



# **June 2016 Newsletter**

## **Letter from the Chair**

I am pleased to report that Dave Orchard has taken over the responsibility for producing the monthly newsletter, This will help Kathy Hobson in carrying out her other duties. We have just installed three new colonies to the club apiary, they have settled in very well, this will help with the teaching of our new members. The Starting Beekeeping Course has now been completed and hopefully we will have six new members. I am sure you like me will be looking forward to the June meeting when we will be entertained by Andy Willis who will be talking on the subject 'A Bee's Eye View Of Beekeeping'. I hope to see you all there.

***Mike Benson***

mikegbenson@hotmail.co.uk

**The Buzz....**

**Bath and West County Show**



**Wiltshire win the Bath & West County Shield**

At left, Chris Rawlings receiving the Shield from The Big Cheese (Sorry, I don't know his name but he appears in most photos from the show!)

Pictures courtesy West Wiltshire Beekeepers Facebook page



**The Wiltshire BKA stand at the Bath & West**

**Local member Ron Hoskins gets recognition in research work** (With thanks to Peter Kent from Taunton &D BKA)

I am not sure how many know that our man Ron Hoskins received some good recognition for his work in the NATURE journal.

**“Superinfection exclusion and the long-term survival of honey bees in Varroa-infested colonies”**

Gideon J Mordecai<sup>1,2</sup>, Laura E Brettell<sup>3</sup>, Stephen J Martin<sup>3</sup>, David Dixon<sup>1</sup>, Ian M Jones<sup>2</sup> and Declan C Schroeder<sup>1</sup>

**I quote some extracts**

...”However, one UK beekeeper, Ron Hoskins, initiated a closed breeding programme from colonies that survived the initial *Varroa* infestation and this isolated population of up to 40 colonies persists in Swindon, central England, without chemical control of *Varroa* (<http://www.swindonhoneybeeconservation.org.uk/>).”

.....” Taken together, these data suggest that a phenomenon known as superinfection exclusion (SIE) ([Salaman, 1933](#); [Labrie et al., 2010](#)) is a plausible explanation for why this isolated UK honey bee population has survived, despite *Varroa* infestation and high DWV loads.”

.....“Therefore, the Swindon UK population in question could have evolved to favour DWV type B persistence as a result of husbandry practices that have selected for a new stable non-pathogenic equilibrium.”

....”We thank Ron Hoskins, Ron Hill, Eddie Eggleston and Glen Head of the Swindon Honey bee Conservation Group for their invaluable assistance in providing the bees and Varroa.”

There are some really interesting conclusions which will hopefully lead to more research and new methods or to control varroa.

The original article is from ISME – The International Society for Microbiological Ecology, and can be read in full at this internet address:-

<http://www.nature.com/ismej/journal/v10/n5/full/ismej2015186a.html>

**Well Done Ron and everyone – see more information here** <http://www.swindonhoneybeeconservation.org.uk>

Or, contact Ron Hoskins on 01793 525364, 07737 400 515 or email Ron at [ron@honeybee1.org.uk](mailto:ron@honeybee1.org.uk) or [swindonbeeman@gmail.com](mailto:swindonbeeman@gmail.com)

**[But it costs money – please donate any amount you can.](#)**

## **THE CLUB APIARY AT TWIGS**

### **Don't Forget, especially you newbees:-**

Mike Benson collected 3 new colonies for the apiary and with the help of Ian Cowdy settled them in at TWIGS.

The Taster Day held in May was very successful with several of the people who came going on to do the Starting Beekeeping Course which was also very successful. The next Taster Day on 16 July is nearly full and a couple have booked in for the August one.

The apiary at TWIGS is your apiary and it would be great to see members coming to either or help or just to "have a look". Please note that the apiary is not open every Saturday at 10am so if you do want to come please contact Kathy Hobson [kathy@waggledancehoney.co.uk](mailto:kathy@waggledancehoney.co.uk) to check the arrangements for that week.



