

Reigate Beekeepers



BeeNews

May 2014



Photo opportunity of the Month



Over exuberance on the Easter Egg Trail

Eagle eyed and camera ready member **Simon Ford**, spotted multiple eggs in some cells, clearly laid whilst the still resident 2013 Queen was around. The cells were subsequently capped off as worker brood, presumably after surplus cell contents had been evicted.

- Was the Queen having a dizzy Easter moment ?
 - Was a laying worker making mischief ?
- Suggestions please to the editors.

*Got an unusual, topical, or interesting bee related image that could be featured here?
Please send it to the editors today !*

Dates for your Diary

Date	Event / Description	Venue / Contact
May, Sat 3 rd	Reigate Beekeepers Auction (11:00 - 14:00) Submit surplus equipment and bid for needed equipment.	Mickleham Apiary Andy Robinson
May, Sat 3 rd	Reigate Spring Bee Health Clinic (10:00 - 14:00) Submit samples of bees Adult Be Disease assessment.	Mickleham Village Hall Bob Maurer
May, Mon 5 th	Buckland May Fair RBK promotion, beekeeping display, and honey sales	Buckland Contact tba
May, Mon 5 th	Lower Kingswood Village Fete RBK promotion, beekeeping display, and honey sales	Lower Kingswood Contact tba
May, Wed 7 th	Summer Apiary Meeting (18:30 - 20:00)	Henfold Copse Andrew Buchanan
May, Sun 11 th	Cowpie Country Show RBK promotion, beekeeping display, and honey sales	Blindley Heath Eddie Webster
May, Wed 14 th	Summer Apiary Meeting (18:30 - 20:00)	Henfold Copse Andrew Buchanan
May, Sun 18 th	Norbury Park Sawmill Open Day RBK promotion, beekeeping display, and honey sales	Norbury Pk, Mickleham Jack Chapman
May, Wed 21 st	Summer Apiary Meeting (18:30 - 20:00)	Henfold Copse Andrew Buchanan
May, Mon 26 th	Surrey County Show SBKA promotion, beekeeping display, and Honey Show	Guildford. Hazel Sharples (Show Sec)
May, Wed 28 th	Summer Apiary Meeting (18:30 - 20:00)	Henfold Copse Andrew Buchanan
More dates ?	The Members website has the full year's Diary Dates	Click Here

Comments about and contributions for publication in **BeeNews** will be welcomed by the editors.
For inclusion in an edition, contributions are required by the 25th of the preceding month.



Bee Involved

The last two month's focus has necessarily been upon preparation for, and then managing the onrush of the active season. This month these pages bring you opportunities aplenty to participate and become involved in a broad and diverse range of beekeeping related activities.

Right from our front page inviting your opinions as to what is going on in Simon's picture, the theme continues throughout the edition.

Learn more about managing an apiary by assisting during the summer at Mickleham; get some insights into 2nd hand equipment by helping at the Auction on the 3rd; take advantage of opportunities to supply your honey to sell at our Market Stall and at a local Deli; participate in providing refreshments at our Wednesday evening meetings. Or maybe your 'other' expertise is in preparing building construction drawings? If so, your involvement in the Education Space project will be greatly appreciated.

And do also support, as well as take good advantage of the involvement that others have already committed to in the organisation and running of activities. Like the many Summer Shows the division attends and not forgetting the Bee Health Clinic on the 3rd May.

To hopefully provide a little light relief from these modest demands upon your time, some further insights are also provided about just how wondrous bees are, as well as more guidance about how we might attempt to manage some of their behaviours !

See you all at the Auction, and don't forget to bring your sampled bees for your colony health checks - see page 8 for advice about sampling and the Bee Health Clinic.

Richard & Graham

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Our website is updated much more regularly than this monthly edition of **BeeNews**, so click on [Members Website](#) for lots more information and, all the latest news and activity updates.

Reigate Beekeepers

MEMBERS



Mickleham Apiary Team need your help

by **Jack Chapman**

What used to be our teaching facility, the Mickleham site, is now operated as a working apiary, and is presently in transition to be a major honey producer for RBK.

But the current team of myself (**Jack Chapman**), **Cyril Humphries**, **Graham Fyson** and **Julie Thain** do need your help!

