

# BFFMASTER

## The Bi-monthly Newsletter of the Nottinghamshire Beekeepers' Association

Honorary Secretary: Maurice Jordan, Crow Park Apiaries, 29 Crow Park Avenue, SUTTON-on-Trent, Notts. NG23 6QG Tel: 01636 821 613  
mauricejordan11@btinternet.com

Membership Secretary: Bob Logan, 'Bon Accord', 67 Breck Hill Road, WOODTHORPE, Nottingham NG5 4GQ Tel: 0115 952 0945

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### DIARY DATES

[www.nottsbees.itgo.com](http://www.nottsbees.itgo.com)

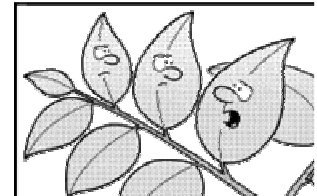
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> August **NEWARK** Region, Lord Nelson, **WINTHORPE**, 8pm

### MOORGREEN SHOW

24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2008

Note: Judging will be on the Sunday

If you think you'll lose, you've already lost,  
At the Honey Shows you'll find  
Success begins with a person's will;  
It's all in your state of mind.



Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September

**NEWARK** Region, Cross Keys, **UPTON** 8pm

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October

**NEWARK** Region, Lord Nelson, **SUTTON-on-Trent**, 8pm

### AUTUMN HONEY SHOW

**LOWDHAM** Village Hall 4<sup>th</sup> October 2008 2.15pm

30<sup>th</sup> October – 1<sup>st</sup> November **NATIONAL HONEY SHOW**,  
St. George's College, **WEYBRIDGE**, Surrey KT15 2QSE

"When we start falling it's time for the National Honey Show!"

### SECRETARY'S REPORT

We have just returned from a short break in Cornwall to visit The Lost Gardens of Heligan and the Eden Centre both of which I would recommend, but beekeeping was never far from my mind and I was amazed at the difference not only in the landscape but in the flora. Back home in Sutton-on-Trent the fields are all filled with corn, the hedges are neatly clipped and hardly a wild flower in sight, how different in Cornwall. Most of the fields are grass meadows and the hedges replaced with grass banks covered with wild flowers. This, combined with the milder climate, must make it a wonderful place to keep bees.

Once again to kill two birds with one stone on the way home we stopped off at Buckfast Abbey to look around this magnificent abbey and also to find out a little about the famous Brother Adam and the beekeeping. On entering the Abbey grounds (no admittance by the way) we were confronted by a large plan of the grounds with directions on where to find the entrance to the abbey, the location of various gardens, the shops, the restaurant, the conference centre but, disappointingly, no mention of the apiary. After visiting the Abbey and wandering around the gardens, still no sign of any beekeeping.

I asked one of the many gardeners at work there if any bees were still kept on site and he helpfully directed us to the famous home apiary which is located approximately three or four minutes walk away down a private road. On reaching the apiary we were once again disappointed that not only was it behind large locked gates but no longer looking like the many photographs I had seen in numerous books and magazines. Obviously beekeeping is not as prominent as in Brother Adam's day, well at least we could say we have seen the famous apiary. Back at the shop we tried buy a pot of Buckfast honey only to be told that they had sold out and none would be extracted until September, so I had to console myself with the purchase of a bottle of tonic wine instead.

Back home it was down to the what little rape honey the bees had collected this year when I suddenly realised the reason they had no need to do any extracting at Buckfast until September has we had not seen one rape field all the time we had been there, what a difference a few hours drive can make!

### MICROSCOPY COURSE

Have you ever looked at the pollen your bees are bringing in and wondered what it is? Pollen colour charts give some clues but have usually left me thinking "Well, it could be this, or maybe that" and not really answering the question. Stuart Ching's microscopy course shows how pollen can be absolutely identified. With instruction on how to use a microscope rather than just look through it and go "Wow" and how to methodically classify and identify what is seen the course is very informative. It's also great fun, very hands-on, and a thoroughly enjoyable evening, with a small group of like-minded people. *Val Simons*

On the last two Friday evenings, five people joined Stuart Ching at his home for the start of a basic microscopy course that he has organised. They have been most informative and enjoyable evenings and Stuart has provided extensive notes and course material to accompany the course and these notes will later be available from the Association Library. The Association microscopes are being put to good use and we are being shown how these should be properly used. Thank you Stuart. *John Carrish*

### IS IT ME – OR ARE YOU HAVING A BAD YEAR?

Rob Jarvie

I have only been keeping bees since 2004, so this is my fifth year – which makes me a cross between a beginner and a beginner who has made lots of mistakes. I have four colonies now (in Nationals), and in other years have had between two and five. They are all in Radcliffe on Trent, but I have had one in the garden before in West Bridgford, and one on an allotment in WB (not very successful as I hardly ever found a time when there weren't people around so that I could work them).

