



# NEWSLETTER

## APRIL 2017

[www.westdorsetbees.org.uk](http://www.westdorsetbees.org.uk)

### More Ramblings

I do hope that you and your colonies are thriving and in good health.

Such an exciting time of year, we can visit our bees and see how they have got through the winter. If yours are like mine, some are strong and busy, others rather frail and wintry looking. People say choose your best colonies and use them to replace a quarter of your weakest colonies. The problem is that they are all different. Some produced lots of brood last autumn so are strong, some don't like the cold and improve no end when it warms up, some are happy in the cool weather and so do well, others have problems with varroa which weren't reduced by winter treatment probably because the queens didn't go off lay for any length of time, some cope better with varroa, some have less resistance to viruses: the differences are endless. The problem is that the poorer ones also have some very good useful genes as well as their not so good ones, which might come in useful when other new diseases occur. So don't be too quick deciding which colony to keep. All you can do is to check for disease, try to work with them, be very aware of the weather coming along and be patient, easier said than done.

When the weather is going to be good for a week I might shook swarm the colony. I could just remove the sealed brood and replace those frames if the rest of the frames are good. I might put on Apiguard for 2 weeks, but I'd need to reduce them down to one box, and also it is known to put the queen off lay. I could use a different thymol preparation ie Apilife Var or Thymovar (ok on double brood) but it may be the same problem for the queen. I could wait and use Maqs when they are stronger and have plenty of brood, but if the queen is failing then it might kill the queen before there are enough decent drones to mate with her daughter. I could use up the Hive Clean I have left (the new Varroa Med is not in yet). I am actually using up some of my Hive Clean on the worst ones and monitoring the others and then will monitor the treated ones after 3 doses. Then I will do more if necessary when the weather warms up. My motto taken from 'The Edge' by Dick Francis is "Thought before action, if you have time". There is always time to go and sleep on a problem even if you see unsealed queen cells - you could always catch the swarm! I am off to the Spring Convention so will chat to the people on the stands and other

One thing I will buy is Apibioxal and treat during the summer if necessary especially after an artificial swarm or a real one. I intend to let some colonies swarm if they are showing an interest in my bait hives. I've never been very happy with an artificial swarm as the wrong bees go with the queen so they take ages to draw out the new foundation and not well at that, all the wax builders being left with the brood. I'm a very sad person: I went down to Otter Nurseries with Carole and spent my £100 Premium Bond win on a super sun lounger for myself and a very nice French table for my bait hives! And talking of France, my hornet-monitoring trap is working well – at catching flies. I cut a hole near the top and put a sherry cork in it and remove it to let them out. Dennis's idea, thanks Dennis!

My congratulations to the cooking team (Liz Moxon, Carole and Sally Boxall) for producing such a good meal before the Dorset AGM when we had 2 enthralling talks by Simon Croson, which WDBKA had organized and hosted. Sorry most of you missed it.

Best wishes to you and your bees.

Sarah More



## FANCY HAVING FOUR NUC BOXES ON YOUR FLAT ROOF!

Brian just put 4 different bait hives up on the roof.  
What do you reckon, £1 a bet on which one gets bees first.  
All stake money goes to winning hive people and if no bees at all stake money perhaps goes to club exam fund.

**A** is 14x12 (no it doesn't have Sky TV)  
**B** is 5 frame 14x12 ply NUC  
**C** is 6 frame 14x12 poly NUC  
**D** is Straw skep in bee boule (no that isn't a chimney)  
All with old frame wax inside.



## Brian's Poor Poly Hive

The Woodpecker has had a field day here drilling in at least 2" right to the frames. The bees will have to be rehoused whilst the brood box is repaired with filler and repainted with masonry paint.

I did ask why not cover with chicken wire but he has decided to move the colony over 3 miles away from the woodpecker!



## SBKA Special Lecture

This year's Somerset Special Lecture is Dr. Giles Budge talking about "The Foulbrood Gang". The lecture is at the Edgar Hall, 8 Cary Court, Somerton Business Park, TA11 6SB. It is on Wednesday 26th April at 7:00 for 7.30pm start.



A short biography of Dr Giles Budge: He is currently the Science Lead for Crop and Bee Health at FERA and a Senior Lecturer at Newcastle University. He has 20 years' experience conducting applied research in honey bee and crop pathology. His current research interests include combining modelling and experimental approaches to elucidate disease epidemiology and predicting the spread of emerging threats to pollinator health. He has authored over 50 scientific publications and currently supervises PhD students at York, Exeter, Liverpool and Aberdeen. Giles is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Entomology and a member of Defra's Bee Health and Advisory Forum.

Title of his talk: The foulbrood gang: Tracking and tracing honey bee killers  
Giles will run through the history of American and European foulbrood disease, and describe the most recent research findings that enable outbreaks to be linked thereby helping with disease control.

**The Special Lecture is open to all. There is no charge for attending this special talk.**

## **East Devon Beekeepers have kindly invited us to join in with their own Nosema Day Sunday 9th April 10am-1230pm.**

Venue The Bee Shed, Hunthay Farm (Business Park) Axminster EX13 5RJ

They have microscopes available for us to use.

If any of you are wishing to attend, please drop an email to Richard Simpson email [RSimpson48@aol.com](mailto:RSimpson48@aol.com) so that Richard has an idea of who is liable to turn up and if you require any other information.

