



Apiary Newsletter...

New Beekeepers Start Practical Sessions

On Saturday June 1st, Shugborough apiary welcomed twenty one fresh new beekeepers. They are the latest club recruits who, having just completed their theory sessions at Wolseley Bridge Centre the previous Tuesday, were ready to go into the hives and put theory into practice.



They looked a motley crew in their paper suits, Marigolds and borrowed veils but were soon taken in hand by club regulars keen to show them how to light a smoker and use a hive tool.



Once properly briefed it was on to opening hives and looking at the bees up close. For most it was the first time they had seen inside a bee colony and it was most definatley a wow moment for some.

The session was very well received with smiling faces all round and lots and lots of questions over tea and cake.



Practical session two continues next Saturday, June 8th.

A big thank-you to all club members who came along to help on the day.



Bee Safari - a great success



It was a good turn-out of club members that gathered together at Lapley Wood Farm one Saturday morning during May.

The reason for the gathering was a 'bee safari' visit to one of Dave Rawsthorne's apiaries.

So, what is a bee safari I hear you ask?

According to Dave, it is all about a day out visiting friends and colleagues at their apiaries to see how they do their beekeeping.



He went on to say that back in the day he well remembers visiting other apiaries and that he felt that it had helped him develop the skills and techniques that he uses today.

With us all kitted up and the trailer loaded up with spare kit and essential equipment we set off down a muddy track to find the bees.



We were introduced to a row of hives adjacent to rows of polytunnels where the bees have the important job of pollinating the crops throughout the season. On this occasion they were cherries but they could have been raspberries or blueberries..

continued on next page...



After checking his notes, David told us about the condition of his colonies and what he wanted us to look for during inspection of the bees.

We then split up into groups to go through the hives. These were commercial hives with short lugs and deep frames and boxes with only small handholds for picking them up. We were learning straight away how to adapt to different equipment.

The bees were calm and the sunny weather made it a real joy to inspect



Dave's bees for him. Queen cells were found and dealt with accordingly and supers were added where appropriate.

During the session David demonstrated how to make up an observation hive of live bees to take to a public event.

He first found the queen and caged her before loading frames of brood and stores from the national hive into the bottom box. The queen was run into the single frame of brood and stores in the top viewing area separated from the lower frames by a queen excluder.

Everybody who attended agreed that they had learnt a great deal from the day and that it had been a fabulous experience.

It was a great insight into the way that our colleagues manage their bees as well as a peep into the world of commercial beekeeping.

The session ended as usual with tea and cake all round.

A really big thank-you to Dave for letting us work with him and for being brave enough to let us handle his bees. *Thanks Dave...*



Ambrosia for sale

The Association is pleased to be able to offer members Ambrosia syrup and fondant for sale at competitive prices.

Order your Ambrosia syrup and fondant bee food now for delivery July/August 2019.

Look out for the Ambrosia syrup/fondant order form coming soon.

Tub of Ambrosia Syrup - 12.5kg



£15

£15



Ambrosia Fondant - box of 5 x 2.5kg

A ready mixed, high energy combination of sucrose, glucose and fructose, Ambrosia syrup and fondant bee food helps bee colonies to survive winter food shortages by mimicking the food bees find in their natural environment.

With the sugar in Ambrosia being very concentrated, it does not 'go off' and the high fructose content of the product ensures that it will not crystallise.

Out-apiary opportunity

Clare Phillips of Sidway Mill Farm TF9 4ET (next to the mill pond) is kindly offering club members the opportunity to have an out -apiary on her land. Telephone Clare on 0771 8338453 for more information.

Find the Queen

The April edition finds our Queen patiently waiting for the AGM to start up. She is sitting on the front row to the left of the picture at the top of page 1. With all this bad weather where has she concealed herself this month? See if you can find her hideout.