In previous years I have generally seen my bees build up fairly quickly from around the end of March and through April. I have usually supered from late April and into May, and had to combat swarming from May through June, even into July. I have had to

deal with Varroa as we all do – mine are on mesh floors (two open mesh, two on reversed floors). I have been rewarded by the bees for looking after them with enough honey to satisfy my family and the few regular customers I have – probably an average of 50lbs per hive (with some giving only one super and another three maybe). I have bought queens from Ged Marshall on recommendations from others, and so have tried to invest in the bees rather than simply take the queens they produce when swarming – next year I PROMISE that I will have a go at queen rearing.

But this year is different. The bees built up very slowly in March and April, still being low in numbers by May and even June. I fed the bees, but they were not that interested. Only two showed signs of swarming, and I performed artificial swarms with these to good effect. I am controlling Varroa as usual. I have supered, though I feel I am going through the motions as they aren't bringing in excess honey. The supers began to fill a bit, then went down (even though no swarming), then filled a bit and now (20th July) have gone down a bit again. I certainly have no honey to bring home, and I doubt that I will get any at this rate. Am I alone? Or are others finding it is a bad year for them too?

## A WORLD WITHOUT BEES

Alison Knox

**"If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe, then man would have four years of life left"** (attributed to Albert Einstein)

These words bring a cold chill to this novice Beekeeper, without yet, so much as a bee to my name. I am still very much agog with the wonder of it all and enthusiastically investigating the many and varied sources of information available. My initial interest was piqued by a random e-mail from a friend exhorting me to sign a petition to HM Government to substantially increase funding for beekeeping research in order to safeguard their well-being. Having signed the petition I wondered if there was not more I could do to help the bees.

My first step was to register as an Associate beekeeper with Nottinghamshire Beekeepers Association and to find an experienced local mentor who could, in effect, "apprentice" me to teach me the ways of the bee before I jumped into setting up any hives of my own. I also signed up for BeeCraft.

My first subscription to BeeCraft (June 2008) advertised a talk in London at the Guardian Newsrooms by Alison Benjamin and Brian McCallum to celebrate the publication of their book **"A World without Bees"**. I was determined to attend. To say *"I am glad I did"* is rather an understatement. The evening held many little gems of knowledge that I could not have anticipated not only within the actual presentation but the informal chatting afterwards, with a glass of wine and signed copy of the book to get to grips with.

As deputy editor of Society Guardian, Alison Benjamin writes on environmental and social affairs for the newspaper. Her partner and co-writer, Brian McCallum, is a Geography teacher and as a couple they keep their own "domestic" hives in London. Their passion and appreciation for the honeybee is palpable without resorting to sentimentality or romanticism. Their presentation, which was only a very short 60 minutes, touched on some of the less well known realities of what the honeybee is having to deal with. A film showing how the intensively farmed bee hives in the USA have been decimated by *"Colony Collapse Syndrome"* highlighted the immense stress the honeybee endures in the thousands of miles they are trucked across states from mono-crop to mono-crop to undertake the pollination of various fruit and nut orchards of America's massive agri-business. We were informed of some of the practices that are regularly used to "trick" the bees into working harder and for longer and for less reward. As this was the first time I had learned of such practices. I was not a little appalled -it smacked to me as nothing short of abuse of one of nature's greatest gifts. I had the opportunity to publicly ask the question *"What can we do to help?"* I was advised that the best we can do is be mindful of what we buy in our shops by checking the country of origin. If that packet of almonds you are eyeing up in the supermarket was produced in the USA, then you can be 99.9% sure that it was pollinated by a knackered little bee. Wherever possible, buy locally produced products and at least check for their organic status. Of course, the miserable existence of the "slave bee" is not held up as wholly responsible for the mass evacuation of the hives as there are other potential factors including viruses, mites, poisoning and even the possibility of mobile phone waves disrupting and disorientating the bees. The truth is that, right now, we just don't know! The book **"A World without Bees"** is very readable and intelligently researched, combining a natural personal enthusiasm with journalistic observance. I urge you to read it, . . . it may yet prove prophetic.