### **NEXT TWIGS OPEN DAYS (SUNDAY)**

# **17th. July**

Last one we supported was a riot - come along to the next!!

***Kath will send a reminder before the next!***

**CLUB API-REL (geddit?...)**

*Nicola Perrett holds a small stock of fleeces,  
polo shirts and sweat shirts  
If you would like to purchase one please contact her  
[nicola.perrett@btinternet.com](mailto:nicola.perrett@btinternet.com)*

**ARTICLES**

I am new bee-keeper! So, *en lieu* of buying you all lots of beer to get you to tell me your life stories of bee-keeping, can you write them down and send them in to me?

I can then save money for my next hive and colony!  
For further hints see the cartoon at the end.

Come on, spill the beans, name the names.  
(P.S. I love swarming stories!)

Email your stories (I know you have more than one) to Dave Orchard at [orchard\\_dave@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:orchard_dave@yahoo.co.uk) so it can be included in the Newsletter.



To encourage you here's one:-

Happy bee day to me! I'm a one month old  
bee keeper!  
And they've just about doubled in numbers  
on that time.

And just at the weekend, I managed to find  
and mark my Queen, God Bless Her.

***Amazing what you can learn at the  
Starting Beekeeping Course!***

**NEXT MEETING THURSDAY 30TH JUNE 2016 7.30PM**

**[Andy Willis - Bee's eye view of beekeeping](#)**

**Here is a brief resume of Andy Willis' beekeeping experiences**

Andy started bee keeping 25 years ago this last April, when he took a new job looking after a 5 acre garden and Manor House in South Lincolnshire. In the garden was a small orchard and in the orchard were 8 national beehives, all surrounded by fields of oilseed rape and field beans.

“The learning curve that first year was vertical, but you do learn by your mistakes. I was essentially self taught with the help of a book written by Ron Brown and a beekeeper in the next village who had retired from beekeeping after 60 years.”

In his fourth year of bee keeping Andy started with 11 queen right colonies (with a summer high of 23 hives ) and harvested 2,500 lb of honey, all oilseed rape or rape contaminated.

He relocated back to Southampton 21 years ago and took one colony with him. He multiplied this just as varroa struck that first summer back in Southampton. Two of the three colonies survived when 75% of all honey bees that summer were killed by varroa, his were saved only by prompt treatment in mid summer.

Andy continued working full time as a gardener with beekeeping as a hobby until he was hospitalised with a severe illness at the end of 2003. He had to stop work due to poor health in 2004 after the severe illness, which has left me with lung damage, and 20 years of gardening resulted in a bad back.

This gave Andy more time for bee keeping and allowed him to exhibit honey and wax at shows. He currently hold 12 blue ribbon awards ( the first was awarded in 2007) and has won trophies every year at the National Honey Show since 2010.

Andy currently has 24 hives of bees on 3 sites.

**FUTURE MEETINGS**

- 30.06.16 Andy Willis  
Bee's eye view of beekeeping
- 28.07.16 Chris Rawlings  
The Rev. Digges and the Transition from Skep To Movable  
Frame Hive
- 25.08.16 Mead Making
- 29.09.16 Honey Show
- 27.10.16 AGM and Open Forum

**Meetings are held on the last Thursday of the month  
throughout the year (except December) in  
The Skittle Alley, Haydon Wick Club,  
Blunsdon Road, Swindon SN25 1JD  
Meetings start at 7.30pm**

**News from British Beekeepers Association**

***In case you missed it...interesting points from the BBKA  
May news:-***

**[Worker Bee \(Click this link to download\)](#)**

**Especially the article on Asian Hornet Confusion, and  
they supply a leaflet you can download describing the  
*Vespa velutina* and how to identify it, and comparisons  
with the European Hornet and other nasty wasps.**

For all you who struggle with your bee-suit – it could be worse....



And for those of you who cannot find the time....



*"Oh, but it's fine for you to grade papers?"*

