

THE BUZZ

CENTRAL SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

CHARITY 1051548

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Welcome to the June 2022 Edition of The Buzz.

I'm feeling very positive - the UK is abuzz as summer arrives and we are carried along on a wave of nostalgia following the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. Spaces not previously thought of as wildlife hubs are to start buzzing with biodiversity as bus stops across the UK are being turned into Buzz stops with the installation of living green roofs with bee friendly plants, and wildlife corridors are being planted up and down motorway verges from Lands' End to Lossiemouth to create Wildlife Superhighways! To ensure this initiative continues to flourish I encourage you to sign the petition on the Notices page of this newsletter - just 10,000 votes needed to get the Government to respond!

With all the buzz in the air I hope your proactive swarm controls have been successful and your colonies are building towards full strength. Whether you are out collecting swarms, extracting spring honey or watching bees in your garden don't forget to get out your camera and share your photos with everyone on the WhatsApp Group/FB page!

Yolanda Noye



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES – Ben Hewson

As luck would have it, I happen to be writing this article on World Bee Day, the 20th of May. It is celebrated on this day as it was the birth date of Anton Jansa in 1734, Anton is recognised as a pioneer of beekeeping. The purpose of the day is to raise awareness of the importance of bees and pollinators and the threats they face.

I think it is important as an Association to engage with local concerns and authorities to educate, encourage and lend support to initiatives like No Mow May and Friends of Horsham Park. Earlier this year The Friends won a national Bees' Needs Champion Award in recognition of the work they do in creating a planting scheme providing food and homes for pollinators.

<https://www.horsham.gov.uk/climate-and-environment/news/articles/bees-needs-champion-award-given-to-horsham-park>



If you know of any similar schemes that would benefit from a talk or housing a hive or providing expert advice, please let me know.

May has been glorious save for some isolated down pours, the good weather has been a boon for flowers and blossom and now with June on our doorstep we hope this good weather continues and look to see brood chambers filling and the risk of swarming becoming a little less of a worry. We may also see the first honey crop of the year, if you do take some, don't forget the 'June Gap' and be mindful of leaving enough stores.

As a bit of fun, how about a little competition? A small prize for the first beekeeper to send us a picture of themselves with their first jar of honey of this season.

Once again, I wish you all good luck – don't forget the WhatsApp group is a great place if you have any questions or need some reassurance – and happy beekeeping.

All the best



NEWS FROM THE APIARY – Ade Belcham

It's been a hectic start to the season for quite a few of us. The nectar flow seems to have been even more concentrated than usual with some things late and some early. The strong colonies have been fizzing to keep up. Of course, that's got pros and cons. As we've been saying for weeks now, both at the apiary and on the WhatsApp groups – get your swarm management strategy straight (before you open a hive and are faced with a lovely row of swarm cells). While the bees often scoff at our terribly clever suggestions, in the case of swarming it definitely pays to have a plan.

I collected my first swarm in mid-April this year and I know I wasn't first out of the blocks. As I write this, the fizz is slowing at one of my apiary sites but is still going strong at another so it's too soon yet to kick back and watch the honey roll in. Another consequence of the nectar boom is that we may need to watch out for a June gap even if you don't think you normally get one. Nucs and weaker colonies are especially vulnerable.

We've had Scouts visiting the apiary in May (see photos below). Not bees looking for a new home this time. Small, uniformed, human scouts. Pip and I had a very entertaining evening with one group on the 17th May - their enthusiasm and curiosity was infectious. Watching one boy act out his part as an egg laying queen, and another waddle/run carrying two full syrup drums (simulating a bee with a full load of pollen), were two particularly memorable moments! Another troop visited us on the 25th.





As far as the club apiary bees are concerned – Pip, Andy and a collection of helpers have installed a big swarm in the top bar hive, so fingers crossed they like the new accommodation. Nadia finally tracked down a queen that has been giving her the run-around for weeks, and Richard found another example of bees moving eggs across the queen excluder. Richard Markwick's commercial colony has already yielded a full brood box of capped honey. Finally, we've had a bit of a setback on the inspection hive as the cast swarm Simon collected for us failed to mate. All is not lost; however, we're trying again with a queen cell donated from Wisborough Green's queen rearing project (more on that next time).

And there's more Saturday morning entertainment to come see you there.

