

Harlow Bees-letter December 2014

Bee quote of the month: Henry David Thoreau;

"The keeping of bees is like the direction of sunbeams."

Upcoming Meetings

8th January - Harlow AGM
5th February - Gardening for bees



Secretary Notices

Member Subscription

Subs are now due. Please bring along your forms and payment to the AGM meeting or drop them in the post to Pauline. The end of the January meeting is the deadline. Please pay on time, its not like Pauline gets paid to chase people and there are deadlines that she needs to meet to ensure your bees are insured with BDI.

Beekeeping Course

As you all know we are doing our excellent beekeeping beginners course starting Tuesday 10th March. If you would like a refresher or know someone who would like to be a beekeeper, please go to the website <http://www.harlowbees.co.uk/course> or contact Pauline (01279 411941)



Winter Warning

How are your bees? A number of members who checked their bees recently (including me) found that they had munched the way through all the stored honey / sugar they had been fed back in Sept/October.

To check your bees you need to 'Heft' the hive. This is simply lifting the hive on one side and then the other. If it is easy to lift then chances are you need to feed, because we have quite a way to go til March (March is when a lot of bees run out and starve)



With this in mind I was going to pop along to Dorringtons' factory shop in Sawbridgeworth to buy some fondant for £15/block. Then on the BBKA facebook group someone pointed out a bargain option, going to a company called Bako

(<http://www.callbakolondon.com/>)

and for 12.5kg block it was £9.69 and free delivery if you spent over £50. No, I'm not on commission, and its just sugar, glucose syrup and water so no nasty chemicals in it.

To apply it you can either use a chinese food container upturned over the crown board hole (handy because you can see how far

This month elsewhere

Propolis has been found to stimulate hair growth in shaved mice. This is the first step towards creating a remedy for follically challenged people.

Bees can learn to recognize human faces even when seen from different viewpoints. The research has shown that the bee brain, containing fewer than 1 million neurons, is good at learning to master complex tasks.

(Ed. I knew it was personal, grr...)

Natural England has confirmed that it will no longer permit imports and sales of non-native bumblebees as crop pollinators, following a consultation that concluded in September.

The Bee Brick has been developed to provide a nesting site to support the declining solitary bee population and is designed to be an integral part of new build projects. It has also won the Soil Association innovation award.



they have gotten through it) or you can cut a slice and put it directly onto the top bars under the crown board over the cluster of bees. Two warnings: 1. when cutting fondant, using a bread knife usually, be careful - its easy to slip through the fondant suddenly; 2. When putting fondant on, especially if it is a cold day, prepare first and do it as quickly as possible so as not to chill the bees any more than they need to be, especially if going under the crown board.

Apparently. according to a bee farmer in beecraft this month, he feeds inverted syrup in winter; warning that using normal sugar syrup would be a bad idea, but that the heavy inverted syrup does the job.

Spring Pollen Patties

Bees in the spring can often benefit from a bit of help starting, especially if you are by rape fields and want to have large colonies to make the best of it.

Bees need protein to make more bees. Protein in a bees diet comes from pollen. Early in the spring while there is a fair bit of pollen about, crocus, snowdrops, willow catkins, they have to go out and get it. Having it popped in the top of the hive means they have it to hand and don't need to use up valuable energy (honey/sugar) reserves fetching it. The problem with pollen is that it degrades over time, so commonly we use pollen supplement.. No it is not the same or as good for raising brood as the real thing, but it does make a difference.

In previous years we have made them with Danny, but the general issue is getting the 'de-fatted soya flour' ingredient which is not easy to find.

This year Richard Alabone (r.alabone@sky.com) has been in touch to invite Harlow members to be in on a deal that he has arranged with the equipment supplier Mann Lake. He has managed to secure 1lb Ultra Bee Pollen patties at £2 each - 20% off normal price. If you would like any please get in touch with Richard directly or failing that, contact me and I will help to arrange. The deadline given by Richard is 12th January and I already have orders for 20 of them.

Small Hive Beetle update

SHB has been found in a total of **59 apiaries** (as of Dec 11th).

<http://goo.gl/zEe9mE>



Bayer cropscience launched a new magazine "Beenow". The magazine presents Bayer's efforts to unite partners from around the world, including research institutes and universities, beekeepers, farmers and industry partners, to jointly tackle the various challenges bees are facing.

Beekeepers reported an average yield of 32lbs of honey per colony this year – a 28% increase on the 25lbs per colony recorded in 2013 and a far cry from the 8lbs per colony nadir in 2012

For sale

Roy (01992 626668)

- Quality Wax at rock bottom prices
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Cropley