

north staffordshire beekeepers association

(www.northstaffsbees.org.uk)

September 2010 NewsLetter

Next Meeting:
Wednesday 1st September
7p.m. for 7.30 start
The Friends Meeting House,
Newcastle

“Chairman’s Chat” September 2010

My apologies to our editor and to you all for delaying production of this newsletter, waiting for my notes! I have been away on a working holiday down in Somerset, and getting caught up in plumbing repairs at home on my return. (Well, that’s my excuse!)

Whilst away, I have been trying to contact **Trentham Gardens** to confirm our commitment to attend their **Autumn Festival** and have a North Staffs Beekeepers Stand, to talk to the Public about our Beekeeping hobby. This is to be held over two days on **Saturday and Sunday 11th and 12th September**. I do need at least a dozen volunteers to help me, these can be newcomers to our craft to explain how they are getting started, as well as more experienced beekeepers so that we can have a mix on the stand at any one time, and give plenty of time for our volunteers to have a look around the rest of the show. There will be an opportunity to sell some honey or other beekeeping products but the final details are yet to be agreed. Now for the hard sell – without your support we will not be able to attend and we will lose any chance of having an Apiary Site at Trentham (if this is the way we decide to develop), so I do want as many of you as possible to either phone me on 01630 647584, or email on davidcheek@talktalk.net and agree to help on either one day or both. Please don’t let me down!

I hope to see as many of you as possible at our next meeting at the Friends Meeting House on Wednesday next 1st. September. Gerry Collins from Doncaster is our Guest speaker (of good repute) and we have South Cheshire Beekeepers with us also.

See you there!

Dave Cheek davidcheek@talktalk.net

Dates for your diary:

Wednesday 1st September

Joint meeting with our friends from South Cheshire

Guest Speaker

Gerry Collins from Doncaster who will be talking about “reading the comb” which will prove to be a very interesting topic for all beekeepers.

Wednesday 6th October Our 58th Honey Show

Open judging by Steve Guest of South Cheshire BKA will give newcomers to showing direct comment on requirements of the very exacting aspects of preparation and presentation.

Future meeting information to follow

NSBKA equipment storage required – can you help us? - URGENT

We have a number of items that need to be dryly and securely stored these includes the marquee, extractors and a few other items.

The amount of space is not vast and the items are not heavy but we cannot store them at the FM Room so we are currently stuck.

If you can help us or know of a suitable location, please contact Nick Mawby on 01538 387506

Annual Honey Show 2010 - North Staff Beekeepers

Now the beekeeping season is drawing to a close, it's time to look at your honey and other hive products and decide what to enter in our Honey Show.

We have planned to hold a small honey show again this year at the October meeting. Hopefully enough of you will have produce to enter items in at least one class

Our judge this year is Steve Guest and is well know to many of us. Steve is a National Honey Show Judge and a member of the Cheshire Beekeepers and he has again agreed to do an open judging evening which many of us have found helpful in the past not just for entering honey shows but for the general production and presentation of our own honey regardless of its use.

You do not need masses of honey to exhibit in the Show and even if you do not have any honey, you will find that there are other classes in the Show that you can enter. The cake class proved to be well supported last year and has been included again.

A copy of this year's Show Schedule is included in this Newsletter but this year for the first time, all of the documentation and some advice on showing preparation is available on our website for you to view and/or download.

For those members who do not have computer access, please contact me and I will post you a printed copy. As usual there will be copies available on the night and entries accepted up to 7.20pm on the evening of the show The Show Rules are also available so please read them carefully because failure to follow the rules can result in show exhibits being disqualified by the Judge.

We hope that you will make an effort and enter **your** Show to help make it a success and please contact me if you need any help.