- Joining the Mickleham team provides the opportunity for experienced beekeepers to contribute their knowledge towards maximizing the productivity of the apiary. The less experienced/novice beekeepers input will be equally valued and they would, at the same time, enhance their own beekeeping knowledge and skills.
- The team meet each Thursday evening, starting prompt at 6:30 pm, throughout the season (weather permitting).
- Unlike the Henfold sessions, Mickleham volunteers will be hands-on through all stages of beekeeping from assembling, cleaning; and maintaining equipment; assessing the needs of each colony; swarm prevention; queen rearing and generally managing the stock to maximise both Spring and Summer honey yields.
- The apiary is currently in the process of increasing it's stock to eight colonies, with four colonies on brood and a half and four on double brood.
- Volunteers will also participate in a queen rearing programme to improve the quality of the Mickleham stock. Cyril is using Wernholz Nucs that are distributed amongst current Mickleham attendees to look after until mated and required for restocking.

Helping us represents a splendid opportunity to accelerate learning and understanding of the practical aspects of the beekeeping craft, or if you are already an experienced beekeeper, to both share and apply your beekeeping experience and knowledge.

Come and join us.....contact **Jack Chapman**
reigatebeekeepers@hotmail.com

.... and you will undoubtedly learn more about beekeeping and apiary management !

Please Leave a Comment

[Click to Bee Involved.....](#)

1st Class Response for Henfold 1st Aid

In last months **BeeNews**, an urgent appeal was launched for more volunteer First Aiders at Henfold Copse during Wednesday evenings.

Three members came forward to offer their skills to the needy in the event of requiring medical assistance.

- **Pauline Sparkes** is now joined by:
- **Colin Clement**
- **Andrew Cornwall**
- **Suzy Stevens**

All hold certificates of proficiency in First Aid, copies of which are posted on the door of the 2nd container together with their photographic portraits for purposes of recognition.

Thanks are due to all four for their help and enthusiasm.

Events News

Our Farmer's Market also requires Honey

Honey it appears may be in short supply, as can be seen from the delicatessen's request elsewhere in this months **BeeNews**. So if you have some available please also consider selling it through our Reigate Farmer's Market stall, or our Show stalls, which are manned by Reigate Beekeepers volunteers.

Please [click here](#) for more details of the Farmer's Market, which is **held every fourth Friday of the month**, and how you can offer your honey for sale.



Deli seeks Local Honey to Sell

A local Redhill delicatessen, keen to be able to offer and sell local artisan honey, has approached RBK, seeking suppliers.

The owner of the '**Deli on the Hill**' Paul Clarke, is very happy for local beekeepers to pop in to the shop with jars of honey they would like to sell. It will be entirely up to you and Paul to discuss terms, but as for any sales to the public, do make certain that your labels conform to regulations.

The **Deli on the Hill** is located on the corner of Linkfield Street and Elm Road in Redhill.

Paul Clarke's email contact is:

enquiries@delionthehill.co.uk

Lost or Strayed ?

After the 'Tidy-Up' at Henfold Copse during Saturday 15th March, **Liz Diprose** was unable to find a pair of **Long Handled Shears** which she had brought along to use on the day.

Liz will be very grateful if fellow members and visitors who attended and participated in the working parties would kindly check to see whether they may have inadvertently added her shears to their tool collection.

If found, or for further information, please contact Liz:

Phone - 01737 763361, Mobile - 07860 237526, or email - lizdiprose@gmail.com

Building Drawing Expertise Sought

To obtain both approval and accurate estimates of cost for the construction of foundations for the planned building at Henfold Copse of the Education Centre, a set of drawings are needed to present to the District Building Inspector and prospective Building Constructors respectively.

Do you have the qualifications to prepare such drawings ?

Would you be willing to contribute to the project by preparing the drawings ?

If you would be able to help and would like more details of the plan, please contact:

Andrew Buchanan, Phone - 01306 712773
email - andrewb38@btinternet.com

Refreshed Refreshment Appeal

The task of finding somebody to step into **Coral Lloyd's** shoes on Wednesday evenings during June to September this year remains. And with just 4 weeks to go, is now all the more urgent!

So what is involved ?

Well, as Coral describes, possibly not as much as you might suppose.

