

Hi All Members

News

Welcome to new members Maggie and Dougie.

On Saturday 29th April, 10 members took advantage of the first apiary visit of the year, which was kindly hosted by John Rennie. The main theme was building up colonies for the season and for queen rearing. A couple of newbies had their first experience of “getting in to bees” – we all remember that day!

Thanks to John, along with Kathleen and Alex, for organising the visit

Bee jobs this month

Weekly inspections should now be a routine. What will you be looking for?

FEDSS

F – Food

E – Eggs

D – Disease. On a good day do an in depth inspection and concentrate on this one - do the bees look healthy? does the brood look healthy? Plenty information on Bee Base to help with this. Remember you have a legal responsibility to report to the Bee Inspectors if you SUSPECT you have AFB or EFB. If in doubt phone your bee buddy/another beekeeper.

S – Space – does the queen have space to lay and is there room for nectar to be stored? Add supers above the queen excluder as required. This is also a great time to have comb drawn on both fresh brood frames and supers (especially unwired, thin foundation for cut comb honey) – this happens when there are nurse bees and a nectar flow.

S – Swarming – this is the biggy in May and June and the reason weekly inspections are so important. A queen cell is sealed on Day 8 – that is the trigger for the old queen to head off with half your bees, each with a bellyful of honey!

Try to prevent swarming if you can by giving the bees space and/or splitting the hives once drones are about.

If that doesn't work and you see queen cells – action is required asap – don't put it off! Have a look at your books and decide what method of swarm control you will use.

If the bees swarm they will likely cluster in a bush or a tree close to the hive - have your swarm collecting equipment ready as they may not hang about for long

We will cover several methods of swarm prevention and control at the Swarming workshop on 13th May, as well as bait hives and collecting swarms.

If you can't manage along, refresh your memory by reading your favourite bee book – I still refer to my notes at swarming time and try to keep a step ahead of the bees!

One of the biggest issues over the next couple of months is having enough equipment. Your colony numbers will increase by whatever method of swarm prevention/control you use and you may pick up a swarm. Do you have hives to accommodate them? Do you have an out apiary where you can take a swarm until you are sure they are healthy?

If you have unmarked queens, this is a good time to get them marked. You'll likely need to find the queen at some stage and you'll be glad if she is marked!

If in doubt – ask your bee buddy or another beekeeper.

Committee activity

The committee met in April.

We discussed new Glenrazie trophy, Wigtown Show stand, summer workshops + apiary visits.

Following an EGM held 29th April the committee is now complete

Chair + Secretary – Linda Robertson

Treasurer – Heidi Hunt

Committee members – Gary Playfoot. Graham Brown, Richard Atkins, Heather Reid and John Rennie

Meetings over the summer

13th May – Swarming workshop, Glen of Luce hall – kicking off at 10am

May – tba – please let me know if you would like to host this visit at the end of May

June – apiary visit at Heidi and Phil's at Drummore – details to follow

July) apiary visit at Fiona's either July or August – details to follow

August) possible visit to an apiary outwith our area the month we're not at Fiona's – I'll see what I can organise

Pests and Diseases workshop – to be fitted in somewhere

Queen rearing group is now set up – John will be running this group and will keep in touch with the queen rearers

Happy Beekeeping!

Linda
Chair