

Reigate Beekeepers



BeeNews

February 2018



Photo opportunity of the Month



A Winter Cluster

This thermal image photograph from the BBC shows the honey bees huddled together in a cluster staying warm to make it through the Winter, and clearly generating some heat. At the cluster's centre the temperature is around 95°F (35°C,) and on the edges the bees will be at 48°F (9°C) until they move inward to warm up.

As we know it takes about 20 - 30 lbs of honey for them to survive a typical Winter, and much of this energy is consumed in generating heat by vigorously flexing their muscles. So check your hives for stores and feed at this time year.

Dates for your Diary

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event / Description</i>	<i>Venue / Contact</i>
Feb, Sat 3rd	Last Date for 2018 March BBKA Module Entries Submit pre-paid (or fees with) Application forms.	Deliver or by hand to Celia Perry
Feb, Wed 7th	Winter Season Meeting (19:00 for 19:30 - 21:00) 'Nuc's and their Uses' - talk by David Rudland	Woodhatch Centre. Andrew Buchanan
Feb, Sat 17th	Spring Lunch (12:00 - 15:00) Book by 2nd Feb to enjoy a fine meal in fine company.	Grumpy Mole Brockham Julie Thain
Feb, Sat 25th	Soaps, Lotions & Potions Workshop (timings tba) Demonstration & Workshop by Dr Sara Robb. Booking reqd.	Henfold Pavilion. Susan Tilley/Karen Ford
Mar, Wed 7th	Winter Season Meeting (19:00 for 19:30 - 21:00) Making Hornet Traps' - talk/workshop by Andy Robinson	Woodhatch Centre. Andrew Buchanan
Mar, Sat 10th	CPR Course (09:00 - 13:00) Course by Andrew & Melanie Carne for SBKA First Aiders	Henfold Pavilion. Andrew Buchanan
Mar, Sat 17th	Henfold Tidy-Up & Frame Making (09:00 - 13:00) Volunteer to help with pre-season apiary preparations.	Henfold Pavilion. Simon & Karen Ford
Mar, Sat 24th	Henfold Mentor Briefing Morning (09:00 - 13:00) Training plans and arrangements presented & explained.	Henfold Pavilion. Mike Hill
Mar, Sat 24th	BBKA Module Exams (Candidates advised of timings) Revision over ... sharp pencils now needed.	Venues tba. Celia Perry
Apr, Sat 7th	RBKA Auction of Bees & Beekeeping Eqp. (from 8:30) Sell your surplus and bid for those needed items.	Mickleham Vlg Hall. Vince Gallo
Apr, Sat 7th	Spring Bee Health Clinic (10:00 to 14:00) Be aware, have ALL your colonies checked for Nosema.	Mickleham Vlg Hall. Bob Maurer

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.

Editorial

Fail to Prepare - Prepare to Fail

Given the gloomy weather we and our bees have been experiencing so far this year, we really ought to avoid such gloomy thoughts. However, just consider that by the end of this month, March will be upon us and much activity may be expected (and hoped for) within our hives.

February may therefore provide us with the last opportunities to be preparing our colonies, apiaries, equipment, and ourselves for the beekeeping season ahead. Will you be prepared ?

This month's **BeeNews** includes a number of prompts, activities and advice that will hopefully not fail to help you in your preparations.

Guidance on Brood Disease Inspection is included, courtesy of an article from Farnham BKA. You should also make note that our Spring Adult Bee Health Clinic (to give it its full title) will be held at the same place and day as our Annual Auction of Bees & Beekeeping Equipment ... for which any surplus equipment you may wish to sell needs to be prepared for selling and you need to determine what items you may wish to bid for ... or buy new from Paynes on the same day ... or order from Paynes via our Quartermaster.

Real alchemy, transforming hive products into exotic and everyday preparations of soaps, lotions and potions will be possible this month. All courtesy of the great initiative by **Susan Tilley** and **Karen Ford** in their preparations of a Workshop for you. Book now.

Our final two Winter Meetings will have **David Rudland** this month giving us the lowdown on using Nuc's, whilst in March, **Andy Robinson** will help us to be prepared to defend our bees from the Asian Hornet.

