



Newsletter

July 2016

First things first...

Starvation alert from the National Bee Unit

Beekeepers may wish to monitor their colony food levels closely over the next month as many colonies, particularly those which are strong and had their spring honey crop removed, will be at risk of starving. In some parts of the UK, the weather is still cold and foraging opportunities for large colonies are few and far between. It is important to check and monitor all your colonies feed levels, if you do not wish to open them up because of poor weather, lift below the floor, in turn, on both sides of the hive to see how much it weighs. Where the hive is light, liquid feed should be applied directly above the bees. Feed can be prepared from refined white sugar and water mixed at a 2:1 ratio or one of the proprietary ready mixed syrups available from Beekeeping equipment suppliers. More information about mixing up sugar can be found in the Best Practice Guidelines no. 7

<http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=167>

Large starving colonies of bees will take 1 gallon (approx. 5 Litres) of syrup very quickly while smaller colonies will take half a gallon (approx. 2.5 Litres). After feeding, heft the hives again and check the weight and if in doubt feed some more in a few days.

On the subject of forage availability, Sheila reported 'Just as the BBKA warn of food shortage for bees, I noticed bees on the lime tree! This last of the trees to flower is opening up! Also the Himalayan poppies, dead nettle, peony and daisy like flowers are out.'

Our bees

As expected, we now have three white queens. Unfortunately we also have someone laying drones in our favourite colony and another in a failing hived swarm. So we took advice and shook out the latter bees outside the apiary. We watched as they returned to the site, clustered on the hive front and started to attempt entry at the door to the nearby colony. Maybe some were successful, but the guard bees were on form, interrogating all and denying entry to those found wanting. A few persistent offenders were jostled off, bitten all over and in some cases,

ultimately despatched by the guards. Nature red in tooth and claw. We left the refugees clustered underneath the mesh floor of the hive, so maybe by now their pheromones will have mingled with the good colony and they will be granted asylum. I just hope the rogue drone layer didn't make it back, the theory being that she won't be able to fly. We have yet to decide whether to try to save the other colony.

Meetings

Our next Branch meeting is next **Saturday 9th July** at Rice Lane City Farm, at the earlier start time of 1.45pm as we need to be out by 4pm. The meeting will begin promptly in the old chapel and will continue at the apiary so don't forget your beesuit and gloves. Cliff Porter and Eric Graham will provide an opportunity to check your awareness of colony health and disease recognition.

The June meeting with Ian Molyneux was most informative and once again very well attended, with most folk staying on for a burger afterwards. Dave and Diane Harrison, Ted Travers and Denis Neale put in loads of overtime to organise the day and the apiary looked great! The beautiful cake from Izzie was much appreciated too. Ian had supervised a shook swarm at the meeting and Dave did a follow up on the progress of the colony at his apiary session the following week.

Wirral Meetings

Don't forget that you can attend other branches' meetings. The Wirral branch will hold their final summer meeting on 16th July with a change of venue. The meeting will now take place on the field behind 3 Seabank Road, Heswall, Wirral CH604SN. Doug Jones reports -

'The speaker at the meeting is Mark McLoughlin, the North West bee inspector. He will be comparing the advantage, or disadvantage, of keeping bees on double or single brood boxes. We also have a stock of bees which has had CBPV Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus for two months to look at. This is a recent new virus which affects honey bees and there is no known cure.

*If I get enough support I intend to hold an auction of surplus beekeeping equipment if you have any equipment you no longer need. **You must mail me a list* by the 8th July 2016 at the latest** if you intend to put anything in the auction, after that date no further entries will be allowed. There should be some stocks of bees for sale as well.*

**doug@bees-r-us.co.uk.*

The remainder of Wirral's 2016 meetings are as follows:

Friday 16th September at 19.30 at Thornton Hough Village Hall. John Zamorski. Beeswax Candle Making.

Friday 21st October at 19.30 at THVH. Ian Molyneux. Beekeeping from a distance.

Friday 18th November at 19.30 at THVH. Beekeepers' Question time.

For further info on these contact Doug on 07977689657 or doug@bees-r-us.co.uk.

Taster Session Success

Cliff and Eric ran our first ever Taster Session in Beekeeping last month at Rice Lane, with myself and Peter Wass assisting. The seven participants all seemed to thoroughly enjoy their afternoon and several are very keen to take the Beginners Course next year. The fee was nominal (£10) but it paid for a couple of extra spare suits, which will help with running further sessions. If you know of anyone who might be interested they can contact Cliff Porter via our webmail address: contact@liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk.

Swarms still needed!

Please remember Eric's request for unwanted swarms to re-establish colonies at Rice Lane City Farm. Please contact him on 07795 414 583.

Equipment sale at Thornes

Thornes are having special offers over the next few weeks, starting with a SUPER sale (a sale of supers) which started online on 29th June and ends at midnight on Monday 3rd July. They will also take telephone orders during normal working hours. Normal carriage rates apply.

Prices:

National super, empty, flat (self-assembly)	£12.00
National Super + 10 SN1 frames and wired foundation on castellated spacers, flat	£22.00
National Super, complete with 12 SN4 frames, flat	£25.00
National Super, empty, assembled	£16.00
National Super, 10 SN1 frames and wired foundation, castellated spacers, assembled	£30.00
National Super + 12 SN4 frames and wired foundation, assembled	£34.00
10 National Supers, empty, flat	£110.00
10 National Supers + 10 SN1 frames ea, wired foundation on castellated spacers, flat	£200.00
10 National Supers + 12 SN4 frames and wired foundation ea, flat	£230.00

E.H. Thorne (Beehives) Ltd, Beehive Business Park, Rand, Market Rasen, LN8 5NJ
www.thorne.co.uk sales@thorne.co.uk 01673 858555

Nucleus for sale

This was posted on 23rd June from the Fylde branch:

Very full five framed nuc with this years marked queen ready to go straight in a hive.

Nice calm bees.

£100. Phone Mica 07866223203

**That's it for now folks. See you on 11th July, 2.30pm, at Rice Lane
City Farm.**

Tracey Seddon, Branch Secretary
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www.liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk