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 £9.00

ASSOCIATE MEMBER. A member of our branch only, without any benefits from the BBKA or County. Will receive Bee Talk. Subscription will be £6.00

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	paul@cleavergroup.fsnet.co.uk
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	r.fulton@blackburnmail.com
Ken Gaiger	Member	01282 778887	
Joe Wrigley	Member	01200 447621	

DELEGATES TO THE CENTRAL COUNCIL

John Zamorski	Hon. Sec	01200 427661	member@johnzamorski.wanadoo.co.uk
Philip Ainsworth	Hon. Treas.	0771 3161480	email philipainsworth@btconnect.com

MORE ON SNIFFER BEES

In remarkable field trials, scientists have harnessed the insect's powerful sense of smell to track down samples of TNT, Semtex, gunpowder and other explosives hidden in



shipments passing through a busy cargo airport.

The prototype under trial consisted of a shoebox-sized device nicknamed

the "buzz box", containing three trained bees harnessed into a removable drawer. An electric fan draws air into the box, while a video camera records the bees' response, which can alert the handler to even the faintest trace of explosives.

According to the researchers, bees are able to detect the scent of explosives at concentrations

as low as two parts per trillion. "It's the equivalent of finding a grain of sand in a swimming pool," said Rachael Carson, general manager of Inscentinel, the company behind the research.

"If you give them the smell, and then reward them with a sugar solution, they quickly make the association between the smell and the food," she said.

Unlike dogs bees are quick to learn, and relatively cheap to maintain.

Furthermore, the insects do not need a dedicated handler and cannot be distracted from their task.



NOSEMA CERANEA IN HERTFORDSHIRE

by Robin Dartington

I have lost 9 out of 20 colonies this winter, the worst I can ever remember. No starvation, just colonies dwindling away, with some dead bees left on the floor.

We took samples from about six dead colonies last December and analysis has confirmed only two bee pathogens out of the 10 mites/viruses/diseases tested – Nosema Ceranae and DWV (Deformed Wing Virus). The normal form of Nosema, Nosema Apis, was not present.

I have never ever treated for Nosema, the recommended treatment being to add Fumagillin to autumn feed which I have preferred to avoid as it arguably contaminates the hive. Winter build up of Nosema apis normally clears up when colonies expand in spring. But now the new form of Nosema has clearly arrived in Hertfordshire. Nosema ceranea is more virulent and kills in winter – the colony just dwindles. Nosema apis is often associated with dysentery, which showed as streaked combs, but Nosema ceranea leaves no obvious signs. Now I will have to consider treating all colonies as a routine – but if I got varroa under better control before autumn – and so reduced the level of DWV – colonies might not be weakened and be better able to cope with Nosema unaided.

It has generally been hoped that Nosema will not develop resistance to Fumagillin – but so far its use has been sporadic. Extensive continuous use might make it ineffective. And there is no alternative, so far as I know. Nosema is becoming another serious threat to the health of Britain's bees!

MULTIPLE MATES

North Carolina State University has found that the number of times a honey bee queen mates is a key factor in determining how attractive the queen is to the worker bees of a hive.

As most beekeepers will know, a honey bee queen mates early in her life, usually with multiple partners, the drones of another bee colonies. The scientists found that the number of partners appears to be a key factor in making the queen attractive to the worker bees of a colony, the more partners, the more attractive the queen is and the longer her reign is likely to be.

PHEROMONES ALTERED

The scientists also conducted experiments that suggest that the number

of times a queen mates is a factor in altering the composition of a pheromone, or chemical signal, the queen produces. It is the composition of this pheromone that appears to attract the worker bees of a hive.

On a mating flight, a virgin queen mates with anywhere from one to more than 40 drones. The average number of drones with which a queen mates is 12. The queen stores the semen from her mating flights for the remainder of her life, two to three years for a long-lived queen.

REJECTED QUEENS

However, some queens are not so long-lived. They are rejected by the workers of the hive. The research sheds light on this rejection mechanism. Because queens mate early in their lives and store semen, it stands to reason that queens that have mated multiple times and accumulate more semen might be more valuable to a colony. But the researchers have not studied the impact of the number of times a queen mates on her physiology until now.