Prepared to increase your number of hives, but have no space ? We direct you to the [Out-Apiary Site Offers](#) page on the Members Website, with three new offers of sites listed.

We are even preparing you to receive invitations to subscribe to and follow our website ... and for early adopters amongst you ... information about Hive Management Software.

Be prepared (without fail) to be amazed by what you can learn, do and achieve this month!

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

Cold and quiet maybe ... but much being and to be done.

Chairman's Chat

January, give or take the odd chilly day or two, has been relatively warm and with the extending daylight hours, Queens may well have been encouraged to start laying eggs.

Now, as we embark upon what is usually the coldest period in the year, it is essential that colonies be checked for stores. If in any doubt, a slab of fondant placed over one of the holes in the Crown Board will help. I tend to err on the pessimistic side and always give some fondant. Also, keep a check on the amount of Varroa dropping from the cluster; it should be very little if any at all. Towards the end of February when checking the take up of the fondant I also add a patty of pollen. This helps the colony expand to a healthy size in readiness to take advantage of early flowering plants.

Apiary activity in January and February may be fairly quiet, but there are RBKA administrative jobs that are being carried out by **Gill Simpson** (our Secretary), by **Mike Hill** and his team (drawing up the Training Curriculum at Henfold Copse), by **Vince Gallo** (looking after our finances and preparing for our Auction on 7th April), by **Sue Hickson** (recording details of our membership), by **Richard Bradfield** and **Graham Pooley** (creating our Newsletter and maintaining our Websites), and last but not least by **Simon & Karen Ford** and the Winter Team who regularly take care of the bees at Henfold Copse.

In addition, some other members have been working to bring enjoyment to our members. **Phil Elwell** has carried out all the electrical installation at Henfold Copse, including completing power and lighting in all the storage containers. **Julie Thain** has organised the Spring Lunch for 17th February, **Janet Kay** has been jarring up RBKA's honey and **Alan Berridge** has been counting up the funds which he and the Pop-Up Stall Team raised through the sale of honey over the Christmas period. Huge thanks to all who have contributed so much commitment and enthusiasm.

Whilst touching on the topic of the Spring Lunch at The Grumpy Mole, Brockham, I understand that there are still a few places available. Julie will be very pleased to hear that you would like to join in what will be a very enjoyable event.

Please [click here](#) to find the Menu and use the Booking Form on the website.

On 7th February at the Monthly Winter Meeting, **David Rudland** will give a talk on 'Uses For A Nucleus Hive'.

On 7th March, our own **Andy Robinson** shows us how to make an Asian Hornet Trap. If you would like to join in the practical element of Andy's talk, (making a trap then and there), let us know at the February meeting, or before, and see the DIY article elsewhere in this **BeeNews** about materials and tools to bring in March.

Now is the time to take stock of your equipment bearing in mind any beekeeping plans you have for 2018. Once again, **Paynes Southdown Bee Farms** have very kindly agreed to offer a special arrangement of 5% discount for any RBKA member who places an order for equipment through RBKA's Quartermaster, i.e. yours truly, during 2018.

Items such as Hive Parts, Tools, Clothing, Fondant/Pollen Patties, Acaricides, Extraction Equipment and Honey Jars will be available. Orders may be made at and collected from Henfold Copse on Wednesday evenings, during April through August between the hours of 7:00pm and 8:00pm together with items available for hire e.g. Extractors.

The latest Paynes Catalogue and Order Forms will be available on the members website and from me very shortly.

Finally, my usual plea at this time of the year. Please respect the signs all those visiting Henfold Copse:

DO NOT DRIVE YOUR VEHICLES ONTO ANY GRASSY AREA

When our parking areas are full, the neighbouring Farmer has given permission to park in the entrance to his farm (next entrance north of Henfold Copse).

**ONLY Park On Hard-Standing Areas.
Do Not Drive or Park on Grass Areas.
Ensure The Entrance Is Not Blocked.**

Andrew Buchanan

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Meet the Committee

Buzziest Interview - this month:

The AGM in November saw the election of a new committee member. Time now for the obligatory deep and probing interview ...