Stocks of coffee, tea, sugar and washing-up stuff all live at Henfold during the Summer meetings. Each week a four pint bottle of milk along with washed and dried tea towels (taken, home the previous week) are brought along. Biscuits, replenished as needed, are also brought; having been kept at home to especially avoid the chocolate ones becoming welded together in the summer heat.

Additions of home made Honey biscuits are welcome but not essential. Others may be able to bake and bring some along each week on a rota basis.

The urn is usually already set-up for me, filled and turned on, by the time I arrive at about 6:15 pm.

The outside table tops do need to be cleaned each week, so a suitable cloth, 'anti-everything' spray and roll of kitchen towel are essentials to be used before the mugs can be set out.

Certainly rope-in help to clear up afterwards as needed, but you WILL probably find yourself leaving with the last !

All costs incurred in replenishing stocks and consumables are reimbursed by Andrew on presentation of receipts.

Would you, or maybe a willing partner, be able to perform this essential role and spare us all from 'dry' meetings this Summer?

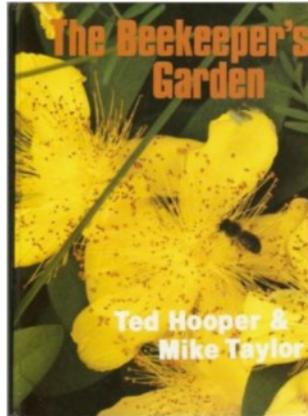
If so, please talk to **Andrew Buchanan** as soon as possible at Henfold Copse apiary or contact him by:

Phone - 01306 712773
email - andrewb38@btinternet.com



Recommended Reading

Ted Hooper has written many great books about beekeeping, and with co-author Mike Taylor his book titled 'The Bee Friendly Garden', (also titled 'The Beekeeper's Garden'), is certainly no exception.



It is an essential companion to any one wanting to develop their garden to benefit bees. A comprehensive summary of gardening with bees in mind, providing guidance to assist beekeepers in planting their gardens so as to provide bees with continuous sources of nectar and pollen.

If you are a beekeeper, it provides beekeeping advice and describes flowers, trees and shrubs which you may plant to encourage your bees. If you are a gardener, it provides descriptions about bees and beekeeping.

Mike Taylor, also a beekeeper, provides sections on garden design and the safe use of pesticides, and descriptive and cultivation notes on over 300 trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants, all of which are useful to honey bees.

Available on Amazon, are both used copies, and new hardcover copies fetching around £73 ! Fortunately a copy is also available for loan from our Reigate Beekeepers Library. [Click here](#) to see the full range of books available.

Coral's Horticultural Tip

If you are considering plants for your garden please remember that many of the plants that look attractive to us, may not be attractive to bees. Choose single rather than double flower varieties, and preferably native species.

Most double flowers are of little use, because they are too elaborate. Some are bred without male and female parts, while others have so many petals bees can't get to the nectar and pollen to collect it. This is the main reason why single dahlias are popular with many bees, while doubles are usually ignored.

The single-flowered rose family, which includes crab apple, hawthorn and potentilla, are irresistible to bees, as are the flowers of fennel, angelica, cow parsley, and sedums. Honey bees find smaller flowers easier to access so preferentially choose these, such as forget-me-nots; especially if considering tubular-shaped flowers, such as foxgloves, snapdragons, penstemons and heathers, which are favourite feeding places for bumble bees.

Equipment News

Reigate Auction - Saturday 3rd May

This year, our Auction of Bees and Beekeeping Equipment at the Mickleham apiary is all set to be 'bigger than ever'.

With the number of lots registered near to the practical limit of 300, it is already unlikely that additional lots will be able to be accepted on the day.

A catalogued 'List of Lots' will be published by Friday 2nd May and will be accessible from both our Public and Members websites. Printed copies of the Catalogue will be available to buy at the Auction itself.

For more details, visit the Auction post on the Members website ([click here](#)) or the Auction notice on www.reigatebeekeepers.org.uk

Viewing from 11 am, Auction starts 12 am

Our Auctioneer on the day will be **Malcolm Fry**, (deputising for **Andy Robinson**), who will be appreciative of additional volunteers to help him on the day. To offer your assistance, just email: events@reigatebeekeepers.org.uk

And don't forget that not only will there be a great deal of equipment (and colonies of bees) to bid for; **Paynes Southdown Bee Farms** will also be selling a wide range of products from their stand in the adjacent Mickleham Village Hall, where you will also be able to buy refreshments, including the fabled bacon rolls.

