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| logoSURREY BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION WEYBRIDGE DIVISION NEWSLETTER: April 2018[**www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com**](http://www.weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com/) |

***Editorial***

This time last year at the start of another season, I suggested that it might be a good time to review the succeses or otherwise of last season, and make plans for the new one, including trying out things that you have not done before. Perhaps this year you might like to consider going to a few beekeeping meetings, national events, as well as supporting the local ones. There are plenty of things going on in the world of beekeeping. At the very least, I feel that all beekeepers should go to the National Honey Show at least once in their beekeeping lifetime. We are especially privileged in this area as it is now held in Sandown Park (the racecourse in Esher), this year in November. Please do not forget to support the local meetings arranged by your own Association. If you require equipment, remember the various sales of beekeeping equipment. There are often great bargains to be had, resulting in the perceptive beekeeper not needing to have a lot of money to meet his needs. Apart from this, it is generally a nice day out. Then of course there are various conferences and conventions where a huge range of information from simple beekeeping to frontiers of research knowledge is presented. Details of all of these events will be shown in the Newsletter.

Lastly, if you have never made a contribution to the newsletter, do consider doing so. Any comments or feedback on items are also most welcome.

**Potential Beekeeping Centre in Pleasant Place, Hersham: Update 14**

**BIG NEWS:** We received our first two grants.  £20,000 from the Elmbridge CIL Fund and £2,000 from the Elmbridge Annual Fund.    We are also through to the second round of the Heathrow Communities for Tomorrow grant, more on that below.

 ***Planning Application***: We are currently in a phase called pre-planning.  This is free to us as a charity.  We expect feedback on this process from Elmbridge Council by the end of April.  We will then have a much better idea on what issues there may be with the proposed development from a planning perspective.

 ***The building:*** In view of the current poor state of the building we are investigating the possibility of a rebuild, rather than a refurbish as a better use for our funding.

 ***Heathrow Communities for Tomorrow Fund***: We have got through to the second round of funding on this and those members who live in the Heathrow catchment areas will be receiving a personal email from Andrew that I would be grateful if you could respond to.  In addition if anyone has connections with any primary schools in Runnymede, Spelthorne, Windsor and Maidenhead please shout as we need to engage with some to demonstrate our eligibility for this fund.  It is worth £25,000 so your help and assistance is much appreciated.

  ***EGM Timing***: This is still expected to be called in early summer when we have all the costs sorted and the feedback from pre-planning.   We, the project team, would again confirm that no funds other than those allocated from a legacy have yet been spent or will be spent until the EGM has been called on the project.

  ***Website***: you will shortly notice a new page go live on the Weybridge Beekeepers website about Pleasant Place.  This will include a link to a Donation Page where members of the general public can also make donations towards the new facility.

 ***Swarm Collectors***:  As part of the our fundraising efforts we will be asking swarm collectors to hand out letters when collecting swarms that invite members of the public to make donations either directly or through the website Donation Page link.  Many of us collect swarms and never charge but we feel that many members of the public may be willing to donate if there was a simple method for doing it.

Please do contact me with any questions, or if you can assist with the schools at:

davidparker@polymathconsulting.com  David Parker

**REPORTS**

**Combined meeting with the Beginners’ Course, Monday, 5th March**

This was the Bee Diseases session of the Course, with David Rudland (of East Surrey Bees) as the speaker. David spent the first half of the talk dealing with the basic biology of Varroa, before passing on to the various ways of controlling the mites by the use of chemicals and biotechnical methods. After the tea interval he dealt with the many other pests that we have to have knowledge of and ways of dealing with them. As usual David kept our attention with a blend of humour, clear explanations and illustrations.

**EVENTS IN APRIL**

**Winter Meeting at Hersham Village Society Hall, Burhill Road, Hersham T12 4BJ**

**Tuesday 10th April, 7.30 pm**

This will be the annual Nosema Clinic to which members can bring samples of their bees for testing. Having this Clinic early in the season gives plenty of time for doing a shook swarm if Nosema numbers warrant that.

Samples of at least 30 bees can be collected at any time now, and stored in the freezer until required. Details of how to collect and prepare the samples are given in attachments. Do take advantage of this service that we offer. If you are unable to attend the meeting you could bring frozen, labelled samples to our house beforehand (ring 01932 242179 to arrange). It IS worth testing for Nosema as there are things that can be done if the levels are high. All information will be available at the Clinic.