BeeNews: What's happening?

GB: I am starting an on-line course on corrective exercise to be able to safely train people with injuries or who are undergoing rehabilitation from injury.

BeeNews: How long have you been a beekeeper?

GB: I've been beekeeping for five years or so.

BeeNews: How many hives of your own do you manage at present?

GB: I run just over 50 hives at present and these are at 5 locations within 10 miles of Reigate.

BeeNews: What got you interested in beekeeping in the first place?

GB: By nearly hitting my head on a swarm that had landed by my car at the front of my house. Malcolm Broatch was the swarm collector that day - that was the start of a good friendship and interest in bees.

BeeNews: What RBKA roles or activities were you already involved in before being first co-opted and then elected onto the committee?

GB: I was active within the swarm collection team and also responsible for training the experienced members at Henfold on Wednesday nights. I have given a number of lectures to local societies and beekeeping organisations too.

BeeNews: How important do you believe Beekeeping Qualifications to be?

GB: I have invested a deal of time and effort in these and have completed all modular exams and the General husbandry certificate, as well as the microscopy certificate - I believe that I am a much better beekeeper as a result of doing the exams and would encourage others to do them.

BeeNews: Do you have a qualification target, or targets, to which you aspire and over what time scales?

GB: I have entered for the advanced husbandry exam this Summer so, hopefully, that will be the end of it!

Geoff Blay



BeeNews: What do you hope to bring to RBKA?

GB: I am gaining a wide range of up-to-date experience which may well be of use to the club. I also hope to develop the microscopy interest and training at the club during the forthcoming season.

BeeNews: How time consuming do you think your role as a Committee Member could or will become?

GB: It is very seasonal - my role is principally in education which runs in tandem with the beekeeping season, and is much more time consuming than many will realise. I hope I can introduce more out of season training at the pavilion for members.

BeeNews: Do you have a message for the members?

GB: Yes - I hear far too many stories of early season swarming and poorly mated replacement queens so don't leave it too late to inspect and take preventative measures.

BeeNews: Thank you Geoff.

*To read all the previous interviews of committee members, search the **BeeNews Editions** section of the members website Library, or [click this short cut](#).*

Auction - 7th April - Get Ready



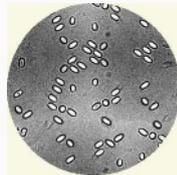
The Annual Reigate Beekeepers Auction of Bees & Beekeeping Equipment event is scheduled for Saturday 7th April 2018.

Held, as usual, at the Mickleham Village Hall and adjacent Mickleham Apiary, the auction provides an opportunity to sell any of your unwanted items of equipment or colonies of bees and/or to bid for items that you need.

Details including T&C's, Sellers Registration forms, posters and flyers are all available **NOW** at <https://reigatebeekeepers.org.uk/> or via the Members Website [click here](#). Some printed forms will be available at Winter Meetings.



Our Spring Adult Bee Health Clinic will also be in operation on the same day. Plan to deliver or bring samples of bees from your hives.



Soaps, Lotions & Potions

A Demonstration of soap making and a Workshop producing moisture cream and lip balm etc will be presented and provided by **Dr Sara Robb** in the **Pavilion at Henfold Copse** during **Sunday 25th February 2018**.

Duration: **2½** hours
 Start time(s) and full details: tbc
 Cost per head: **£17**

Maximum participants per session: **20**
 Subject to demand, two sessions may be arranged for the same day.

Participation requires to be booked and paid for in advance, with places being subject to availability at the time of booking. Full details and on-line booking on the Members Website ([click here](#))



'Nuc's and their Uses'



... a presentation by guest speaker David Rudland at the Woodhatch Centre, Wednesday 7th February 7:00 pm for 7:30 start.

SPRING LUNCH

Saturday 17th February 2018
 12:15 for 1:00 pm
 at
The Grumpy Mole Brockham Green



Join fellow members and friends of RBKA for a great meal together whilst maybe reflecting upon this summer's beekeeping, and even daring to contemplate what 2018 may bring.

