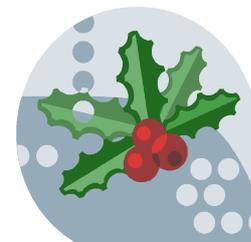


NORTHERN LIGHTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH DEVON BRANCH
OF THE DEVON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2009

www.northdevonbees.org



Wishing all our Readers

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Chair Chat

In the dark winter months, the bees are not at the forefront of our minds. Apart from checking and hefting occasionally, this is the time of the year when we, and the bees, can enjoy a breathing space. No doubt most of you will be busy preparing for Christmas and hopefully you've left plenty of hints to your nearest and dearest about the equipment or books that you'd like to see in your Christmas stocking. However, after the festive season has gone and the prospect of Spring comes nearer, maybe you'll have the time to check your equipment, send a big order to Dave Morris, mend that tatty super and get ahead with making up some frames. In the meantime, enjoy this natural pause and have a very happy Christmas - hope to see you at the Branch New Year meal.

Best wishes

Chris Tozer

New Branch Officers. At the recent AGM and subsequent Branch Committee Meeting the following elected officers and appointed positions were filled.

Chairman - Chris Tozer

Vice Chairman - Sylvia Barber

Treasurer - Derek Hunter

Branch Secretary - Patrick Moore

Apiary Manager - Flowa Houldsworth

Shows & Social Events Co-ordinator - Barbara Carlyle

Examination & Education Officer - Jack Mummery

Membership Secretary/Mailings - Denise Oldacre

Committee Members

Julie Elkin, Peter Auger, Jeff Orr, Mike Hayward

Apiary Quartermaster - Albert Cannon

Minutes Secretary - Lesley Jones

Newsletter Editor - Sylvia Barber

Librarian - Julie Elkin

Webmaster - Ruth Blake

Spray Liaison Officer - Chris Tozer

Honey Shed Organiser - Liz Wilson

Microscopist - Patrick Moore

Branch Representatives at DBKA EC meetings - Chris Tozer and Patrick Moore.

Apiary Manager's Update

Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink!

Once again high tide has swept over the fields leading to Horestone and we have considered hiring kayaks to reach the apiary! With these continuing hovercraft hiccups, we have decided to **close the Tuesday meetings from December 1st until March 2nd 2010!** However, the maintenance work and security checks will be undertaken on varying 'kind weather days' throughout the winter.

We do appreciate that many beekeepers who work (for pennies!!) on a Tuesdays, miss the weekly meetings, so we will hopefully be holding our gardening and repair days on weekends occasionally so we can all catch up on our news. The dates and times will be sent via the Messenger info system---the perfect way to exercise and loose a little weight after the Christmas feasts!!!!

Our 9 colonies and 1 nucleus are now fed and settled for the cold wet months ahead, and our thoughts are considering plans for the coming year. The education team are arranging evening lectures at the Castle Centre in Barnstaple over the next 3 months, and again, they will be published via the messenger service. If anyone has a particular interest please can you let us know and we'll try to find a suitable speaker.

The gardening team have designed a leaflet suggesting bee-friendly flowers for each months of the year. Sylvia will be putting a cut and pasted version in this month's Northern Lights, but if anyone would like a full copy, please mail me for this very helpful information sheet.

So as our Committee's first year draws to a close, we would like to thank our many helpers who have contributed to our apiary with their time, energy and donations and we look forward to meeting again in 2010 to share the joy of caring for honey bees

Wishing everyone a sharing and caring festive time,

Flowa

FROM THE EDUCATION TEAM

TEACHERS NEEDED

“Calling all experienced beekeepers who are also practicing teachers, qualified teachers or retired teachers” The Education team would like more members to call upon to teach some sessions to satisfy the increasing interest in “beginner beekeeper courses”. Currently the teaching team comprises five members: Kay Thomas, Julie Elkin, Glenis Beardsley, Sue Madgwick and Jack Mummery. The team successfully delivered a ten week, 20 hour beginner course last spring and the plan is to deliver another this coming spring. Our dilemma is that we would like another team of volunteers to possibly deliver another course if interest is as buoyant as some expect; for example there are 85 on a waiting list in Exeter. There would only need to be a commitment to deliver two sessions and perhaps help at some open days. **SO** come on all you teachers help spread the word and your knowledge of our craft to the enthusiastic newcomers.

BASIC ASSESSMENT

I intend organising a “Basic Assessment” at the apiary early next summer. I’m not asking for names yet but I would like new beekeepers and the more experienced beekeepers who have not completed a basic assessment to think about completing one. I’ll advertise a couple of sessions next spring when some dates have been arranged with an examiner. For more information go to the following link http://www.britishbee.org.uk/examinations_and_assessments.php#basic

MODULES

Why not consider sitting some module examinations? Chris Utting one of our prominent members is the BBKA Correspondence Course Secretary and will only be too pleased to help and advise any member wishing to proceed with some modules. Sometimes there is enough interest from members for a “discussion” group to operate. For more information go to the following link

http://www.britishbee.org.uk/examinations_and_assessments.php#abr The examination fee for each module is £18.00. ALL exams are arranged for 20 March 2010. Closing date for applications to sit modules must be made by 28 February 2010. The fee for each module by correspondence is £45.00.