**Tim Lovett** (BBKA President) was in the audience and further endorsed the suggestion that we should be very mindful of what imported products we buy and also (of course) encouraged us to join a local Beekeeping Association and to sign the petition to the Government. He also advocated buying local honey and related products from local beekeepers. At the reception later, I was delighted to have the chance to chat to Tim and felt, despite my obvious limited experience with bees; I was given some great encouragement from a genuine enthusiast and bee lover. Thanks Tim!

Alison and Brian were supported throughout the evening by **Ted Benton**, photographer of bumblebees. Ted pointed out that although the bumblebee lives a very different kind of existence to the honeybee, many of the factors which affect one also affect the other. He mentioned in particular the decline of hedgerows and naturalised spaces, the use of pesticides and the fashion for paving over our gardens which have contributed in making life difficult for the wild pollinators that we have been so used to seeing during the summer months. It was advocated that we may consider encouraging the wild bees, although we do not get the same reward in terms of honey. They do add to the fabric of the eco-system and make a very considerable contribution to the pollination process. If you are interested in bumblebees, I can highly recommend ***"Field Guide to the Bumblebees of Great Britain"*** by Mike Edwards and Martin Jenner, with photography by Ted Benton. ISBN: 0-9549713-0-2. (I bought mine at The Natural History Museum but I am sure you can get it elsewhere.)

The evening also played host to the charity ***"Bees Abroad"*** raising awareness of the work undertaken by them in developing countries to support beekeeping projects. This organisation encourages use of locally sourced equipment and indigenous methods of beekeeping enabling beekeepers to earn a living and make a real contribution to their local economy. If you are interested in finding out more contact Mrs Jules Moore on [info@beesabroad.org.uk](mailto:info@beesabroad.org.uk) or check out [www.beesabroad.org.uk](http://www.beesabroad.org.uk)

I understand that the success of the evening has prompted Guardian Books to consider the possibility of running another talk in the near future. I can wholeheartedly recommend that you book a ticket if you have even the mildest interest in bees and their future.

And so; whilst the Americans may stand with their jaws agape looking for the “smoking gun” we all need to do our own bit to redress the imbalance that has been created by man. I look to the wise words of the philosopher Schumacher “*Small is beautiful*” and the great teacher, Gandhi “*Be the change you want to see in the world*”

As a positive step to encourage and enthuse others, and to share the joy of my experience as “The Beekeeper’s Apprentice” I will very soon be launching my own website [www.melissae.co.uk](http://www.melissae.co.uk) .designed to be informative and inspiring rather than simply factual and technical. Perhaps I cannot personally take on the giants of the American agri-business, but here, in my own small way I can make a difference in my own back garden. By next year I will have my own hive(s?) and have a decent education in how to manage and rear happy healthy bees. I have no desire or expectation to turn my bees into a “business” but to allow them every opportunity to be bees, doing what bees are meant to do. If there is a pot or two of honey for me at the end of it I will be delighted.

### **BEECRAFT DISCOUNT**

Bob Logan

I have been approached by BeeCraft with the offer of a group discount. If we have more than 10 members who receive BeeCraft by post we can get 10% discount if the association orders as a block booking. All copies are still posted to you directly from the printers. If you are interested in the scheme please let me know. To make life a little easier it is suggested that when you pay your membership fee in December you also include the annual BeeCraft subscription (less 10%). I will modify the form to include the option. Anyone out of sync will be reimbursed by Bee Craft.

### **BEEES AT RUFFORD**

Bob Logan

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July started cold and wet but that didn’t deter a dozen or so of us setting up the marquee at Rufford Abbey Country Park. We had stalls to interest the general public and, although we weren’t overwhelmed early on, things did pick up by 11.00am. Honey tasting, candle making, observation hive, promotional computer presentations, bees in the garden, candle dipping, a display showing the stages of honey production from flower to jar and our new virtual hive all proved to be of interest to the public. Lots of people were genuinely interested and, because we were not overrun, we were able to spend a little longer talking and explaining to them and passing on our enthusiasm about bees.