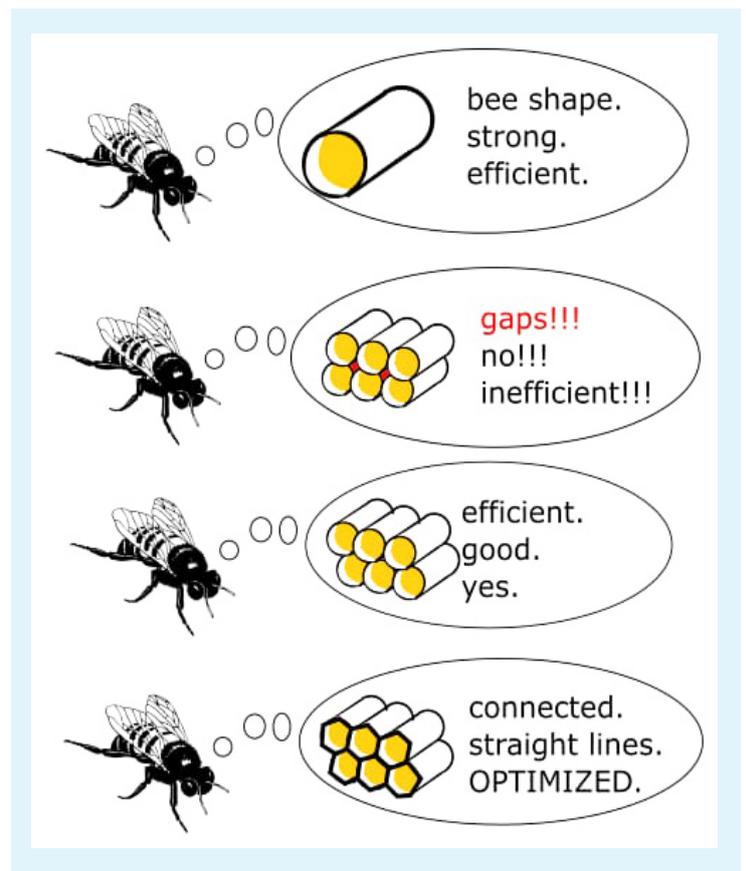
Has anybody seen this?

The photograph below shows a smoker carrier that I made for use at Shugborough last year. I would be grateful if you could help me locate it as it seems to have disappeared.

The 8 smokers are stored in the carry box, can be carried around in one go, making it easy to take them to and from the hives as required.

If it is not wanted at the apiary I would like to have it back please.

Barry Crossley



My Skep comes in useful..

I have noticed that you are always learning new skills when you keep bees.

One result of a failure to adequately carry out effective swarm control is the opportunity to practice other skills such as swarm collection.

This prime swarm came from one of my hives and settled on the garden fence.

This good fortune gave me the chance to see if I could coax the bees up into my skep.

That's right the skep I made a couple of years ago, always knew it would come in useful one day.

I did find that a bit of smoke helped to persuade the queen and the bees up into the skep.

It took them a while but they got there in the end, after about an hour or so.

Just had to wait for the last few stragglers to find their new home in the skep before successfully transferring them to a polynuc.

Now I have an additional colony!

Barry Crossley



Honey Bee Experience Day

On the 19th of May the club held its first Honey Bee Experience Day of the season. Nine keen people turned up to the Gatehouse at Wolseley Bridge to listen to Trevor and Alan talk all things bee.

Lots of questions asked and suitably bee proof everybody went into the orchard to open a hive and look at the bees. After a great experience, one person has already signed up for the beginners course 2019. Two more sessions are planned for this year on July 7th and September 8th.

Thank you to Kate and Charles for their support and to Lynne for providing wonderful homemade cake



