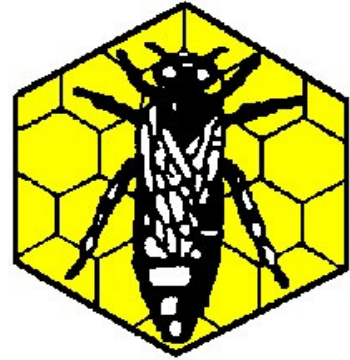


Cardiff, Vale and Valleys Beekeeping Association



President: Prof. R S Pickard
Chairman: John King (01443 400798)
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Newsletter : October 2010



Photo Ken James, West Suffolk BKA

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday, November 9th - a talk on Bees and Flowers, to be given by our President Prof. R Pickard

Wed.8th, Thurs.9th and Fri.10th, December - St. Fagan's Museum Christmas Fayre, 6pm. until 9pm. Beekeeping Table Display

Tuesday, December 14th - Assn. Christmas Social

NB - Barbara Chick has requested that members volunteer for 'kitchen duties'. If you are willing to help please contact Barbara: tel.02920 597275 or e.mail beechick@madasafish.com

NB - a request has also been received for donations of raffle prizes. Any profit from the raffle is used towards the rent of Llandaff Village Hall for our Tuesday meetings. Please bring any such donations along to the next meeting.

Should you have any contributions for the Newsletter (articles/photos etc.) or wish to place an advertisement, please contact Cherry Clark at: 14, Rudry Close, Caerphilly, CF83 3EU or e.mail: cvvbees@sky.com

Advertising rates are:

Commercial/semi-commercial traders @ £5.00 p.a. for approx. 1/6th page in 11 monthly issues. One off adverts @ £1.00. Non-commercial adverts (i.e. sale of surplus equipment) are free to members for a single entry.

Chairman's Report

It is now the end of October and most of the month has been mild. The bees have continued to work the Himalayan Balsam and, more recently, Ivy. This is the last of their natural forage for the year. By now the Varroa treatment should have been removed, feeding should have been completed and mouse guards should have been placed on the hives. Make sure the roof is water tight. The standard method of making sure it stays on the hive is a brick. This will prevent the roof blowing off when the weather turns. Alternatively, if your apiary is situated in a windy area, tie the roof onto the hive with a rope or strap making sure that the strapping goes under the floor (thus ensuring that it is securely attached to the rest of the hive). It is much better to be safe rather than find that the roof has gone and the bees are getting wet, assuming that they stay in the hive should such a catastrophe arise.

We had a very successful honey show in mid-October. The judge, Claire Miller of Swansea and District BKA, commented on the high standard of exhibits displayed by members. So remember the date for next year (second Tuesday in October at Llandaff Village Hall). It is not about winning but taking part and raising the presentation standard of honey, which the bees have worked hard to produce. Congratulations go to Ray Strange on winning the cup again. Congratulations also go to Rhodri Powell who has only been keeping bees for 2 seasons and was awarded the 'Best in Show' for his exhibit of cut comb. I hope more of you will have a go next year.

It was good to see some new faces at the Honey Show. Please come again soon, perhaps at the next meeting on 9th November when our President Prof. Pickard will be speaking. He is a good speaker and last year the hall was packed.

John

The Royal Welsh Show honey show schedule can be found on the WBKA website: go to wbka.com - under the [links](#) tab look for Royal Welsh Show and then "follow this link for honey schedule". The 2011 schedule will replace the 2010 in due course, although I have been assured that the format will be essentially the same. The Assn. has had some success at the Royal Welsh in previous years. Claire made a few comments which may help those thinking of entering:

- (1) make sure both jars and tops match - including the colour of the tops and tops must not be dented
- (2) ensure that jars are polished with no sticky marks - this can be done with a little spirit on a cloth and using cotton gloves to move jars after cleaning
- (3) no foreign bodies in any entry - wax or honey

The cover photo is printed courtesy of Howard Gilbert, Editor of Essex Beekeeper and first appeared in the Ipswich and East Suffolk BKA. Howard also found the text below in *Advances in Genetics* (vol.8), where the Editor M Demerec commented (page 123) on the article *General Genetics of Bees* by W E Kerr and H Laidlaw, that:

'The normal eye colour of the honeybees is black and when with white or coloured eyes appear in a colony they stand out in contrast. . . . In nature these mutations have always been restricted to the drones because all genes which are recognisable in drones will be expressed since the drone is haploid, and the lighter eye colour mutations so impair the drone's vision he seldom if ever succeeds in mating and therefore has no offspring.'

