



# BEEKEEPERS NEWS

Issue No. 34

July 2019

## June Roundup

Just a quick round up this newsletter. June was filled with many different events from WI visits here at Rand to, of course, the fabulous Bees for Development Garden Party at Marlborough House in London. I have included one photo below of our MD - Paul Smith and another BfD trustee Bob Spencer – meeting the Duchess of Cornwall and showing her the Bees for Development, Silver Medal winning 2018 Chelsea Flower Show Display (designed by Thornes).



Our Windsor Branch has now completed the move across the yard at Oakley Green Farm. The sign is up and the car park complete. Do come down and take a look if you can.



We would also like to thank our customers for their patience during these last few weeks. As you are probably aware, we were inundated with orders and worked seven days a week trying to despatch these just as quickly as possible.

## Equipment Focus

This month we are going to showcase a few new products that are on our website and available to buy.



The first is the Uncapping Slice. This tool is available in two different widths (75 or 130mm) and costs £6.25 for the narrow and £7.25 for the wide. The fork tines pierce the cells and as you pull the slice towards you the wax cappings are removed in one simple motion.

[Buy Now](#)

The Queen Hinge Cage is another type of cage ideally suited to introducing a Queen to your hive. With a hinged door either end and a removable top lid, it makes the queen introduction process even easier. Costs just 75p per cage.

[Buy Now](#)



We are pleased to offer this new style frame grip with wooden handle. Simple and strong – have confidence when removing heavy frames from a hive. £5.00.

[Buy Now](#)



The nifty Scrap Wax Shovel, is designed to scrape top bars etc and remove those valuable pieces of brace comb. Only £3.00.

[Buy Now](#)



Finally the new Bucket Rest, £5.00. The rest sits nicely on our 40kg tank. Simply place a bucket on the rest and watch the honey flow. Tank and bucket are not included.

[Buy Now](#)



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## Beekeeping Blog

June 2019

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Well, June has been a rather wet month to say the least! Chances to go out beekeeping have been limited to just a few sunny days, and the sunny days at the end of the month were perhaps just a bit too hot to put a beesuit on!



This photo was taken one day when we went to inspect the bees...as you can see, not ideal weather for beekeeping! June is always an odd month however, with the typical 'June Gap' coming into play and we have experienced this here at Rand - lots of brood and bees but not a lot going on in the way of stores. This photo shows the underside of the top brood box of a double brooded colony – there are plenty of bees at this time of year. Starvation alerts have been sent out reminding people to feed their bees if necessary. At this time of year with the colony potentially at its largest in size, it has more mouths to feed than at any other time and with a lack of forage, the bees can easily starve. This can be made worse by taking off spring honey and not providing bees with an alternative food source so be sure to keep an eye on stores. Our bees here are doing well, with newly mated queens



in all the hives. As last month's issue explained, we used the Quintrex cages to introduce newly reared queens to our colonies this year and it has been very successful. The emerging bees within the cage have accepted the queens as their own and the queens have mostly gone on to be good layers. One or two new queens have come out drone layers but that is not really a surprise as we got a lot of heavy rain here around about the time the reared queens needed to be out mating, so perhaps some did not get mated properly when they went out. Drone layers will only ever be drone layers so as soon as these are identified, they need to be changed for a good laying queen.



Swarms are getting fewer and further between...thankfully. This year has been a very swarmy year! Despite our best efforts, some colonies have swarmed this month, but luckily not very far away so we have managed to catch the majority and re-home them. This photo was taken as we hived a swarm one warm day early in June. If you look closely you can see the lugs of a dummy board poking out at the side – this is just what we had at hand to create a runway into the hive for the bees to walk up. As we move into July, we are really hoping for no more swarms! Everything has been reduced down as nucs have been taken off or artificial swarms have taken place. The frames which have been taken out have been replaced with nice, new foundation so hopefully this will give the bees the room to expand, reduce their impulse to swarm and mean they are on clean combs for next year.

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## Disease Focus

### American Foulbrood

American Foulbrood is a notifiable disease caused by the spore forming bacterium *Paenibacillus larvae*. Despite its name, AFB can be found in the UK and is a serious disease of honey bee larvae. AFB can infect the strongest to the weakest colony in an apiary.

#### Causes

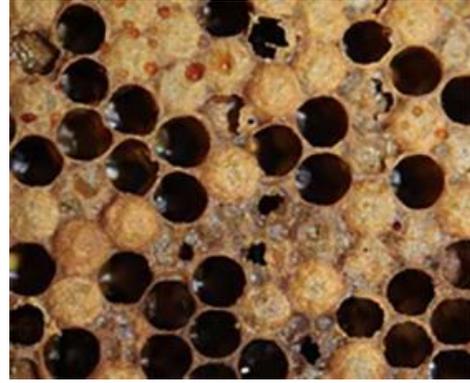
Larvae become infected when they consume food contaminated with *P. larvae* spores. The spores then germinate in the gut and move from there into the larval tissues, where they multiply enormously. Infected larvae normally die after the cell is sealed and millions of infective spores form in the larval remains. *P. larvae* spores remain viable for many years and are very resistant to extremes of hot and cold and to many disinfectants.

