



NEWSLETTER – June 2015

Next Meeting BBQ Townhead Farm Sunday the 30th August, approx.1200, details next month

Joining the SBA

A few weeks ago at Graeme Sharpe's talk to the association a member said that his main problem was obtaining drawn comb for swarm control and what could he do about it. More recently a new beekeeper asked me about the different types of hive tool to which I gave a rather inadequate reply. This month's edition of the vastly improved Scottish Beekeeper has a clear and well illustrated explanation by Margaret Thomas on how comb can be drawn on a single brood chamber (used by most new beekeepers) as well as an instructive article by Alan Riach on both the use of and differences between the conventional, J type and combi hive tools. Membership of the Scottish Beekeepers Association gives the vital insurance cover that all beekeepers should have but it now also provides an interesting and useful magazine. Further our subscriptions support a range of training, publicising, lobbying and other initiatives on behalf of beekeepers in Scotland and I would urge that all members of HDBA join the SBA if they have not already done so. (Easy to get an application form at scottishbeekeepers.org.uk. -Alastair)

June gap?

At this time of the year the beekeeping advice columns are always warning about the June gap that can bring a dearth of nectar and even lead to starvation. It has been such a strange season that it is difficult to know where we and the bees are (some colonies forward, some back, some with heavy supers some not, some swarmed but are they mated?). The bottom line, irrespective of the month, is that bees are much happier if, like Pooh, they have plenty of honey laid in. The great beekeeper Willie Robson of Chain Bridge Honey Farm always stresses the importance of **Nutrition** (as he writes it in bold in his book "Reflections on Beekeeping"). A colony running on empty is an unhappy and uncertain stock of bees (and will be more difficult to handle as they simply cannot access sufficient honey when they are smoked). So this month's message is that, with the emphasis on inspecting for swarming or signs of new laying, do not overlook the colonies' need for stores, and feed the bees if necessary whatever month it is.

Mike Thornley

Bee Suit for sale. £20. Thornes "Bees on a budget", XL, contact Janet Maccallum 01301702295

