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| logoSURREY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONWEYBRIDGE DIVISIONNEWSLETTER: June 2015 [**www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com**](http://www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com/) |

***Editorial***

The good news is that it looks as if the current season will be a good one for at least the spring honey harvests. The bad news is that there are many reports of unusually large numbers of queen cells and swarms this year, and even very experienced beekeepers are having their work cut out to keep up with them. A disturbing feature is the continued problem with the queens who are starting to be raised in their cells and then ‘disappearing’ from the colonies at an alarming rate. This has been reflected in the numerous reports of second batches of queen cells being raised in both halves of an artificial swarm, despite an initial selection of one or two cells having been made earlier. The problems seem to extend to virgin queens or young laying queens where they are in a nucleus colony or a full-sized colony one day and gone the next, with more queen cells being produced by the remaining bees. For several years, we have heard a lot about queens ‘not being properly mated’. Is this another effect of varroa mites and the viruses they carry weakening drones whose cells they are known to enter in preference to worker cells?

Turning to something quite different, please read carefully and give your very serious consideration to the following important message that has already been circulated to members.

**Acquisition of a permanent site for Weybridge Division**

Weybridge Beekeepers Division has an exciting opportunity to acquire a permanent site for our divisional activities. Whilst your committee can identify some potential sites we believe it is much more effective to enlist the knowledge, experience and contacts of our entire membership to identify and develop a site which will best suit our purposes. The purpose of this note is to invite your help in realizing this goal.

Those of you that have been to the Epsom Division Apiary, from where they run a shop open to all Surrey Beekeepers, will have seen their excellent facilities. There is a building with an extraction room that can be hired for the day, toilets, a meeting room that can be used for lectures/presentations, space for hives and a large store. The Reigate division bought a large woodland plot, and they are close to completing the development of a building providing extensive facilities. Another Surrey Division has facilities at a National Trust property. And in Beecraft some years ago there was a story of the Bradford Division leasing a disused bowling green and clubhouse from the council that they converted to an apiary.

So what would we look for in an ideal site? The following criteria would be essential:

* Access at any time during daylight hours
* Access for vehicles
* Parking
* Secure
* Firm ground with no flood risk
* Space for a large shed and 10 colonies
* Permission to erect shed
* Low risk of conflict of use with surroundings
* Natural screening or permission to erect it
* Low risk of vandalism
* Located within the area covered by the Weybridge Division

*continued on page 2*

*continued from page 1*

The following, whilst not essential, are desirable for an ideal site

* Water, electricity, sewage
* Toilets
* Meeting room
* Storage facilities (more secure than a shed)
* Ability to build/adapt a room as an extractor room

The costs are a significant factor. Building the facilities from scratch would be a considerable expenditure. An ideal site would therefore have some existing facilities that we could use, adapt or add to. And if we were able to work with an organisation, sharing facilities, it would reduce the ongoing maintenance costs.

Do you know any sites that fit these criteria? Do you have any contacts in Elmbridge Council or Surrey County Council that may be able to help? Do you know any organisations that have facilities they could share with us (National Trust, Woodland Trust, RHS, Walton Charity land, Brooklands Museum, Rugby clubs etc.). Do you have contacts with any companies that may have a corner of land they are willing to let us use (e.g. Sony – on the Brooklands Road, Glaxo SKB on Cobbets Hill)? Are there businesses that would welcome us on their land (e.g. orchards, nurseries, arable farms)?

Could you please think about this, and follow up with any of your contacts to help identify potential sites? We would like you to identify potential sites and make initial enquiries to assess how close a fit the site is to our criteria above and also establish the ownership of the site and whether the owner is interested in exploring the opportunity further. On behalf of the Committee Martin Major will coordinate this, so can you please advise him by email ([martin@tectoday.com](mailto:martin@tectoday.com)) of potential sites providing details of the location, the site and the match with the above criteria. We would like to have feedback by 30th June so a shortlist can be drawn up for consideration by the committee. If you have a potential site but have not been able to gather all the information by this date, let us know about it anyway. A committee member could join you to approach the site owners if desired.

The boundaries of the area covered by the Weybridge Division are not clearly definable, as they inevitably overlap with those of adjacent Divisions and depend on where our members live, but Weybridge is and has always been more or less in the middle.

We need your ideas to help find a new site.

Please help us identify suitable locations in your local area.

Thank you, The Committee

**Intended Teaching Apiary site at St George’s College Junior School, Weybridge**

As many of you will know – especially those who have helped at this site – we had planned to move the Teaching Apiary to Weybridge from Burhill School in Hersham during the half term holiday of both schools. However, the move did not take place because there had been vandalism at the new site. The school has increased security, and an old hive contaning a swarm has been placed there. All is well so far, so we wait and see how it goes.