To determine the effect mating has on honey bee queens, the scientists artificially inseminated queens. It's difficult to determine the number of times a queen mates under natural conditions. Some queens were inseminated with the semen

from one drone, others with the semen from 10 drones. The scientists then put the queens in hives and observed them.

RETINUE RESPONSE

They found that worker bees paid more attention to the multiply inseminated queens. Worker bees demonstrate what is known as a "retinue response" to their queen; they lick her and rub their antennae on her. The retinue response to the multiply inseminated queens was more pronounced. This indicated that the workers can tell how many drones the queen has mated with.

Like many animals, honey bees use pheromones to communicate. When they analysed pheromone produced in the mandibular gland of honey bee queens, they found that pheromone composition

changes dramatically after queens mate and that the number of times the queen mates appears to be a key factor in determining the extent of pheromone alteration.

Also, an analysis of the mandibular gland pheromone found differences in the chemical profile of pheromone from once-inseminated

and multiply inseminated queens. The scientists also found differences in the two types of queens in brain-expression levels of a behaviourally relevant gene. The results clearly demonstrate that insemination quantity alters queen physiology, queen pheromone profiles and queen-worker interactions.

The research could have implications for bee breeding and for beekeepers. The research suggests that queens that mate with multiple partners are superior, so breeders may want to select for this behaviour.

A TEST FOR MULTIPLE MATES

Beekeepers usually buy mated queens when they re-queen their hives. The scientists believe that it should be possible to devise a test to determine if a queen has mated few or many times. Such a test would help beekeepers determine the quality of the queens they buy.



MEMBERS ONLY !



Bits and Pieces from the Members

DARK HONEY FIGHTS DISEASE

There was 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, Davis, 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.

Sent in by Pauline Roberts

FROM THE TELEGRAPH.

The effects of the thick creamy *royal jelly* used to feed honey bee larvae and groom queen bees can now be mimicked, giving scientists an invaluable new technology to help make resistant bee strains, says Dr. Ryszard Maleszka, of The Australian National University, Canberra. Eating royal jelly seems to turn off DNA methylation, a mechanism used to govern the way genes are used. When a gene called Dnmt3 was turned off, larvae developed to resemble queens.

Brian says, "Hopefully this does not affect humans or we shall be in lumber and maybe the word *queens* takes on a new subtle meaning"

Sent in by Brian Jackson Chairman

BEEES IN TROUBLE

Our bees are in trouble! Hive losses by our members have been off the charts the past year. Beginners, Intermediate beekeepers and long time veteran beekeepers have all reported an abnormally large die off over the winter.

As the weather warms and we begin to open our hives we need to examine them with a fine-tooth comb. Is the hive healthy? Is it dead or on life support? Why did one hive make it and the other one right next to it not, in spite of the similarities between the two hives and the beekeeping practices the same?

I would like to recommend that we survey our members and report the results to the Napa, Marin and San Francisco beekeepers. We need to share information so we can help solve the disappearing bee crisis. If the hive losses continue at this rate, we will start to see our membership decrease as well.

I urge ALL of you to contact to report the number of hives you have lost out of the total number of hives you managed this past year. I would like to share this information with the entire organization as well as the beekeepers in the adjacent counties. For all new swarms this year I will be using new foundation exclusively. I have been on the 3 year rotational culling plan advocated by Serge Labesque, but I am scared that maybe there is something toxic in my 1, 2 and 3 year old comb. I have always scorched my equipment to decrease the risk of cross contamination and used hygienic practices. Frankly, I am at a loss at what else I can do to improve the chances of my bees! survival. Hopefully, Randy Oliver, Eric Mussen and the other beekeepers who are scheduled to speak at the March 8th Beekeeping Symposium will be able to give me more information to keep my bees from dying.

From Your President Michael Johnson

This is from a news letter in Santa Rosa, Cal. who I'm in contact with. The organisation is about the same as Lancashire bee keepers. Ed

FROM STEVE GANNER

Not sure whether I should report the loss of two out of my five hives this year so records of losses can be monitored. I have three hives at my house and two at out apiaries. Surprisingly, these losses are only the 3rd and 4th I've lost in 22 years. Using National jumbo hives, they have always had surplus supplies to overwinter.