I was very heartened to see so many newer beekeepers helping out as well as our “old hands”. It is a huge relief to me, beforehand, to know who can support events. It makes the allocation of jobs a lot simpler. We have undertaken this event for five years now and I think we are beginning to settle in. I know that it is a positive step towards recruiting new members, along with our other outreach activities. On behalf of the Association our grateful thanks for your support.

### **FEEDING**

Bee Works, Toronto, Canada

The means of supplementing or stimulating a hive by feeding at various times of the year improves its viability. After the honey crop has been removed it is vital that the bees have sufficient stores to carry them through winter into early spring, otherwise they will starve, one of the biggest failures of a wintered hive. The hives need approximately 45 kilograms of stores. Translated into easy maths, each frame (standard deep) will hold approximately three kilograms, so a hive examined in late autumn should have at least 14 plus frames of sealed stores. If not then they should be fed quickly.

For winter feed, a 2:1 sugar syrup in a hive top feeder should be fed early enough for the bees to convert and seal off ready for winter. It should be remembered that bees need warmth to work and a reasonable daytime temperature is essential to allow them time to convert. With autumn feeding it should be ‘a lot in a short time’. If it is dragged out by only supplying small amounts the danger of stimulating new brood is very possible, quite the reverse of what is needed. By feeding large amounts quickly any cells becoming empty by late emerging brood will be filled. The perfect position to start the winter.

An interesting question: Is sugar better than honey for feed? The simple answer, yes, sugar is better. It seems there are fewer solids in sugar; therefore the bees have fewer faeces to vent during cleansing flights. It is possible to feed honey drippings etc. from the autumn extraction, but it should be stressed not to use heated honey in any form, otherwise dysentery is almost guaranteed.

### **Spring Feeding.**

A misnomer in fact. If autumn feeding was carried out correctly then spring feeding should not be necessary. The term should really be ‘spring stimulation’ because that is what is being attempted. Incoming nectar is the trigger to most hive functions. Without it the queen will stop laying, brood production goes into a decline, and hive activity slows down. Now add a slow drip of nectar, (sugar syrup), and suddenly activity increases. Working backwards from when the real first flow starts, we stimulate to produce bees for this flow by adding syrup six weeks ahead. Remember: - Don’t overfeed in the spring. The danger being a honey bound brood area, nowhere for the queen to lay, leading to early swarming.

### **Nucleii.**

The thing that gets these off to a good start is feeding. On making up a nucleus there are a few points worth repeating. First, a nucleus, after a couple of days will have lost most if not all of its foraging bees, so therefore there is no nectar coming in. In these circumstances the queen will lay, only if there are open stores. On making up the nucleus, crack open sealed stores with a hive tool, and then feed using the spring stimulation method.

Finally, remember! Bees will only draw foundation during a flow, so feed heavily if adding foundation.

### **BEE STINGS**

Bob Logan

The item in the last Beemaster about stings reminded me of a tip I was given by a chemist who was also a beekeeper. “Always carry some Dissolvable Aspirin” (now marketed under Aspro Clear). If you ever have a sting (wasp or bee) place a tablet on your tongue and when it froths put it (*the tablet not the tongue!*) and the froth on the sting site. If you do this within 15 minutes of being stung, you should avoid any swelling and inflammation. I’ve used it on numerous occasions and it works for me.

Very recently I received some other advice from a doctor friend to always carry a 1p or 2p coin. If you get stung place the coin on the sting site, secure it in place with tape and again there will be no swelling. I've used this method too and it does work! Apparently the copper in the coin counteracts the venom. Of course you scrape the sting and venom sack away before applying either method. Unfortunately the sting site is still itchy for a couple of days, you can't have everything!

## IT'S A STRANGE WORLD

Ettemarie Peterson, California

**M**y latest funny child's remark was made when I explained to a group about the drone's dying when he mated. A little boy got a very serious look on his face and said, "Why would a drone want to mate then?" I said, "Good question!"

## THE EXTRAVAGANCE

Gary Krist

"Industry," the beekeeper said, "is the only true path to God's grace."

I watched from a distance, standing under the rattling leaves of a poplar tree. The man, despite his pious words, looked more devil than angel to me. He wore thick gloves and a wicker helmet draped to the shoulders with dusty burlap sacking. His leather apron, wax- and honey-smearing, clung to his chest like an eel-skin.