If you have not already done so ... late bookings will be accepted up to the 2nd February ... subject to availability.

Menu options are displayed under **Events News** and a Booking Form with menu selection accompanies this edition of **BeeNews**.

All these details are also provided on the Members Website ([click here](#)) from where there is also an On-Line Form. Book and select your menu choices before then making payment direct by Bank Transfer.

Make sure of your seats at the table by making your booking NOW.



Following What's New

by Webmaster Richard B.



SUBSCRIBE!

Since the Members Website was launched five years ago, members have simply been encouraged to be 'Followers' of the site. The web page side

bar provided a button to click and occasionally a suggestion to 'follow' appeared in [BeeNews](#).

However, of RBKA's 200+ members, today less than 45 of you are currently Followers.

We would like that number to change and to change significantly ... with ideally 100% of web-connected members being Followers.

Why?

When there is particularly useful or important news, information or an appeal that needs to be broadcast to all members before the next scheduled edition of [BeeNews](#), your Committee may still wish it to be promptly communicated. At present, that means emailing a message to ALL members that either includes the new information, just posted on the website, or asks recipients to visit the website to view that information. And of course by then, the information may no longer be 'new news' to those members who are Followers.

If ALL web-connected members are Followers, then the information only needs to be published once, in one place - the Members Website.

What?

With the approval of your committee, all members with email addresses who are not already Followers will be now be directly invited to subscribe to the Members Website.

Individual members may still choose to 'Opt-Out', either by not accepting their invitation or unsubscribing at a later date, should they no longer wish to receive the automatic notifications of new news.

How?

Members will receive an email message from the Members Website.

Upon '**Accepting**' the invitation:

- The creation of a Wordpress user name and password will be automatically requested. **BUT ... THIS IS OPTIONAL.**
- **ALTERNATIVELY**, scroll down the message to the **Follow by Email Address** link to register, for which you only need to provide your own (preferred) email address.
- You can then select whether you wish to receive notifications about new posts **Immediately, Daily or Weekly.**

Once registered as a Follower, be assured that 'if it's published on the website, you will get to know about it.

Be aware though that should you decline to Follow the website, you may well miss out on receiving important new information in a timely manner ... unless you regularly visit the site.

Of course, whether or not you subscribe and follow the website, please do also visit on a regular basis anyway; to catch-up with the news, browse some of the extensive reference content, check the Diary for upcoming events, or simply enjoy a jolly good read.

DIY Suggestions & Tips

Hornet Trap Workshop - Planning

The 7th March Winter Meeting will be an opportunity for **Andy Robinson** to describe and demonstrate how to make a simple Asian Hornet Trap. Each member present will also have the opportunity to make one for themselves.

On the day, participating members will each need to bring an empty and clean 2 litre PET bottle and either a pair of scissors or craft knife capable of cutting the plastic bottle.



BeeNews DIY Suggestion

Making your own is fun and saves money

Working in groups of 3 or 4 people, each group will also need a few tools to share between them: a small cordless drill with 8 mm drill bit.
a Soldering iron.
an office Stapler.

Andy will provide everything else.

An indication of how many will want to take part in the construction activity will be assessed at the February Winter Meeting, and volunteers to provide the group tools sought.

How to do a Brood Disease Inspection ?

It is good practice to carry out regular checks for brood diseases, and at the very least once in Spring and again in the Autumn. So now is the time to plan your next brood inspection.

Before undertaking a brood disease inspection, first of all make sure you can identify normal brood, then look carefully for the abnormal within the normal shown below.



Brood Diseases

The two main diseases you are looking for are American Foul Brood (AFB) and European Foul Brood (EFB) which are notifiable by law. EFB is far more prevalent than AFB and if caught early enough, the colony can usually be saved with treatment and advice from the Bee Inspector.

However, there are other less serious brood diseases some of which are more common such as Chalk Brood, Sacbrood, Bald Brood, Chilled Brood and Varroosis caused by mites.