They were all doing OK, even up until a couple of months ago when I checked them and put in the Apiguard. They appeared strong for the time of year, but maybe were a little low on stores (Not sure as I only checked two frames from each hive).

It was a warm day and the hive was active with minimal bees flying. Looking from underneath the raised hives, (They were also sat on a super for a bit of extra wind protection) I could see that the open mesh floors were clear of dead bees.

After finding the colonies dead-there were no signs of mice, and mouse guards were fitted. There was very little honey, but plenty of pollen. I suppose they could have starved. There were approx. 400 bees clinging to the comb, 250 with heads buried in the cells and 1800 on the mesh floor, all intact and no sign of any deformities or wings incomplete.

Steve Ganner

(The County Association is keen to know details of the number of stocks you have and details of any losses due to disease or totally unknown reasons. Probably the best thing is to contact Ian Molyneux on his mobile phone 078158 72604 or his email address is I.molyneux@csl.gov.uk)

THE DEATH OF JOHN ATKINSON

John Atkinson died on Friday 28th March. He was a long time contributor for The Beekeepers Quarterly and a world figure in his writings based on his knowledge of bee breeding. The funeral was at Bury St Edmunds Crematorium on Friday 11th April at 3.00

Jeremy Burbidge

I followed John's articles in Bee Keepers Quarterly with very great interest, thought his quirky writing was sometimes hard to follow. We loose a beekeeper and scientist of great standing. Ed.

FROM FRED DUCKETT

Just something I came across!

I purchase a polystyrene hive. When working on another hive next to it, I place the smoker which was nice and hot on top of the poly hive it burnt a nice indent in the roof, which I repaired with silicone, I now have a piece of slate to protect the roof.

Regards Fred

FROM BRIDGET

I Hope Ken is making a good recovery. Please give him my very best wishes for a full and speedy recovery.

I've decided to join the BBKA as an individual member, as I'm unlikely to be able to get to Blackburn BBKA again.

I'm starting a beginners course here in France this very morning! I've got 15 signed up so far - but bees will be a problem. I lost 4 of my 6 hives to CCD this winter, despite leaving state and a super of honey queens in a healthy starved - just dwindled away to nothing; and we have the Asiatic hornet nesting in this area. Not a nice time for beekeepers.

All the best,

Bridget Beattie

SUBJECT: LOSS OF BEES

Dear Annette

I hope the advice to use Bayvarol did not come from your local Association. If it did, expect many losses. Apiguard is proven and high quality. You need healthy bees and building up on autumn forage. Use the Apiguard immediately after removing supers, preferably in August as soon as your summer flow stops. This way you clear the bees before they make the winter bees.

Best wishes **james kilty**
<http://www.kilty.demon.co.uk/beekeeping/improvement.htm>

Reply to a request for help from our Annette Hawkins (By the way, the local Association did NOT advise using Bayvarol)

I DO IT MY WAY!

There have been a couple of requests for an extended version of an article in the last issue of Bee Talk - here it is.

This is how I deal with varroa. It may not be the best way for you, so if you have a method that works and it suits your way of beekeeping - stick to it. If you find a method that you think is better, give the new way a try on a single hive to make certain that it is better.

I use open mesh floors so I can easily check on the natural mite drop and I do this at least once a month so I have some idea as to the scale of mite infestation. Almost without fail, there will be some mites present - knowing that the hive was more or less mite free last month and can be left at that, just isn't good enough! All hives can be contaminated by bees from other apiaries carrying varroa, where badly infected stocks are breaking up. You would be unaware of this unless you regularly check the mite drop.

1. About the second week in March, as soon as the weather starts to get around 10°C I put a tray of Apiguard on the top of the combs, not directly over the brood nest but to one side. I leave this on until the Apiguard mixture is all gone, then put on a second tray. This should take me through the summer without any more treatment other than dusting with icing sugar when the opportunity arises, swarms etc.

2. About the Second week in May, or when the weather dictates it is time for the super to go on, all Apiguard is removed and honey supers put on to make room for the Spring flow. The stock can now go through the Summer with some confidence that the mite problem is somewhat under control. I still keep an eye on the mite drop and use icing sugar when the opportunity arises.

3. About the first or second week in August before the bees start to work the heather moors which are within flying distance of my apiary, I take the now full, (hopefully) supers off and put some partially full ones on, to take the heather honey, Winter feed and whatever else they can get, to provide themselves with their Winter stores.

