

Plymouth Branch Newsletter

June 2015

PLYMOUTH BEEKEEPERS' APIARY PROGRAMME 2015

JUNE

Sunday	7 th	10 am	General Meeting: discussion on topical items – all members welcome
Sunday	14 th	10 am	Novice Meeting (7)
Sunday	21 st	10 am	Improvers Meeting (JEF)
Sunday	28 th	10 am	Novice Meeting (8)

JULY

Sunday	5 th	10 am	General Meeting: discussion on topical items – all members welcome
Sunday	12 th	10 am	Novice Meeting (9)
Sunday	19 th	10 am	Improvers Meeting
Sunday	26 th	10 am	Novice Meeting (10)

AUGUST

(Bank Holiday: Mon.31 st)			
Sunday	2 nd	10 am	General Meeting: discussion on topical items – all members welcome
Sunday	9 th	10 am	Novice Meeting (11)
Sunday	16 th	10 am	Improvers Meeting
Sunday	23 rd	10 am	Novice Meeting (12) – End of Course
Sunday	30 th		No Meeting (Bank Holiday Weekend)

SEPTEMBER

Sunday	6 th	10 am	General Meeting - Apiary Maintenance – all members
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OCTOBER

Thursday	8 th	7.30pm	Winter Meeting (* Elburton Village Hall)
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NOVEMBER

Thursday	19 th	7.30 pm	Branch AGM (* Elburton Village Hall) (OK with Bernie)
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DECEMBER

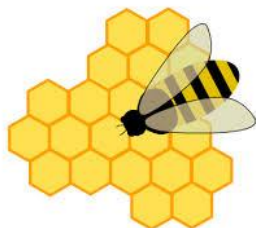
Sunday	13 th		Branch Christmas Lunch (tbc)
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(* Booked)

NB. Meetings will be held at the Branch Apiary Site unless advised otherwise.

Directions to Branch Apiary at Lee Mill, Ivybridge:

- Turn left off the A38 at Lee Mill and follow the signs for Tesco.
- Drive past the Tesco entrance and take next right for Central Avenue on the industrial estate.
- Drive down the hill of Central Avenue, looking for East Way on your right.
- Drive along East Way, looking for Cadleigh Close on your left.
- Drive into Cadleigh Close and the apiary site is behind the big iron gates of the tyre factory.
- Park inside the gates, walk up the concrete path and you will see the portacabin on your right.



facebook

The Historical Honeybee Community - another beekeeping community on Facebook.....

[Ctrl + Click for the Historical Honeybee Community on Facebook](#)

Woman hiving a swarm of bees



Beekeeping was popular in the USA during the 19 c and early 20 c. Women at the time were expected to tend the bees along with the many other household chores. Women were often quite successful at keeping bees, with apiaries that sometimes grew to over 100 colonies. The image shows her wearing clothing typically worn by women working in the apiary during the period.

Image: Woman Hiving Swarm.

1896 - Gleanings in Bee Culture. March 1896, Page 176

From: Historical Honeybee Articles - Beekeeping History Community on Facebook

Chairman's Blog



Image from BBC website

The swarming season is well and truly underway. If you haven't had one yet, be on the lookout. It only needs one queen cell to be sealed and they will be on their way. The bees get a lot of bad publicity when they swarm, but it is the responsibility of the beekeeper to try to avoid it happening. Too many people, especially in urban areas, seem to think that a hive at the bottom of the garden is "nice". They do not realise that bees have to be managed. You will have noticed, no doubt, that I did not call them beekeepers, as clearly they are not!

I had a letter from Gary in New Zealand, who breeds those wonderfully quiet tempered bees that we used to import. He tells me that they had a reasonable crop, an average of 55kg per hive. If they were my hives, I would be over the moon! However, Gary relies on the Manuka crop to achieve a profit – and keep his bank manager happy – but the bees ignored it this year. He is also concentrating on rearing varroa resistant bees. He is having some success, but nowhere near 100% resistance. This could take years. He inspects his hives without a veil, uses a smoker, if necessary, and if the weather is hot, in shorts! Stings are rare, and then only on his hands! Sounds pretty good to me.

Congratulations to those who passed Module 1 recently, namely Phil Aitken, Terry and Valerie McAuliffe, Kathy Lovegrove and Mark Ovenden. I have no doubt that some, if not all of them will progress further.

I was out at my Buckland Abbey apiary the other day and noticed that the clover was starting to flower. This is good news and it could mean that we will not experience a June gap this year. People have said to me that Spring has been late this year, but it is more a case of being back to normal. The temperature has been lower due to cold winds, which the bees dislike more than we do! Some nice, warm sunny weather will be welcome after the rain and wind on the last weekend in May.

