

Cumbria Bee Times

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(Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the editor and do not necessarily represent those of the CBKA)

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Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a troublefree 2014 with healthy good tempered bees, plentiful honey and no lost swarms



Cockermouth Autumn Conference 26th October

Despite a poor turn-out for yet another year, those who did attend the Autumn conference at Embleton were treated to a day of excellent talks. The date clashed with the National Honey Show and some people were away competing for recognition of their Hive products.

Archie Ferguson spoke on Queen Production and, in the afternoon on Overwintering Bees. Alan Riach described his unique experiments and inventions with beekeeping and also gave us a tour of hive development through the ages.

Good compensation for those of us who did not attend the National Honey Show!

Simple Queen Production - Archie Ferguson

(A few notes from the Cockermouth conference)

Drones take 38 days to mature, Queens only 21.

Drone production needs to be started in March if possible and Queens ONLY once the drone brood is capped.

Think of adding Apistan/Bayvarol strips with the drone brood just before it is sealed to reduce the Varroa burden.

In the Q Rearer colony move all brood to above q/e and keep Q in lower brood box trapped in brood cage for 12 hours to ensure the age of the grubs destined to be Q reared.

Q rearing nurse bees must be well fed with pollen and nectar frames once they are separated from the old Q and flying bees.

Think of cutting the bottom off the frame of eggs to allow better (vertical) creation of the Q cells and separate by destroying some cells between each Q cell.

Timing of all procedures is critical Don't let several virgin queens hatch together—only one will survive!



Brazilian Beekeepers Donkey

from www.treehugger.com.

Candy recipe by Alan Riach

Alan Riach was one of the speakers at the Cockermouth Convention. Below is his recipe for homemade Bee candy, with thanks to "The Scottish Beekeeper"

The old beekeepers formula for Candy, which depended on Imperial measurement units, was recorded in the rhyming ditty "12345 Candy keeps your bees alive"; one pint of water to 5lbs of sugar and bring it up to the soft candying temperature of 234° Fahrenheit.

The metric equivalent of the rhyming ditty is: "11124, Candy supplements your store", (not quite so snappy!); one litre of water to 4kg of sugar and take it up to 112° Centigrade).

Ingredients + Equipment

One litre of water, 4kg of granulated white sugar.

A jam thermometer or a thermocouple and reader capable of reading up to 115°C.

A pan capable of comfortably containing 3.5 litre – say 5 litre capacity (Jam pan?).

Method

Bring one litre of water to the boil and add 1kg of sugar, stirring with a long spoon. When this is dissolved and coming to the boil again, add sugar 1/2kg at a time until it has all dissolved, stirring continually. As more sugar dissolves the boiling point will increase to 110°C or thereabouts. Boil gently for 10 minutes until the thermometer reads 112°C (234° Fahrenheit) or just over. This is the 'soft-ball' temperature when the hot solution dripped onto a cold plate just forms a soft, solid mass. Remove the pan from the stove and stand in a sink of cold water for 20 minutes until the temperature drops to 70°C (160° Fahrenheit) when it will show white streaks and solidify around the edges. Stir vigorously prior to pouring it into one or two litre plastic containers (ice cream or margarine tubs or take-a-way containers) or cardboard boxes lined with polythene. Remember you will have to accommodate about 3.5 litre for the above quantities.

Take Care - 112°C is very hot and hot sugar solutions cause severe skin burns due to them sticking to the skin.

To use

Invert the containers over the feed hole on the crown-board or, in the middle of winter, place directly on top of the frames.

Do not remove from the container or if you do, keep the top covered with polythene to prevent it drying out.

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Cumbria BKA Autumn Conference and Honey Show Saturday 16th Nov Southey St Keswick.

There was a smaller turn out for the 2013 Conference than previous years.

The first Speaker of the day, Julia Piggot gave us a fascinating talk on good environmental management of orchards with emphasis on ensuring forage for pollinators, including honey bees, throughout the seasons.

After lunch the Branch reports all mentioned the poor 2012 season with the following long harsh winter causing heavy colony losses. Carlisle reported a lot of chalk brood. Cockermouth reported that 2012 had been the worst year ever recorded for beekeeping. Keswick mentioned the difference in wellbeing of the Apiary bees compared with Members Apiaries. Penrith spoke of plans for an Association Apiary and Whitehaven of their Apiary garden development.

There followed an "Ask the Experts Session" which gave all those attending a chance to put questions to Julia Piggot and Peter Sutcliffe, our second speaker of the day. Peter went on to explore and debunk many beekeeping myths of past and present including the idea that keeping bees in any type of hive including top bar hives is natural. He stated at the beginning of his talk that he might be controversial in his views and indeed he was!

The Honey Show was judged by Bill Mackereth with Ian Gregory stewarding.

Entries were down on last year, but of a high standard..

The judge awarded :

The Association cup (most points classes 1-12) Alan Tett

The Hendran cup (Best exhibit in Show) Alan Tett

The John Dixon cup (Wax classes 13-16) Julia Hoggard

The Scott-Just Trophy(Best exhibit classes2-3) Alan Tett

The W.Barton cup(Beginnersclass23) Mike Fitzgerald

The F.Hydes cup(classes 20-22) Maggie.Hopkins

The S.J.Wornham Trophy(Best exhibit class 1) J.Glaister

The W.Douglas Trophy (most wax class points)
J.Hoggard

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A hive for all your Apiary equipment
Agents for Thorne



If you have some honey to spare try this recipe

16th CENTURY APPLE PIE

"Take your apples and pare them cleane and core them as ye will a Quince then make your coffyne after this maner take a little faire water and halfe a disshe of butter and a little safron and set all this vpon a chafyng disshe till it be hote then temper your floure with this vpon your chafyng dissh till it be hote then temper your floure with this said licour and the white of two egges and also make your coffyn and ceason your apples with Sinamon, ginger and honey inough. Then put them into your coffyn and laie halfe a disshe of butter about them and close your coffyn and so bake them" - From A Propre new booke of Cokery



? The "must have" Christmas present

for the Beekeeper who has everything—
a watering device to fit
onto your hive entrance .