

Cardiff, Vale and Valleys Beekeepers' Association

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Vice Chairman: Peter Shaw (01633 897195)

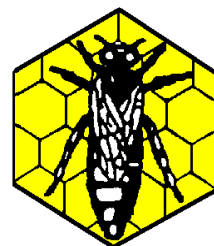
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Newsletter July 2009

We have been experiencing tropical weather with highs in the thirties over the past month and the bees have been enjoying it. Apart from the odd thunder storm, the high humidity and warm temperatures have allowed for a lot of new comb building and nectar collection. In many areas there was a 'June gap', which is a short lull in nectar collection between the Spring flowers and the Summer flowers in the first week of June. I have been informed that some hives with foreign queens/bees didn't do too well at this time!

We had a fantastic meeting at Harold's apiary last month in the grounds of Fonmon Castle followed by a wonderful spread in the dining room and tea on the lawn. There were about 30 of us watching Harold explaining what was happening in the hives, which were all weighted down with many supers of honey. He needed a step ladder to take the top supers off! The bees were a little fiery as they were working the fields of Oil Seed Rape around that area. Sir Boothby the owner of Fonmon, joined 40 of us later in the beautiful gardens and explained how the castle had been in his family for hundreds of years. We were very lucky to have enjoyed such hospitality and would like to thank Barbara, the Fonmon staff and Sir Boothby for such a wonderful experience. (The extra 10 members must have heard about Harold's scones!)

The association is running a microscopy course in September (see below) with John Verran (Regional Bee Inspector) showing beekeepers how to examine a sample of bees for Nosema and Acarine. Interested members please book a space on this course with John King (Tel. above).

DIARY 2009 - Out Apiary Gatherings and other Meetings

Royal Welsh Show July 20th to 23rd at RWSA, Builth Wells. Honey show in the Glamorgan Hall and a display by Glamorgan Beekeepers.

Saturday July 25th at 2.30 pm at my place (Dinah's)- Graig Fawr Lodge, Caerphilly, CF83 1NF. New entrance in lay-by. Phone 02920 869242 for directions.

Saturday August 15th at 2.30pm at Julia Bartlett's farm- Penllan Farm, Machan, CF83 8QE. This will be a big event where interested new members hooked in at the Royal Welsh Show will be invited to have a beekeeping experience.

Friday 4th September at 2pm, Thornhill Centre - Microscopy course. Book with J. King

Saturday 12th September from 7.00pm - Association Honey Show, Thornhill Centre.

Newsletter contributions If you have any contributions for the newsletter such as letters, articles, poems, cartoons etc. copied from elsewhere or made up please send them to Dinah Sweet, GraigFawr Lodge, Caerphilly, CF83 1NF. Advertising rates for commercial / semi-commercial traders at £5.00 per year for approx. 1/6th page in 11 monthly issues. One off adverts at £1.00. Non-commercial adverts i.e. for sale of surplus equipment are free to members for a single entry.



Richard Macklin one of the association's new beekeepers, has been in a similar situation to Eddie in last month's newsletter. As can be seen from his photograph, bees set up home in the roof of an old empty hive at his sister-in-law's farm. The comb was stuck on to the underside of a deep roof and there was an empty super also stuck onto the roof! He managed to get to them before they swarmed and has put them in a new hive. When we last corresponded he had yet to move them to his Taffswell site.

This sort of wild comb building can easily happen if we don't put enough frames in supers in time for the bees. I have to admit that I left a space for a week when amalgamating 2 hives to find wild comb filling the brood chamber.

At the Machan Show last Saturday the Association won a 1st prize rosette for the best stand in the tent. Obviously the observation hive and beautifully arranged honey jars made an excellent impression on the judges, plus the cheery faces of the members selling the honey.

This year everyone is finding that the bees haven't been reading the same text books as us! There have been strange things happening everywhere with new young queens deciding to swarm after they have only been laying for 2 weeks. There have been so many swarms and casts this year but hopefully with the summer flow in full swing, the bees are too busy to mess around and have settled at last.

A few weeks ago in the teaching apiary one of our members went into anaphylactic shock after several stings to the head. She had been stung on previous occasions with no detrimental effects but on this occasion collapsed suddenly, losing consciousness. We quickly went into action, checking the airway was clear and the pulse, raising her legs onto a stool and dialling 999. The paramedic came within 4 minutes and administered adrenalin, hydrocortisone and fluids. He also gave oxygen but luckily the breathing was fine. The ambulance came eventually and took her to A&E to be checked out. She was sent home later and recovered fairly quickly but was very tired the next day. She is still madly keen to keep doing beekeeping!! **This could happen to anyone at any time.** Try to look at bees when there is someone else around not on your own! We are buying an **EPIPEN** just in case lightning strikes twice. Dinah Sweet.

BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

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