



COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2020/2021

Mike Benson	
Tim Bullock	Chairman
Stephen Greenaway	Vice Chairman, Spray and Swarm Liaison.
Clive Harris	Treasurer
Kathy Hobson	Secretary, Membership Secretary.
Andy Jones	
Nicola Perrett	
Christopher Wilkinson	Website Manager

APIARY NOTES Tim Bullock

As we are now into May hopefully the weather will warm up and we come into our 'peak season' for beekeeping.

Now is the time that colonies are more likely to swarm, Are you ready? Once a colony has entered swarm preparation mode, nothing is likely to stop them so just knocking back queen cells will only stop swarming for another week – the more you do it the sneakier they will get about where they build the queen cells, so eventually you'll miss one. The key thing for us is what's their reasons for building queen cells – are they superseding the current queen, have they already lost her or are they just trying to expand the colony number? Splitting a colony that is in swarm mode is usually the best solution. We either end up with 2 good colonies so can expand our number, or there are two colonies that could be united once one of the queens has been destroyed (usually the older one, but it might be that the new one fails for some reason).

As supers start to fill add more, if bees have space they are less likely to swarm. Once honey is capped off then supers can be removed and extracted. If you don't expect to have much oilseed rape honey then there's nothing to stop you from just adding more supers and do a 'mass' extraction later in the spring. If you do have lots of oilseed rape honey then it's best to extract as soon as supers are capped so hopefully it hasn't granulated...

When inspecting it's worth having a plan, what am I looking for, what do I want to achieve by inspecting. The key ones are is the queen there and laying? Are they running out of space? Is the laying pattern a normal shape? Is there any sign of disease? Etc.

Don't forget to keep colony records up to date, including now recording and reporting the presence of varroa (separate note specifically about this).

VARROA REPORTING

As of 21 April 2021, we as beekeepers are now legally required to report the presence of any varroa mites in any of our hives/apiaries to the Secretary of State. This is to bring us in line with new EU regulations.

Reporting once will cover all the hives in that apiary. The easiest way to report this is on your Beebase records. A tick box has been added so reporting is very quick and easy (on my record the box has already been ticked- I'm presuming that it's because the bee inspector found some varroa when inspecting my hives last year). For those who aren't registered on Beebase an alternative system is/has been introduced to make reporting easy (I haven't seen anything so it may not be available yet).

Below is a link to the amendment order of the Bee Diseases and Pest Control Order 2006 if you want to read it.

[Bee Diseases and Pests Control \(England\) Order 2006](#)

TRAINING

Taster Days will be run in July as long as the current restrictions are lifted. The Starting Beekeeping Course may not take place but this is still being looked into .

FUTURE MEETINGS

Our Club Zoom meeting, held on 29.4.21 was only attended by 11 Swindon members (6 of these being committee members) with 11 people from other Wiltshire Clubs joining us. The committee has decided to go ahead with the next Zoom Club Meeting on Thursday 27.5.21 at 7.30pm as this had already been arranged. It will depend on the attendance at this meeting as to whether any more are arranged.

It would be good to have members feedback about this.

TWIGS Open Day for the National Garden Scheme

This takes place next Sunday 23.5.21 May 12.00-4.00 pm admission £3.50 children free. Refreshments will be available on the patio.

We are not asking for volunteers to help this time but would encourage you to visit and look round the garden. As you are aware the SDBKA apiary is here and it would be good to give TWIGS our support.

Anything odd or unusual (or just anything!!!) to add to the Newsletter will be gratefully received.