 Thank you, Marion Cooper

**First Summer Meeting, 14th April, 2.30 pm**

Paul and Helen Bunclark will host this meeting at their apiary in the midst of the woods. The two main topics are the reason for, and method of carrying out (1) a Bailey Comb Change and (2) a Shook Swarm. We will also be shown how to make an Asian Hornet Trap from a 2-litre pop bottle.

See attached instructions on how to reach the Apiary; if you have not been before it is an amazing facility.  As usual please bring cakes and stuff and your own mug for coffee/tea.  Please bring any empty 2 litre pop bottles as we need some to make the hornet traps – we will supply wire, so you go home with something useful! Meet at 2.30 pm at the venue and, by the way, there is a toilet on site.

David Parker

**Reigate Beekeepers Auction Saturday 7th April from 11.00 am**

Full details of this were given in an attachment to the March Newsletter.

**FUTURE EVENTS**

**Weybridge Summer Meetings**

As we shiver and I write this newsletter piece with temperatures down to 3ºC during the day, Summer Meetings seem a strange thing to talk about.  But they will soon be upon us and I  hope you will attend as we have some new and exciting things.   The list of events arranged so far is given below, as are the key highlights of the ones in April and early May; for July and August, we are still looking for ideas.

*Special Extra Summer Meeting – removing a colony from a tree trunk, Saturday 5th May, 2.30 pm*

Ever wondered how to extract a colony of bees from a tree trunk?  Well, thanks to Arran and Edwina for acquiring this trunk with bees in it, we are holding an extra session where Arran and I will chain saw our way into the trunk and extract the bees.  All are welcome to come and watch and participate.  Instructions on how to get to the location will be in the next newsletter but the address is: Fox Hills Rd, Chertsey KT16 0ES.  This operation is likely to take around 2 hours.  Whenever you extract bees from a tree trunk, as with a swarm there is a chance they are diseased.  The location we have therefore selected to do this currently has no bees on it and is in effect an isolation site.  We would suggest people wear a full bee suit or good, loose-fitting trousers and boots as you never know if you will have placid or more aggressive bees.  Attached is a picture of the trunk; it is big with the entrance pointing down in the middle.  Please do come and it should be a fun time for all; as usual please bring mugs and cakes, etc.

*This does look to be a rather special and unusual event – do come if you possibly can. – Ed.*

*Special Summer Training Course10th May – Raising queen cells using the Punch-Cell method*

There are still a few places left, so please let me know if you wish to take one of these. We have been very fortunate that Roger Patterson has agreed to come and run this course for us. If any of you have attended any of Roger Patterson’s lectures or the 2015 Surrey Bee Day lecture on Bee Improvement in conjunction with BIBBA, you will know that Roger promotes the use of Cell Punching as a method of Queen Rearing. He has a special knowledge of queen rearing, and in particular was one of the first to recognise several years ago, the new problems with queens that have now become very apparent to many beekeepers. In this method individual cells containing larvae are punched out of a comb and then put into a queenless colony for the bees to draw out as queen cells.  I will call it a ‘grafting-for-those-with-poor-eyesight’ method, as both methods allow you to select cells from your very best queen’s colonies and then have them developed in a separate colony.

I attempted this method last year and I know others have, with varying success.  Weybridge Beekeepers have therefore formally invited Roger to come and give a practical demonstration of how to carry out Cell Punching.  As far as I am aware this will be the first time Roger has run such a short practical course.  It will be held from 6.30 – 8.30 pm on the May 10th.  Space will be VERY limited due to the nature of this session with a maximum of around 15 attendees.  It is designed generally for beekeepers with 3+ years of experience who are looking really to understand cell punching as a viable method of queen rearing.  Whilst realising that May is someway off it would be useful to be advised of anyone who might be interested in attending the session.  If not enough Weybridge members are interested we will open it out to other Surrey divisions; hence the request to advise if you are interested now.  There is no cost to this course.

Please email me at davidparker@polymathconsulting.com if you are interested in attending and put in the head the title:  Cell Punching Course.

I will come back to you to check you can make it nearer the time. We need to avoid drop outs as we may end up being oversubscribed.