Margaret Teasdale - Honey Show Manager

North Staffordshire Beekeepers Association - 2010 Honey Show Schedule

Class Details

1. **Two jars of Light, Medium or Dark Honey** Only open to members who have not previously won a first prize at a honey show
2. **Two jars of Light Honey**
3. **Two jars of Medium Honey**
4. **Two jars of Dark Honey**
5. **Black jar class** One jar of honey with glass covered as the honey is judged on flavour but not appearance
6. **Two jars of Heather Honey (Ling)**
7. **Two jars of Chunk Honey - (Must consist of approximately 50% comb).**
8. **Two jars of Granulated Honey**
9. **Two containers of Cut Comb Honey.** Displayed in standard white or clear commercial 8 oz containers (230gms approx) with a transparent snap on lid.
10. **One cake of Beeswax. 250gms weight.**
11. **One standard Bottle Mead - (Dry)**
12. **One standard Bottle Mead - (Sweet)**
13. **Photographic - Prints or transparencies 35mm size, of any subject connected with beekeeping.**
The exhibit can be titled or displayed in mounts for projection. Up to three may be submitted as a single entry.
The photographs must have been taken, but not necessarily processed by the entrant.
14. **Honey Cake**
4oz (100g) butter or margarine 6oz (150g) honey 8oz (200g) self-raising flour
6oz (150g) sultanas 2 eggs

Mead should be exhibited in clear colourless (or slightly green tinted) glass bottles stoppered by a cork with a white plastic (or cream coloured) flange

Cream together the fat and honey, beat the eggs well and add with the sifted flour. Beat well and lightly. A little milk may be added as necessary. Turn in sultanas and mix well. Bake in a 6½-7½ inch round tin for about 1¼ hours in a moderate oven.

September Beekeeping Tasks & Tips

- Finish your varroa treatment and plan for an October formic acid or December oxalic acid treatment
- Feed as much strong sugar solution (2lb sugar to 1pint water) to ensure a total of 30-40 pounds of stores
- Feeding should be finished by the end of September to allow the bees to store it properly and prevent fermentation which can lead to dysentery.
- The wasps are out – so close down your entrances to one or two bee widths –wasps can wipe out a weak colony in a few days.
- Consolidate frames in supers so that empty combs are together and there is some empty space for storage of autumn nectar. Partially filled supers can be rearranged with empty frames in the centre and the filled and capped frames on the outside.
- Remove and carefully store all empty supers of comb – fumigate with acetic acid.
- If you have a question or problem – don't hesitate to ASK as help is always available!

Meeting the public at the shows –

Thanks to those who offered their help but sadly, we did not have sufficient volunteers to enable us to attend the two shows but the good news is that I now have some names upon which to build for next year. It has been an excellent suggestion from Rachael Lewis that we discuss this subject at a future meeting and that will be done.

Thanks DT

Member's Chat

Subject – The Summer “Social” - revisited

We were sorry to miss the summer social, it clashed with our holidays and perhaps others members also had other conflicting and equally important happenings so maybe the timing is not the most convenient? **Thank you**

(Emailed to Ed - Members name withheld by request)

AFTER THE HONEY HAS BEEN REMOVED

Now is **NOT** the time to sit back and think how clever you have been to get a crop of honey. On the contrary, it is time to get on with the job of preparing your hives for winter and the big question is which to do first – **feed or treat for varroa?**

If there is plenty of honey left under the queen excluder the answer is **varroa treatment first**. Remember that this is going to take about four weeks and you do not want to have to interrupt the treatment with the need to feed.

If the colonies are short of food then the answer is **feed first**.

However, as soon as you have got enough food in to last the four weeks, you should cease feeding and commence varroa treatment. You can always come back later and top up stores as required.

VARROA TREATMENT

Treating properly is much too detailed to describe in this article. Instead I would refer you to the set of notes that appears on the Welsh Beekeepers' Association website www.wbka.com Click on *Information Station - Post-pyrethroid varroa control using a combination of Apiguard and oxalic acid*. The instructions are not hard to follow but it is important to get the detail right if you are to get optimum results.

Always remember that **it is not the mites you kill that matter, it is the mites you don't kill**, i.e. the mites that survive will form the starting point for future population increase.

When you compare a treatment that kills 95% of the mites with one that kills 99% the difference is not 4%, it is five-fold! This is why back-up treatments, such as mid-winter oxalic acid, are required. The combination of 95% kill with your main treatment (usually essential oil-based at the present time, e.g. Apiguard or ApiLife Var) added to a 90-95% kill with oxalic acid is mathematically (and practically) as good as or better than a single treatment with a 99% kill.

Extract from August Beecraft – August Beekeeping – Wally Shaw



HAVE YOU GOT EMAIL?

You have chosen to receive newsletters by post but would prefer to receive future newsletters by email and save your association money

email info@northstaffsbees.org.uk

Talking to YOU

Over recent years, several changes and improvements to the services to members have been provided thanks mainly due to the vision, ideas, efforts and enthusiasm of some members who want to take our Association from the 20th into the 21st century.