#### Symptoms

First signs may be an irregular, patchy brood pattern with dark, sunken and greasy cell cappings. The cappings may also be perforated due to workers trying to remove the dead contents. There may be a sulphurous smell to the colony. Larvae generally die after the cell is capped and change from a pearly white colour to a dark brown, semi-liquid mass. A 'ropiness test' can be carried out at this stage. As the larvae dry out, they turn black and become a tough but brittle scale that is hard to remove from the cell. In older larvae, the tongue may stick to the top of the cell wall.



*Pupal tongue stuck to the cell wall*



*Irregular brood pattern with sunken, greasy and perforated cappings*

## Spread

AFB can be spread by transferring combs, honey or hive equipment from infected colonies to healthy colonies. Migratory beekeeping i.e. moving healthy colonies into close proximity of infected apiaries can spread disease, as can the purchase of infected bees.

However, bees can also spread spores themselves. Robbing bees can infect a healthy colony if they visit an infected hive. Swarms from infected colonies may carry infection with them and become diseased after they are hived.

## Diagnosis

The 'ropiness test' is a good indicator that a colony has AFB. However, if you suspect your hive or hives have AFB, contact your local bee inspector. Occasionally, sample brood combs are sent to the NBU laboratory where larval gut contents are examined for the presence of the bacterium.



*'Ropiness test'*

## Control

To try and avoid getting AFB, the beekeeper should inspect colonies specifically for disease and keep equipment separate for each hive to minimise the risk of cross contamination. The spores of AFB are capable of surviving for more than 50 years and are resistant to extreme temperatures meaning freezing or heating infected material will not disinfect it.

American Foulbrood is therefore a notifiable disease that legally requires beekeepers to inform the National Bee Unit if they suspect their colonies to be infected. After a confirmed case of AFB, infected colonies are destroyed by burning under the supervision of a Bee Inspector. The bees are killed and then together with the combs, are burned in a deep pit. Hives and appliances are sterilised by scorching. Gloves, overalls, footwear and smokers are washed thoroughly in washing soda or hot soapy water. Here is a link to the National Bee Unit Bee Inspector contacts page

## Bees for Development Update

### Bee Garden Party

What a wonderful evening the 2019 Garden Party was. The weather certainly did not put off any of the eager ticket holders. Her Royal Highness, the Duchess of Cornwall joined the Bee Party and was fascinated by the skep making and the recreated Chelsea 2018-winning Pollination display. The Party was hosted by BfD Patrons Martha Kearney and Bill Turnbull, and the several hundred visitors were entertained by Mary Berry and many other well-known bee enthusiasts, who enjoyed Champagne from Fortnum & Mason and English Tregothnan Estate tea. Over one hundred bee themed artworks by famous artists and celebrities were sold in the auction.



It was a busy night with much effort put in by the staff and volunteers at Bees for Development, however it was all worth it – the event raised over £60,000 for Bees for Development’s great work! Thank you to all our amazing sponsors, volunteers and of course the BfD supporters who came to the party!



Beekeeping to empower people with disabilities in Uganda

## National Honey Show News

Our lectures are in large lecture theatres, and all who have paid either admission via membership or day visitor are welcome to attend on a first come, first served basis. Of course many of our main lectures are filmed so there’s an opportunity to catch up early in the new year if you miss one, or have a timetable clash.

Our workshops are much smaller hands-on, instructive, demonstration or seminar styled sessions, each open to about 20 of our members and day visitors. They are very popular so must be pre-booked, and booking opens on line on 1st September.

Planned for this year, as well as our usual skep making, pampering potions, microscopy etc workshops, are sustainable planting for honey bees, identifying pollen from honey, honey tasting, making beeswax wraps, and new for this year, mixed media bee art.

The full list is now available on the website

[Book now](#)

Do read the synopsis carefully to check your chosen workshop is the right one for you, and also for any clashes with other vital events, before booking.

Calling all teachers, associations with educational or school apiaries, those with young, interested members of their families: there are entry classes in the schedule specially for our upcoming generation, also activities for younger people with some throughout the show but particularly on the Saturday. So encourage them to enter, and bring them along to the show. Do ask for our general show leaflets (for your association or if you are attending any shows), and/or the leaflet with info for the younger audience. Email Val at [publicity@honeyshow.co.uk](mailto:publicity@honeyshow.co.uk)

**National Honey Show Thursday 24th to Saturday 26th October 2019 at Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher, Surrey KT10 9RT.**

Bees for Development are launching an important new project in Uganda - where people with disabilities suffer disproportionately from extreme poverty. With funding from The National Lottery Community Fund, Bees for Development will work with The Uganda Apiculture National Development Organisation, TUNADO, to help people with hearing and visual impairments to begin beekeeping. Lessons learned throughout this two-year project will enable TUNADO and Bees for Development to reach more people who are disabled and marginalised.

## Courses and Safaris

Bees for Development still have plenty of beekeeping and skep making courses ahead this year. The Bee Safari to Ethiopia this autumn is sold out, however there are still spaces for the trip to Trinidad and Tobago in February 2020.



[See our courses and events](#)



[Visit www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk)

## Upcoming Events

- **Newburgh Sale Day** – Friday 9th and Saturday 10th August
- **Windsor Sale Day (date now confirmed)** – 12th June
- **Stockbridge Sale Day** – Saturday 21st September
- **Devon Sale Day** – Saturday 28th September
- **Rand Open and Sale Day** – Saturday 12th October

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