"Nothing is earned except by good, honest labour," said he, testing the weight of each throbbing hive. "The Bible has it so"--and here a smile showed in the gap between the pleats of burlap sacking--"but pray don't ask me to say precisely where."

He plucked a dish of smouldering grass from the ground and swept it round the first straw skep, painting the hive with his sweet smoke. A few lone bees emerged to buzz about his covered head, but though I looked for the rest to turn angry and swarm from the hive like seamen from a burning sloop, the bees inside were still. I wiped a trickle of sweat from my lip and--heart jumping, thinking it a bee--slapped an ant from my moist bare thigh.

**He had the smell of  
beeswax about him**

The beekeeper turned his head and smiled again. He was a large man, beefy and bulb-nosed, with the stance and slow movements of a bullock. In the heat of the spring afternoon, his cheeks shone wet and ruddy beneath the wicker helmet. He had the smell of beeswax about him--of beeswax and smoke and horse leather--which I liked. I had seen him once or twice in the town, and knew him to be a man of many trades: a lock keeper, a grower of potatoes and roots, a street-corner Dissenter, and now a honey-man. I never knew his name.

He put aside the smoke-dish and lifted the skep from its wooden platform. This caused some mild perturbation in the hive, and I took a step back, though I stood distant enough to be safe, I thought. Then he reached within and brought out a comb, brimming with amber honey and deep-cobbled by bees. "There's them that will kill the bees to harvest their honey and wax, but I've not the heart for that," said he. He took a goose feather from his belt and gently brushed the bees from the comb.

"What's your name, boy?" he enquired of me then, eyes upon his work. "William Merrick, sir." "And do you go to school, William Merrick?" "I do. Though I have a tutor as well--my older cousin, an educated man--whose attentions I share with my brothers." And does this cousin teach you your Bible verses so you have them all by heart?"

I hesitated, wondering if it be best to lie and be caught out, or else to speak the truth and risk his disapproval. "Mr. Dooling--for such is my tutor's name, sir--he owns a fine old Bible, bound in red Morocco. He puts us to reading it whenever he needs an hour to himself." The beekeeper laughed then--a deep, rasping growl. "You answer like a Norman, Master Merrick. Which is to say, you answer not at all." He placed the brushed honeycomb into a bucket and reached in for another. "But I was a boy once, too. I know there's better games than Bible-reading."

The time was early May, and the spring had run long and hot that year, with little rain. The grassy hills beyond the Exeter road showed sere and brittle in the sun, grazed by sheep and wild ponies kicking up the dust. Freed from lessons by the heat, I spent my afternoons aimlessly, scraping at the countryside for amusement. I chased hares, played jousting knight against the cattle, made daring leaps from haylofts, and bathed in the warm oily waters of mossy ponds. I was nine that year, and well mannered--when it suited me.

"Have you tasted honey fresh from the hive, William Merrick?" the beekeeper asked. He was engaged now in brushing another comb. Bees clung to his arm, the feather, his helmet. "No, sir." "Come here, then." I shifted on my feet. I was yet damp from my bathing and the shirt clung to my narrow, knobby chest. A bee, I knew, had thirst like any other creatures. "Are you afraid?" I nodded, and hung back.

He laughed. "That's a good lad. A little fear is not a bad thing when working with the bees. But there's fear and there's panic, y'know. Calm is what matters to the bees. Calm without fear is a peril, and fear without calm doubly so. But the man who can hold both at once within his breast will not be harmed. Do you believe me, William Merrick?" "You are the honey-man, sir, and ought to know." He grunted in satisfaction. "Good, good. Then there's something remarkable I wish to show you." He replaced the skep on its platform and picked up the bucket of honeycombs. "Come along, then, if you're not too frightened."

**Calm is what matters  
to the bees**

He started down the hillside toward a gathering of barns and out-houses in the fields below. Curious now, I followed, skirting the little village of hives, yet keeping a distance from the beekeeper, too, as his clothes and bucket still shed strays at every swing of his arm. In a minute, we had reached his honey house, as he called it. He placed the bucket inside and peeled off the wicker helmet and shawl. His grey-black hair was matted and tussled like a wren's nest atop his head. "There comes a time," he said to me, "when bees, like men, must set out to try their fortunes in a new place. And, like men, they can easily be led. Or misled. Do you understand my words, boy?"

