

NORTHERN LIGHTS

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

NOVEMBER 2009

www.northdevonbees.org



The Annual General Meeting of the North Devon Branch (of the Devon Beekeepers Association) will take place at the Horestone Apiary on Saturday 14th November at 2pm

The meeting will be run according to the Rules that you will find printed in your DBKA 2009 Yearbook, using both the Branch Rules, and those of the DBKA, as parent organisation. You should note that only Registered and Partner Members are eligible to vote etc at the AGM. A Register of Attendance must be signed, and a list of eligible members will be available.

As at the previous AGM, the following Branch Committee positions shall be elected:

Chairman, Vice Chairman, Branch Secretary, Treasurer, Apiary Manager, Show & Social Events Coordinator, Education & Exam Secretary, 4 Committee Members.

Patrick Moore,
Secretary
North Devon Branch
Devon Beekeepers Association

Chair Chat

Well here we are at the end of another beekeeping year. We have been very lucky to have had a mild October giving the bees a chance to continue foraging for a while longer. By now we should have hefted our colonies and made sure they have adequate stores. If you have left a super on for added insurance, make sure that you have removed the queen excluder between them or the queen could get trapped below if the bees move upwards to feed on the stores. Other than that, make sure the mouseguard is in place and that the roof is watertight.

And now to the forthcoming AGM. **Please remember that we are very short of parking space and share cars where-ever possible. Please use the field opposite for 4x4's.** Julie is organizing a raffle and the plant stall will have some end of season bargains. There will be light refreshments when the meeting is over. I look forward to seeing you there. *Sylvie*

Apiary Manager's Update:

Seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness

.....
And still more, the later flowers for the bees
Until they think the warm days will never cease
For summer has o'er brimmed their clammy cells

We and the bees have really enjoyed the surprise warmth of the delayed autumn onset, which saw the bees making the most of the pollen and nectar available from the continuous-flowering fuschia and ivy. Our bees have now been bedded down for winter: the weaker colonies having been united and feeding ended.

At the National honey show this last week-end, Philip McCabe from the Irish beekeepers group gave a fascinating description of a his father's twist to winter preparations:

In late September, he identifies the brood nest, and removes 2 or 3 frames surrounding this. Taking the non-brood bearing frames, he cuts 2-3 inches, 5-7cms from the frames' base, and replaces it alongside the sealed brood. He believes that during the very cold weather, this allows the bees to cluster there more effectively, so maintaining their temperature and subsequently requiring less stores. Too late for our bees this year, however a thought to carry over for the future!

Another snippet of interest, this time from Buckfast Bee Day, when Ivor Davies remarked on an observation made at the hive entrance. It is known that bees begin their initial orientating flights by leaving the colony flying backwards to absorb landmarks for long return flights. However, it appeared that older field bees were under-taking this amazing behaviour during the afternoons. Eventually it became apparent that these were bees accompanying the virgin queen on her mating flight! They not only offered their protection to her during this most vulnerable time, but acted as her entourage until she arrived safely back at the hive!!

This summer we have used icing sugar in our management of varroa mite control, and it is encouraging to learn that Professor Keith Delaplane from Georgia University will be researching its efficacy.

These on-going observations and investigation encourage our reading for the coming winter and new ideas for next year.

Hoping to see you at the new Years dinner to catch up on everyone's plans and hopes for the wonderful summer the weather forecasters may predict for 2010! *Flowa*



DEVON BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION - North Devon Branch
90th Annual General Meeting
Horestone Apiary. Saturday 14th November 2008 at 2pm

A G E N D A

Welcome from the Chairman

1. Apologies for absence; an attendance sheet will be circulated.
2. Minutes of the previous AGM.
3. Matters arising from those Minutes.
4. Chairman's Report.
5. Branch Secretary's Report.
6. Treasurer's Report.

7. Election of Branch Officers_

Retiring Officers

Chairman

Sylvia Barber

Vice Chairman

Chris Tozer

Branch Secretary

Patrick Moore

Treasurer

Derek Hunter

Education & Exam Secretary

(position vacant)

Apiary Manager

Mary "Flowa" Houldsworth

Show & Social Events Coordinator

Margaret Kay

4 Committee Members.

Peter Auger, Mike Hayward

Victoria Hull, Jack Mummery

Any of these positions not filled at the AGM will need to be co-opted by the new Branch Committee.