Excellent descriptions and illustrations of all these can be found in the newly revised 2017 version of 'Foulbrood Disease of Honey Bees and Other Common Brood Disorders' which you can get a copy of, or view on BeeBase at www.nationalbeeunit.com

The objective of this article is to explain the organisation and process for carrying out a disease inspection on a double National Brood Box with supers in place.

Equipment Needed

Full personal beekeeping protection, smoker, hive tool, tweezers, match sticks, torch, nuc or empty brood box to provide an 'inspection box' with lid, bucket of washing soda, spare roof, and to prevent robbing a spare crown board.

Steps to Follow

Step (1) - Smoke the colony and while you wait sort out your equipment and set up a safe working area around the hive, so you are not stepping over other equipment.

Place the 'inspection box' to one side of the hive with the spare roof next to it. Remove the hive roof and place on the ground on the other side of the 'inspection box'.

Step (2) - Leaving the crown board in place, remove any supers and to ensure hygiene, place them on the spare roof so they are not directly on the ground. (These do not need inspecting.)

Step (3) - Next, leaving the queen excluder in place, split the brood boxes and place the top brood box on to the upturned hive roof, then cover with the spare crown board to prevent robbing.

Step (4) - Now turn your attention to the bottom brood box. Gently smoke the frame lugs if needed and remove the dummy board plus 2-3 frames of stores into the inspection box, after quickly checking whether the queen is on them. (These frames do not need inspecting.) This will create a space for you to work in.

Step (5) - Move any further frames of stores to the back of the box until you get to the first brood frame.

Step (6) - Lift out the first brood frame, checking the dark side, furthest away from you first, then the near side to ensure the queen is not on it. If she is, either cage her or put this frame into the inspection box and replace the lid. If the queen is not there, lower the frame into the middle of the gap and with your fingers underneath the lugs, shake downwards sharply 2 or 3 times to dislodge the bees into the bottom, without banging the box.

Now the frame is clear of bees, you will be able to examine the brood systematically and thoroughly. You will need to repeat this procedure with each brood frame in turn.

Step (7) - First check whether you are seeing a normal brood pattern, with regular areas of dry digestive biscuit coloured, slightly domed worker brood and any larger drone brood

towards the bottom. Larvae should be C-shaped, pearly-white, with clearly segmented bodies, lying flat within their cells, radiating out from the larger to the smallest day old larvae.

Outside these, regular patches of single eggs, shaped like minute grains of rice should be laid in the bottom of each cell. If you regularly change out old comb, these should be easy to spot. Hopefully, the queen has prolifically laid wall-to-wall brood with very few empty cells. An old or failing queen may have a more haphazard pattern but the individual larvae and cell cappings should still be normal.



Step (8) - Now start looking for the abnormal – it doesn't matter whether you look at the sealed brood first or the larvae, but keep to a system.

- For sealed brood first look for sunken, moist, greasy looking cappings that could be a sign of the spore forming bacteria AFB. Small irregular perforations in cappings can be a sign of AFB, but could also indicate Sacbrood or Chalk Brood.
- A fairly reliable test for AFB is to insert the end of a match stick into the cell and probe the contents before slowly withdrawing. If AFB, a rope of between 10 - 30 mm will form between the cell and matchstick. Dispose of the matchstick in the smoker.
- Also angle the frame so the light comes over your shoulder and down into each cell, allowing you to scan the bottom of the open cells for hard, dark scales, that can't be removed. Use a torch if the light isn't good.
- Search the frame for any larvae that are discoloured, lacking segmentation and lying twisted in the cell. This could be caused by the bacteria EFB.
- Use your tweezers to pull out the suspect larva and place it on the side of the frame to examine closely. If the tip of the larva is pointed upwards in the cell, like a Chinese Slipper and it comes out in a fluid filled sack - the cause will be the virus Sacbrood.

- Very liquid, or rotting pupal remains in cells, similar to EFB can be the result of varroa infestation. Hard white, grey or black pellets in cells, that can be removed, are an indication of Chalk Brood. Uncapped cells with normal pupae inside, often in a line, is the sign of Bald Brood, frequently caused by wax moth infestation.
- Any larvae removed by tweezers should be disposed of in the nozzle of the smoker and wash tweezers, hive tool and hands as necessary.

