

FEBRUARY 2023

WDBKA NEWSLETTER



Future newsletter articles would be most welcome, please feel free to send them to Graham at: wgh585@gmail.com



Cherry blossom - 25th February 2023

Committee 2023

Chair - Grahame Pinches
Secretary - Debbie Keighley
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Social Secretary - Sarah Richards
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A reminder to check your hive's food.
Before forage becomes plentiful, bees will continue to use fondant.



January 28th



February 19th



February 25th

How to collect and kill bees for procedures which require numbers of fresh bees from Your Apiary.

by Val Sullivan.

You may have qualms about killing several of your bees intentionally, but this is often required for dissection studies and for assessment of various diseases eg. Nosema (approximately 30 bees sample); Acarine infestation (approximately 20 bees sample).

First put on full bee suit and gloves.

A simple way I have used over previous seasons is close down the hive entrance to a small aperture using a standard entrance block or piece of foam rubber.

Fix a clear plastic food bag over one end of a small cardboard tube (Eg. Toilet roll or kitchen roll inner) with a rubber band. Apply the open end of the tube closely to the restricted hive entrance. Now tap the sides of the hive and bees will come out and up the tube towards the light and into the poly bag. Quickly rattle them in, pull the bag plus the rubber band away from the tube and seal the neck by winding the band around it tightly. Put the bag (with rather cross bees!) into the freezer overnight.

By morning all will be accomplished. Bees can be kept in the freezer for several days, although the fresher the better for most procedures .



ENTRANCE BLOCK / FOAM



CARDBOARD TUBE
POLY BAG AND
RUBBER BAND.

Early season garden flowers for Honey Bees.

by Sarah Richards.

Snowdrops.

When snowdrops are in flower, honeybees will visit them on warm sunny days in search of the yellowish orange pollen.

Snowdrops with single flowers are best as the bees can't access the pollen of double-flowered varieties.



Crocus.

Crocuses flower mainly in March and produce large amounts of bright orange pollen which is very valuable to help colonies start to build up in the early spring.

Heathers.

Winter flowering varieties of garden heathers provide lots of nectar for a wide range of bees, including honey-bees, and are in flower from January onwards.



Hellebores.

Hellebores are hardy perennials which also flower in early spring and provide both nectar and whitish pollen for honeybees. There are a range of different species, in a range of colours from white, green, pink and purple.

The photo shows a *Helleborus orientalis* or lenten rose.