Make a great day of it.

PS. Have we mentioned the Bee Health Clinic running in the hall on the the same day ?



Bees that can Fly over Everest

Surprisingly it appears that bumble bees can fly over the top of Mount Everest, research suggests.

Despite their apparent physical drawbacks, bumble bees often forage in mountains, and researchers found that they can negotiate air so thin it would kill a human, making bees the finest fliers in the insect world.

In a series of experiments, scientists placed wild bumblebees caught at 3,250 m in China in a flight chamber that simulated much higher altitudes. All managed above 7,500 m, meaning they could scale six of the 'seven summits' the highest mountains of each of the seven continents.

Two flew more than 9,000 m above sea level, higher than the 8,848 m summit of the world's highest mountain, considered to be the at the limit of human endurance.



To achieve these altitudes, the bumble bees increase the maximum angle at which they flapped their wings, while keeping the same beat frequency.

In the past bumblebees have been found on Mount Everest at more than 5,600 m above sea level.

courtesy of the Daily Telegraph

Bees Taste with their Feet

Researchers have established that honey bees have taste receptors on their feet, and they have tested their reactions to a variety of tastes.

Over the course of two years, researchers captured bees and stimulated their front feet with a variety of tasty (and not-so-tasty) solutions, from sweet to bitter.

Like other insects, bees don't confine their sense of taste to their mouths. They also taste using their antennae and the surfaces of their feet. In this case, the researchers focused on the feet, dabbing sweet sucrose, bitter quinine and other solutions onto the tarsi, the end parts of the legs.

They measured the bees' reactions by observing whether or not they stuck out their tongues — a tasty substance elicits a protrusion of the proboscis, while a distasteful one would lead to no response or a retraction. They also used minuscule electrodes to measure the sensory cells' reactions to different tastes.



They learned that bees don't sense bitter tastes with their feet, but they do have a strong capacity to taste sweets.

Apparently they are also sensitive to salt, which is why salty swimming areas in places such as Australia attract bees which hover on masse around the surface of the pools.. "Our guess is they may not need to land on the water surface to taste the salt", said study researcher Martin Giurfa, the director of the Research Centre on Animal Cognition at the University of Toulouse in France. "They just sense, with the tips of the legs, the presence of the salty solution".

The results are important for understanding the honey bee sensory system and, potentially, for figuring out how pesticides might harm these important pollinators and critical lab models for cognitive research.

For further information and to read the full article please [click here](#).

Please Leave a Comment

[Click to comment on this item...](#)



Bee Cousins

There are some 20,000 species of bee in the world, including bumble bees, solitary bees, stingless bees, cuckoo bees etc, but only a few of these may be called *Apis*, or 'honey bees'.

These are broadly divided into single comb, giant bees, dwarf bees and multi-combed, cavity nesting bees. They are found in Europe, Asia and Africa.

All honey bees in the Americas and Australasia have been imported. (Recently however, *Apis cerana* has found its own way into Northern Queensland, Australia).

The European honey bee, also known as the western honey bee, is designated *Apis mellifera*. There are many sub-species (eg *carnica*, *lingustica* etc) that have evolved in different areas. It is thought to have originated in Africa, where *A. mellifera* is also dominant. *A.M. Scutellata* and *A.M. capensis* are examples.

The bees of Asia form an interesting group, the best known being *Apis dorsata*, the giant bee, *A. florea*, the dwarf bee and *A. cerana*, the Asian hive bee.

A. dorsata and its cousin *A. laboriosa* the Himalayan bee, are the bees featured in films about honey hunting.

They build a single large comb, returning to the same sites each year. They are migratory, following the available nectar flows, going north in March and coming south again in September.

A. dorsata is golden in colour, about an inch long, and there is little variation in the size of the castes. They build their comb on trees and have a spectacular defence, where they perform a 'Mexican wave' over the surface of the clustered bees, which looks very intimidating. They are also very well armed, with a powerful sting.

A. laboriosa is a giant black bee, living further north, in the Himalayan foothills, and preferring cliff faces to trees to build its comb.