	10am Discussion Topic (followed by Apiary Jobs)	Led by
11 June	Catching and marking queens including drone practice	Nadia
18 June	Spring Honey Harvest & the June Gap	
25 June	Managing nucleus colonies	Melvyn
2 July	Preparing for the main flow	Melvyn

In the meantime, a few more pictures from recent Saturday morning meetings







TIPS OF THE MONTH – Melvyn Essen

While we are in the swarming season make an extra split to either donate to a Newbee (assuming the bees are healthy & good tempered) or to keep as insurance. I hear so many bad luck stories from members that only overwinter one hive and have a poorly mated queen etc etc. You don't need to deplete your donor hive very much with some TLC, one frame with bees and sealed brood and another frame with stores is enough and of course a sealed queen cell, you need to ensure the flying bees don't return to the original hive. Add another frame of drawn comb making a minimum of three frames if you're using a six frame nuc and use a dummy board to start with so the bees can maintain a decent temperature and don't forget to feed them regularly. DON'T disturb them until you're sure the queen is laying - say 3 weeks - then take out the dummy board or donate the nuc.

If you want to overwinter the nuc make it into a double brood nuc (Paynes) with a brood extension, you can either put this colony into a full-sized hive or use it for splitting in the spring.

Make sure you constantly monitor your bee's health especially for Foul Brood.

Also make sure your bees have enough space to store nectar, three frames of nectar are needed for one frame of honey.

If you have a 2022 laying queen that is laying well and no further queen cells are being produced you don't need to carry out regular inspections, leave them for a while and only inspect to check their health.

Week in Week out!

I'm often asked: *"What does it take to keep bees?"*

Weekly inspections from say, April until you have a new laying queen that the colony is happy with, in my case this year hopefully the end of May, the next inspection pending (that's with help from a friend) I must add.

Last year only one of my five colonies showed any interest in swarming - so when did I stop my weekly inspections? I certainly wasn't going to carry on through the summer, lifting supers on and off so I decided early June when I went for a break.

Some members are unhappy disturbing the bees every week. Well, being on the BBKA swarm list and on the local council swarm collectors list you soon realise why we should do our best to prevent swarming. The number of calls from the public and Housing Associations *"a swarm has entered an air brick"*, *"a swarm has just moved into my chimney"* – what do you say to them?

You can help to keep the impact of your inspections to a minimum, especially when you have your first colony and inspections often take longer than you would like. If you can't see eggs and are trying to look for the queen every time, reading glasses or using a torch may help you see the eggs more easily - then you don't need to look for the queen.

Finding the queen before the colony builds up and marking her helps later in the season. Use cover cloths to keep the warmth in the hive and stop the bees flying around so much.

When inspecting if you do see eggs, check for stores, that any larvae look healthy, and no queen cups are occupied. Finally make sure there is expansion room, then that is enough. Occasionally have a more detailed health check.





HONEYBEE POPULATIONS COULD BE WIPED OUT WORLDWIDE BY WING VIRUS

Thank you to Andy Campbell who found this interesting article by Thomas Hochwarter, Zenger News, published online by Newsweek on 20 05 22.

The global bee population could be endangered by a newly discovered deadly virus, a leading scientist has warned. Professor Dr Robert Paxton from Martin Luther University Halle Wittenberg (MLU) in the German city of Halle, Lower Saxony, warns that the latest variant of the Deformed Wing Virus has the potential to wipe out honeybee populations all over the world.

Paxton heads the university's General Zoology. The renowned expert on honeybee and wild bee diseases warned: "The Deformed Wing Virus is arguably the biggest threat to honeybees right now. Our lab research has shown that the new, highly contagious variant is killing bees faster." The virus variant, which causes serious damage to the insects' wings before killing them eventually, has been detected by an international group of researchers who have been analysing virus variants over the past 20 years.

The new variant of the virus is spread by varroa mites which are widely considered one of the biggest threats to honeybees in the world. These mites invade hives and reproduce by laying eggs on pupa. Paxton warned: "Mites don't just spread viruses. They also eat bee pupa." If not detected and treated early on, the mite population may increase to such an extent that the hive will succumb to the diseases and deformities caused by the mites.

The latest research at the MLU has revealed that the new variant has already replaced its predecessor in Europe - and is quickly spreading in other regions. Scientists at the MLU have examined 3,000 different sets of data to determine which regions are already affected by the new variant. Paxton explained: "Our analysis confirms that the new variant is already the dominating force in Europe. We fear that it's just a matter of time before it will have forced its way all over the world."

The new variant, called DVW-B, was first detected in Europe and Africa in the early years of this millennium. It started spreading in North and South America in 2010. In the year 2015, DVW-B reached Asia. Paxton said the new variant has settled on all continents except Australia. The zoologist explained that the varroa mite's failure to establish itself there to a wider extent could be the reason. The scientist added: "Basic, general hygiene measures for the hive are paramount for beekeepers when it comes to protecting their colonies from the varroa mite."

