

KENT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION SEVENOAKS AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS BRANCH NEWSLETTER

June 2019

Editor: Mary Staffurth

Tel: 01732 462931 or e-mail: marystaffurth@yahoo.com

Branch website: <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/>



Visit to a Member's Apiary

There will be a visit to Belinda Thorkildsen-Canty's apiary in Stone Street on Saturday 8th June, at 2pm. John Hendrie will be giving a demonstration of queen rearing.

You need to book if you are planning to attend. RSVP to membership@sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk for directions.

This visit clashes with the regular meeting at Barrwood so the Barrwood meeting has been rescheduled to Tuesday 11th June at 3pm.

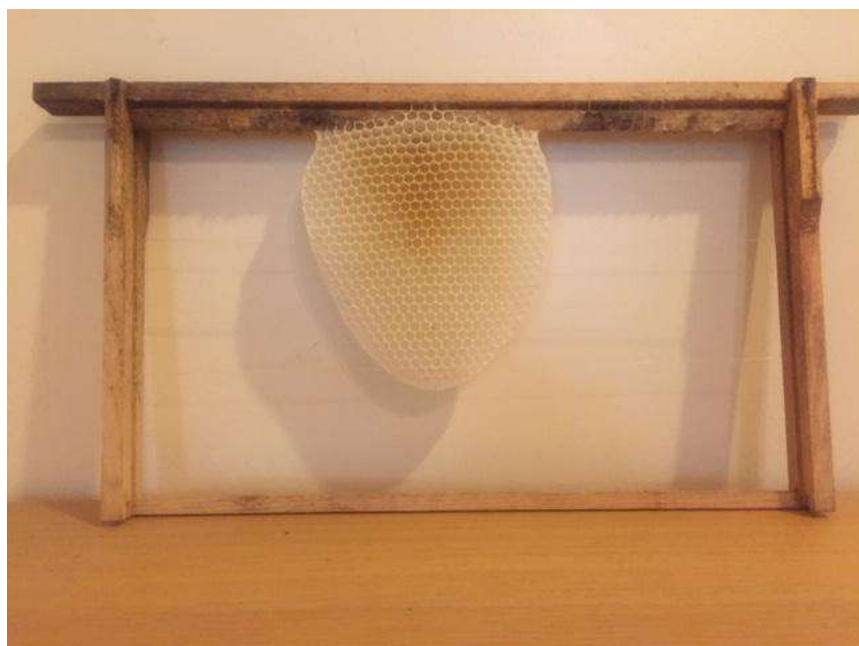
Honey Bees for Children

Following up on a contact made at one of the garden centre visits last year, I was invited to Skinners Kent Primary School in Tunbridge Wells to talk to the year 1 and 2 classes about honey bees. The teachers were keen to tie this in with other lessons looking at habitat and endangered species. Although it was not practical to take an observation hive into the classroom, there was a slide show showing bees close up, collecting pollen and nectar. There were lots of really searching questions from the children about how to look after bees. The children also had the opportunity to look at a nucleus box and some drawn frames to get an idea of what a hive looked like close up.

The children were surprised and interested to learn how much of our food depends on pollinating insects. They were shown some apples which were just developing, so they could see of original flower still in place, and the fruitlet starting to develop. The children also had a good look at strawberry flowers, which have very clear stamens.

Liz Birchenough

Active Swarm



This is what one of my collected swarms built in one of my poly nucs in a couple of days.

You can just see the two cross wires which run through the newly built comb, giving sufficient support when rotating the frame.

The bees preferred this to the other normal frames with wax foundation in the nuc. It allows them to build a cell exactly to their body size. They don't know that this hinders the varroa mite moving around the cell and mating - or perhaps they do? You never can tell with bees!

John Farrow

Healthy Colonies at Hilbert Road

The season started at Hilbert Road with nine members clearing leaves from the apiary and mowing the area. We also cleaned out the top bar hive, which was full of wax moth larvae. We fed the two hives a liquid feed.

On Easter Saturday, there were eight of us. We checked the two hives that came through the winter; both are healthy. We put a queen excluder and a super on one colony.

At our third meeting, there were five of us. Because of the inclement weather, we could only put a queen excluder and a super on the remaining hive. We discussed supersedure and how recognise it. We also looked at recognition of the Asian Hornet and setting traps. It was noted that the apiary itself needs to put up a couple of hornet traps.

Barry Chaseley

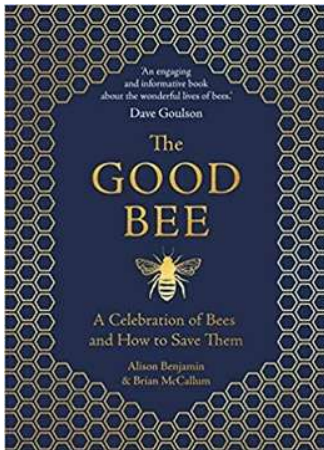
Queen Rearing at Barrwood

The apiary started the season with six colonies and one has since been split for swarm control. In May, Cliff Hayward introduced the Miller queen rearing procedure using eggs from his own colony. John Farrow has suggested setting up bait hives on the far side of the apiary. Number 1 hive is still an aggressive colony and will need re-queening.

All Change for the Branch Honey Show

There is a new venue for our branch honey show this year. It will take place at St. John's Church Hall, Hildenborough TN11 9HT, on Saturday 21 September. The branch committee has also agreed to add a new class: 'Any decorative or artistic item with a beekeeping theme'. That's all it says in the schedule so you can use your imagination!

A Good Read?



Looking for a bee-related gift? There is a new book just published "The Good Bee: A Celebrations of Bees and How to Save Them", by Alison Benjamin and Brian McCallum. This is the latest in a series of books by the same authors, and brings together the facts about the impact of bees on agriculture.

The book covers all types of bees, and identifies the species which are under threat of extinction. The book has been well reviewed, and sounds like a really interesting read.

It is available in kindle format or hardback, either on-line or through major High Street book shops. It is published by Michael O'Mara Books Ltd, ISBN number 9781 7892 90837.

Liz Birchenough

Kent Show

The Kent Show will take place on **Friday 5, Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 July** at the Kent County Showground, Detling, Maidstone. The beekeeping show schedule has been sent to everyone by email with this newsletter. You can also see the details on the Kent Beekeepers' Association website: <https://www.kbka.org.uk>

More Diary Dates

Saturday 1 June at 2pm: Hilbert Road apiary meeting.

Saturday 8 June at 2pm: Visit to Belinda Thorkildsen-Canty's apiary in Stone Street.

Tuesday 11 June at 3pm: Barrwood apiary meeting – rescheduled from Saturday 8th.

Saturday 15 June at 2pm: Hilbert Road apiary meeting.

Saturday 22 June at 2pm: Barrwood apiary meeting.

Bees and honey will be on display at the annual South of England Show at Ardingly, West Sussex, on **Thursday 6, Friday 7 and Saturday 8 June**.

Please send any articles or photos for the newsletter to Mary Staffurth: marystaffurth@yahoo.com