A major advance is the creation and more importantly, the ongoing development of the North Staffs Beekeepers' website, which has provided wider access to information for members and the general public. Whilst many members have access to internet facilities, the needs of those members who do not have access to the internet are not forgotten and your Association makes every effort to ensure that they receive equally comprehensive benefits and are not affected by not having access to a computer.

However, the access to an internet connected computer does enable speedier communications with members and does save money which enables us to maintain the level of membership subscriptions.

Monthly Newsletters

The objective of the monthly Newsletter is to let you know what is happening in your Association and to provide useful information on beekeeping.

It takes (on average), three days each month to produce each issue and we need to know if it is fulfilling its objective in being interesting and useful to you or if it is too long, not long enough, and if the articles/information is of use, and what else or other options you would prefer.

The Newsletter is produced in a printed and electronically printable form if members wish to print certain pages themselves and members can request either or both. The benefit of distributing the NL by Email saves both time and Association funds. The electronic copy is sent out as an Email attachment that you need to "open" in order to read it. If you have any problems opening the document, please contact either Nick or myself.

Meeting content and social events

We aim to make the meetings as interesting and enjoyable as is possible for all who attend the meetings but Tim Wayne would appreciate your views about what you would like from the meetings i.e. subjects, content and format. Equally, if you have any views about the social events, make them known to him. Tim's contact details are tim@microwayes.net or 01782-611890

We are trying to move forward and perhaps, the word is modernise but it is the members needs that must be the driving force, so please, give us YOUR views.

Membership Renewal – due October 1st for 2010/2011

This is to remind you that your membership of YOUR Association is due for renewal on 1st October 2010 and the documentation is attached/enclosed for you to complete. In order to remain a member it should be paid by 1st November 2010. Full membership not only includes your Association, it also includes membership of the BBKA and your insurance cover so in order to maintain that status, please deal with it promptly.

Members should note that **AFFILIATE** Membership is intended for members who do not have any bees and only provides membership rights for your Association. In order to receive the excellent publication BBKA News and have insurance cover, you do need to be **FULL** members of your Association.

Of your membership subscription, a substantial percentage is paid directly to the BBKA to support the work our National organisation does for us. As the capitation monies are paid with strict deadlines, you will appreciate that your Association needs all members to pay their subscriptions promptly. You can pay your subscription in various ways, via paying Ray at the next meeting in September, completing the form and sending it to Ray or (what is now proving to be very popular) via the computerised Paypal system through our website which is both speedy and secure – the choice is yours.

Giftaid – This is the system of Charitable giving where charities can reclaim the value of tax for your subscription. It costs you nothing and benefits your Association so we would encourage you (if you are a tax payer), to sign-up to this facility for the benefit of your Association.

Contact with YOU - When you complete your membership renewal, please ensure that we have all of your contact information i.e. telephone number, mobile telephone number and/or Email address which will enable us to use the most cost effective and timely method to contact you if the occasion arises.

We maintain that communications are the most important task of your Association and every effort will be made to achieve that objective. Your Association still undertake to maintain the privacy of your information regardless of the method of communication you chose.

Winter Preparations & feeding

Whilst not wishing to move the calendar forward, now is the time to prepare your bees for winter and ensure that your bees have sufficient stores to sustain them through the winter and your bees need to be treated for Varroa. Remember that NO stores and not treating might result in **NO** bees next year!

Ensure that you store your unused boxes and combs in a dry protected area that mice cannot get to i.e. no gaps because mice can get through the smallest of holes and they do damage honey comb, and don't forget to fit mouse guards on your colonies.

Each colony of bees needs enough sealed stores to ensure that they are adequately fed and have sufficient stores to last them throughout the winter. Ideally, there should be a minimum of 40 pounds (in old money) of stores available on each colony for winter. If your colonies do not currently have that amount of stores available now, start to feed them immediately

To calculate the amount of stores currently in your colonies, the process is very simple insofar as you need to assess the amount of stores on each colony and whilst accuracy is preferable through weighing hives etc. As a rough "rule of thumb", for British National frames each full frame of stores will weigh approximately 5 pounds and a full super frame will weigh 3 pounds. If the total is less than 40 pounds, feed NOW using two pounds to one pint of water syrup.