Impatient as I was with this didactic way of speaking--and eager to see the promised amazement, which I hoped might be some horrible, dead thing--I asked him: "Will you tell me next that men, like bees, can sting?" He looked up sharply. But then, deciding

my answer had no scorn in it, he merely shook his head. He shed his gloves and tossed them upon the hot yellow straw. Then he took from his pocket a few balls of beeswax. After first kneading them soft, he pushed them into his hair-clogged ears and nostrils. "You're a clever boy, William Merrick," he muttered--somewhat incomprehensibly, with his nose so stuffed. "Mind you don't overvalue your cleverness. To the soul it can be killing as the canker to the rose."

He beckoned me round the corner of the honey house. Again I followed, until we came upon an apple tree in the yard. It hummed like a church choir, and its limbs seemed as if wrapped up in a kind of furry pelt--which I recognized all at once, and with a start, as a swarm of bees, unhived, clinging to a joint in the boughs.

I stopped cold, but the old man went on toward the tree. As I watched, he reached into the seething mass and slowly pulled away an object--a small cage or box that had hung there by a leather strap. "The queen," said he, as he slung the box round his own neck, bees and all, and took a few steps from the tree. He turned to face me. "'Tis simple as a proverb: They follow the object of their desire."

I looked on, astonished, as a cloud of bees rose from the apple tree. They moved across the intervening space, gathering then on the old man's aproned chest, his blown cheeks and stubbled chin. I gasped, seeing the future content of all my midnight horrors there before me, but the beekeeper only gave a nod. "The calmness, William Merrick," said he, draped in that shawl of blind, teeming life. "You must learn the calmness, and thus conquer the fear."

I put a hand to my dry lips and--sighing--fainted dead away.

### WHY DO FLOWERS SMELL SO SWEET?

It is puzzling that flowers smell so good to us. Indeed, the scent of flowers is probably the nicest smell of all. This would be understandable if humans fed on nectar or pollen, like bees, but we do not, except in the form of honey. Perhaps some of our primate ancestors did, and we have inherited their pleasure in the scent of flowers. (Some primate species do eat flowers or suck nectar.) But it must be many thousands of years since flowers were a major food item for humans, so this is a thin explanation.

### WINTERING BEES

Bee Works, Toronto, Canada

Winter a most difficult time for bees, even more so if the beekeeper hasn't prepared the hives correctly. This is the time of year when the most losses occur; mainly through ignorance or bad management the hives are left to their own devices. Often the keeper has stolen the bees winter stores, left them unprotected from the elements, then wonders why the hive is dead come spring. Good wintering techniques start months before the first frost.

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Starvation.</b>           | There is a misconception that honey can be taken from a hive without causing problems. False! Bees need, subject to the area they're kept in, approx 45-60 kilograms of stores. Simple math's at three kilograms per frame tells you how much stores your bees will need. The results of keeping your bees short of winter stores will be obvious in a slow spring build up.  |
| <b>Failing Queens.</b>       | It is obvious when pointed out that a failing or old queen won't make it through a hard winter, but time after time I find failed queens when analysing other's failures. A queen in her second full season has a 50-50 chance of failing over the winter. So my advice, autumn re-queen. A young, strong queen entering the winter has a far better chance of heading a strong hive in the early spring, leading to bigger crops. An old queen in the winter will certainly not improve before the spring. |
| <b>Wet Hives.</b>            | It is remarkable how many fail to ventilate the hive in the wettest time of the year. Warm air condenses on cold surfaces and forms ice; this then melts in the spring and often drips back into the cluster.   |
| <b>Disease and Dwindling</b> | Without a proper autumn examination for disease a hive with any of the hive diseases, Varroa, Tracheal mites, Foul brood, Chalk brood, the list seems endless, is bound to fail. A hive seems to need a 'critical mass' to be successful. So if the hive is small because of queen problems a better solution might be to unite after culling the worst queen. One strong hive is better than two weak ones and can always be split come the next year, where two weak ones can fail, leading to no bees.   |
| <b>Stock Selection</b>       | Use stocks bred for use in an area climatically similar to where they are to be hived. There is no point in expecting semi-tropical bees to survive in near Arctic conditions.  |
| <b>Insulation.</b>           | Add insulation over the inner cover to stop drafts upwards through the centre vent holes.   |

### BEEKEEPING AND FIRE DANGER

Lyn Shiels, Bindaree, Australia

Working bees in hotter months has potential for fire problems with smokers if bees are on farm or bush land. During total fire bans it is illegal to light a smoker in the open (as in National Parks in the UK. Ed.) although it is possible to use one under certain strict controls. High fire danger periods occur on days with high temperatures and strong winds. Such days are not good for working with bees and if possible, the work should be left until better conditions occur. If it is really essential to work your bees during a period of high fire danger some precautions need to be taken to ensure you don't start a bushfire.