There is no problem now in having Apiguard and supers on at the same time, as the honey in the supers is solely for the bees and not for human consumption. With this in mind, a tray of Apiguard is placed on the top frames of the super. The second tray of Apiguard will need to go on after about four weeks. I keep checking the mite drop and ensuring the hive has sufficient food for Winter.

This is the time of year to make sure the bees get sufficient stores for Winter and, more importantly, are given a chance to raise bees that are free from varroa and as disease free as possible. They then have the best possible chance of getting through the Winter and into Spring as a healthy, strong stock.

4. About the second week in December when the queen has all but stopped laying eggs and there is very little or no brood in the nest, is the time to do the oxalic acid treatment.

Try to keep an eye on the four day weather forecast. Try to find a day that is cold, just above freezing to keep the bees in cluster whilst the acid is trickled along the seams of bees, then a couple of days of warm weather for the bees to fly and relieve themselves. (you'll be lucky!)

But for goodness sake do not abuse the Bavarol strips, they should be held in reserve for emergency treatment only

IN AN EMERGENCY

I start to get worried if I see two or more mites drop per day in Winter, one in early Summer or three in August.

This would lead me into immediate emergency action. The emergency action, would be to put Bavarol strips in for 24/36 hours to see the mite drop and then use Apiguard or some other thymol treatment.

Bavarol strips can be used as a test and reused twelve times if stored in the bag they came in and properly sealed. Bavarol all so knocks down 70/80% of the mites that are on the bees in this short time. So there is a good chance of bringing things under control with this use of strips in an emergency. But for goodness sake do not abuse the strips, they should be held in reserve for emergency treatment only, or for the full treatment as stated on the box, otherwise we will loose the exceptional killing effect they have on the mites.

There are all ready many mites about that are immune to Bavarol right now. If you get a mite drop that suggests immediate treatment is necessary and placing strips does not cause a tremendous drop of mites, then it suggests you have resistant mites and will have to rely on thymol (Apiguard) alone.

Bill Ainsworth

THE BEES KNEES

Lord Rooker has announced plans to protect Britain's honey bees

A crack team of beekeepers is to be introduced to protect Britain's honey bees from killer diseases The Government announced the new plans yesterday as honey bees are under threat from new pests and infections predicted to hit in the next ten years. Volunteer beekeepers will be enlisted in any future emergencies to help the national team of bee inspectors to track and eradicate new viruses. The recruits will be kitted with safety suits and veiled helmets.

The strategy, announced by Lord Rooker, Food and Farming Minister, coincides with evidence from the British Bee Keepers' Association that the country has lost 25 to 30 per cent of its bee colonies in the past year as the varroa mite spreads killing millions of bees. There are 274,000 bee colonies; 50 years ago there were more than 400,000.

Since 1992 the mite has spread from Devon to cover the whole of the South, the Midlands and East of England. Lancashire and Cumbria are now on the front line as the mite moves north, feeding on larvae and adult bees.

Beekeepers also fear the importation of a disease that has wiped out millions of bees in America. Colony collapse disorder has spread to France, Germany and Italy. Climate change may drive other exotic parasites to Britain. The biggest threats are from the small hive beetle, parasitic brood mites and the Asian hornet.

From The Daily Mail Online April 2008

HISTORICAL NOTE HONEY AS A PRESERVATIVE.

Honey is of course a well known preservative and the ancients knew this as well and was used by the Babylonians, Greeks and Spartans for preserving the bodies of their great soldiers who died in battle far from home.

HEROD

The famous and wicked King Herod kept the body of Mariamne his wife in honey for seven years after her death because he loved her so much – even in death. The fact that it was him that executed her in the first place says a lot about Herod!



The Egyptologist E. A. Wallis Budge at his desk in the British Museum

The Egyptians provided their dead with jars of honey to eat in the after life and some of them survived until found by Egyptologists exploring the great tombs in the 1800s – 1900s. The honey was fine.

One incident however shows us the true power of honey to preserve and is taken from a story told by E A Wallis Budge an Egyptologist (1857 – 1934) who became curator of the British Museum. A local man had told Budge that:

EEUUUGH!