## **Trip to Twickenham and Thames Valley BKA**

The trip to Twickenham and Thames Valley BKA is on Saturday 10th June. I need to explain why we are going; when we are leaving and returning; how much it will cost and where the collection points will be.

**Why we are going** T&TVBKA is one of the best beekeeping associations in the country. It is very concerned with beekeeping education; it holds the prize for the association with the most people taking the basic bee exam. It holds its own honey show, it has an Open Day which is not an introduction to beekeeping but a chance for the public to see how the apiary is run and runs lecture days which are open to other beekeepers. It runs modular courses during the winter months. A number of regional beekeepers were trained there. We can learn a great deal from them and also share the problems we have. I thought it would be interesting to go to another apiary apart from our members apiaries which has to deal with different problems and has different advantages from ours

**We are leaving** at 8.30am in the morning or as close as possible to that time from the Shillingstone Church Centre. The trip takes about 2 hours and so we should arrive between 10.30am and 11.00am. We will be taken round the apiary so bring your beesuits . We will have a chance to see their facilities and hear how they go about using them and financing them. We will have a chance to have tea/coffee and we should bring our own lunch though you can buy lunch in Twickenham. The visit should last about 2 hours with talks and explanations. We should have finished the tour and talks by about 1.00pm if not a bit earlier.

**We are returning** about 4.30pm or a bit earlier if people want to get back sooner from Twickenham which means everyone has a chance to look round Twickenham and the Thames. We should be back in Shillingstone by 6.30pm.

**What will it cost?** For members of BSBKA the trip is free. For members of other associations it will cost £10. I have hired a coach from Damory Coaches and depending on the numbers we can have a 54 seat coach or a 45 seat coach - the price is the same.

**If you have any queries please ask Lesley Gasson.**

**To book a place on the coach please email me on [imgasson@btinternet.com](mailto:imgasson@btinternet.com) or phone me on 01258**

**861690**

## DORCHESTER & WEYMOUTH BKA ANNUAL BEE EQUIPMENT SALE 1st APRIL

Auction would be held at Nordale Farm, Broadmayne Dorchester DT2 8LY

Lots must be on site before 2.00 pm;  
details and arrangements can be obtained from Chris Donaghy 01305 852317  
[c2donaghy@btinternet.com](mailto:c2donaghy@btinternet.com)

Please be careful what you buy - do not get carried away!

### Site for Bees in Stoke Abbott

If interested please contact Caroline Carless  
[caroline.carless@btinternet.com](mailto:caroline.carless@btinternet.com) or Tel 01308 868421  
There are several types of fruit trees in the garden, plus within the  
Stoke Abbott area there are orchards nearby.



### WDBKA BEE EQUIPMENT SALE 25th MARCH

The sale went well, the weather was kind to us, a lovely sunny day - everyone could enjoy the glorious views, such a contrast to when we were setting up on the Thursday late afternoon at Skyfall Farm Marshwood by kind permission of Justin Baldwin. Thank you to everyone who helped to get the sale on the road.

We had a hundred entries in all, nearly everything sold, those that didn't will be going to the Nordale sale on the 1st April.

Hilary and her glamorous assistant Liz did the auctioneering with lots of humour and I was the runner to Brigid who admirably did the paper work. Sally and Caroline provided the tea & coffee plus biscuits, plus chatting to all the visitors making them all very welcome.

There were several bargains to be had on the day and I am sure everyone went home happy to various parts of Dorset and Somerset with their purchases.



**BATH & WEST SHOW    31st - 3rd June 2017**

**BBKA Spring Convention 7th - 9th April 2017**

Harper Adams University, Newport, Shropshire TF10 9NB

Full Details go to BBKA Website :  
[www.bbka.org.uk/news\\_and\\_events/spring\\_convention.php](http://www.bbka.org.uk/news_and_events/spring_convention.php)

Sarah More has kindly offered to bring back any equipment/foundation (not too big)  
if any member wishes to purchase any items

Please contact Sarah first on Tel 01297 489489 or em [s.more1@btinternet.com](mailto:s.more1@btinternet.com)

**EAST DEVON BKA EVENTS COMING SOON .....**

DATE	TIME	EVENT	WHERE	DETAILS
SUNDAY 9TH APRIL	10.00- 1230HRS	NOSEMA MORNING	The Bee Shed Hunthay Axminster EX13 5RJ	WDBKA Members Welcome

**WEST DORSET BKA EVENTS COMING SOON .....**

DATE	TIME	EVENT	WHERE	DETAILS
SUNDAY 2ND APRIL	1230AM	FIRST APIARY MEETING FOR ALL BEEKEEPERS	NETHERBURY APIARY PARK FARM DT6 5LY	CLEAN SUITS & GLOVES PLEASE
EASTER WEEKEND DAY TBA	TBA WILL BE AN EMAIL & SEE WEBSITE	APIARY MEETING FOR ALL BEEKEEPERS	NETHERBURY APIARY PARK FARM DT6 5LY	CLEAN SUITS & GLOVES PLEASE

Published for its members by West Dorset Beekeepers Association  
 Secretary: Carole Brown 11 North Hill Way, Bridport, Dorset DT6 4JX  
 Tel 01308 456210 email [secretary@westdorsetbees.org.uk](mailto:secretary@westdorsetbees.org.uk)