Both species are 'honey-hunted' using bonfires for smoke, and simple but effective bamboo tools. The hunter descends a cliff face or climbs a tree, on a bamboo ladder - 75 ft up ! He manoeuvres a basket under the comb and cuts the comb off with a knife attached to another 15 ft bamboo pole. This requires a great deal of experience, nerve and athleticism !

courtesy of Harrogate & Ripon BKA
based on a talk by Claire Waring, Editor BeeCraft

Bumble Bees

Richard Woodhouse's wife Liz sadly found this large bumble bee dead on their terrace a couple of weeks ago.



The photo shows the tri-colour markings and it has subsequently been confirmed to be a Tree Bumble Bee, which were featured in the [BeeNews](#) article in February.

Further good news however of the general significant activity of bumble bees again this year, was another queen bumble bee spotted by Richard entering a hole in brickwork in his garden shed. Unlike the Tree Bumble Bee she was nearly all black in colour, and she was carrying pollen on her back legs.

Please Leave a Comment

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New Beekeeping Experiences

Bee Sampling - Bee Health Clinic

Checking the health of your bees is an essential and very important part of beekeeping, for both experienced and new beekeepers.

It should be undertaken regularly and by various means, including as part of the regular inspections you undertake when opening your hive. A good tip is to schedule that during a particular hive inspection you will open your hive with the express purpose of only checking the health of your bees, so that you concentrate on that aspect of inspection. Look for any bees with deformed wings, odd behaviour, evidence of chalk brood, sacbrood, EFB, AFB etc.

Another important activity is to take the opportunity to participate in the Bee Health Clinics run by Reigate Beekeepers. These are held in the Spring and the Autumn, and you will see reminders about the Spring Clinic in this edition of [BeeNews](#).

Spring Bee Clinic

Saturday 3rd May
(same day as the auction)

Please bring your samples of bees either along to the **Henfold Copse** Apiary meeting on **Wednesday 30th April**, or to the Bee Clinic itself which is being held in **Mickleham Village Hall, on 3rd May**

During the Bee Clinic your bees will be examined by experts using high power microscopes initially to check for Nosema, and if time allows to check for Acarine.

This is an important health check for all beekeepers and the Bee Health Clinics are one of the benefits of being a member of Reigate Beekeepers - so don't miss the opportunity.

Did you know ?

That African honey bees not only swarm but they also migrate.

The whole colony including the queen will fly over twenty miles to relocate to a new source of forage, and they may do this twice a year. Honey bees in Kenya relocate from the plains during the dry season and go to the mountain slopes, and then may return after the rains encourage new foliage to grow on the plains again.



Bee Facts



Sampling Your Bees

For the Health Clinic you will need a sample of approximately thirty bees from each of your hives, (no fewer than thirty). The bees should be dead - achieved by leaving them in the freezer overnight - and be careful to ensure your sample does not include your queen !!

An article about making a simple bee sampling kit, plus advice about where from, and how to sample your bees was included in the March edition of [BeeNews](#).

Significant research has been undertaken into bee sampling for various requirements, and into diseases such as Nosema. For those who wish to read more definitive details about the latest research please [click here](#) to access detailed articles in the International Bee Research Association's (IBRA) extensive library, and download articles such as 'Standard methods for Nosema research'.

Please Leave a Comment

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May 2014

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Please send your questions and queries to the editors and we will seek out an answer or explanation to publish in a future issue.

Question - What is a Shook Swarm ?

Firstly the 'Shook Swarm' is not a recommended method to manage swarming. (Although it does actually produce an 'artificial swarm', and shaking bees on to fresh foundation was historically used as a method of swarm control.)

It is a manipulation used similarly to the 'Bailey Frame Change', which was featured in last months [BeeNews](#), to replace old or diseased comb. The major difference is that it is used to replace all the brood frames in a single operation.

Consequently it is a 'more cleansing' operation, and is recommended by many beekeepers whose experience suggests that it subsequently produces a stronger and healthier colony.

It is a useful manipulation where the colony is heavily infected with varroa, and has become an accepted effective method of treating a colony infected with EFB.

The technique is however, not suitable for smaller colonies, and is best undertaken between April and the end of July. Undertaking the manipulation any later than July has resulted in some colony failures.

Also called the 'Shakedown Method', which is an apt description of the manipulation. It is easy to undertake, requiring the following steps.

