



NEWSLETTER – April 2022

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2021/2023

Tim Bullock	- Chairman
Stephen Greenaway	- Vice Chairman, Spray and Swarm Liaison.
Clive Harris	- Treasurer
Kathy Hobson	- Secretary, Membership Secretary
Justin Downes	- Newsletter Editor
Nicola Perrett	
Mike Benson	
Mick Carter	
Juliette Cavilla	
 Website Manager	 -Christopher Wilkinson

APIARY NOTES - Tim Bullock

As we go into May hopefully the weather will stay warm as 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.

NEXT MEETING

Avril Earl - 28.4.22 - Avril will be speaking about a number of things which include the role of Seasonal Bee Inspector and the National Bee Unit Education Team (NBU). She will also be discussing queen rearing and the NBU 'Question Time' event which takes place on 16th August.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Swarm Control -26.5.22

Skittles Evening – 30.6.22

Honey Extraction Demonstration – Park Farm 28.7.22

Beekeeping Safari – August – TBC For this to be organised we need an idea of numbers of those who are interested and likely to attend. If you are interested, then please let Kathy know.

Meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month in the Skittle Alley at the Haydon Wick Club, Blunsdon Road, Swindon SN25 1JD, start time 7.30pm. Please come along, all are welcome.

TWIGS

Open Days - There are a number open days coming up, these are:

TODAY Spring Open Day - Sunday 24th April 11-4

It would be greatly appreciated if some members could come along and assist, even just for a short while to speak to members of the public about beekeeping and show them our bees through the shed window.

NGS Open Day Sunday - 22nd May 12-4

Summer Open Day Sunday - 19th June 11-4

NGS Open Day Sunday - 17th July 12-4

SDBKA APIARY AT TWIGS

The new fence has been erected and various tasks to tidy up the site have now been completed. A big thank you goes to those members who participated in the work party, making it now look ship shape.

TRAINING COURSES - 2022

The dates for the courses are:

• **Taster Days** - Places still available 11.6.22, 9.7.22 and 6.8.22

• **Starting Beekeeping** The course is now full and takes place on 28.5.22 and 4.6.22 – help is needed to run this course – you need to have passed the basic exam to be “eligible” Can you let Kathy know if you can help

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

If you feel you would like share anything of note or which may be of benefit to other members, then please let me know.

Justin

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