



## Plymouth Branch Newsletter

March 2015

### PLYMOUTH BEEKEEPERS APIARY PROGRAMME 2015

#### MARCH

Sunday	1 <sup>st</sup>	10 am	Apiary Team Inspection (+ Education Team Meeting)
Wednesday (new date)	4 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Winter Study Group: Topics: "Queen rearing for beginners" & "Introduction to Microscopy for honey bee enthusiasts" (Colebrook Community Centre 7.30 pm)
Sunday	8 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	General Meeting: discussion on plans/your ideas for the Branch Apiary + topical items – all members welcome
Sunday	15 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Novice Meeting (1) - Introduction + Film
Sunday	22 <sup>nd</sup>	10 am	Improvers Meeting
Sunday	29 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Novice Meeting (2)

#### APRIL

	(Easter: Good Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April / Easter Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> April)		
Sunday	5 <sup>th</sup>		*No Meeting (Easter Sunday)
Saturday	11 <sup>th</sup>		Joint Nosema Day with Totnes & Kingsbridge (Details in this Bee Brief)
Sunday	12 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Novice Meeting (3)
Sunday	19 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Improvers Meeting
Sunday	26 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Novice Meeting (4)

#### MAY

	(Bank Holidays Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> + Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> )		
Sunday	3 <sup>rd</sup>	10 am	General Meeting: discussion on topical items – all members welcome
Sunday	10 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Novice Meeting (5)
Sunday	17 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Improvers Meeting
Sunday	24 <sup>th</sup>		No Meeting (Bank Holiday Weekend)
Sunday	31 <sup>st</sup>	10 am	Novice Meeting (6)

#### JUNE

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

## JULY

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

## AUGUST

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

## SEPTEMBER

Sunday	6 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	General Meeting - Apiary Maintenance – all members
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## OCTOBER

Thursday	8 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	Winter Meeting (* Elburton Village Hall)
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## NOVEMBER

Thursday	19 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Branch AGM (* Elburton Village Hall) (OK with Bernie)
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## DECEMBER

Sunday	13 <sup>th</sup>		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.

## Chairman's Blog

Snowdrops, crocuses, hellebores, camellias and numerous "weeds" are in flower, hazel catkins are everywhere and many other plants are budding up nicely. On sunny days recently the bees have been working these, but more importantly they have been collecting water. If you see pollen being taken in, there is a very good chance that you have a laying queen. However, don't be tempted to look inside – and then only briefly – until the temperature is much higher. March is probably the most difficult month of the year, as it can be "make or break" for some colonies. Heft your hives to make sure they have enough food and feed with candy if necessary. Ron Brown used the saying "Keep them warm in March". The brood nest is expanding and heat conservation becomes more important than through ventilation. Some insulation material between the roof and the crown board will help. Don't worry about condensation, as the bees will use the moisture to dilute sealed honey. Also, don't take any notice of the article in the recent issue of Beekeeping which suggested that newspaper can be put in an open plastic bag to soak up the condensation between the crown board and the roof. This will do more harm than good, especially in our damp climate.

If we get a warm spell towards the end of the month, then up to a gallon of syrup can be fed. It is best to do this via a contact feeder in the evening and use a 1:1 sugar solution, as the bees will require this as "fuel" and will not want to go to all the trouble of diluting a thicker mixture. You can add something like Vita Gold, especially as this is good for combating Nosema in both its forms.

Many thanks to all those members who came to the joint meeting with Totnes and Kingsbridge branch at Buckfast. The Q & A session was interesting and I hope that the responses from three of the panel were useful. Quite why the fourth member was there is still a mystery to me! The winter meetings have now finished, but I would like to thank all those who have worked hard "behind the scenes" to make these so successful. The attendance has been exceptional and it's great that so many members turn out on winter evenings to come along. Long may it last!

The first Apiary General meeting takes place on 8th March and everyone is welcome to attend.

