

NORTHERN LIGHTS

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

OCTOBER 2011

www.northdevonbees.org



Editorial: Due to computer problems this week, this copy of NL is rather thrown together - so many apologies if there are rather more errors than usual or if I have forgotten to put something in. *Sylvie*

FROM THE EDUCATION SECTION

Taster Course

Kay, Sue and Jack from the education team staged a taster course on Sunday 4 September at Horestone. There were ten participants who all enjoyed the afternoon especially looking in a hive of bees and handling them. The weather remained dry just long enough to offer everyone some hands on experience. A thoroughly enjoyable session.

Module One Discussion Group

There are ten learners who are meeting on Monday evenings at the Castle Centre, Barnstaple, to discuss and learn the content of Module One: 'Honey bee management'. Sylvie and Julie are the discussion group leaders and some weeks there will be other members leading sessions.

Modules: If you are unable to attend the programmed discussion groups you can always study at home for them by following a correspondence programme. Here is a link to the BBKA website for the correspondence course details http://www.bbka.org.uk/files/library/20-08-2011;bbka_-_modules_correspondence_course_enrolment_form_1313_824028.pdf By studying for modules you will almost certainly increase your knowledge of beekeeping and thereby become a better beekeeper.

Jack Mummery
Education Officer

STOP PRESS

NORTH DEVON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION AUTUMN EVENING LECTURES 2011

Friday night (30th September) is beekeepers question night. The experienced beekeepers are ready for your questions.

The talk will take place at the Castle Centre, Barnstaple
7.30 - 9.30 pm.

Charge £2 per person, refreshments included.

The Annual General Meeting

of the North Devon Branch (of the Devon Beekeepers Association) will take place at the Castle Centre, 25 Castle Street, Barnstaple on Sunday 13th November, at 2pm.

The meeting will be run according to the Rules that you will find printed in your DBKA 2011 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.

Agendas for the meeting will be available at the meeting. 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. I shall endeavour to circulate the Agenda to you by e-mail well before the AGM (though obviously not more than 14 days before!).

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

Chairman, Vice Chairman, Branch Secretary, Treasurer, Show & Social Events Coordinator, Education & Exam Secretary, 5 Committee Members.

Martin Pollock
Secretary
North Devon Branch
Devon Beekeepers Association

HONEY SHOW

We are all set for the Honey Show 22nd & 23rd October. Read pages 3 and 4 for tips and advice from Jack on preparing exhibits for the Show.

If anyone would like to help on Friday, Saturday or Sunday, please contact Barbara, on baranlyle@hotmail.co.uk.

Just for interest, everyone should come in and see the show to see how it is set up and to look at all the exhibits. It's open to the public from 11 am on Saturday and from 10 am on the Sunday at St Johns Garden Centre, Barnstaple.

All exhibits should be at St Johns on Friday afternoon or before 9.15 am on Saturday morning.

Good luck to everyone.

Barbara

September/October notes from Horestone

As September ends feeding of the colonies is more or less complete. We have light nosema in a couple of the colonies and these have been treated with Fumidil B. All the colonies in Blue team were treated as they are very close together and the spores may be introduced if there was drifting or robbing. Most of the colonies have been treated with Vita Gold® as it is reputed to control nosema spores.

We are still in the process of sourcing a freezer so that all the super frames to be over wintered can be introduced to 48 hours in the freezer to kill any wax moth eggs or larvae.

At the Apiary Support Team meetings we have had spirited debates as to the best ways to maintain our colonies in a healthy condition.

We still have to finalise our preparations and make sure that all the colonies are ready and fit for winter. As I type this the sun is shining and it is warm, this is exactly what our bees need before they face some of our damp / cold winter weather.

The garden is still looking good, with the bees foraging on the sedum and michaelmas daisies. The bees were busy yesterday arriving at the hive entrances loaded with yellow pollen. Unfortunately we still have a wasp problem but we have put the windfall apples to good use in our stewed apple wasp traps.

We are really pleased and grateful to Alan Barrow who has replaced our water pump so that we no longer have to drag in gallons of water every Tuesday. It was the highlight of the month and caused much excitement as water now comes out of a shiny new tap.



