

# Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association

## Newsletter for September 2008



**A**utumn is nearly upon us and we should be starting to think about putting our bees to bed for the winter.

If you have not yet put in your Apiguard to control Varroa you should do so without delay. Also any weak colonies should be united; it is better to go into winter with one strong colony than two weak ones. Be careful though. If the colonies are weak because the queens have only been going for a short time then you can pick the strongest queen and unite around her. On the other hand if the colonies have remained poor throughout the summer then there may be some disease present and uniting might not cure the problem (see the item on Nosema overpage).

It is remarkable how many people are now becoming aware of the problems facing beekeepers. At our shows this summer we have been asked repeatedly whether the reports of problems in the media are true and how seriously we are being affected. As a sign of their support, people have been only too willing to sign the BBKA petition asking the Government to provide more money for beekeeping research.

This increased awareness is undoubtedly due to the high profile publicity campaign mounted by the BBKA which has gained widespread media attention.

We are also finding a lot of interest in next year's beginners course; already I have received nine enquiries which is unprecedented this early. This is very good news for the Association because the more people we can encourage to take up beekeeping in a knowledgeable and responsible way the stronger our Association will become.

### Professor Dewey Caron

Thursday 11th September

Dewey Caron is Professor of Entomology at the University of Delaware in the USA and is a foremost authority on CCD. He will be giving a talk to the High Wycombe beekeepers entitled:

#### Preparing for the Fall

on Thursday 11th September at 7:30 pm in The Environment Centre, Bassetsbury Lane, High Wycombe, Bucks HP11 1QX

If you are not familiar with the Environment Centre it is located adjacent to the Holywell Mead swimming pool on The Rye, High Wycombe. A map is given on the web site [www.ecobuzz.org.uk](http://www.ecobuzz.org.uk).

All Mid Bucks members are invited but accommodation at the Environment Centre is limited so please register in advance by phone or email to Julian Parker:

☎ 07754 - 018877    ✉ [Hwbees@fiolian.co.uk](mailto:Hwbees@fiolian.co.uk)

### Barbecue and Autumn Clean-up at the Association Apiary

Sunday 14th September

Our annual tidy-up of the Association Apiary will take place on Sunday 14th September starting at 11 am.

There is always plenty to do: cleaning used brood boxes and supers, tidying the site, making any necessary repairs to the hut and, this year, we will need to replace some of our hive stands which are getting rather wobbly.

If the weather is good enough we will have a barbecue so bring along some food to share.

It is always a good get-together so come along and lend a hand.

### Our next meeting

The first meeting of our winter season will take place on **Wednesday 17th September at 7:30 pm** in the Bowls Club.

Our Seasonal Bee Inspector, **Margaret Holland**, will give us a talk on "Preparing Colonies for the Winter" and will outline the latest thinking on the causes of the high colony losses we have been experiencing over the past couple of years and the steps that we can take to try and reduce losses this winter.

The first meeting of the season is always a good opportunity to meet again our fellow beekeepers and compare notes about the summer.

More overpage ....



## Affiliation to the BBKA

Following the decision at the 2007 AGM to re-affiliate to the [Bucks County Beekeepers Association](#) and the [British Beekeepers Association](#), the arrangements have now been made and affiliation will take effect on 1st October.

Members of the Mid Bucks Association who keep bees will automatically become members of the BBKA after they renew their subscriptions in November and should start to receive BBKA News early in the New Year.

Associate Members (i.e. those who do not keep bees) will not be affected by the change.

## AGM and Honey Show

The AGM and Honey Show will be held at 7:30 pm on [Wednesday 15th October](#) in the Bowls Club.

Nominations are invited for members of the committee and any member of the Association is entitled to put a resolution before the AGM. A nomination form and a resolution form are provided on page 3 of this newsletter.

One important position that we **must** fill is that of **Treasurer**. John Parsons-Smith has done an excellent job for the Association over the past two years for which we are most grateful but he is unable to continue.