1. Move the hive to be 'shaken' to the side of its current position.
2. Replace a clean floor in the original position.
3. Place a queen excluder on this floor and under a clean brood box full of fresh frames and foundation. (Note this queen excluder will act as an 'includer').
4. Temporarily remove some of the frames from the centre of the brood box to create sufficient space into which to shake your bees.
5. Open the original hive, and if possible find the queen. Cage her temporarily or place

her carefully between the frames in the new brood box.



6. Remove each frame from the old hive and shake the adhering bees, preferably diagonally across the new brood box. If you have not previously found the queen and put her safely aside great care needs to be taken to avoid harming her, particularly if you use the alternative method of jolting the frames whilst holding them in between the frames in the new box. Shake all frames.
7. Replace the new frames carefully in the centre of the new brood box.
8. Release the queen into the new brood chamber if you have her in a cage.
9. Place a crown board over the brood box, or another queen excluder if you are replacing any supers.

Unless there is a strong nectar flow feed with heavy sugar syrup.

10. After about a week, when brood should be present, remove the queen excluder from under the brood box.

Graham Pooley

For more details [click here](#) to see the National Bee Unit Fact sheet 16 on the Shook Swarm.

More NBU information in 'Best Practice Guides' on our website's Knowledge Base, [click here](#)

Please Leave a Comment

[Click to comment on this item...](#)



All New Items on the Members Website

The Members website is regularly updated and added too. If you have not visited the site and browsed since the last **BeeNews** was published, these are some items that may be new to you.

Catch-up now ... **click on the items to view in full.**

May in your Apiary



May is usually the month in the beekeeping year when activity accelerates very quickly.

If you are not well prepared, you will be caught out!

The rape crop in some areas started in the first half of April. Horse Chestnut and May Blossom started emerging in the 3rd week of April ...

Taster Day - Spread the word



Our own experienced beekeepers will be aiming to provide members of the public with a great taste of what is involved in being a beekeeper during Saturday 21st June.

Commencing at 10.00am and going through to 4:00 pm, the event will be held at Mickleham Village Hall and our training apiary in Mickleham.

Basic Assessment Study Notes ...



The set of Basic Assessment Study Notes that accompany the Beginners and Basic training hives at Henfold Copse, are now also available as a single PDF file to download for viewing and/or printing from this website.

The document and related information can be found under the EDUCATION menu tab ...

Henfold ready for Summer Season



Saturday 15th March started dry but with a rather cloudy sky! By 9:30 am, half an hour before the appointed hour for the start of the Tidy Up Day, about 10 members had already arrived eager to get going.

By 10:00 o'clock there were 34 members and by 10:30 am there were 45 members all busy ...

Competition Frame for 2014 Show



Each year in October RBKA holds a Honey Show. This has various classes in which people can exhibit their honey, candles and other products of the hive.

One of the classes is for a Competition Frame and you need to be thinking about this NOW.

May Tips Checklist



Unlike last year the initial warm weather this year has seen an early start to the season, with a rapid build up by many colonies, and some very early swarms.

So now is the time to ensure you are prepared for all eventualities and the acceleration in the activity of your bees.

Sussex Festival of Beekeeping



The Sussex BKA present the Sussex Festival of Beekeeping 2014, Incorporating the 40th Bee Market at Heathfield Community College, Cade Strett, Old Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8RJ

The Market Opens at 10:30 am. Auctions commence at 1:30 pm, after ...

London Honey Show 2014



The date for the London Honey Show has been announced as Monday, 6th October 2014, from 6-9 pm at the Lancaster London hotel, by show promoters Luxe PR.

The hotel will be organising and hosting this annual event for the fourth consecutive year, with a small £1 entry fee, which will be donated to a bee charity.

Reigate Beekeepers



MEMBERS
website

Go to [FRONT PAGE](#) for HEADLINE NEWS, APIARY TASKS, FEATURED ANNOUNCEMENTS and NEXT BIG EVENT items. Visit the [NOTICE BOARD](#) for all the latest general information and to the [KNOWLEDGE BASE](#) for beekeeping skills information. To see [Who's Who](#), look under the [MEMBERSHIP](#) tab, and [ALL](#) the available [Diary Dates](#) are under the [EVENTS](#) menu tab, plus more !