Thank you, David Parker (davidparker@polymathconsulting.com)

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|  | **Hosts** | **Date** | **Main Subject** | **Secondary Subject** |
|  | Paul and Helen Bunclark | 14th April, 2.30 pm | Bailey Comb Change, Shook Swarm | Making Asian Hornet Trap from 2 litre pop bottle |
|  | Arran Taylor, Edwina Wardle, David Parker | 5th May,2.30 pm | Extracting Bees from  Tree Trunk | None |
|  | Paul and Helen Bunclark | 10th May,2.30 pm | Roger Patterson Training course on Queen Rearing using Cell Punching |  |
|  | Geoff, Marion and David Parker | 19th May,2.30 pm | Swarm Control - a variety of methods:  Demaree, Pagden, Queen in Nuc, etc. | Finding and Marking a queen |
|  | Arran Taylor | 9th June, 2.30 pm | Queen Harvesting, Mini Nuc mating test | Different Mating nucs, Apidea, Kieler, Abelo, v full sized nuc. |
|  |  TBA | July |   | How to make up Sections, tricks e.g. waxing wood, etc.  Problems using them |
|  |  TBA | Aug | ?? | How to do cut comb |
|  |  TBA | Sept | End of Season Social | 20 min Lecture/Presentation  |

**The West Sussex Beekeepers’ Association Bee Market and Auction Saturday 21st April 2018.**

The West Sussex Beekeepers’ Association is again organising a Bee Market and Auction for the benefit of its members and non-members with beekeepers from a very wide area attending to buy and sell. The event will again take place at Chichester College's Brinsbury Campus in Pulborough, West Sussex on **Saturday 21st April 2018**.  Auction details, Guidance Notes and the Entry Form are available to download from the WSBKA website - [www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html](http://www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html). If any Association would like hard copies of the Guidance Notes and/or Entry Form please let me know.  The Auction catalogue will be published online after 18th  April. We look forward to seeing as many of your members as possible at Brinsbury. For further details contact me on email secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk  or phone:

01403 752493 Mobile 07761 34928

*Graham* Secretary West Sussex Beekeepers' Association, [www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/)

**Surrey County Show, Monday May 28th, Help needed**

*Reminder of an important note in the March Newsletter:*

We are looking for 40 volunteers to help man the Honey Tent at the Surrey County Show, Stoke Park, Guildford.  This year again we are asking for volunteers for the whole day 8.45-5.00 (subject to travel).  You will be allocated 1 hour to go around the show and 1 hour for lunch.   You will be provided a free entrance ticket, tea and coffee during the day and lunch in the tent.  If you would like to be a steward and are **willing to commit the time**, please complete the attached form and return, by 15th  April, to: Michael Main, Hill House, Northfield Place, Weybridge, KT13 0RF or by email to michaelfmain@hotmail.com.  Queries to Michael by phone on 01932 849080. Thank you. Michael Main

Our Secretary, Jane Hunter, reminds us that now is a good moment to start thinking about our entries for the Surrey Show. As well as honey, wax, cake, photographs and 'items of interest', see if Weybridge can get more points than Farnham in 2018!

*Please note that the entry fee for the Show was incorrectly stated in their earlier notifications: it is £16.50 for the day, not £13.00 as last year – another good reason for being a steward!*

**Bees & Honey Show at the South of England Show, Ardingly, 7-9th June**

The full details of this event were given in the March Newsletter, page 4.

**Weybridge Market dates for your diary.**

*Please read the following carefully, as under this single heading there are several events in which you can take part, either as a provider, visitor or volunteer:*

As usual Alison Derrick from Bee Inspired (<https://www.beeinspiredcreams.buzz/>) will be attending the 5th May market and she always likes to source and sell local honey, so please feel free to contact her directly on ask@beeinspiredcreams.buzz or 07825 278 044.  As a reminder, she kindly pays for your honey upfront in cash.  Your honey must **be properly labelled per the 2015 Honey Regulations**, as Alison cannot accept anything less.

The division is looking for volunteers to help out with a Weybridge Division stall on 29th July and 1st Dec, so please email our secretary Jane Hunter on weybridgebees.sec@gmail.com or use the contact form on our website <http://weybridgebeekeepers.weebly.com/contact-us.html> to register your interest.

Richard Hignett

**The Royal Three Counties Show, Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcestershire WR13 6NW**

A flyer detailing this was attached to the March Newsletter. It is to be held on 15th - 17th June.

**ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST**

**An offer of a hive site in Chobham**

My name is Alice and I am contacting you from Holly Farm in Chobham.