These are all "voting", representative positions though the Chairman's vote is a "casting vote" only

8. Election of other post holders

The members present at the AGM will be invited to elect the following :

Membership Secretary (currently Denise Oldaker, who is content to continue)

Newsletter Editor(s) (currently Sylvia Barber and Mel Browne, who are content to continue)

If either of these positions is not filled at the AGM the new Branch Committee will co-opt appropriately

Please note that the following positions will be appointed by the new Committee:

Clerk to the Branch Committee (Minutes Secretary), Branch Librarian, Quartermaster, Webmaster, Branch Microscopist, Swarm Liaison Officers, Gardening Team Leader, Foulbrood Recognition Advisors, Examiner of Accounts, Spray Liaison Officer

(note: Branch Officers and elected Committee members may also hold any of these positions .)

9. Presentation of Trophies won at the Branch Honey Show

10. To agree the Membership fee for the North Devon Branch for 2010

11. Date of next Branch Committee meeting: Wednesday, 18th Nov. at 7p.m., at Horestone Apiary.

12. Any Other Business

(A Member wishing to propose any matter for discussion at the Branch AGM, shall notify the Branch Secretary in writing at least 14 days before the meeting in order that it may be placed on the agenda)

a) Received from Michael Duncan:

"Clarification of Branch's decision to ostracise and remove certain Branch Members"

Notes:

a) Candidates for election to the North Devon Branch Committee at the AGM must be Registered or Partner members of the Branch. Their candidacy must be proposed by another Registered or Partner branch member, and seconded by yet another Registered or Partner branch member. They must also indicate their preparedness to serve, either verbally in person at the AGM or (if they are unable to attend) in writing to the Branch Secretary before the AGM commences. A contested election will be subject to vote, votes being cast by Registered or Partner members in attendance at the AGM, and the candidates may themselves vote in this process. In the event of a confirmed tie, the Chairman (who may not otherwise vote) will have the casting vote.

b) The Chairman and the Branch Secretary are *ex officio* Trustees of the Charity, The Devon Bee Keepers Association, and are expected to attend DBKA Executive Committee meetings as voting representatives of the North Devon Branch.

c) The Membership Secretary and Newsletter Editor(s) are usually invited to attend Branch Committee meetings, though not as voting members of the committee.

d) Members *may* serve in more than one post/office simultaneously, but of course it is preferable that different individuals hold each of the elected Branch Officer positions.

e) Whilst it may be helpful for the "Ordinary" Committee Members to hold other roles, it should not be regarded as obligatory – we are keen to have representation from the wider membership, and especially those members who cannot take part in Tuesday Apiary activities.

BRANCH HONEY SHOW

A BIG thank you to all members who entered the Branch Honey show and congratulations to all prize winners! This year's honey show was a resounding success with both the honey judge and cookery judge commenting on the very high standard of entries. Almost everyone who entered picked up a prize and it was good to know that some new beekeepers and some first time show participants won prizes. Unfortunately we were four entries short of the "magic" 100 but hopefully next year may be a better honey year when there won't be any excuses for not entering and the magic 100 will be exceeded!

There was plenty of interest from lay people and Jean and David were kept busy with sales of members' honey and other bee related goodies.

To all those who entered, don't forget to keep your special show exhibits for the County Show in May. It's time more Northern members entered the County show and gave the other branches a run for their money for the Branch Trophy. There are usually at least two Northern branch members who enter the County show who would be willing to take other entries; so give it a try!

Jack Mummery

The main Trophy winners were:

Novices trophy for run honey	Derek Hunter
Novices trophy for wax	Jean Morris
Trophy for best wax exhibit	Chris Tozer
Trophy for most points in the cookery classes	Jean Morris
Trophy for most points for Honey classes	Jack Mummery
Trophy for Mead classes	Jack Mummery
Trophy for best exhibit in the light run honey class	Jack Mummery
Trophy for most number of points overall	Jack Mummery



On 24th October I went to my first ever honey show. I didn't enter anything, I thought as a novice I wouldn't make the grade. All my preconceptions were wrong and next year we should all have a go. It's a fun day out, doesn't cost anything and you get a free cup of coffee thrown in. More important you learn a lot.

It was amazing to see rows of honey in every colour, candles looking and smell heavenly. Even the lady who did the judging was impressed with the bread and cakes; and what the honey judge didn't know you could put on a pin head.

The judging is an art in itself. They took a great amount of time on our behalf to make their choices. Their help and feedback was on hand for all there to reap the benefit of first hand knowledge.

Congratulations to all the winners; and thanks to Margaret's team of workers who made it all possible. that's what a honey show is all about.