Once when he and several others were exploring the graves and seeking for treasure near the pyramids, they came across a sealed jar, and having opened it and found that it contained honey, they began to eat it. Someone in the party noticed that a hair in the honey turned round one of the fingers of the man who was dipping bread into the honey and as they drew it out, the body of a small child appeared with all its limbs complete and in a good state of preservation. It was said to be well dressed and had upon it numerous ornaments'.

Courtesy apis - uk

FOR ALL YOUR BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

Contact

Judith David

agent for

Thornes Beekeeping Equipment

Hoarstones, Fence

BURNLEY BB1 2 9EA

'phone 01282 693330

**Always telephone first - early morning or teatime
are the best times to find us available.**

A phone call will guarantee your order will be at the next beekeepers' meeting

Tired with noise, pollution,
and the same old Costa holiday?
Why not try a different Costa?

Come to Costa Geminiano.

An Italian rustic farmhouse
to let for holidays in the
mountains of Emilia-Romagna
Province of Parma.

The property is situated at
620 metres above sea-level
on the edge of a small quiet
village amidst beautiful unspoilt
country-side. The nearest town
Parma is 12 kms.



Accommodation comprises of three double bedrooms + one single,
self-catering (meals can be arranged by request)

Guaranteed no internet, no television, no on-suite bathrooms,
no discos or fully sunset covers — just the sound of the birds
(cockatoo alarm calls) and bees (please bring your own veil)

Walking boots must for exploring the country-side.

Price per week 450 euros. Short stay B+B also available at 30 euros per
person a night. Interested? Need to know more? Ring 0039 0525 76169.

LIFT ME ONTO MY SOAP BOX

AH YES! I REMEMBER IT WELL!



It may not affect you yet but rest assured it will!

You'll go to an upstairs room and think "Now why have I come up here?" Or you'll open three drawers and a cupboard looking for your car keys and then discover they were in your hand all the time.

AND HOW ARE YOU?

You'll stand talking to someone for ten minutes desperately trying

to remember their name or even where you've seen them before. Sometimes the penny will drop other times you will say goodbye not having a clue who you've been talking to. Or, even worse (and this has happened to me), you will mutually discover that you have never seen one another before in your life!

SUMMAT AND NOWT

Memory is a strange thing. I have a theory that every single word, impression, image and thing that happens is stored in that most magical of computers - the mind. Perhaps I am peculiar but do you find that random memories spring into your mind? Not highly significant events in your life but inconsequential little things of no great importance which out of the blue, flash up in your memory in every little detail.

Again, if you are like me you can drive down a road and suddenly realise that you have been this way before - recognising buildings and even hedges and fences. And yet I find even relatively young people (By my standards anyway!) seem to have the same difficulty recalling specific details - names, places, faces.

HOW MANY DO YOU KNOW?

Another crack pot theory comes to my mind. Perhaps it is simple overload. Imagine one of your ancestors who lived in, say, 1800. If he could read at all, he might read the newspaper and the occasional book or pamphlet. He wouldn't travel far and when he did it was probably never more than ten miles an hour. He might have known a hundred people by sight but it is likely he would see less people in his lifetime than you see in a month. No TV, no radio, no cinema, few if any road signs, no supermarkets, no 'News 24'. In

other words lots of time and lots of room to store comparatively little information.

IT'S ALL TOO MUCH!

Just compare your day with his. You get up, switch on the radio or TV, read a newspaper. Get in your car and drive several miles to work - all the time taking in impressions of road signs, advertisements, other drivers, pedestrians, possibly listening to the car radio and maybe taking a couple of calls on your mobile phone.

COMMUNICATION

At work there are lots of people to communicate with. You may work on a computer, use the Internet, read documents, answer the phone serve customers - all the time absorbing thousands and thousands of impressions. Whether or not you accept my theory of storing ALL this information you must concede that you store a heck of a lot of it.

Could it be that the memory banks are becoming over stuffed? Does our biological computer struggle to find pigeon holes for everything and simply puts the garbage in amongst the things we really should remember so that when we see that familiar but un-recognised face there are just too many pigeon holes to search to put a name to the face?

WHAT ABOUT THE BEES?

What has all this to do with beekeeping? Well perhaps they are in some ways ahead of us on the evolutionary path.

