

Beekeepers News

Welcome to the first edition of the newly vamped Beekeepers News!

Every month we will email out a brief newsletter to all our customers. This will include a Thornes monthly news roundup, upcoming events, equipment spotlights and our 'Ask our Expert'.

September Roundup

Like most months here at Thornes September has been busy. Two Branch Sale Days and a Flash Sale have kept our workshops and despatch departments on their toes.

The Windsor Sale Day on 3rd September was well attended and we think everyone managed to pick up a bargain. Bob and Chris answered questions and managed the shop queues and Colin, Anthony, Stuart and Andy marshalled the traffic and customers outside. We packed up just before the rain came down - so all in all a good day!!

Stockbridge Sale Day was the normal relaxed atmosphere and the sun shone (as it always normally does on our Stockbridge Sale Days). Thank you to everyone who bought cakes and had a coffee - we raised £98.25 for Bees for Development. A big thank you to the wonderful ladies who made the delicious cakes too!!

September also saw a Frame Flash Sale, giving our online customers the chance to order second quality frames and have them delivered to their homes. This was very successful and will take some of the pressure off our annual January Sale.

On the 20th September it was confirmed that the Asian Hornet had been sighted in the UK. See www.nationalbeeunit.com for updates.

Upcoming Events

Brood Body and Super Flash Sale Now On! www.thorne.co.uk/flash-sale

Rand Open and Sale Day - Saturday 15th October from 10am. You can pre-order now at <http://www.thorne.co.uk/sale-days>. Our full range of stock will be on display and can also be pre-ordered for collection.

National Honey Show - Thursday 27th - Saturday 29th October now at the new venue of Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AJ. Again you can pre-order items (including sale items) for collection at www.thorne.co.uk or for more information go to <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk>. We are also happy to transport honey and other exhibits to the National Honey Show. If anyone would like to take advantage of this then please wrap and label securely and take to our head office at Rand or the branches at Windsor or Stockbridge by Tuesday 18th October.

Equipment Focus.....

We are constantly updating and reviewing our product range and are always adding new and exciting items. Each month we will focus on one of these new products.

This month's featured item is our new stainless steel Octimel manual extractor.

This robust radial machine will take eight BS Shallow, Langstroth Shallow, Smith Shallow or Commercial Shallow Frames or eight BS Manley or Langstroth Manley Frames.

The legs lift the barrel 205mm from the floor and it includes stainless steel cage, two part plastic lid and a nylon valve. We have a limited quantity available at an introductory price of £295 including VAT.



Ask our Expert

Each month we will try to answer a relevant beekeeping question that has been put to us during the month. If you have any questions that you would like answered or included in next month's newsletter then please email sales@thorne.co.uk.

We were recently asked by a customer

"What are the uses of thymol crystals and will adding thymol to syrup combat varroa?"

Thymol - also known as 2-isopropyl-5-methylphenol, is found and extracted from the common Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*) and various other plants. It is a white crystal with a strong aromatic odour, and strong antiseptic properties. Thymol provides the strong flavour of the herb thyme used in cookery.

Thymol can be added to sugar syrup to stop fermentation by yeasts and moulds. Because it is difficult to get it to dissolve in water, most recipes call for it to be dissolved in methylated spirit or surgical spirit initially. If it taken down and stored, it is going to get spread around the hive and as an antibacterial/microbial (like propolis) it will disrupt the spores of moulds, yeasts and bacteria.

It is not believed that thymol in syrup directly combats varroa, other than as a pungent smell, it may help the bees spot the varroa in the dark, as the varroa will absorb the scent.

Thymol can be used in a thymol frame to upset the Varroa mites breeding cycle. Thymol doesn't kill the Varroa mite, it does however upset its reproductive system, meaning the female mite cannot mate within the sealed cell. Once the bee emerges the thymol stops the varroa re-infesting another cell.

The added benefit of using thymol in the hive is to reduce the spores of chalkbrood present in the hive.

Both of the above uses were developed and used by Rob Manley - honey farmer and developer of the Manley frame.

Both Api Life Var and Apiguard contain Thymol as the major active ingredient.

There was a very interesting talk at the National Honey Show, a couple of years back, called the "ghost in the hive", varroa vanishes into the background by absorbing the smells from around it, and can mimic the smell of any substrate it finds itself on (it can even do this when it is dead! It is a passive attribute).

<https://youtu.be/fE4emUMyOWs>

Pungent treatments and cleaners seem to make the varroa "appear" and may encourage the bees into grooming off the alien substance on their sibling.