Now a note for beginners. If you are thinking of buying a nuc, make sure that it is from a reputable, local beekeeper. Please read the article elsewhere in Bee Brief. Also, if you are a more experienced beekeeper intending to sell nucs, please ensure that you comply with the guidance.

Let's hope that warm weather will arrive, the bees will not swarm and that they will bring in a superb crop during the main flow in late June and July.

Keep buzzing!

David Milford

Standard and Guidance Notes for Nuclei

This leaflet is to provide both buyers and sellers with sensible guidance for the sale of nuclei. There has been no standard since the withdrawal of British Standard B.S. 1372 in 1984.

Purpose

This standard concentrates on nuclei, simply because the majority will probably be purchased by beginners and owing to their inexperience they will need guidance on what to expect. Since bees are living things and general conditions and weather varies, there may be good reasons for the occasional slight departure from the standard.

If you expect to buy a nucleus to these standards you should check with the seller that it complies with the "BBKA Standard". If not, then there may be a reason and the buyer may have a difficult decision to make.

Bees are often in short supply very early in the season and it may be tempting to buy something you may later regret, when a few weeks of patience may be well rewarded.

For practical purposes this standard is only applicable to a nucleus supplied between early May-end August.

Nucleus Structure:

A nucleus is a well balanced colony on between 3-5 B.S. brood combs. It should have bees, food, brood and a queen as described below. The total number of combs should be stated. For bees on other sizes of frames the buyer and seller should reach agreement.

A nucleus should be in a position to expand as soon as purchased, without risk of starvation. It is not just the number of bees, but the queen and the quantity and age of the brood that are important.

Combs and Frames:

The frames should be securely nailed or pinned and be in sound order. They need not be new. Combs should be fully drawn out i.e. not foundation. The outside combs can be food only, especially on the outside faces. There should be no sacrificial drone comb (shallow frames).

Queen:

There should be a current or previous season's UK reared laying queen and she should have produced all the brood. If the queen is older, this should be stated to the buyer. She should be clipped and marked if requested. It may not be reliable to assume the colour marking will comply with international queen marking colours.

It is BBKA policy not to recommend the use of imported queens. You should ask the seller if you are concerned about the origin of the queen.



A good brood comb. Bees have been shaken off to show brood and sealed stores. A frame like this should be well covered with bees.

Brood:

There should be healthy brood and eggs in all stages with no brood cycle break. Not less than 30% of the total comb area should be sealed brood. No more than 15% of the total area should be drone comb. The brood should have a good pattern with no drone brood in worker cells. There should be no active queen cells at any stage of development.

Food:

The amount of honey and pollen in a nucleus can vary considerably owing to conditions, but there should be enough food for at least two weeks, to allow for poor foraging weather after purchase.

Adult Bees:

There should be a good balance of young and flying bees and the frames should be well covered. They should be good tempered when handled by a competent beekeeper in suitable conditions. There may be a varying number of drones depending on the season.

Health:

The brood should be healthy and not show any signs of disease in any stage, except that a small number of cells showing chalk brood is acceptable, as this can partly depend on weather conditions.

In the adult bees there should be no obvious signs of acarine, nosema or deformed wing virus. As varroa is endemic a very small number of mites on adult bees is acceptable.

Purchasers are advised to inspect the brood closely and seek guidance from their Regional Bee Inspector if they are concerned about the possibility of foul brood disease.

Hiving and Care Instructions:

If your nucleus is sourced locally and the seller is able to help you there is no need for instructions, but if the seller is unable

to help, then a set of clear hiving and care instructions should be provided.

Other Considerations:

General:

It must be accepted that some suppliers may not be able to comply with some of the above for good reasons and the structure of the nucleus may vary. These variations may include such things as:-

- the nucleus is made up of bees and brood from several different colonies,
- the queen is not responsible for all the brood present,
- the queen is caged (not on the brood) and/or not yet proven, or
- the nucleus may be the result of a swarm control manipulation, rather than part of a managed queen and nucleus creation programme.

Such variations should be declared before the purchase takes place. Whilst they are legitimate forms of nuclei where a bit more care may be needed, they are not recommended for the beginner without help from an experienced beekeeper.

The supplier should be able to state what treatments (including those for Varroa) have been administered to the nucleus and when. There is a legal requirement to record all medications applied to food producing animals, therefore it is reasonable to ask for this information so you have a record. Make sure all applied treatments are legal, as any residues of illegal substances found in honey and wax will be your responsibility once the bees are yours.

If your BKA or another beekeeper is doing you a favour by giving you a nucleus or selling it to you at an advantageous price it is unreasonable to apply this standard, although it is reasonable to expect help and guidance to get the nucleus into the condition implied by this standard.

Container:

A nucleus sourced locally may be in a nucleus or travelling box, but expect a commercially sourced nucleus to have a temporary non returnable container. Be sure that you agree with the seller on what equipment is returned or replaced.

