



NEWSLETTER – May 2024

STEERING GROUP MEMBERS 2023/2024

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	
Mick Carter	-AHAT Leader
Website Manager	-Christopher Wilkinson

APIARY NOTES - Tim Bullock

May has been an interesting month to say the least, wet and cool for the first 10 days then drying and warming up since then (at the time of writing), so who knows if we'll have a June gap this year or not. Personally, I think there won't be – things have been later than 'usual' but things are catching up now.... Keep checking that there are enough stores in colonies to keep them going. If you do need to feed then go for the little and often method as we don't want them drawing syrup down into the brood box or supers, feeding now is for consumption.

The oilseed rape should now finish flowering so if you have colonies close by now is the time to clear supers and extract the honey if you haven't done it yet as it will granulate quickly. Better that this happens in a honey bucket rather than in capped supers.

I'm sure that swarming is going to be an issue right through June this year, so stick to a maximum of 7 days between inspections. It may be worth doing an artificial swarm on strong colonies even if they aren't showing signs of swarming – at least we're in control and you get the benefit of another colony!!

Don't forget that water demands will be high, not much of an issue at the moment but as natural water sources dry up make sure that there are water sources for colonies – I have a large plant saucer with a sponge in full of water close to the outside tap available (it also gets used by the local hedgehogs as a bonus!)

The new 2024 £1 coin - complete with bees!



SDBKA Apiary – Park Farm

The 2 new colonies purchased are doing well as is a swarm which has been collected. Mick has put a weed suppressant down to prevent overgrowth impeding the hives. New members Marcel and Fiona have helped with inspections – they will be getting their own bees this month. Barry Roberts is helping Mick with management of the bees

SDBKA Apiary – TWIGS

The Club's colony swarmed a few weeks ago. The swarm was collected by Barry Roberts and Kathy Hobson and was put into a nuc but when Barry went back the next morning to check he found that the bees had left the nuc overnight. Barry put them back in the nuc and took them to Park Farm. Sadly, they didn't survive. We are hoping that the queen cells left in the hive will produce a new queen. A split from Park Farm has now been taken to TWIGS.

Club Meetings

The next club meeting is on 30th May where we will have an input from Doug Deas on sustainable beekeeping plus, an open forum. The schedule for the next two months is.

27th June 24 - Queen issues

25th July 24 – This will be held at Park Farm. Chris Rummig will be giving us a talk about the farm

Unless otherwise stated 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 7pm. Please come along, all are welcome.

Dates of note:

TWIGS Open Day

The next TWIGS open day is on 23rd June 24 11am to 4pm. Please come along, even for an hour to talk to members of the public and show them our bees (behind glass of course!!). You are welcome to bring your honey to sell. If you can help please email Nicola Perrett nicola.perrett@icloud.com

Starting Beekeeping Course

June 8th

June 15th

Barry Roberts will be running this course with help from Mick Carter – the course is now full

Beekeeping Taster Days

July 13th

August 10th

Kathy needs two beekeepers to help her with the two Taster Days (one for each day) - especially in the afternoon with the handing part – the day starts at 10am and finishes around 4.30. Please email her asap 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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