The area around the hives should be as free from flammable debris as possible. The smoker should stand in a fireproof container (eg metal) while lighting, between uses and when refilling. Have a large can of water on hand in the apiary if it's in a bush or farmland area. Empty the smoker into a water-filled hole in the ground and cover with earth when you are sure it is out. Make sure the smoker is cool before storing away for transport. In periods of total fire ban it may help to have a spray bottle of light sugar syrup on hand and lightly spray the frames and front of the hive. This helps to keep the bees occupied while you are working.

### ADULTERATED HONEY

Chinese Peoples' Daily May 2008

China's State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC) named and shamed 18 substandard Chinese food brands in a move to better regulate the food market. According to a market survey of 100 samples of honey products, 46 percent of honey products were not up to national food quality standards, with problems involving excess levels of sucrose and water.

### DANGEROUS ACTIONS

G. Fisher, "How to guide to Basic Beekeeping"

There are two activities which have all the potential of ending up in the Divorce Court. One is reversing a caravan following your partner's instructions and the other is extracting honey in the kitchen.

|   |
|---|
| <b>SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT</b>   |
| People are afraid of death, electricity, and bees, in that order. <i>Traditional saying</i> |

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Come to National Bee Supplies for hives, and the full range of bee-keeping equipment. We promise you the best quality and value – backed by our no-quibble money back guarantee if you are anything less than 100% satisfied.

## Call us for expert advice and friendly service



Prompt Nationwide delivery service • All major credit cards accepted  
For Catalogue, price list, and orders:-  
tel: 01837-54084 fax: 01837-54085 e-mail: info@beekeeping.co.uk  
web: www.beekeeping.co.uk

National Bee Supplies, Merrivale Road,  
Exeter Road Industrial Estate, Okehampton,  
Devon EX20 1UD

## BEEMASTER is published bi-monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of February, April, June, August, October and December

Contributions in writing by 15<sup>th</sup> on previous month please to Stuart Ching, 77 Moore Road, Mapperley, Nottingham NG3 6EJ or by e-mail to jsching37@yahoo.co.uk or by telephone 0115 9521 859. Copy received after this date may have to be held over to the next **BEEMASTER**

### ADVERTISEMENTS

NBKA accepts no responsibility for advertisements appearing in this newsletter Please mention **BEEMASTER** when replying to advertisements.

**EASYBEE EXTRACTOR Members** can hire this extractor for £15 per week for members and £20 per week for other bona fide beekeepers. It is recommended for extracting honey, which has solidified in the frame. The extractor is stored by Tony Maggs (0115 849 7282 or 01332 203893) who should be contacted to confirm availability.

**RECIPE BOOKS ONE and TWO.** These contain many recipes using hive products in a handy lay-flat format. Available from the Show Secretary, the Editor, members of the Council and at Association meetings. Price £2 (+p&p)

### ADVERTISEMENT RATES

Advertisements 10p per word – minimum charge £1. Circulation approx. 100 throughout the UK. Separate adverts for distribution £10 per issue – please send to Bob Logan with payment. Short adverts may be paid for in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class postage stamps and should be sent directly to the Editor. Cheques should be made out to NBKA.



### CASH and CARRY BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT

at discount prices

Make sure you have enough equipment for dealing with your honey extraction. At the Honey Pot we have jars, labels, Frames, Foundation and Supers as well as complete National Hives in stock.

Don't miss out on the harvest

See our website (Products/Cash and Carry) for new beekeeping equipment being introduced continuously throughout the year.

Major cards accepted.

Normal opening times: Wed, Thurs, Fri and Sun 12.00 – 5pm  
The Honey Pot, Markeaton Park Craft Village, Markeaton

Lane, **DERBY** DE22 3BG

Tel: 01332 203 893

Mobile: 07703 711 009

Email: sales@localhoney.co.uk

Website: www.localhoney.co.uk