He underlined: "Bees are the most important creature for mankind and the environment."

Before joining the MLU, Paxton had an assignment as a lecturer and reader in Insect Ecology at Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, between 2003 and 2010. He previously also researched at scientific institutions in Wales, Sweden and Mexico.

Honeybees are social flying insects known for their construction of perennial colonial nests from wax, the large size of their colonies, and surplus production and storage of honey. Only eight surviving species of honeybee are recognised with a total of 43 subspecies. However, honeybees represent just a small fraction of the roughly 20,000 known species of bees.

The best-known honeybee is the western honeybee *Apis Mellifera* which has been domesticated for honey production and crop pollination. The only other domesticated bee is the eastern honeybee *Apis Cerana* which occurs in South Asia.

The varroa mite, excessive usage of insecticides, construction projects and one-crop agriculture are considered the major threats to the existence of honeybees.





EXPONENTIAL INCREASE IN GLOBAL HONEYBEE POPULATIONS AS A DRIVER OF WILD BEE DECLINES

and, to balance the scales - thank you again to Andy Campbell who found this controversial article written by Mark Patterson in 2020, published online by Apiculture on 30 03 20. You may need some time to read through this one!

In March 2020 the Bumblebee Conservation Trust issued a position statement on honeybees and perceived issues around competition and disease transmission to wild bees in the UK context. This is our stance on the subject which we published on LinkedIn in February before the BBCT statement. Mark examines previous research looking at interactions between honeybees and wild bees and provides some evidence-based suggestions on how we can minimise impacts to wild bees.



*Brown banded carder been *Bombus Humilis* (in Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park)*

There have recently been several research papers published highlighting undeniable evidence that the exponential worldwide increases in honeybee hive numbers is having a detrimental effect on wild bees and on plant communities.

Contrary to popular believe honeybees are not threatened anywhere on Earth, they are not in decline and are considered by the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN) as being of 'least concern.' The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystems services (IPBES) reports that globally numbers of managed honeybees are increasing with a current estimate of 81 million managed beehives (<https://ipbes.net>).

Despite high seasonal losses in some regions of the world few areas are experiencing actual declines and globally the picture is one of exponential increases. This increase is being driven by a growing human population, requiring higher agricultural outputs and increased demand for pollination services (Breeze et al 2014).

In the UK hive numbers have recovered quickly following declines at the turn of the 20th century and post-world war eras. The National hive count reported by DEFRA to the EU hive census is around the 247,000 colonies number (National Bee Unit 2019). In the UK urban areas are where the largest increases in hive numbers are being noticed. In Greater London hive numbers have more than tripled in the past decade to around 7000 colonies (DEFRA 2019). Parts of the city now host 40 or more hives per km². The science suggests that landscapes rich in flowers could support 12 colonies per km² (Ratnieks 2014, the biologist) so in parts of London it appears that hive numbers are exceeding the carrying capacity of the landscape by a large magnitude as most of the city has less than 2 ha of good bee foraging habitat per km² (2009 London borough green space survey data held by Green Space Information for Greater London).

Many 'save the bees' messages being circulated by well-meaning but misguided campaigns continue to focus on honeybees which are not in any danger and are not well aimed at the bees really at risk which are wild bees, the bumblebees, and solitary bees. Wild bees have recently been proven to perform the bulk of commercial crop pollination and current best estimates are that overall honeybees are only responsible for 30% of insect dependant crop pollination in the UK. There are also individuals and organisations with financial interests in honeybees who whilst aware of the situation perpetuate honeybees in danger messages and encourage more urban hives for their financial gain.

The decline in wild bees has serious implications for agriculture and ecosystems services.

Previous papers published before 2017 had concluded that evidence for honeybees outcompeting wild bees were inconclusive and showed mixed and highly variable results

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0189268>

Opinions among the scientific community are however now shifting based on new evidence being made available. Two studies published autumn 2019 studying bees in urban Paris and in southern France both reported that wild bee abundance was halved within 600 meter radius of honey bee apiaries and that larger apiaries resulted in a worse effect.

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0222316>

It's worth noting that in the Paris study honeybee apiary and hive density was nowhere near as high as London or cities like Berlin and Brussels which have very high honeybee densities. Studies have shown that wild bees often fair better in urban landscapes where more diverse plant communities which includes exotic plantings can support a wider variety of bees, but bee abundance is ultimately dependent upon floral resources - which can be limited.