So there we have it . . . but . . . Drones are haploid because they are raised from unfertilised eggs, i.e. they do not have a father. (Haploid is from the Greek *haplous* meaning single.) So drones have DNA only from their mother, the Queen. The Queen does however have DNA from both parents, having been raised from a fertile egg. The white-eyed drone, therefore, would inherit some DNA from its grandfather, but that drone (the grandfather) couldn't have been white-eyed as the passage above infers that it would not then have been able to mate. (Is this because it can't see to reach the mating site or that it has additional defects?) So is this deficiency - lack of pigment in the eye - passed down the maternal line in the bees' DNA? Does the Queen's DNA modify in some way that of the drone? I shall ask my favourite scientist when he returns from South America.

Bees are on the Ivy at the moment and as this honey granulates the following might be of use.

David Morris of Beelines (Taunton and District BKA) writes:

'Ivy honey granulates like O.S.R. (Oil Seed Rape) and can be impossible for the bees to use during the winter months. If your bees were near any O.S.R. during the year, then even just a small amount remaining in the combs can cause the honey collected later to granulate. The problem can be overcome in the spring if the amount is just a few frames. By scraping the cappings off and exposing the honey, the bees, providing they have water, will usually be able to use it.'

David also sent me this photograph with additional information: '. . .last year the bees stored Ivy honey in the washing up bowl feeders that we use! I cut this out and stored it in a bucket over winter and then added it to the OSR honey when that was harvested. We, in fact, use just cut comb foundation for OSR as we can then just cut it out and place it in the cappings melter and honey liquefier that we purchased a few years ago . . . '



I have no information on the depth of the feed in the washing up bowls but I assume it wouldn't be too deep otherwise there would be a lot of drowned bees.

On the subject of feeding this snippet from Herts. Bees makes interesting reading. 'Feeding until they won't take any more is a recipe for disaster. Combs full of stores will mean that the Queen won't have anywhere to lay, and the bees won't have any empty cells to cluster in at the start of winter. A colony will use about 1lb of stores per week between the end of October and the beginning of February (10 to 14 lbs). Then the brood rearing starts and consumption quickly increases. If necessary candy can be given during February, and syrup in March, after which most bees will be self-sufficient.'

I have learnt that there is such a thing as a 'starvation swarm' (Herts. Bees), 'bees swarming late in the year if there is not enough food in the hive. They take the queen with them and go in search of a location where there is more food.' Perhaps over enthusiastic honey collection adds to this phenomenon.

Many of you will have recently received the revised booklet on Small Hive Beetle. The EU Commission has amended regulations following confirmation of SHB found in Hawaii. The regulations governing the list of approved countries for queen imports can be found at:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/downloadNews.cfm?id=80>

The advisory document *Preparing Honey Bee Colonies for Winter* is available from the BeeBase leaflets page.

To keep up with the latest news from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, go to: www.vmd.gov.uk/VetSQP/Bee/actionplan.pdf

This recipe from Devon Beekeepers' Assn. will be of particular use now, when preparing equipment for winter storage:

Cleaning a smoker:

Dissolve a 1Kg bag of washing soda crystals in a gallon of water in a wide topped plastic bucket. Immerse the smoker, lying on its' side and supported by a couple of stones, keeping the bellows clear (of the water). Top up the water to cover the metal parts of the smoker. Leave for 24 hours and wash using the hive tool to dislodge any stubborn carbon. (Dry well before storing.)

Permission was sought and granted from all the above publications: Herts. Bees specified that no author would be identified.

Other Officers and Committee Members

Vice Chairman: Peter Shaw (01633 897195)
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Julia Bartlett (01633 441008) - Ray Strange (02920 887044)
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Tel: Peter Shaw - 01633 897195 / 07758131440
(for Bee supplies)
Tel: Nigel Harris - 07970293016

Please note that should you discover that you have not been receiving your copy of The Welsh Beekeeper magazine, you will need to contact the Treasurer, Lewis Roberts, as he supplies the list to the WBKA mailing officer. It may also be that, if you are not on Lewis' list, your insurance is void.

A reminder that Assn. polo shirts can be purchased from Annie Newsam, Stonecroft, Mountain Road, Bedwas, Caerphilly, CF83 8ER. The shirts cost £15.00 each, are black with a gold embroidered logo, available in sizes Med., Large, or XL. Please note sizes are generous. Please make cheques payable to 'Cardiff and Vale BKA'. The photo shows John & June King modelling the polo shirts. John won the silver ware at the honey show last year. June designed the logo.



BEESWAX FOUNDATION

L & GR Chirnside
Tel: 01837 880625

Foundation available at a straight exchange for wax.

Beekeeping supplies available from stock.

Equipment new and used also available.

Bryn y Pant Cottage,
Upper Llanover,
Abergavenny
NP7 9ES

Would any member giving up beekeeping or those who have surplus bees/equipment kindly contact one of the following Officers who will pass such items on to other beekeepers in the Assn.

John King - tel: 01443 400798
Annie Newsam - tel: 02920 868756
Barbara Chick - el: 02920 597275

Would members inform the Secretary of any changes in address/e.mail etc.

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