Information about the Basic Assessment and Modules as well as other beekeeping qualifications can be found on the BBKA web site.

Jack Mummery

Obituary. Peter Woollard 1922—2009

Some of you will remember Peter, busy in the apiary garden. No one could dig like him! This was in the early days of the garden refurbishment, general hedge laying and clearing. He was 80 or so then, enjoying his bees and life generally. He had been a farmer and horticultural nurseryman (among other occupations), and had a deep interest in and knowledge of the natural world. The bees gave him a very rewarding last chapter of his life.

Sadly a heart attack and minor stroke made him less active but watching the bees on a fine day was still a joy. After a very brief stay in South Molton Community Hospital Peter died peacefully on 23rd November.

Your Help and Assistance Please

Please make Denise’s and my life easier by renewing your membership subscription promptly. It makes our job far easier if we can have all the renewals in by the end of January. It also ensures that your insurance runs continuously. So make the Treasurer happy and send a cheque.

Many thanks, Derek.



Community of Beekeepers - Bitz4Bees would like to wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a ‘Honey’ New Year.

For the next month, if you require any items, please call or email Derek Hunter who will be looking after the Shop.

Derek 01769 561033 Derek-hunter@lineone.net

Presentation of Trophies won at the Branch Honey Show

At our recent AGM, Roger Lacey, Chairman of DBKA, presented the trophies to this years Branch Honey Show winners. He expressed his pleasure in attending the meeting and gave words of encouragement to all the Devon Branches for rising to the challenge of providing information and education to the increasing number of people wanting to learn about and keep bees.



Show and Social Events

On 14th November 2009 I was asked to be the Events Coordinator. Margaret has done a wonderful job for the last year and we all thank her very much for all the hard work she has put in. As my knowledge when it comes to organizing events is non existent, Margaret has agreed that she will look after me and be my guiding angel.

All event information should be sent to me at baranlyle@hotmail.co.uk. Everyone should tell me if they think I should know something. Please do not assume that I should already know or that I would have been told by someone else. **Better to get told the same thing fifty times than not at all.**

Our next 'bit of a do' will be our New Year Meal on Sunday 17th January. The lunch will be at **12.30 for 1pm** start. I have provisionally booked the Chichester Arms. They can do a set 3 course Christmas menu for £20 or a 2 course meal of Roast Beef, Pork, Turkey or a Vegetarian meal with the choice of 3 sweets (fruit salad, apple crumble or chocolate fudge cake) and coffee for £15.

All meals must be pre booked and paid for by 6th January 2010.

Please pick your menu and contact me as soon as possible to book a place.

Barbara Carlyle 01271 882303

or email me at baranlyle@hotmail.co.uk

PLANTS FOR A BEE FRIENDLY GARDEN

(please contact Flowa if you would like a full colour e-mail copy of the Garden Teams recent new brochure)

PLANTING IDEAS

Think 'early & late' - grow plants to flower in late winter /early spring & as late into the autumn as possible. Bees will forage on a mild winter day.

Plant flowers in groups as colour & scent on mass are easier for bees to find.

Double flowers are often sterile or the nectaries are difficult for bees to reach so choose single or semi-double varieties.

Sow annuals around the edges of or in rows between fruit & vegetable beds. They will also bring in the Hover Flies whose larvae eat aphids.

Sow hardy annuals in September for early flowers.

Do you need to mow the whole of your lawn? An area of wild flower meadow with white clover will attract butterflies as well. Underplant it with small flowered early crocus.

Make a small pond and bog garden, bees need water.

A hedge of native shrubs allowed to flower is more useful to bees than the 'ubiquitous' leylandii!

If you have space leave brassicas and spare leeks to flower.

SUMMER MAY - AUGUST

BULBS / TUBERS

Alliums ornamental & Chives, Bluebells, Dahlias.

ANNUALS

Borage, Beans, Buckwheat, Busy Lizzies, Calendula, Californian Poppy, Cornflower, Gillia, Heliotrope, Mallows, Mignonette, Phacelia, Poppies, Sweet Williams, Sunflowers.

PERENNIALS

Bell heather & Ling, Bergamot, Campanulas, Cranesbill, Cuckoo Flower, Dandelion, Echinacea, Golden Rod, Helenium, Knapweeds, Marjoram, Meadowsweet, Mints, Purple Loosestrife, Rockroses, Sainfoin, Scabious, Thistles, Thrift, Thymes, Vetches, Veronicas, Vipers Bugloss, Wild Valerian, Willowherb, White Clover.