Step (9) - Once all the frames in the bottom brood box have been examined as above, reassemble the box, smoke the top bars to send the bees down and also smoke under the bottom of the top box to drive the bees up a little to avoid crushing bees as you replace the top brood on the hive. Squashed bees are another source of disease, not to mention angry sisters with stings ready!

Step (10) - Remove the spare crown board and queen excluder, checking the underside for the queen, then place in front of the hive so the bees can climb up to the entrance. After removing the dummy board and some frames of stores to create space, proceed to examine all the brood in the top box, remembering to check for the queen before shaking the bees off and use the smoker to calm the bees if they get agitated.

When to Seek Expert Advice

If at any stage you suspect you may have Foul Brood, close up the hive immediately, reduce the entrance right down to prevent robbing, scorch or sterilise all equipment used. Then place a voluntary standstill on your apiary (no bees, equipment or bee products can be removed until given the 'all clear').

Contact Regional Bee Inspector - Sandra Gray
sandra.gray@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 01787 211 531 / Mobile: 07775 119 430

Hopefully you will not find anything serious and you can close up the hive and sterilise all equipment used and proceed as normal.

Remember

Robbing, drifting and swarming can all be the cause of disease transfer, however the biggest cause of all is poor husbandry practices by beekeepers.

courtesy of Lynn Cox, Farnham BKA

February Forage

The weather may be wet and variable, but there is plenty of forage now available to our bees. And if we have no frosts many plants will burst into flower this month.

Trees

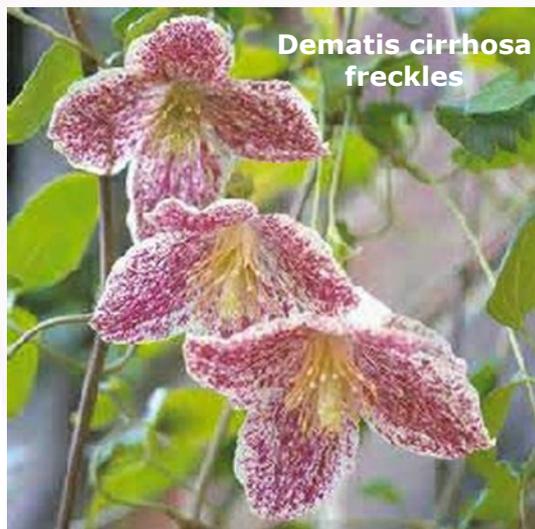
- *Corylus avellana* (hazel) - the catkins provide plenty of pollen
- *Cornus mas*



- Magnolia - the early varieties are coming into bud, if not hit by frost
- Salix (willow) - many varieties come into flower in February

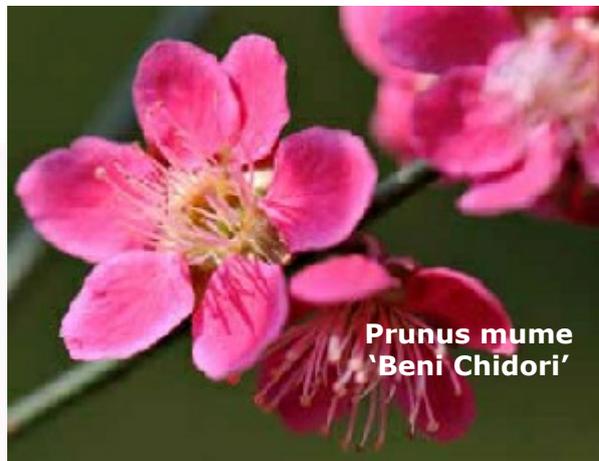
Shrubs and Climbers

- *Chimonanthus praecox* (wintersweet)
- *Clematis cirrhosa* and other varieties, usually evergreen
- *Daphne mezereum* - very sweetly scented



- Hamamelis (witch hazel) many varieties and colours with a strong scent
- *Edgeworthia chrysantha*