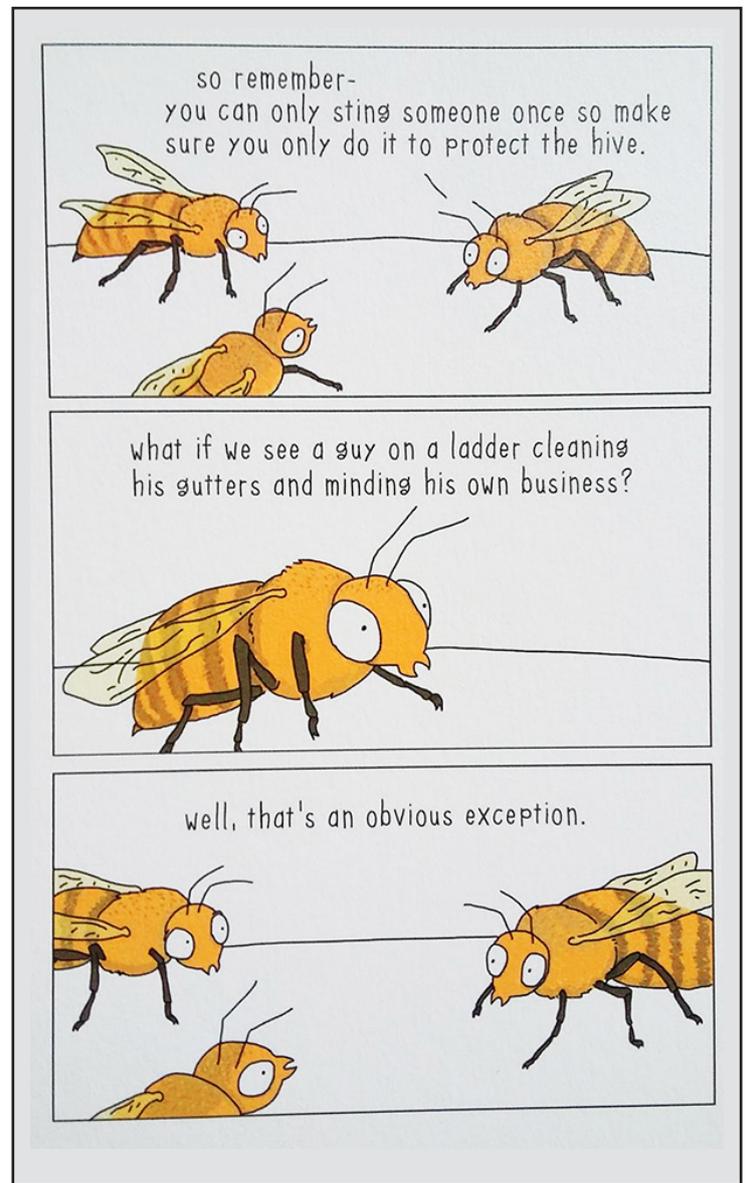
Honey Extractors for Sale

Twenty frame electric powered radial honey extractor for sale £500 ono. Tel: John White on 07791639501 for more information. *see pictures*



Large stainless Thorne's three-frame manual honey extractor which needs a new home. Telephone Richard Kimblin on 07932 008904 for more information.

I have a manual six frame honey extractor. Yours for £50. Telephone Keith Stratton on 07548 375289 for more information.



New club branded clothing coming soon

At the last club committee meeting, as the result of requests from members, the decision was made to offer club branded clothing for sale again.

The garments are all top quality Fruit of the Loom products and will include T-shirts, polo shirts and sweatshirts in a range of colours and sizes with a high quality embroidered official club badge (see sample photograph)

There will also be a fleece and the opportunity to have the club badge sewn onto your bee suit.

As we go to press, provisional prices are:

T shirt - £10, polo shirt - £15, sweatshirt - £17.50, fleece - £20 and embroidered badges sewn on to your bee suit for £6.



Club member Barry Crossley recently claimed that, 'The club fleece I bought a few years ago is one of the best ones I have ever had'.

Club committee member Keith Thompson will be talking about the new club clothing range and taking orders in the near future so watch this space for more information.

Club badges

The club is also planning to offer high quality enamel badges based on the club presidents official badge of office. More details soon...

see photo for a sneak preview



Annual Club BBQ

The club's annual BBQ will be held at Hilton Green apiary on Saturday August 10th starting at 4.00pm. Tickets at £5 each.

Last year we had a great time, eating drinking and chatting with colleagues and friends.

Put the date in your diary now so you don't forget.

Apiary BBQ at Hilton Green



2018

Club Honey Show

Another important date for your diary.

The club's annual honey show will be taking place at our Hilton Green apiary on Saturday the 21st September 2019.

Look out for much more information about the Honey show and details of all the classes you can enter in the next newsletter.



What's on - diary dates 2019 - 2020

2019

June

- 19th - Basic assessments taking place at Shugborough apiary
- 20th - Bee inspector Ben Bowen visit to Shugborough apiary to talk about healthy bees and how to inspect hives

July

- 7th - Bee Experience Day -at Wolseley Centre
- 13th - Honey extraction - Shares Hill Village Hall
- 15th - Basic assessments taking place at Shugborough apiary
- 18th - Honey bee health certificate assessments taking place at Shugborough apiary
- 20th - Honey bee health certificate assessments taking place at Shugborough apiary
- 27th - Honey extraction - Shares Hill Village Hall

August

- 10th - Club BBQ at Hilton Green - tickets at £5 each
- 17th - Sedgley Flower Show
- 17th - Honey extraction - Shares Hill Village Hall

September

- 8th - Bee Experience Day - at Wolseley Centre - see club website to book a place
- 21st - Club Honey Show - provisional date - more details to follow

October

- 24th - Club winter lecture at Shares Hill Village Hall

November

- 28th - Club winter lecture at Shares Hill Village Hall

December

2020

January

February

- 27th - Club winter lecture at Shares Hill Village Hall

March

- 26th - Club winter lecture at Shares Hill Village Hall

Please check club website for the latest information on all events

Items for the newsletter

If you have any stories, pictures or information that you would like included in the newsletter, or if you have items for sale or wish to comment on the content of previous newsletters, please send to: ssbka-mail@southstaffsbeekeepers.com and make the subject "Item for the newsletter".

SS&DBKA Links

Facebook page:

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