My First Year

My introduction to bee keeping was quite sudden with the sad loss of my brother-in-law Chris Shere, a well known bee keeper in mid Devon. The apiary is located at Bampton on the edge of town in a very sheltered spot down by the river. I inherited two hives of bees.

Looking for help it was North Devon Bees that offered the help and tuition, and the cups of tea and cakes that was required to help me through the first season. Taking of 50 lbs of honey and increasing my colonies to 3, and having been stung twice, I can now claim to be a beekeeper.

The nosema testing day results in August - was not good, two hives testing heavy for nosema. Fumidil B seems to be hard and time consuming work, so I looked for an easier method. Looking around I found Nozevit, an organic treatment. Treating the bees three times in 10 days as recommended the bees showed a noticeable improvement in less than a week. Testing the bees again after two weeks I found the nosema count to be very light. A good result.

The bees will be tested again next spring - I will let you know the results of that test then.

My thanks to North Devon Bees for their help,

And keep the teapot hot.

Alan Barrow

Sainsbury's Honey

I had a look along the shelves of Sainsbury's Supermarket in Barnstaple the other day and was surprised to find 45 varieties of honey on sale. None from Devon. The most expensive was Manuka 15+ at £11.45 for a 12 oz jar.

The cheapest was a 12 oz jar of Basics at 99 p.

Chris Utting.

NORTH DEVON HONEY SHOW

Our Branch Honey Show is approaching and now is the time to start thinking about your exhibits and preparing some of them.

Look through the show schedule and tick the classes that interest you. You won't have to pay for each entry; the entry fee covers ALL your entries so enter as many as possible. Don't think you won't be good enough to enter because you are! Just prepare your entries carefully and have some fun entering the show and you never know you may win some prizes.

When you have put all the hard work into your entries, don't forget the County Show next May and save the entries you can to enter that show. There is always someone from the branch who attends it and would stage your entries.

Here are a few tips for showing.

GENERAL TIPS FOR SHOWING

SHOW SCHEDULE

Carefully read the show schedule and observe all the rules and criteria; make sure entries are the correct size and in the correct containers. Tick the items you feel confident in showing.

RUN HONEY

- Filter honey through a fine straining cloth or several layers of fine muslin
- Only use new matching honey jars of the squat pattern, warm them before pouring in your prepared honey
- Wipe around the inside top of the jar
- Make sure the external jar thread is clean
- Ensure there are not any particles of wax or dust on the top of the honey
- Remove bubbles from the top of honey with a clean spoon or cling film
- Only use new matching lids
- Ensure that there is not a gap between the bottom of the lid and the surface of the honey when viewed from the side of the jar
- Shine a bright torch light through the honey to check there are not any foreign bodies in the honey
- Keep the prepared run honey in a warm place until the show to prevent crystals forming

CHUNK HONEY

- Choose the palest honey you have and prepare it as for light run honey
- Select a piece of comb which is even in thickness either side of the central rib and does not have any pollen cells and is not crystallising. Cut the comb (Chunk) as large as possible as you don't want it floating above the bottom of the jar or leaning to one side.
- Place a little clear honey in the jar then carefully place in the piece of comb. Fill the jar carefully with honey. Allow the jars to stand in a warm place for a few days then check the surface; remove any bubbles and flakes or wax. Cover with a tight fitting new lid.

GRANULATED HONEY

- Make sure naturally granulated honey surface is free from any specs of propolis and check there aren't any specs on the bottom of the honey. A wet surface would usually indicate that it has started to ferment; this would be rejected by the judge. Choose the jars with the least 'frosting', i.e. where the granulated honey has shrunk away from the jar. Carefully clean the inside top of the jar WITHOUT disturbing the surface.

SOFT SET HONEY

- Soft set honey should not be runny but should be set but with a soft texture like that of butter. Make sure that it hasn't started to ferment.

MEAD

- Use Bordeaux style punted bottles for mead (See DBKA show rules)
- Filter mead through a wine filter into a clean clear bottle
- Only use mead that has stopped working, ie is not continuing to ferment
- Make sure you use the correct type of stopper; the rules state a flanged stopper. These can be purchased from home brew shops.