- *Lonicera honeysuckle* *L. fragrantissima*, *L. purpusii*
- Winter Beauty, and *L. standishii*
- Mahonia - some varieties have been flowering since December, others just coming out
- *Prunus mume* (Beni Chidori) - Japanese flowering apricot



- *Rosemarinus* - rosemary
- *Sarcococca* - Christmas box, several varieties with very strong scent
- *Viburnums* - several varieties in flower

Perennials and Bulbs

- *Anemone blanda*
- Crocuses - hopefully by the end of the month
- Cyclamen
- Daffodils, early varieties at the end of the month if the weather warms up.
- *Erysimum Bowles Mauve* - perennial wallflower
- Heather, winter flowering ericas
- Hellebores, *x hybridus*, *niger*, *argutifolius*, *foetidus*, and *sternii*
- Primroses
- Snowdrops
- *Eranthis hyemalis* - winter aconite
- Vinca - a few plants are continuing to flower.

Wild Flowers

- Gorse, this flowers for most of the year

courtesy of Margaret Lennard, Farnham BKA

Bee Hive Management Software

Modern computer technology has a lot to offer to the beekeeper and can make beekeeping both easier and more interesting.

Not the least is the remote monitoring equipment that we have featured in the February 2105 edition of *BeeNews*, and is the subject of the an article in the February edition of *BeeCraft* which highlights the theft alerts capability of the Arnia equipment.

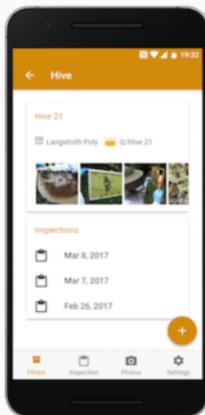
One of the first things that every experienced beekeeper seems to have in common is rigorous record keeping. For some who are blessed with an excellent memory this information can be kept in their head, but for the rest of us written record keeping is a must.

Paper records can be a practical solution, but for those who like more detail and options - and can overcome concern about honey and high tech not mixing - should consider what the PC or mobile phone and Hive Management Software has to offer.

There are many different software applications available, including:-

(1) **Beetight** www.beetight.com/

Beetight is online hive tracking and recording software. It is free to use for the first 6 hives and then costs \$15 per year. It is easy to use, looks nice and even has mobile apps that work on various mobile devices and smart phones, including an iPhone or iPad.



Beetight is useful, allowing you to easily record details of inspections and manipulations; treatments and feeding; honey harvests, including records of nectar sources and batch codes; and track colony temperament.

You can enter in the details of various apiaries (if you have more than one), record the hives in each of these apiaries and then record the details of each inspection on each hive. It all

works well and you are able to download the inspections as a csv file too. This last point is very important when using online recording software as it allows you to keep a copy of your data on your own computer.

Beetight seems to work well and many beekeepers have been impressed with it, but it may be a little too restrictive for some.

(2) **Hive Tracks** www.hivetracks.com/

This has both a freeware version and full version. The focus is on overall colony health, looking at key indicators such as brood pattern, honey stores, etc.

One of the features is the dashboard, which shows at-a-glance tasks coming up, number of inspections, average hive condition and a map of the apiaries. Over time you can also see the strength of the hive change, and relate this to specific events (re-queening, robbing etc).

It also includes a 'Hive Builder' tool that provides you with a graphical representation of each hive at any one time. This shows you the number of supers on the hive, the type of floor it has, roof it has etc. etc.

If you have more than one apiary the map of your apiaries and the foraging range for each is also another nice feature, and helps show where you need to be looking to assess what is flowering and if there is enough food out there for your bees.

Click this link for an interesting video about the software.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=yG2HEpgyBSM

(3) **Hive Keepers** www.hivekeepers.com/

If you like keeping detailed notes, this is the system for you. Everything is customisable, and you can keep notes down to individual frames. If you are a 'details' person then you will love it. It is a beautifully crafted app. There is also a good set of statistics and summary pages.

These apps are all worth a review - also BeeBase has a colony record management tool.