If the bees are confined for more than a few hours they should have ample ventilation and have water sprayed or dribbled on them regularly through the ventilation holes.

Transportation:

Bees suffer stress when confined and moved, so to minimise this make the journey as short as possible. It would be preferable to collect the nucleus rather than have it delivered by a carrier, who may not treat it with care, or who might cover up ventilation holes, allow the bees to get overheated or delay delivery.

If you collect make sure you treat them gently and do not keep them in a hot car or in full sun. If overheated the combs can melt and collapse which will quickly kill the colony.

Advice to Buyer:

If the buyer is new to beekeeping it is advisable to seek sound advice from a local BKA, where you may get help to inspect the bees before purchase. This can avoid some of the problems that are not always obvious to an inexperienced buyer.

If you are buying a nucleus for a present please make sure the recipient is willing to accept it, as there is a high level of commitment needed in keeping bees. If the bees are unwanted it could result in them being abandoned and causing a nuisance to others.

Complaints:

A nucleus can change character very quickly, therefore any complaints should be lodged within a few days. Inexperienced buyers would do well to seek guidance from an experienced beekeeper when transferring a nucleus and this is where early contact with a local BKA is invaluable. If there are any problems, take dated photographs and notes as early as possible. Please remember it is unfair to make a complaint if a fault has been created after delivery.

General Notes:

This leaflet is one of a series intended to help beekeepers and non-beekeepers. If you believe the contents of this leaflet are relevant to you, please seek further advice from an experienced beekeeper or your tutor.

Information is updated regularly – please check with the BBKA web site at: www.bbka.org.uk – for the latest information.

This leaflet supersedes B14 (2009, 2nd edition).

Note: The same information is published in our printed leaflet L014 available from the BBKA.

Disclaimer:

This leaflet is provided for general interest and information only and is not intended to provide specific advice for any individual. BBKA make no representations or warranties about the accuracy or suitability for any purpose of the information contained in this document. No liability is accepted for any injury or loss arising out of the contents or information published within this leaflet.



The Buzz – Bees in the news



13/5/15

Middle class urban beekeepers blamed for town centre swarms

Expert says new beekeepers don't know how to manage hives effectively, causing more swarms in cities.....

Ctrl + CLICK to READ MORE on the Telegraph website.....



22/5/15

Bee Coalition calls on Defra to reject NFU neonics application

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust has joined forces with the Bee Coalition* in order to drive forward our policy position on the use of pesticides and their impact on bee health. Recently the National Farmers Union (NFU) indicated that it wishes to apply for an emergency licence to apply neonicotinoid seed treatment to oil seed rape crops sown this Autumn. The Bee Coalition has written to Defra urging them to reject this application.

CLICK HERE to READ MORE on the Bumblebee Conservation Trust website.....



**Worth
Watching**

The first 21 days of a bee's life are captured in this inspiring video by photographer Anand Varma. Bees pollinate 1/3 of the world's food crop but are being threatened by the Varroa destructor mite; Varma was hired to document the process. While scientists have succeeded in breeding a mite-resistant bee, it lacks other desirable traits such as gentleness and the ability to store honey.

More details are explained in the 6 minute Ted Talk at the link.

Ctrl + Click for Bee life time lapse video & TED talk



Chinese beekeeper covers himself in 1.1million bees

Last year it was 326,000, this year 1.1million.

Beekeeper Gao Bingguo sets a new record by covering himself with 109.05kg of bees on Monday, estimated to be more than 1.1million. The 55-year-old has been a beekeeper for more than 30 years and his fellow beekeepers help cover him in bees while he casually has a cigarette. In order to attract yet more, 12 queen bees are also placed on him

Ctrl + Click to view Gao Bingguo covering himself in a million bees!



Hi, Have a look at this:

Click to follow links

[38 Degrees Keep Bee Pesticide ban - Petition](#)

[38 Degrees - Send an Email](#)

Our bees are in danger again. Toxic chemical companies are trying to get their banned pesticides back on UK fields. An application's been submitted to the government asking them to lift the ban on bee-killing chemicals for some crops planted this autumn.

Bees don't have a voice, but we do. Please can you email the environment ministers who'll make the decision demanding that we keep the ban on bee-killing pesticides?

It'll only take a couple of minutes. Just [Click here](#) to send an email:

Thanks

NEILL

There is a template ready written or you can compose your own.

From the 38 degrees website

The latest bid by pesticide companies to bring bee-killing chemicals back to the UK has just moved to its final stage. The application to lift the ban on the bee-killing pesticides is now with the three government ministers in charge. It's sitting on their desks right now – and they could make a decision at any moment!

