

NOVEMBER 2012

Surrey Beekeepers Association

CROYDON DIVISION

Chairman Mark Stott 0208 684 1098
Treasurer Tamar Cavett 0208 406 9258
Secretary Joyce Atkinson 0208 657 2817

www.croydonbeekeepers.co.uk



DATES TO NOTE

SUNDAY - 25 th. NOVEMBER - 2-00 p.m.

Hartley Down Apiary - please come and help tidy up the site - bring a rake as there are a lot of leaves to clear besides general tidying up that is overdue.

Our apiary manager, David Shepherd has had a busy year with his other interests, so has not been able to keep the site as he and we would like it to be.

If you have a few hours to spare at other times let him know - not just this month but through out the year - he will let you know what needs doing.

SO give David a call on 0208 668 4538

Nothing else this month - BUT

SATURDAY - 1 st. DECEMBER - 2-00p.m.

SURREY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
AT:

East Horsley Village Hall,
Kingston Avenue,
East Horsley,
Leatherhead - KT24 6QT

An opportunity to meet beekeepers from other parts of the county - hear how the county association affairs have been conducted - refreshments too -

AND a talk on 'Queenlessness in Your Colony'

by: Ian and Ruth Homer.

HONEY SHOWS - CROYDON and NATIONAL

Last month's newsletter did not list the winner of the Haines cup at our show, this is for the most points in the honey classes for entries by anyone

who has not gained a prize in a honey show.

It was awarded to Derek Read

It was pleasant that several of our members entered the National Show this year, including the new class 19 for six jars from a branch apiary - only one gained an award - Meriel Spalding for her cake.

Dennis and Ann Scott, whom many of our older members will know came from their Cornish home to the show and were pleased to meet up with Richard Palmer, Tom Kirsch, Mike Wright, Rosemary and myself, a pleasant reunion.

As usual there were quite a number of keen showmen from Ireland, some of whom Ann and Dennis know, and they returned home with many prizes for their numerous entries.

FIXTURES FOR NEXT YEAR

Some evening talks are being arranged for January - February and March and details will be in the next edition.

Chairman's Report 2012

Despite the less than idyllic weather this spring I believe we have had a successful year and the AGM is my opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to the Divisions activities. At each event this year we have been able to rely on a number of willing volunteers to share the work.

- Winter Talks – as series of interesting talks to keep us entertained during the quiet season. *Thanks to Joyce for organising these events*
- BBKA modules – three members passed a module this spring – *well done*. We have study group working towards taking further modules in November 2012 and March 2013
- Spring management day – A surrey wide event hosted in Croydon with around 100 attendees. *Thanks to all the volunteers who turned up to help make the day a great success.*
- Taster day – For the first time this year we had a group of new beekeepers attend a Taster Day. Followed by practical sessions on a Sunday afternoons. *Thanks to David Joyce and Mag's*
- BBKA Basic Assessment – 5 people passed at this year (certificates on the way!) – *Well done*
- Honey Show – despite the awful weather the honey show was a great success in its new venue this year. *Thanks to Joyce, Penny, Harry and everyone else who helped.*
- Honey extraction meeting – *thank you to the Collett's for their hospitality.*
- Surrey Education Committee – A new surrey initiative to promote education across the county. These events are open to Croydon Members. Upcoming events
 - Module 1 session - 15th December
 - Microscopy training at a date to be announced. If you are interested please email me
 - General Husbandry Training – for those with 3 years' experience who would like to develop their skills further.
- Apiary - the honey crop was poor, but despite the weather we managed to raise a few queens. As always the Sunday meetings were friendly and informative sessions. More help is always welcome with the running of the Apiary, both at the meetings and for general maintenance. *Thanks to David for managing the Apiary John Collett all the hard work behind the scenes.*
- Social – The only social event this year was the BBQ - *thanks to David*
- New equipment – Thanks to generous donations we now have laptop and projector which is being used for presentations, and a new compound microscope for disease identification and pollen analysis. We will be setting up a Microscopy practical session in 2013.
- Finally a big thank you to all those people who quietly work and often unseen making sure the Division keeps running smoothly:
 - Tamar - Treasurer
 - Mag's - Membership secretary
 - Joyce – Secretary and honey show
 - Rosemary – Trustee and generally helping at events
 - John C - Newsletter and also maintenance at Apiary
 - Harry and Family - helping at events
 - John L- Helping at events
 - Terry – Minutes and looking after equipment
 - David – Apiary
 - Richard – auditing accounts

... and all the people who turn up at meetings and help without even being asked.