SHRUBS / TREES

All the top & soft fruits, Abelia, Abutilon, Buddleia (alternifolia & globosa), Ceonothus, Clematis (wild travellers Joy), Cotoneaster, Escallonia, Eupatorium, Fuchsia, Gaultheria, Hawthorns, Holly, Hyssop, Judas Tree, Laurel, Lavenders, Lime, Mountain Ash, Rosemary, sage, Snowberry, Virginia creeper.



Do you know:-

80% of the world's food crops need a pollinator at some stage in their life.

The number of nectar gathering trips per bee per day is between 7 & 13, each lasting from 30 - 60 minutes.

The nectar content of plants can vary from 5 - 60%

Bees are especially attracted to blues and lilacs. A red poppy looks black to a bee.

LATE SUMMER INTO SPRING JANUARY - APRIL

BULBS

Aconite, Anemone, Chionodoxa, Crocus, Grape Hyacinth, Scilla, Snowdrop.

ANNUALS / BIENNIALS

Forget me Nots, Honesty, Limnanthes ie poached egg Flower, Sweet Rocket, Wallflower.

PERENNIALS

Arabis, Coltsfoot, Dead Nettle, Doronicum, Hellebores, Lesser Celandine, Pulmonarias, Violet, Winter Flowering Heathers.

SHRUBS / TREES

Almond, Amelanchier, Berberis, Chaemoneles, Cherry laurel, Clematis, Currants, Daphnes, Goat Willow, Gooseberries, Hazel, Mahonia, Maples, pears, Prunus sp. ie Blackthorn & Plum, Skimmia, Viburnums, Yew.



AUTUMN SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER

ANNUALS

Many continue into autumn especially if spring sown. The most valuable are Borage and Phacelia. Evening primrose.

PERENNIALS,

Autumn flowering Heathers, Heleniums, Michaelmas daisies, Sedums.

SHRUBS / TREES

Clematis, Fuchsia, Gorse, Ivy, Viburnums

Mulled Wine Jelly

Serves 6

10 sheets gelatine

500 ml full-bodied red wine and 300 ml orange juice

2 tbsp honey, 2 strips lemon peel

1 cinnamon stick, 1 vanilla pod

150 ml whipping cream

2 tsp caster sugar

Soak the gelatine in 3-4 tbsp of water for 5 minutes. Heat the wine, orange juice, honey, lemon peel and spices together in a pan, bring just to the boil to reduce the alcohol, then take off the heat. Remove the gelatine from the water and shake gently. Add to the pan and stir until melted. Strain and pour into 6 small wine glasses. Leave to set for 4 hours.

To decorate, split the vanilla pod down its length and scrape out seeds. Use a few of the vanilla seeds to flavour the cream. Cut the vanilla pod into very thin sticks for decoration. Lightly whip the cream with the caster sugar and vanilla seeds and spoon on top of the jelly.

Serve chilled decorated with the vanilla pod sticks.



Turkey Salad Recipe

2 large handfuls of brown turkey meat (cooked)

1 large handful of cashew nuts

1 large handful of dried cranberries

2 tsp ground five spice

A bunch of fresh mine and a bunch of coriander (leaves)

4 large handfuls of mixed salad leaves (rocket, spinach etc)

1 tbsp runny honey

1 fresh red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped.

Dressing: juice of 1 clementine and juice of 1 lime,

1 pomegranate halved, half a red onion peeled and coarsely grated, extra virgin olive oil, 1 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tsp sesame oil, a thumb sized piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated.

1. Shred the turkey into thin strips and put it into pan on a medium heat. Add the cashew nuts, dried cranberries and five-spice. Give it a good stir then let it toast away while you get on with the salad. Give the pan a shake every now and then to make sure nothing catches.

2. Add the mint and most of the coriander leaves to a bowl with the mixed salad leaves. Make the dressing in a separate bowl by mixing the juice from the clementine and lime. Squeeze the juice from one of the pomegranate halves through your hands to catch any seeds then discard them. Stir in the grated onion. Measure the amount of juice then use 3 times as much extra virgin olive oil. Add the soy sauce and sesame oil. Squeeze in all the juice from the grated ginger then throw away the pulp.

3. Give the dressing a good stir. Drizzle over enough dressing to coat the salad leaves then use your hands to toss and dress them.

4. Add the honey to the pan with the turkey meat and stir through until coated. Turn the heat up to full whack for the last few seconds to really crisp up the meat mixture. Serve the salad as soon as the hot meat hits the salad leaves. Toss half of the pan-fried ingredients through the salad leaves and transfer to a serving platter.

5. Spoon the remaining nuts, cranberries and crispy meat over the top of the salad and add another drizzle of dressing. Hold the remaining pomegranate half over the salad and knock it on the back with a spoon so the seeds pop onto the salad. Garnish with a sprinkling of fresh red chilli and any remaining coriander leaves and serve straight away.

Serves 4

Edited by Mel Browne, The Cottage, Bridge Ball, Lynton, EX35 6LH (01598 752449)

Email m.browne@homecall.co.uk

and Sylvia Barber, Foxpark, Waddicombe, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9RX (01398 341624)

E.mail sylviad.barber@dsl.pipex.com

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