Barbara Carlyle



When I came to judge your honey show I knew there would be a scarcity of honey entries because of the odd weather we have had this summer. However I was very pleased to see a large number of entries in the novice honey class. There were a few mistakes - but if you have never shown before it is difficult to know just what is expected. The entries in the wax classes were very good overall with some very good entries. I was intrigued by the swarm remover - perhaps it will be patented in the future! The photographs were also of a very high standard as were the entries in the gift class. I do hope the comments I put were helpful and encouraging. Well done to all who entered and to all who gained prize cards. I expect you all to try again next year!

Alicia Normand - honey judge

HONEY SHOW

I was quietly nervous about this years Honey Show. Would the members rise to the occasion and put in lots of exhibits? Would the public be interested? Would we have enough helpers? As it turned out there was no need to worry, all Margaret, Jack and their team of helpers hard work paid off and the Show was undoubtedly a success. What I wasn't expecting though was how much I would enjoy being a steward for our honey and wax judge, Alicia Normand. I am now a complete convert to the delights of Showing. I was hooked before she had even finished judging Class 1 – 2 x 1 lb jars of Light Run Honey.

Alicia showed me how to use the grading glasses to check the honey was the right colour to be in that class. She then held each jar up to the light to make sure that she could not see light round the rim which would mean that there wasn't enough honey in the jar. The jar and lid were examined carefully and she shone a torch through the jar to look for bubbles, debris or granulation. She explained the importance of filtering and then warming the honey slightly to let the bubbles come to the top for removal. She told me how to remove small spots of debris/pollen/bubbles with a straw. The honey should not be warmed too much or it will affect the flavour. The perfect jar should contain crystal clear honey. Then we moved on to the smell. She slightly lifted the lid of the first jar—and we sniffed. Each jar was different, some with a very mild scent, one with a full bodied floral scent that hung in the nostrils. She then examined the surface to see whether the debris and bubbles had been removed. Then the sense of touch, she dipped her taster stick into the honey to check whether very runny and watery – or whether it dropped with a full bodied consistency. Then finally on to the taste. This too was a surprise, some honeys the flavour was sweet but didn't linger on the tongue, some tingled on the tongue and exploded in the mouth. Well maybe not exactly exploded but more erupted with flavour. Then finally the prize winning jar was chosen - very clear, no bubbles or debris, lovely scent and taste.

I have taken copious notes, but perhaps for now Class 1 is enough. Thank you to all of you who contributed to the day.

Sylvie





Honey Show

At the recent Honey Show, we were fortunate to have two expert WI cookery judges to award the prizes for the cakes and bread section of the show. Sally Wilson and her friend, Julie, arrived with knives, cutting board and a check-list of what to look for for each type of cake or bread. As Steward to the judges I kept them supplied with glasses of water to sip between tastings and gleaned several baking tips along the way. Marks were awarded for external appearance, internal appearance and for taste. Each entry was carefully assessed in these three categories and the marks added up to give the final points. It was really quite scientific and very thorough, although taste was the deciding factor, and this has to be down to the judges preferences. Thanks to everyone who put on their pinnies and baked a cake and thanks to Sally and Julie.

Lesley

Community of Beekeepers - Bitz4Bees

Now the active season is slowing down, from Tuesday 3rd November 2009 until February 2010 the B4B Shop will only be open ON REQUEST.

Orders will be processed by Phone or email



Baked apple, with ricotta and honeycomb.

4 small red apples

80 g sultanas

Half teaspoon ground cinnamon

4 tbsp honey

60 g butter

250 g ricotta

120 g honeycomb

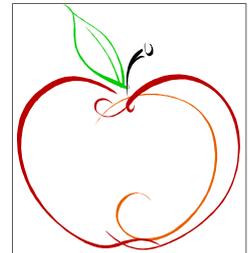
To improve the final presentation of the baked apples, slice off the top 5 millimetres of each fruit with a sharp knife before cooking. Remove the core and, once the centre of the apple has been filled, replace the top before baking. This way the cooked dessert looks more like a whole apple and, if the fruit was bought with stalks, these can be removed and reserved before baking and then popped back into the top of the apple for serving.

Method

Preheat oven to 200C. Slice the tops off the apples, reserve. Remove cores with an apple corer. Mix sultanas and cinnamon in a small bowl and stuff into apple cavities. Place in a baking tray, drizzle each apple with honey and top with a tablespoon of butter. Roast for 10 minutes. Turn oven to 170C. Baste apples and bake for a further 20 minutes.

Serve with a spoonful of ricotta, a chunk of honeycomb and a drizzle of pan juices.

Serves 4



DIARY DATES

***Unfortunately the November Microscopy Day with Brian Marchant has been cancelled.** Further information will be given out when a new date has been organized*

Saturday 14th November Branch AGM 2pm

Christmas Lunch - Sunday 17th January - date set, venue to be arranged.

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