Mark Stott, 20th October 2012

COMMITTEE

Following our AGM this is now:

Trustee Derek Read
Chairman Mark Stott
Treasurer Tamar Cavett
Secretary Joyce Atkinson
Membership Secretary Margaret Scott
Honey Show Secretary Joyce Atkinson
Apiary Manager David Shepherd
Newsletter Editor John Collett
General Committee John Lunn - Harry Parker -
Terry Stephensmith - Richard Snelling

You will find address and telephone number and email for them on the membership list as bold names - so if they might be able to help you in any way do not hesitate to contact them.

In recent months there have been several articles about reuse of glass jars, many now made are not suitable for this due to their shape, size and colour, but it does seem wasteful not to use those that are suitable - this cutting may help you to decide!



A selection of home-made jams for sale at a roadside stall on the Lizard peninsula in Cornwall

The Church could solve this sticky situation itself

SIR - You report that the Church of England has written to parishes warning that jams and preserves should not be sold in jars that have been previously used, because of food hygiene regulations (October 7).

By "CE marking" a product, the manufacturer declares that the product conforms with the essential requirements of the applicable European directives. I suggest "C of E" labels on jams and marmalades would be appropriate.

John Ellis
Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire

SIR - Does this mean that the Women's Institute - the foundation of human decency - is now too dangerous to contemplate, thanks to their pots of jam which they sell at public events, and which the Food Standards Agency have decided must not be re-used?

Will normal service ever be resumed?

Charles Holden
Lymington, Hampshire

SIR - While it is true that European regulations specify the types of materials that are satisfactory and

safe for contact with foods, jars made commercially for jams will comply and will have been certified. Therefore they will have been made of the right sort of glass and, if properly sterilised, can be re-used. If that were not the case, no milk bottles could be re-used.

As I was involved in drafting the regulations, I know what was intended. We never wanted to preclude the re-use of jars for produce offered at charity events.

Bob Salmon
Food Solutions
Greetham, Rutland

The Role of a Honey Show Judge Steward

This year I was asked to be the Judge's Steward for the Honey Show. I have never had this opportunity and I thoroughly recommend it.

The main role is to assist the Judge, to help them work their way through the exhibits – that being said your main and really only roles are to make sure that you wash and clean their instruments and tasting sticks, write down the results and run them over to the Honey Show secretary so they can be recorded and then make sure that the exhibits are returned to their jar “pairs” or frames returned to boxes, and plastic bags put back over the cakes etc. The judge did on occasion ask my opinion, but never used my answers in her decisions.

Each judge, naturally enough, has their own way of judging, our judge said that she judged depending on the level of the show ie., village show is judged differently, to Local Honey Society Show, to National Honey Show and of course no two judges will judge the same.

Some of the comments made by the Judge:

Honey Classes –

Jars were dirty and sticky.

Lids had not been cleaned and some were not new.

Not filtered properly.

6 Jars of Honey for sale – honey not matching, jars not matching

Frame for extraction –

Most of the frames were not ready for extraction – ie, they were full of crystallised honey, or the honey was not capped.

Jam –

The judge did not like the fact that some people used honey jars. The jar need to “pop” when opened or if no lid, the jar must have a wax disc. Then it was down to personal preference!

Sweetmeats –

There were too many alien exhibits in this class – ie, small cakes and biscuits. The class is for sweets.

Mead –

The one bottle that was entered did not have the correct stopper. It was not even tasted.

Biscuits –

These need to ‘snap’ when broken – no limp biscuits!

Overall she was impressed with our show and enjoyed her morning. I found it very interesting especially tasting everyone's honey. Naturally enough I thought mine tasted the best – but it's all down to personal preference!