We are planning to plant some wild flowers on our field (approx. 5ha) this year and thought this would be a great opportunity for bees. Unfortunately, we have no personal experience yet with beekeeping, but would love to invite some beekeepers to set up their equipment and tend to the bees on our property.

Please do feature us in you newsletter, relevant contact details are as follows:

Email: Robert@page.vg Phone: 07785 510 436

We would be very excited to welcome local beekeepers onto the farm.

Please feel free to reach out with any further questions.

 Alice Page

**ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST**

**Lithium: A new powerful chemical treatment for Varroa?**

 *A research paper recently published in the journal ‘* Nature’ *described lithium as a possible break through* *in the control of Varroa. The following is part of the summary of the paper:*

“…The number of effective acaricides is small and no new active compounds have been registered in the past 25 years. RNAi-based methods were proposed recently as a promising new tool. However, the application of these methods according to published protocols has led to a surprising discovery. Here, we show that the lithium chloride that was used to precipitate RNA and other lithium compounds is highly effective at killing *Varroa* mites when fed to host bees at low millimolar concentrations. Experiments with caged bees and brood-free artificial swarms consisting of a queen and several thousand bees clearly demonstrate the potential of lithium as a miticidal agent with good tolerability in worker bees providing a promising basis for the development of an effective and easy-to-apply control method for mite treatment.”…

*The following is quoted from the full Research paper:*

“These results obtained in cage tests under controlled conditions represent a successful and promising first step towards a new approach to *Varroa* treatment. However, efficiency and side effects must be confirmed under field conditions.”

“At the end of the observation period, 92.9% of the mites (n = 225 mites, *P* < 0.001, log-rank test) were killed without any significant effect on the treated bees. This result clearly demonstrates that even a short-term feeding of 25 mM LiCl is sufficient to substantially diminish the mite population.”

*As is normal will papers of this type, it is very long and detailed; however you are encouraged to read it in full by clicking on:* <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-017-19137-5>

*Thanks to Anne Miller for sending in this very interesting item.*

**Modern day Swarm Harvesting – Bee Watch System**

This appears to be a website service that puts people with swarms in contact with beekeepers who are on the Bee Watch list.  It seems to be independent of the BBKA scheme and beekeepers need to pay a fee to be on the list.

The BBKA website does have a link to the Bee Watch site but it is in relation to Bee Watch's pesticide spray alert app.

Full details are found on the following website: lb.beewatch@gmail.com

Andrew Halstead

**Farmers face ban on use of bee-harming pesticides**

A near-total ban is expected on some of the most effective farm pesticides after an official assessment confirmed that they harmed wild bees and honeybees.

Read more at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/28/total-ban-on-bee-harming-pesticides-likely-after-major-new-eu-analysis>

Anne Miller

**Tasmania's bee surveillance program helping keep world population healthy**

One of my friends in Australia sent me this article about bees hives  placed near ports  in Australia to act as  an early warning system for varroa.

 <http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-17/protecting-tasmanian-bees-to-help-the-worlds-population/9554514>

Anne Miller

*This is an interesting article explaining how the authorities have installed a number of hives around ports. These monitoring hives are inspected every six weeks for the arrival of varroa (which the country does not currently have), and other exotic pests. Seems a good idea. In this country the NBU has sentinel hives that they monitor for exotic pests near air and sea ports.*

**Chilled brood or what?**

On the 10th March during the first spring inspection, I noticed small patches of what appeared at first sight to be unsealed brood (white). The brightness in some of the cells was enhanced by what appeared to be water on its surface, giving the contents a greyish appearance (mould?). After some thought and conversation with another beekeeper, it was concluded that what I had seen was chilled unsealed brood following the week of snow that had ended a few days earlier. I decided to look again in a couple of weeks. When we did this yesterday (26th March), I was surprised to find that the appearance of the white ‘brood’ was virtually unchanged; it had not decomposed or been removed by the bees as one would expect in more than a fortnight. Furthermore some of the cells had a level of white nowhere near the top of the cell (unlike much of it in which the cells were full). I had certainly removed some bits of semi-solid material, possibly bits of unsealed larvae on both visits, so was it chalk brood? I then remembered someone saying last autumn, “…expect a lot of ivy honey this year” in view of the late nature of the autumn. We looked at some of the ‘white’ under a microscope (20x magnification), and sure enough saw white crystals. Marion performed a ‘taste test’ and the material was very sweet. Two other hives in the garden were found to have the same material in them. Earlier in the afternoon, we had been called to look in another beekeeper’s hive as he was concerned at what he was seeing in it. Again we saw the same white material. I have never seen anything like this before in 36 years of beekeeping. I am now very convinced that our “unsealed larvae” was indeed ivy honey. The sugar crystals would be hygroscopic which would explain the damp, greyish appearance of its surface. I have not used fondant this year.