FRAME FOR EXTRACTION AND SECTIONS

- Try to clean the frame by carefully scraping the exposed surfaces to remove any propolis
- Aim to have the minimum number of unfilled/uncapped cells
- Choose a frame/section that has been well drawn and where the surfaces are as flat as possible, with the whitest cappings possible.
- Check by holding the frame/section to a light that there are not any cells of pollen and that the honey hasn't started to crystallise.

CONTAINER OF CUT COMB

- Cut the WIRELESS comb as close to half a pound or 227 g as possible, drain it on a cake cooling wire before carefully putting it in a plastic container.
- Make sure there are not any cells of pollen present and that the honey hasn't started to crystallise. Make sure the piece of comb is uniform thickness with a central wax rib and has a flat surface of white cappings.

WAX AND CANDLE CLASSES

- Only use wax cappings for wax classes and wash them in rain water
- Pick out as much discoloured wax, pollen and propolis from the cappings before melting them.
- Filter wax through a coffee filter or similar before moulding for candles or blocks.
- Polish moulds with a dry, lint free cloth with a drop of washing up liquid on.
- Work in a warm place and pour the melted wax carefully into the moulds. Allow them to cool slowly
- If the wax does not free easily from the mould, immerse it in cold water and leave, the wax cast will usually float out.
- Polish the finished wax with a silk cloth
- For candles dip the wick in liquid wax prior to placing in the mould, and have the wick long enough to light; about a centimetre from the top of the candle.

PHOTOGRAPHS

- Make sure that the photo is of interest to beekeepers and take care to mount it on a piece of suitable card or thick paper. Add a caption that summarises the picture. Keep within the size criteria written in the schedule

COOKERY

- Make sure you follow the recipe accurately
- Practice items you are not sure about
- Make your items as close to the show time as possible so that they are fresh.

If you haven't thought about showing before, have a go, it can be very rewarding and great fun and it supports your branch which will have put a lot of hard work into preparing for the show

BEST OF LUCK

*Jack Mummery,
Education Officer*

DIARY DATES

BRANCH HONEY SHOW - 22^o 23 October^o St Johns Garden Centre, Barnstaple

Please fill out your entries form in plenty of time and give or post or email to Barbara Carlyle. Early receipt of entries form helps us to plan the exhibits and prepare the labels for Show.

National Honey Show: Weybridge, Surrey.
27^o 29th October.

Sunday 13th November, North Devon Branch (of the Devon Beekeepers Association) - Annual General Meeting - 2pm at the Castle Centre Barnstaple.



Isabelle's First Year as a beekeeper - helping Cathy - a great white hunter playing wasp tennis. It's to be highly recommended; not only is it fun, but we despatched dozens of wasps too!
Cathy Backway

Apple and Honey Squares.

6 oz SR Flour

1 tsp baking powder

Pinch salt

3 oz caster sugar

1 oz butter

Grated zest of 1 lemon

1 egg

6 tbsp milk

2 tbsp vegetable oil

11b apples

Sift the flour, baking powder and salt into a bowl. Stir in 3oz caster sugar and half the finely grated lemon zest.

Whisk one medium egg with 6 tbsp milk and 2 tbsp vegetable oil and pour into the bowl. Beat until smooth and pour into a lined, shallow oblong tin.

Peel, core and thinly slice 11b apples, arrange the slices in the batter and brush with 1 oz melted butter.

Mix 2 oz caster sugar with the zest of the remaining half lemon and sprinkle over the apples.

Bake at 200C for 30^o 35 minutes until the base has risen and the topping is golden brown. Cool in the tray for 4 minutes before brushing with 2 tbsp clear, warmed honey. Cut into about 12 squares.

Freezes well. Serve with warm custard or cream.



Community of Beekeepers.
Bitz 4 Bees

WINTER SCHEDULE

Please note that the shop will be closing for winter from 26th October.

Should any one need something urgently after that date please contact me to arrange a convenient time to collect it.

Derek Hunter

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