The individual bee may not have the mental capacity of the average human but collectively the hive does pretty well. Who remembers the very precise specifications for the honey comb? Who remembers when it is time to swarm or produce a new Queen? Is there an individual who remembers how to read the waggle dance?

WE MIGHT CATCH UP

Maybe when we have a few hundred more generations under our belt we won't need so much individual memory but be able to tune in to the collective human memory. Come to think of it perhaps we are part way there already. I don't know if the analogy is quite right but there must be quite a few individuals who could make all the parts for a primitive steam engine from scratch but I doubt if there is an individual who could make even the most basic computer.

Scrapings

YEMENIS RECOGNISE MEDICINAL BENEFITS OF HONEY

Yemenis have honey for dessert. After a meal, they dip bananas in the thick, sweet liquid, the colour of which varies from amber to black. Or it's poured in circles over a huge round pastry that tastes like chewy puff pastry.

But that's not its only use. Long before honey stores cropped up about three decades ago, honey was used mainly for medicinal purposes. It was not sold commercially; rather, jars were presented as gifts. Today, the medicinal benefits of honey are touted by honey stores, which display jars of honey-laced cream to treat everything from hemorrhoids to back pain, fatigue to dry skin. The shelves the jars are on look like beehives.

There's also the "newlyweds mix," honey spiked with ginseng and herbal extracts that salesmen promote as an aphrodisiac. "We give it to men and women who come to us with sexual problems," said salesman Ahmed al-Nahari. "Honey is a good aphrodisiac." . . .

PINE MARTEN IN SCOTLAND

This young Pine Marten became a regular visitor to our lodge in Scotland. He's supposed



to like peanut butter but this one loved bread and jam. I was going to try him with honey but Bill's honey is much too good to give away!

Arthur

BEES MOVE INTO EMPTY HOMES

CAPE CORAL, Florida

In a county with one of the nation's highest foreclosure rates, empty houses have attracted a new type of nonpaying tenant: bees. Tens of thousands of honeybees, building nests in garages, rafters, even furniture left behind. When a swarm came to the foreclosed ranch house Cape Coral, town officials called a fourth generation beekeeper and licensed bee remover.

On a recent evening, the beekeeper stood at the open garage door as hundreds of honeybees buzzed over his head and past his ears, disappearing into a hole behind the water meter. The house has been without a human occupant since December. "If it's in the yard I just take care of it," Mr. Councell said. "But if it's in the structure, usually I can't get permission to go in. And it's a problem, because somebody's going to get stung. It creates a risk for everybody around."

Foreclosed houses around the country have been colonized by squatters, collegiate revellers, methamphetamine cooks, stray dogs, rats and other uninvited guests. Mr. Councell only has eyes for bees. Last year, he said, he answered calls about bees in more than 100 vacant houses, and the volume was higher this year. . .

CARRIER BEES !?

The British Beekeeping Journal of 16 Jan 1902 informs us of one English beekeeper who used his bees to convey messages. He took the bees a long way from their hives and gummed to their wings tiny micro-photographed letters and then set them loose, whereupon they returned directly to their hives, so demonstrating that bees could be used in this way. The idea seems to have been taken up by the Japanese during the Second World War, when bees were employed to carry microscopic documents across enemy lines.



Cleaver Group



Suppliers Of Quality Freezer Foods To The Retail And Catering Trade
Manufacturers of and specialists in all meat products

* * * *

-  Purveyors of Quality Meat & Freezer Food
-  Expert advice on choice
-  Free Local Delivery

* * * * *

**CLEAVER GROUP STANDS FOR QUALITY, SERVICE
AND COMPETITIVE PRICING**

Retail Premises:

Roberts Butchers
Croft Street Burnley
(Opposite the Bus Station)

Factory:

2/4 Bradley Road East Nelson

Phone 01282 698032 Fax 01282 698119

email paul@cleavergroup.fsnet.co.uk

www.cleavergroup.co.uk

THE ASSOCIATIONS HONEY EXTRACTOR

The extractor is available for hire at £5.

It must be returned in the condition it was received - - clean and tidy and all in one piece

All breakages must be paid for by the hirer

Michael Birt is no longer in charge of the extractor.

Ring Bill on 01282 614015 to find out mor



A HONEY EXTRACTOR