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**REMINDERS**

**Garden meeting, Saturday 20 June, 2.30 pm**

For our next meeting we have been invited to Stephen Ward's home, 27 Broad Highway, Cobham, KT11 2RR. Please bring contributions for a picnic tea afterwards. Stephen would appreciate some suggestions as to an appropriate topic for his session, so please give Sue your ideas when you let her know if you intend to be there (slawes@hotmail.co.uk, 01932 843209).

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**REPORTS**

**Apiary meeting at Garson’s Farm, Sunday 24th May**

Peter Bowbrick kindly invited us to his apiary at Garson's Farm. The first challenge was how to approach the hives. The usual gate had been padlocked because the strawberry picking was open nearby.

We gathered at the other gate, which Peter opened with the code. Parking at the picnic site, out of sight of the fruit area, we walked back to the apiary, taking the opportunity to catch up with each other's spring bee stories. The high level of swarming this year was one topic, with several people having more colonies than they expected after a busy couple of months.

We separated into two groups. Tim Hutchinson gave a very clear and helpful guide to inspecting the hive for the dozen or so beginners. Group members really appreciated his explanations and his willingness to answer questions, including some about a top bar hive.

The rest of the group were led by Peter Bowbrick, who showed us how to requeen a queenless hive by placing the frames from a nucleus into a space left by removing broodless frames from the recipient brood box, lining the gap with newspaper and closing it over the inserted frames like a package. Despite the fearsome reputation of this colony, we all escaped unscathed. He also demonstrated how versatile a double height nuc box can be, allowing many permutations of queen management.

Our tea lived up to the high standards we have come to expect, and the forecast rain materialised as only a few minutes of light drizzle. The conversation continued without a break.

All in all it was a very enjoyable and informative meeting which was enjoyed by more than 30 of our members.

Jane Hunter

*Thank you, Jane, for this, your first contribution to the newsletter.*

**Teaching Apiary Equipment**

A big thank you to Gil Bray and his helpers, Anne Miller and Paul Svard, who made a magnificent job of cleaning 14 boxes and the frames they contained – no mean feat. Also we give our further thanks to Gil for his continued strimming at the Hersham site.

Sandra Rickwood, Teaching Apiary Manager

**Surrey County Agricultural Show, Monday 25th May**

For once the weather was excellent for this show, and we had the usual great interest in the ‘Bees and Honey’ tent. The volunteer stewards were given their customary excellent lunch and time to look around the rest of the Show.

Congratulations to Michael Main, our Treasurer, who was the Chief Steward and to Weybridge members who won prizes in the Honey Show. They are listed below:

Geoff Cooper 3rd Prize Frame of Honeycomb

Andrew Halstead 1st Prize Gift Honey Crystallised

2nd Prize Gift Honey

2nd Prize Crystallised or Soft Set Honey

Lynne Major 1st Prize Honey Cake

David Parker 1st Prize Gift Honey

2nd Prize Light Honey

2nd Prize Benchworthy

3rd Prize Interesting or Informative Exhibit

4th Prize Novice

*Please check these carefully and let me know of errors or omissions. – Ed.*

The full set of results is attached.

**Identifying Nosema and Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus**

On our latest Bee Craft Hangout about Nosema and Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus, we were joined by Julian Routh of the BBKA and Seasonal Bee Inspector, to talk about the BBKA Bee Health Month. We were also joined by Seb Owen of Vita Europe.

The embedding code for your website is:

<iframe width="620" height="349" src="[https://www.youtube.com/embed/qFAJL7d4fj0](http://bee-craft.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1b3026ffe9de637a5feece3be&id=58f6f781fe&e=e26e2dc2c4)" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>

Wendy, BeeCraft, wendy@bee-craft.com

*If you haven’t watched or participated in any of these BeeCraft webinars, I recommend that you do so. Details of past and future programmes are on their website.*

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**FUTURE EVENTS**

**Garden meetings**

*1. Saturday 20 June 2.30 pm*

See page 2, under REMINDERS, for details.

*2. Saturday 18 July 2.30 pm*

Jonathan Hall to lead at Crockford Bridge Farm, New Haw Road, Addlestone, KT15 2BU. There is an ice cream parlour on site, or for those who prefer, please bring contributions for a picnic tea afterwards including flasks of hot water for tea/coffee.

*3. August meeting*

This will be in the teaching apiary subject to the move. The intention is to cover varroa treatment. Details will be published later.

*4. September*

Details for this meeting will be published at a later date.

Sue Lawes (slawes@hotmail.co.uk, 01932 843209)

**Cambridge University Weekend course:**

**“Bees, flies and flowers: the ecology of pollination and why it matters”** **26 – 28 June 2015**

Are you worried about the plight of wild bees and other pollinators?... This course will teach you how to identify and monitor common pollinators… how you can contribute to pollinator conservation.