Don't forget the DBKA AGM in Exeter on 14<sup>th</sup> March. It is only for the morning and this includes a speaker. It will be good to see many of you there and remember, your vote will count and one Plymouth member will be awarded the Frank Alston Skep for achieving the highest marks in their Basic assessment. A Plymouth member for the second year running is quite an achievement. I hope that all those who passed the Basic in 2014 will attend, as it could be you! Jean and I will have to endure the EC meeting there in the afternoon and England play Scotland that day in the Six Nations; thankfully kick off is at 5pm!

Keep buzzing!

**David Milford**



**everybody for the donated raffle prizes during the winter meetings, the proceeds go towards the rental of the hall.**

**I hope everybody has a good season beekeeping and look forward to seeing some of them at the Apiary on a Sunday morning.**

**Thanks very much.**

**Mike Lawrence**

# NOSEMA DAY 2015

Details of the joint Nosema Day between Plymouth and Totnes & Kingsbridge Branch:

**Date:** Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2015

**Venue:** South Brent Village Hall, Station Approach, South Brent TQ10 9JL

**Doors Open:** 11 am – 3 pm

There will be refreshments available.

Plymouth branch have offered assistance with this event and would appreciate volunteers to help with:

- the preparation of samples (bee crushing)
- preparation of slides
- analysing slides the under the microscope
- I've offered to run the Reception Desk but will need a volunteer to assist with the paperwork

To help with the collection of your bee samples:

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SAMPLING:

- 1) Find suitable containers for each sample, either a plastic bag, plastic box (an empty, clean margarine tub is a good idea) or empty honey jar.
- 2) Write your name, hive reference and apiary location on the outside of each container.
- 3) Thirty (30) mature bees will be needed for the test. To achieve this it will be easiest to catch flying bees around the entrance.
- 4) Choose a day and time when the bees are flying actively.
- 5) Close the entrance for a while until returning bees are crowding the entrance.
- 6) Brush or scoop 30 bees into the container – it can be done!
- 7) Seal the container, check the label and place in a freezer immediately.
- 8) Remove the bees from the freezer only on the day of the test to minimise decomposition.
- 9) Bees and details can be sent with a fellow member on the day.

Those members unable to come along on the day and wish samples of their bees to be tested, please get in contact with myself.

This should be an interesting day out so please support this event.

**JEAN FRENCH**  
**Branch Secretary**

**Tel:** Plymouth (01752) 338279

**Email:** [JeanFrench1957@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:JeanFrench1957@yahoo.co.uk)

## BeeCraft Magazine Hangouts

Wendy at BeeCraft Magazine has asked us to let members know about their BeeCraft Hangouts (Live Webinars). The Beekeeping magazine is available only by subscription.

[CLICK HERE for BeeCraft Hangouts](#)

The next Hangouts are on:-

**March 18th and**

**April 15th**

## The Buzz – Bees in the news

### Urban habitats 'provide haven' for bees

By Helen Briggs, BBC Environment Correspondent

**Britain's urban areas are home to more types of wild bee than farmland, a study has found.**

Flowers planted in gardens and allotments provide a valuable food source for bees across the year, according to research.

Scientists counted honey bees, bumble bees and other pollinating insects, in and around some of the UK's largest towns and cities.

[\*\*CLICK HERE to READ MORE on the BBC website.....\*\*](#)



## Painting Your Beehives?



[CLICK HERE](#) for the BBKA guide to 'care of Wooden Hives'



## Member Adverts

**FOR SALE**  
**Top Bar Hive**  
**£10**  
**Contact: Bill Finnemore**  
**Tel: (01752) 404184**

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

£100 each

Patrick Mansfield  
Apiary Manager

I have 2 colonies for sale on national frame.  
Need to downsize as have to move.  
**Cost at £80 each**  
My bees are in Wembury, Plymouth  
but I can transport them for you.  
**Contact: Sarah Rochester 07917276595**

## Contact Details

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