



Whitehaven and District Beekeepers Newsletter Winter 2011/2012

Welcome to the winter newsletter. The format has changed a bit, as I have taken over the job of editor from Val Sullivan. If anyone has any comments, suggestions or articles to contribute to the newsletter, please contact me, Sarah Richards, at hawesfarm@hotmail.co.uk

This has been a busy and exciting year for W&DBKA, with the development of our new Branch Apiary at West Lakes. The official opening ceremony took place in brilliant sunshine on September 28th. Tim Hirst, the CEO of West Lakes Properties cut the ribbon, and was given 2 jars of honey from the apiary.

Whitehaven beekeepers had some success at the Cumbria Honey Show on 12th November, with Val & Richard winning prizes for honey & frames, while Maggie Hopkins retained the Hyde cup for most points in the baking section, winning first prizes for her honey cake and biscuits, and third prize for her fudge

AGM

Our AGM was held on 7th November at Lamplugh Village Hall (now refurbished, warm & comfortable). There was a good turnout, with 18 members attending. The existing committee members all agreed to continue in their posts.

Chairman	Paul Connor
Secretary	Val Sullivan
Treasurer	Richard Robinson
Membership Secretary	Alex Nancollis

Sarah Richards has taken over the role of Social Secretary and newsletter production from Val Sullivan and Dominic Rhodes was elected to the committee. He has an interest in new projects, with a special interest in developing a local Queen rearing programme (see further details below), Microscopy* and Thermal Imaging.

**An article about the successful September Microscopy day will be published in the January edition of Beecraft **

Next year, the AGM will be followed by a pie & peas supper to provide an opportunity for informal discussion. For those who like to get dates into their diaries early, next year's AGM will be on Monday 12th November.

Membership

The Association now has 42 full members, of whom 4 are family members, and 11 associate members. The numbers of new and novice beekeepers in WDBKA has increased significantly over the last 2 years.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions for 2012 **are due by 1st January**. See the enclosed form for details.

Single membership	£25.00
Family membership	£30.00
Associate membership	£5.00

Please return forms and payment to the Membership Secretary

Apiary developments and projects for 2012

- 1. The bee shelter;** The Copeland Fund has provided an additional grant to WDBKA to put up a bee shelter to cover the hives. This will enable apiary meetings to be more independent of wet weather. The aim is for a group of volunteers to build the shelter early in the New Year, while the bees are still quiet. A date for this will be confirmed in early January.
- 2. Apiary visits;** The aim is to run regular Saturday meetings. There will be a 4 weekly programme, with one meeting for Beginners, one for more experienced beekeepers, one for those interested in Queen rearing and one for visits to members' apiaries each month. A programme will be circulated to members in the spring.
- 3. Queen rearing made simple;** With the poor summer weather, a shortage of queens has been a significant problem in 2011. To address this, Dominic will run a local queen-rearing course this year, using Apidea & Keiler nucs and local queens. This course is aimed at all beekeepers, including beginners.
- 4. New website;** Richard Robinson has been busy designing a website for W&DBKA called www.whitehavenbeekeepers.co.uk. The ID for the members' area is member, and the password is WDBKA. The site is still evolving, so please have a look & send any comments and suggestions to Richard at info@whitehavenbeekeepers.co.uk

Other Meetings and Events in 2012

20th January, W&DBK Annual Dinner at Sella Park Hotel

25th February, 2.00 pm at Brackenwray, David Walmsley, the secretary of Furness Beekeepers will give a talk about "What I should look for when I open my hive this Spring". This will be followed by tea

10th and 11th March, Beginners and Improvers Courses to be held at Lamplugh Village Hall with follow up practical sessions at the apiary for members of W&DBK. The Improvers Course will include half a day on Queen rearing.

17th March, Weather permitting, there will be a planting day at the branch apiary. Please bring any bee-friendly plants, especially native ones, to grow in the apiary.

23rd June, BBQ at Brackenwray

Alan Robson noticed a plant in his daughter's garden, which was flowering in September & covered with bees. Some research suggests this is *Actaea simplex* 'Brunette', is a clump-forming perennial which has dark, brownish purple foliage, purple stems and spikes of purple-tinted, off-white flowers. It is happy growing in moist soil in partial shade, which is good news for Cumbrian gardeners & beekeepers. Is anyone growing Actaea already?