If anyone feels they might be able to help out in this capacity, please give me a ring or send an email.

## IMPORTANT

### Survey of the Bee Inspectorate

The National Audit Office is conducting a survey of beekeepers to get their views on how effective the Bee Inspectors are in safeguarding the health of honeybees in the UK.

The survey was only announced in August, after my last newsletter, and there is some confusion as to the closing date. The BBKA says 12th September but the NAO web site says 5th September.

Nevertheless, if you get an opportunity, please follow the link <http://www.nao.org.uk/survey/beekeepers.htm> and complete the short questionnaire which will only take a few minutes.

The Bee Inspectors are an extremely valuable resource for us; they provide an enormous amount of support, advice and training and we would be very much worse off if their activities were curtailed.

Please add your voice in their support.

## Dates for your Diary

**Thursday 11th September** 7:30 pm  
"Preparing for the Fall" by **Dewey Caron**.  
at [The Environment Centre, High Wycombe](#).

**Sunday 14th September**. 11:00 am  
Barbecue and Tidy-up at [The Association Apiary](#).

**Wednesday 17th September** 7:30 pm  
"Preparing colonies for the Winter"  
by **Margaret Holland**.  
at [The Bowls Club, Wendover](#).

**Wednesday 15th October** 7:30 pm  
AGM and Honey Show  
at [The Bowls Club, Wendover](#).

**Wednesday 19th November** 7:30 pm  
"The year in the life of a bee farmer"  
by **Ged Marshall**  
at [The Bowls Club, Wendover](#).

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## Treating for Nosema

At one time beekeepers used to treat routinely for Nosema by adding Fumidil B to the winter feed.

The Bee Inspectors are now strongly recommending that we do NOT use Fumidil unless we have good reason to suspect that Nosema is present. Fumidil is an antibiotic and there is a real danger that the protozoa which cause Nosema could become resistant. Also, many beekeepers, myself included, are reluctant to put any chemicals in the hive unless they are absolutely necessary.

Deciding whether to use Fumidil can be difficult. The tell-tale signs of Nosema are brown streaks on the outside of the hive and over the tops and sides of the frames. Colonies suffering from Nosema do not build up properly and can remain quite weak throughout the season.

Colonies that are reasonably strong with a good queen should not be treated with Fumidil. If a colony has been weak for most of the summer look for the signs of dysentery and, if present, treat with Fumidil at the rate of 8.3g (1/3 of a 25g bottle) to 14lb sugar in 7 pints water.

The only way to be sure that Nosema is present is to grind up about 30 bees in water and examine the fluid under a high-powered microscope. We don't have these facilities in the Association at the moment but I hope that we will be able to acquire them in the future.

Frank Rickett  
Chairman  
Tel: 01494 866516  
Email: [chairman@mbbka.org.uk](mailto:chairman@mbbka.org.uk)



Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association

Nomination Form for Officer/Committee Member 2008/09

I, .....being a fully paid up member of the MBBKA,  
(name in full)

hereby nominate

.....for the position of  
(name in full)

.....in the MBBKA.

Signature of proposer.....

Signature of seconder.....

I agree to the nomination .....

(Signature of nominee)

Completed form to be returned to the Secretary by 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008.  
Jane Arnold-Round, 80 Haw Lane, Bledlow Ridge, Buckinghamshire, HP144JH

Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association

Notice of motion to be put before AGM 15<sup>th</sup> October 2008

We/I, .....&.....  
(name in full) (name in full)

being fully paid up members of the MBBKA, hereby propose the following resolution be adopted by the Annual General Meeting

.....  
.....  
.....

Signature of proposer.....

Signature of seconder.....

Completed form to be returned to the Secretary by 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008.  
Jane Arnold-Round, 80 Haw Lane, Bledlow Ridge, Buckinghamshire, HP144JH