Since writing this, another beekeeper has made an alternative suggestion as to what this ‘white’ might be? Has anyone else seen this ‘white’ this year (or indeed in previous years)? I can’t help wondering if there is a lot of it about at the moment.

Please let me know what you think. Any other suggestions?

Geoff Cooper

**NNSS Invasive Species Week**

Please refer to the attachment for details of various invasive species, especially the Asian Hornet.

**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 secondhand 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.

**Surplus Bee equipment for Sale:**

If you would like to come and see what I have got and make an offer, please give me a call on 07557037873

I have the following available all purchased from Thorne and in good condition.

National supers

Large Stainless Steel smoker

Various feeders

Queen excluders both wire and plastic

Water feeders

Uncapping fork

And more…

All items can be viewed at the address below, please call for more details.

20 Dale Road, Walton on Thames, Surrey, KT12 2 PY, 07557 037873 robert@crosley.co.uk

Robert Crosley

**Bees for sale**

**A number of ESTABLISHED OVERWINTERED COLONIES with 2017 Queen (National Standard brood frames)**The colonies were treated with Apivar for Varroa in late summer/autumn 2017. They have a gentle temperament and are good foragers. All queens are locally reared from our gentle breeding stock. Price of each colony: £180 (excluding hive) .  These colonies are available in early spring as soon as the weather allows. For more information, please contact me – details below.

**NUCS (available to pre-order now – see** Special Offer **below)  (We do not overwinter nucs)**

**- 6 Frame Nucs** (National standard frames) with 2018 mated queen (marked red).   Supplied in 6 frame Poly Nuc. £150 + £35 nuc deposit which is refundable on return.

 **- 5 Frame Nucs** (National standard frames) with 2018 mated queen (marked red).   Supplied in 5 frame Correx Travelling Box. Price: £155.

The nucs will have a mated 2018 Queen, locally reared from our gentle breeding stock, together with a combination of her brood in various stages and stores.   These nucs will be available from mid June onwards depending on the weather.

**Special Offer**: We offer a £5 discount for nuc orders received by 30th April.

**Contact: Astrid Bowers-Veenman** **(Hog's Back Bees and Bee Products)**

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

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

**Tel.No.: 01252 330229 / Mobile: 07803 069798 / Email:** **astrid@coginternational.co.uk**

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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| **Dates for your diary** |
| Saturday  | April 7th | From 11.0 am | Reigate auction | March p. 5 and attachment |
| Tuesday | April 10th | 7.30 pm | Nosema Clinic | p. 2 |
| Saturday | April 14th | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting. Paul and Helen Bunclark  | March p. 4 |
| Saturday | April 21st |  | West Sussex Bee Auction, Brinsbury | p. 4 |
| Saturday | May 5th | 10 am - 3 pm | Weybridge Market | p. 4 |
| Thursday  | May10th | Evening | Roger Patterson at Paul Bunclark’s. Cell Punching. | p. 3 |
| Saturday | May 19th | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting at Painshill Park. Geoff, Marion & David Parker | March p. 4. Details later |
| Monday | May 28th | All day | Surrey County Show | March p. 4 |
| Saturday | June 9th | 2.30 pm | Summer Meeting. Arran Taylor | March p. 4.Details later |
| Wednesday - Friday | June 7th-9th | See Attachment(March  | South of England Show |  p. 4. March and attachment |
| Sunday | July 29th | 10 am - 3 pm | Weybridge Market, Prudential Ride | p. 4 |
| Saturday | December 1st | 11 am - 7 pm | Weybridge Christmas Market | p. 4 |
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| Beginners’ Beekeeping Course TutorAndrew Halstead - 01483 489581email: ahalstead44@btinternet.com |  Beekeepers Beginners’ Course - AdminSue Lawes - 01932 843209email: slawes@hotmail.co.uk |
| SwarmsMichael Main - 01932 849080 email: michaelfmain@hotmail.com  |  Education CoordinatorEdwina Wardle - 01932 702887 email: Wardle\_1@ntlworld.com |
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