



Southampton & District Beekeepers Association

www.southamptonbeekeepers.co.uk

Things to do and see

Author Andy Willis - June 2008

- June – every thing seems to happen in June in the apiary. Swarming continues, virgin queens emerging and getting mated. Newly mated queens start laying. These unmarked queens require marking with this years colour (Red for 2008) the spring honey crop (if you have been very lucky) can be harvested. Artificial swarms, and nukes/hive divisions can be done, and queen rearing continues.
- The June gap which started in most areas in the middle of May continues until the second or third week in June most years. The heat we had in May has brought some plants forward within the city so the June gap has finished early this year, the main honey flow starting on 7th June in the Sholing area.
- Robinia pseudo acacia (which produces acacia honey) is flowering now, but most trees are not flowering much and are having a rest year, (this is probably due to the poor summer last year).
- The main honey flow usually starts this month. The heavy rains at the end of May will help this as clover and lime both yield best with moist roots.
- Sunny weather will favour blackberry which has already started to flower in some areas.
- If you plan on going to the heather then get your heather permit applications in this month. Contact Jim Stuart (see newsletter, June issue)
- Plants in flower this month that contribute to the main honey flow are:
 - Robinia pseudo acacia (like a white flowered laburnum)
 - Tilia species & hybrids (lime trees) First trees started flowering 7th June
 - White clover
 - Blackberries (Grey pollen)
 - Sweet chestnuts, end of month
 - Privet, bitter tasting honey
 - Cotoneaster late varieties
 - Meadow Sweet (green pollen)
 - Red field poppy (black pollen, no nectar)
- Monitor for Varroa regularly as numbers can increase rapidly from invasion from other hives or drones attracted to your hive if you have a virgin queen. A gap in laying/brood rearing within a colony gives an opportunity to remove Varroa. This is done by moving a frame of open brood from a disease free colony and placing in the brood nest of another one that has mostly hatched brood or only young eggs or best of all, no brood at all. The Varroa will invade the brood on this introduced frame and once sealed are then trapped inside so can be removed and destroyed, sacrificing this one frame will remove up to 90% of the Varroa from a hive.
- If a newly housed swarm contains a high level of Varroa, the first 2 frames of sealed brood should be sacrificed, as this is where most of the Varroa will be.
- Varroa levels to monitor for in June

| Level and Control Required | Average Mite Drop per Day | Proportion of Infested Drone Pupa |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Low No Action | 1 or less | < 1 in 50 |
| Medium Plan Action | Between 2 and 8 | Between 1 in 25 and 1 in 50 |
| High Take Action | More than 8 | More than 1 in 25 |