

# Bee Matters - Bees Matter!

FBA and DWFBA newsletter May 2011

Pressures of bees, beginners' classes, garden, family and visitors mean this will be a very short newsletter. Apologies. Janice

**Winter talks** and the **indoor beginner classes** are now at an end. Disregard the (Saturday) 14 May talk listed in the SBA calendar – it was Thursday 14 April!

**The hands-on apiary visits** for the beginners are now well underway, under very varied weather conditions: Enid at St Andrews Botanic Gardens on 23 April worked under several umbrellas, but successfully transferred one colony from Wormit to Smith hives, sawing off the ends of each lug to fit, whereas Newton Bank and Turnhouse had wonderful warm, windless conditions.

There are spaces on several of the coming dates  
Lethangie on 15 May,  
Grange Rd on 15 May,  
Lethangie on 28 May,  
Muirside on 29 May and  
Muirside on 12 June.  
E-mail [jcfurness@dirdale.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:jcfurness@dirdale.fsnet.co.uk) if you want your name added.

## **Ninewells Research.**

You will probably have read in the *Courier* that Chris Connolly's hives were all stolen from the grounds of Ninewells Hospital last Sunday morning. Two men in a white van were seen at the hives. **Anyone being offered bees for sale should report it at once!!** This theft must have been perpetrated by a beekeeper, which I find a sickening thought, especially as most must know that these bees were an integral part of research into the possible effects of miticide and pesticide exposure, research which could help towards stopping the decline in honeybee numbers.

## **Swarms.**

Anyone not giving their bees enough space when first inspecting in March or April, especially if there was plenty of forage around, will by now have had, or be about to have, swarms! A super at the last minute will not

change their minds once they are set on it. It was sad to hear that one couple of last year's beginners' bees, which had come through the winter very well indeed, were so cramped and so strong that they had swarmed at the start of May and put the couple off beekeeping entirely.

Also, once into late April / May weekly inspections are vital. One of my colonies, not examined for 12 days because of family visits then the car being in the garage for two days, then a weekend of torrential rain, had a small cluster with the clipped queen clinging to the stand when I finally got there on Monday morning! It is known as 'Sod's Law' – if you ever miss an inspection, that's when they'll decide to swarm. Thank goodness she was clipped. I could see the bees dancing on the little cluster, but there was no way the queen could have flown with them, and perhaps the cluster was so small because the others had already realised that and gone back to the hive. I split the colony into three, one with the queen, her cluster and quite a few extra bees from the same hive added to them, one with an open queen cell and one with a sealed queen cell.

## **Nucs (Nucleus colonies – NOT bombs!)**

Tom Scott, DWF Secretary, is compiling a list of those beginners and not-so-new-beekeepers wanting a nuc this season. Please contact him if you wish your name added to the list. The cost for a 5-frame nuc with a new marked and clipped queen will be £100, (£75 to the vendor and £25 to the relevant association). We will do our best to supply everyone, but can make no promises, so get on the list early!

[dwf@fifebeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:dwf@fifebeekeepers.co.uk)

## **Annual BBQ.** – 2.00pm.

Members are reminded that the annual 'Barbie' is scheduled for Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> Junw at Milton House, Scotlandwell.

Bring friends (possible new members?) and partners plus suitable items for the BBQ.

**Programme of Events.** Please check the web site regularly – don't rely on memory.

We might forget to remind you!