

Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association

Newsletter for April 2009

Colony Losses Survey 2009

This time last year we started doing a survey of winter losses among our members, with a view to building up statistics year on year.

Last year was particularly grim with over 30% losses overall. Early indications are that this year will be better but we cannot be sure until all the figures have come in.

As previously, we are using the period 1st November to 15th April to define winter losses. Please let us know how many colonies you had on 1st November and how many were still alive and queenright on 15th April. You can use the form at the end of this newsletter or, if you received the newsletter by email, you can reply directly using the email itself.

I am asking you to include your name on the form to ensure that I do not double-count anyone but names are not stored in the database.

Please help us by filling in the form; the more people who reply, the more meaningful our figures will be.



April Meeting

"Beekeepers' Question Time"

on

Wednesday 15th April

at 7:30 pm in the Bowls Club

On the panel will be [Beulah Cullen](#), [Bob Hunter](#) and [Roy Brunswick](#) and they will be ready to answer your questions on all aspects of beekeeping or hive products.

There is still time to submit your questions. Please use the form at the end of this newsletter or email your questions to me at chairman@mbbka.org.uk.

Most important of all, come along and give us your support to help make this an interesting and enjoyable evening.

Swarm Collection

Our new Swarm Officer this year is [Sean Kirwan](#). He will be co-ordinating the collection of swarms in our area and is the person to contact if you would like to obtain a swarm to increase your stock of bees.



We have a new mobile phone number for reporting swarms and for contacting the Swarm Officer. It is

07501 359 748

Sean is already collecting names of members who would like to receive swarms. If you wish to join the list, please contact him as soon as possible.

Other dates for your diary

Friday-Sunday 17th-19th April

BBKA Spring Convention,
Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

Sunday 26th April

Apiary Working Day (details overpage)

Wednesday 20th May

Apiary evening session starting at 7:00 pm

More overpage

Basic Assessment

I am very pleased to say that sufficient people are interested to enable us to run a Basic Assessment course this year.

The course will consist of 4 evening meetings in Wendover Library. In these we will work through the syllabus together so that we cover all the subject matter that is likely to be asked by the assessor.

The sessions will take place in late April / May. The dates have not yet been finalised and I will shortly be contacting those who have expressed an interest to agree suitable times.

We can still take a few more people so, if you are interested, please contact me as soon as possible. The only requirement is that you have been keeping bees for at least one season.

Apiary available

A lady in **Chearsley** would like to contact a local beekeeper who is willing to keep one or two colonies this year on her land.

She is hoping to take our Beginners Course next year and eventually take up beekeeping herself. In the meantime she would be happy to help the beekeeper managing the colonies.

This would be a good opportunity to obtain some more apiary space and at the same time help a new beekeeper who is anxious to learn the craft.

Photographing swarms

If you go to collect a swarm, don't forget to take your camera with you.

At our next AGM and Honey Show in October we will have a competition for the best photograph.

Apiary Working Day - Sunday 26th April

There are quite a few jobs we need to do in the Apiary so, weather permitting, we shall have a working day on **Sunday 26th April**.

The jobs that need doing are:

1. Strip old roofing felt and apply new felt.
2. Make some new hive stands.
3. Fill in the ruts just outside the field gate caused by the white van parked there. These are now pretty deep.
4. Paint the solar extractor.
5. Make a stock take of brood boxes, supers and frames (with and without wax) in the shed.

We aim to start at **11:00** and be finished by **4 pm**.

It won't be "all work and no play" however. At lunchtime we shall have a barbecue so please bring along some food to share. In the afternoon if the weather is good enough we will have a look and see how our colonies are doing.

Colonies needed

All the indications are that colonies of bees are likely to be in short supply this year.

If you are planning to breed some queens, why not make provision for one or two spare 5-frame nuclei that can be sold on to our new beekeepers.

This way you will be helping a new member to start up beekeeping and make a bit of money for yourself.

Looking forward to seeing you all on Wednesday 15th April

Frank Rickett

Tel: 01494 866516

Email: chairman@mbbka.org.uk



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Colony Losses Survey 2009



Name: _____

Number of colonies on 1st November 2008: _____

Number of queenright colonies on 15th April 2009: _____

Observations about losses _____

Suspected reasons for losses _____

Please return completed form to: Frank Rickett, Fairholme, Perks Lane, Prestwood, Bucks HP16 OJQ
email : chairman@mbbka.org.uk

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Beekeeper's Question Time

Wednesday 15th April 2009

Starting at 7:30 pm



Name: _____

I would like to ask the following question:

Please return completed form to: Frank Rickett, Fairholme, Perks Lane, Prestwood, Bucks HP16 OJQ
email: chairman@mbbka.org.uk