For ease for the two to one solution, use a one-gallon container and make two marks on the container i.e. one at the four-pint level and another at the eight-pint level. To produce the syrup solution, fill the container to the four-pint mark with very hot water and then pour in sugar until the eight-pint mark is reached. When that level is reached, put the stopper on the container and then "shake" the container to ensure a complete mix. When it is cool, feed your bees using an appropriate type of bulk feeder. If you do not have a suitable container or for larger amounts of syrup, a clean plastic bucket can be used but this will require you to measure the volumes before putting them into the bucket and stirring the mixture until it has dissolved. Using very hot water does not affect the quality of the solution and does make the task easier but do take care when using either of these methods

If you have any questions or problems with this article contact either David Teasdale (07971 013787) or Nick Mawby (01538 387506).



your chance to take part in our

HONEY SHOW

on Wed 6th October
when

OPEN JUDGING allows you to understand what the judge is looking for which will help you with your "normal" honey processing.

All Honey Show documentation and guidance information on preparing exhibits for showing is on the website and can be read or printed;

start preparing now!

Enquiries or for printed copies contact: Margaret Teasdale 01782 502495

NewsLetter Editor:

Dave Teasdale. 01782 502495 or 07971 013787 or Email teasdale.david@btinternet.com

pay online



north staffordshire beekeepers association

northstaffsbees.org.uk

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL 2010-11

Your annual subscription to the Association is due by 1st October. It would help the association's officers if you could pay as soon as possible, or let us know if you do not wish to renew

1. Affiliated membership does **NOT** include B.B.K.A. membership nor insurance nor B.D.I.
2. Your third party liability insurance will lapse until such time as your subscription is received. **£14.00 from your subscription is paid to the B.B.K.A** and obtains this insurance cover.

This gives you cover in case you are sued for personal injury related to your beekeeping, or sale of hive products.

3. **B.D.I cover** (which only gives cover for compulsory destruction of your colonies if diagnosed with foulbrood) for your first three hives is included in the full membership but all other hives have to be covered at an extra charge (see below). For cover of more than 25 colonies please contact the treasurer for details of additional charges.

Surname:.....First name of full member:.....

Partner's Name:.....Tel No:.....

Address:.....

.....Post code:.....

To be kept informed of NSBKA meetings, apiary visits and events, include your *email address* and *mobile phone number*.

Email:.....Mobile No:.....

Type of membership required (please tick one)

- Full (includes BBKA membership & insurance) - **£26.00**
- Affiliated (**NO** BBKA membership or insurance)- **£13.00**
- Double Full (BBKA insurance for two members)- **£52.00**
- Full & Affiliate (insurance for first named only) - **£39.00**

Tick one box ONLY if you need extra BDI cover (your subscription includes the first 3 hives):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 5 colonies (includes the basic 3 hives) add £2.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 25 colonies (includes the basic 3 hives) add £11.10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 10 colonies (includes the basic 3 hives) add £5.25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 30 colonies (includes the basic 3 hives) add £13.60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 15 colonies (includes the basic 3 hives) add £7.75 | <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 35 colonies (includes the basic 3 hives) add £16.10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 20 colonies (includes the basic 3 hives) add £9.50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Up to 39 colonies (includes the basic 3 hives) add £18.10 |

If you need to claim for Bee Diseases Insurance (B.D.I) a receipt will be provided at the time.

Total remittance of membership and extra B.D.I (if applicable) enclosed = £

Please make you cheque payable to N.S.B.K.A. If you require a receipt, please enclose a S.A.E.

You can pay at the September meeting, or post a cheque, or pay online (see bottom of page)

Treasurer:- R. Day, 10 Acreswood Road, Burslem, Stoke On Trent, ST6 7DZ

tel no: 01782 867352 email: bigagino@hotmail.com

If you are a UK taxpayer, and want us to reclaim the tax you have paid on your subscriptions (which are considered as donations) please tick the relevant box for the years you wish us to reclaim:

- For this and future donations, and any made in the last 6 years.
- For this and future donations only
- For this donation only



Newsletter Delivery: We aim to produce a monthly newsletter, posted to those without email addresses; otherwise you will have them emailed and a choice of receiving all, none, or only the 'Special' colour editions by post. Please tick your choice of delivery:

- Only 'Special' issues posted
- Post everything
- Email only

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