SURREY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

TRAINING DAY

FOCUS ON BBKA MODULE 1- HONEY BEE MANAGEMENT

15TH December 2012 at 2-5pm

Led by Dr Ivor Davies this afternoon will aim:

- To discuss what the modules are and why they are important to beekeepers
 - To introduce the Module 1 syllabus
- To discuss the level of information required and techniques for answering the questions
 - To explain the marking system
- To explore resources and support strategies available
 - To discuss the correspondence course approach
 - To answer questions and queries
 - To test your current knowledge with a fun quiz

40 PLACES AVAILABLE £10 PER PERSON

EAST HORSLEY VILLAGE HALL 'LOVELACE ROOM' KT24 6QT

RESERVATIONS

To reserve a place please email Sandra Rickwood on rickwoodsba@gmail.com or phone **01932 244326**
FULL DIRECTIONS AND PAYMENT DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED ON
CONFIRMATION OF PLACE

Secrets of the honeybee bite revealed

OCTOBER 17 2012NEWS7

A previously unknown honeybee defence weapon against varroa and a potential new natural anaesthetic for humans

Researchers have discovered that honeybees can bite as well as sting and that the bite contains a natural anaesthetic. The anaesthetic may not only help honeybees fend off pests such as wax moth and the parasitic varroa mite, but it also has great potential for use in human medicine.

The surprise findings discovered by a team of researchers from Greek and French organisations in collaboration with Vita (Europe) Ltd, the UK-based honeybee health specialist, will cause a complete re-thinking of honeybee defence mechanisms and could lead to the production of a natural, low toxicity local anaesthetic for humans and animals.

The natural anaesthetic that has been discovered in the bite of the honeybee and measured at the University of Athens is 2-heptanone (2-H), a natural compound found in many foods and also secreted by certain insects, but never before understood to have anaesthetic properties. Independent tests have verified Vita's findings and the potential of 2-heptanone as a local anaesthetic.

As a naturally-occurring substance with a lower toxicity than conventional anaesthetics, 2-heptanone shows great potential. Vita has already patented the use of the compound for use as a local anaesthetic and is seeking pharmaceutical partners to develop it further.

Until recently, research seemed to indicate that 2-heptanone was either a honeybee alarm pheromone that triggers defensive responses, or a chemical marker signalling to other foraging bees that a flower had already been visited. Vita's results contradicted these notions.

The new research clearly shows that 2-heptanone paralyzes small insects and mites bitten by bees for up to nine minutes. Somewhat like a snake, the honeybee uses its mandibles to bite its enemy and then secretes 2-heptanone into the wound to anaesthetise it. This enables the honeybee to eject the enemy from the hive and is a particularly effective defence against pests, such as wax moth larvae and varroa mites, which are too small to sting.

Dr Max Watkins, Technical Director of Vita (Europe) Ltd, said "We are very excited about our findings on at least two levels. Firstly, the revelation that honeybees can bite enemies that they cannot sting confounds some existing ideas and adds significantly to our biological knowledge. Secondly, the discovery of a highly effective natural anaesthetic with huge potential will be of great interest to the pharmaceutical industry eager to develop better local anaesthetics."

In laboratory neurophysiological trials in the School of Biology of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece), 2-heptanone was found to have a similar mode of action to Lidocaine, the dominant local anaesthetic used in humans and other mammals. 2-heptanone is found naturally in many foods such as beer and white bread and is so safe that it is permitted as a food additive by USA regulatory authorities. 2-heptanone therefore offers considerable potential as an alternative to Lidocaine. Very recent laboratory research using mammalian cells in the USA, has confirmed Vita's expectations that the anaesthetic could be as effective on humans and mammals as it is on insects and mites.

In considering the biological impacts of the findings, Dr Alexandros Papachristoforou, a Vita researcher working under the supervision of Professor G Theophilidis in the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in Greece, said: "It is amazing that this second line of honeybee defence has gone undetected for so long. Beekeepers will be very surprised by our discovery and it is likely to cause a radical rethink of some long-held beliefs. It will probably stimulate honeybee research in many new directions. For instance, many beekeepers have spoken of the 'grooming' behaviour of honeybees in helping to control varroa populations. This grooming behaviour can now be interpreted as biting behaviour."

Dr Papachristoforou described how the unexpected properties of 2-heptanone were discovered: "We were investigating wax moth control. Wax moths are a serious honeybee pest whose larvae consume wax and pollen, often completely destroying honeycomb. When exposed to 2-heptanone, which is produced naturally by honeybees, the wax moths appeared to die. However, on closer inspection, we realised that the wax moths were merely anaesthetised for a period of one to nine minutes. This was quite unexpected, so our scientific team set up a series of rigorous experiments to find out what was really happening and came up with our remarkable discovery."