*If this is of interest to you, please contact me for full details. –Ed.*

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**OTHER ITEMS**

*I am receiving increasing numbers of items referring to websites or links – thank you for all of them; I am entering most of them and shall be putting them together – in no particular order – in this OTHER ITEMS section of the newsletters.*

**A video covering the development of a honey bee from egg to adult bee**

<http://pulptastic.com/this-mesmerizing-timelapse-of-a-bees-first-21-days-of-life-will-have-you-hypnotized/>

A wonderful item of skill and photography. – Ed.

*Thanks to Bill Riddiford for this contribution.*

**Do watch this video**

It’s a reminder of the Swingle Singers plus Rimsky Korsakov!

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/CNjOgNflXX0?rel=0>

*Thanks to David Parker for drawing our attention to this extraordinary and very skillful performance.*

**Swarms in London reported by the *Daily Mail***

Some reports and videos sent to us by Sally Abraham:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3079105/Amateur-beekeepers-causing-urban-swarms-Efforts-protect-bees-led-sharp-increase-hives-located-towns-cities.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3080826/Why-bees-invading-High-Streets-blame-trendy-middle-class-urban-beekeepers.html>

*You will need to be patient in navigating the advertisements****.***

**Common Bumblebees - a video and an identification Chart**

Richard Hignett has passed on the following website which shows a excellent video and identification chart of Bumblebees, produced by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust.

<http://bumblebeeconservation.org/about-bees/identification/common-bumblebees/>

**Would we starve without bees?**

A comprehensive overview which should be especially helpful to our new beekeepers.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zg4dwmn>

*Contributed by David Parker*

**Bee Pictures from the Milan Expo**

The British stand at the Milan Expo has a BE pavilion as a virtual beehive designed by Wolfgang Buttress.

Look at the link below which shows a couple of pics and other details about the idea behind it.

<https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=BE+Pavilion+Milan+Expo+2015&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&hl=en&client=safari>

*Contributed by Graham Maguire*

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**FOR SALE**

Neither the Newsletter Editor nor Surrey Beekeepers Association take any responsibility for the accuracy of any of the following entries, or for the condition of any of the items advertised. If considering purchasing bees or second hand equipment, the prospective purchaser should take great care to ensure that the bees are not diseased, and that all equipment is sterilised before use. Inexperienced purchasers should take a knowledgeable beekeeper with them.

**Bees for sale**

We will shortly have available **1 and 2 brood box colonies** **with 2015 mated Queen** (on Standard National frames - hives not included, frames to be transferred into Buyer's own hive) as soon as we have evidence the new queens have been mated and are laying well.

1 brood box - 11 frames - £165

2 brood boxes - 22 frames - £195

We only sell bees with a nice temperament and a good laying queen.

The colonies were treated for Varroa late summer/autumn 2014. All queens are locally reared.

**Available to pre-order now:**

**6 Frame Nucs** (National frames) with 2015 mated queen (reared locally). Supplied in 6 frame Poly Nuc.

£140 + £20 nuc deposit which is refundable on return

**5 Frame Nucs** (National frames) with 2015 mated queen (reared locally). Supplied in 5 frame Correx Travelling Box.

Price: £145

The nuc frames will have a mated 2015 Queen with a combination of her brood in various stages and stores. These nucs will be available from some time in June onwards.

**Contact: Astrid Bowers-Veenman** (Yankari Bees)

Location: Ash Green (between Guildford and Farnham, just off the A31)

Distance from Weybridge: 12 miles (as the crow flies)

[**Tel.No**](http://Tel.No/)**.: 01252 330229**

**Mobile: 07803 069798**

**Email:** [**astrid@coginternational.co.uk**](mailto:astrid@coginternational.co.uk)

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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| **Dates for your diary** | | | | |
| Wednesday | June 3rd | Half day from 10.00 am | General Husbandry Practical Assessment Training Day | May, p. 3 and flyer |
| Saturday | June 20th | 2.30 pm | Garden meeting  Stephen Ward  Cobham | p. 2 |
| Saturday | July 18th | 2.30 pm | Apiary Meeting  Jonathan Hall  Crockford Bridge Farm Addlestone | p. 4 |
|  | August |  | Teaching Apiary |  |
|  | September |  | Details later |  |

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| Teaching Apiary Manager  Sandra Rickwood - 01932 244326  email: sandrarickwood@btinternet.com | Nosema Clinic  Jim and Enid Joyce - 01932 225435  email: enid.w.joyce@gmail.com |
| Regional Bee Inspector  Julian Parker 07775 119469 | Swarms  Michael Main – 01932 849080 michaelfmain@hotmail.com |
| LOCAL BEE ADVISORS | |
| Rob Chisholm - 01483 715779 | Geoff Cooper - 01932 242179 |