Please can you send a quick email now to the ministers who are making the decision? Together we can tell them to protect our bees and not the profits of toxic chemical companies:

People-powered campaigning helped get bee-killing “neonicotinoid” pesticides banned across Europe in 2013. But the huge pesticide companies care about their profit margins more than our bees and countryside - and so keep trying to get rid of the ban. **Public pressure is crucial** if we're going to stop them.

Over 230,000 of us have signed a petition calling on the government to do the right thing. Now let's add to the pressure with individual messages to the ministers in charge. **We know they'll be hearing from corporate lobbyists speaking to the pesticide companies. Let's make sure they hear from more of us**, speaking up for the bees!

Information from the Bee Craft Hangout on Honeybee Health

Identifying Nosema and Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus

On our latest Bee Craft Hangout about Nosema and Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus, we were joined by Julian Routh of the BBKA and Seasonal Bee Inspector, to talk about the BBKA Bee Health Month. We were also joined by Seb Owen of Vita Europe.

The BBKA is running this yearly initiative to encourage beekeepers to think disease first. At this time of the year it is very easy to focus on matters of swarming and miss vital signs of disease. This is why Bee Craft and the BBKA are raising awareness of the Bee Health month.

Ctrl+ Click for this hangout which covers such topics as:

- * What is the BBKA Bee Health Month
- * The difference between Nosema Apis and Nosema Ceranae
- * Techniques to test for each form of Nosema yourself
- * Discussions of tests involved in testing for Nosema (also covered in Bob Maurer's book - Practical Microscopy)
- * Discussion on the Isle of Wight disease and why it was thought to be Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus
- * What is Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus and how can you spot it

The video is nearly an hour long but worth watching all the way through.

The articles referenced can be by clicking the links below:

[NBU Nosema pictures](#)

[NBU pictures of Chronic Bee Paralysis](#)

[All NBU booklets and information sheets](#)

STRANGE PLUMS



Neil & Phil collecting swarms at May & Fry's allotments, Keyham. 2 swarms within days of each other on the same plum.

I have twelve colonies of bees in brood boxes for sale.

£100 each

Patrick Mansfield
Apiary Manager

FOR SALE

**Brand new 5 frame
nuc box (wooden)
with OMF & feeder
£40**

**Contact: Bill Finnemore
Tel: (01752) 404184**



FOR SALE

High Heat Solar Extractor

**Manufactured from weatherproof ply
20g Alloy sheet
New double glazed panel & High heat fibre glass lagging**

**Size: 21½" x 15" x 15" deep
Angle to sun 34°**

£65

**Contact: Bill Finnemore
Tel: (01752) 404184**

Downsizing!

Three hives complete with bees for sale

Queens laying well
£75 each

Tested Nosema free April 2015

Contact Claire on 07976 346 898
Wembury

**Member
Adverts**

Member Advert



City Bees

Apistan Pouches (10 strips per pouch)	£17.50
Apigaurd Trays (per 2 trays enough for a single application for one hive)	£4.20
Apigaurd Trays 10 (1 Box enough for 5 hives with a single application)	£21.00
ApiShield National Floor (Hornet, Asian Hornet, Wasp and wax moth trap, replacement open mesh floor)	£45.00

Prices are kept as low as we can to help as many beekeepers to look after their bees well.
If you can collect your order it will save on postage and environmental costs.

If you would like to have it posted please call me and we will work out a total price for you.

If you are a member of a local association put in a combined order, ring me with your order and we can arrange for one person to collect or we may be able to deliver it to you free.

Sad to say there are no discounts for bulk orders as these prices are as low as we can go!

City Bees, are a not for profit organisation, providing free swarm rescue, bumblebee nest relocation and advice to individuals and organisations in and around Plymouth.

Tel 01752516619

citybees@hotmail.co.uk

Provisional 2015 price list



**Member
Advert**

Nucs for sale

**Queens from local matings with
Ligustica (Italian) Queen.**

All on 6 to 8 frames £80

**Contact: Roger Round 01752 701945
Email: roger.round@hotmail.co.uk**

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you make a visit**



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Okehampton Devon EX20 1UB

www.beekeeping.co.uk



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Contact: honey@cornwallhoney.co.uk
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For prices, information, collection or delivery
Wax exchange available

**For Beekeeping Course's
visit our website for details**

Stockist of Organic Treatments



www.cornwallhoney.co.uk

Non Member Advert

FOR SALE

Approx 70 complete frames, unmade, mix of SN1 & DN1

Approx 50 complete frames, used

1 Nuc box (wooden)

Castellated spacers (9 slots) 17 pairs

4 frame (super) extractor (manual)

Galvanised filter tower

Comb cutter

Antique wax purifier

1 WBC hive, complete

1 hive stand

Perforated Zinc sheet 1 x 36" x 10"

1 x 22" x 18"

**Prefer to sell as one lot but if you are interested in anything please contact David Keogh
by email: dmk123@btinternet.com**