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0225852>

The southern France study also demonstrated that the foraging success of wild bees was halved in proximity to honeybee apiaries which lead to a decrease in reproductive success and a gradual decline in species abundance.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-018-27591-y>

A research paper published February 2020 in the royal society has highlighted that the huge increase in honeybees in the Mediterranean basin is reducing wild bee abundance and diversity and is contributing to wild bee declines, exaggerating declines caused by climate change and habitat loss.

<https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rspb.2019.2657>

Several papers published recently have highlighted the role of anthropomorphic honeybee disease, pest and pathogen spread on wild bee populations with some wild bee species being driven to the knife edge of extinction. Imports of honeybee queens and packages from Southern Europe, New Zealand and Argentina continue to grow year on year to meet the increasing demand for bees mostly from new hobbyist beekeepers. In 2019 more than 19,000 queens and 2400 packages of bees were imported to the UK from continental Europe (National bee unit SE region report February 2020). Each year the UK also imports thousands of packages of bumblebees from Turkey and Belgium. Research has shown that as many as 70% of these bumblebee packages harbour 3 or more honeybee pathogens known to be spreading to wild bees (Dave Goulson, Sussex University).

One study reported that instances of honeybee diseases found on flowers was high within several hundred-meter radius of honeybee apiaries and that there was potential for this to be a vector for honeybee virus transmission to wild bees.

A paper by Dave Goulson 2 years ago warned about the increasing instances of honeybee pathogen spread to wild bees and recommended measures across economic regions to prevent further impact on wild pollinators.

<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/webteam/gateway/file.php?name=goulson-hughes-15-review-mitigating-anthropog...>

Finally, several papers published recently have highlighted that honeybees often favour ornamental and non-native species of plant when foraging or favour a small group of native plants over others. Various papers have shown that over time honeybees are affecting landscape level changes in plant diversity to meet their foraging preferences which is affecting the survivability of plants and their co-dependant pollinators.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-41271-5>

In London and other large cities, we are seldom any further than 500 meters from another beekeeper's apiary and in many instances much closer. We all need to be mindful of the impacts our beekeeping has on the wider environment and wild pollinators. High density urban beekeeping is likely having an adverse effect on declining and struggling wild bee populations. Some European cities are now restricting establishment of further urban apiaries to conserve wild bees.

Urban environments are becoming increasingly important for sustaining populations of wild bees which are suffering catastrophic declines in rural areas. For example, in London Borough of Tower Hamlets and LB Newham urban areas are supporting the only inland populations of the black mining bee found in the UK, and many London parks support rare brown banded carder bee and red girdled mining bees - a nationally scarce species. London also hosts several species of bee found nowhere else in the UK including Hoplitis Adjuncta the Vipers Bugloss Mason bee and Hawks Beard Nomad bee.

In short keeping honeybees does not help the environment or improve biodiversity. Suggesting it does so is #BeeWash and counterproductive to conservation efforts.

Should we be keeping bees then?

There are of course plenty of good and justified reasons for urban beekeeping. It's a convenient window into the world of insects and makes a great education tool, can be used as a form of therapy with people suffering mental health complications and learning difficulties and it's also a fun and enjoyable hobby. For many, beekeeping is as much a social activity and an outlet to meet and mingle with likeminded people through a beekeeping club or association.

If businesses such as hotels and restaurants want to have their own in-house honey on their menus, then that's perfectly legitimate too. But businesses going down this line of thinking need to be aware of [the \[YN1\]](#) bee's needs, welfare, and the impact their hives may have on the wider environment. It may be a better option to support a small local producer on the edge of the city where the habitat is better, honey yields are higher and to promote your businesses actions supporting a small artisan producer through sponsored hives. What we do need to curb though is the trend for businesses to plonk bees on city roof tops without giving thought to the wider environmental issues and using a hive as a green tick box exercise claiming they are saving the environment when they are not. Unless your business is involved with structured research with a conservation outcome, investing meaningful sums of money in planting for bees or making efforts to educate and raise awareness among staff, clients and your supply chain then hosting a hive of bees on its own has no positive environmental benefit.

How can you reduce your beekeeping activities impact on wild bees?

1. Plant for pollinators. Bees and flowers go together. Especially helpful is to plant flowers wild bees prefer and not just plants honeybee's favour. This could be flowerpots on your building's windows, a biodiversity green roof if you don't have a ground level garden. Businesses could sponsor planting projects in the public realm where local authority budgets have been cut.
2. Plant for seasonal continuity with a variety of flowers in bloom throughout the year.
3. Include solitary bee nesting habitats in your gardens. These could be dry aggregate soil mounds, nest boxes containing tubes or dead wood habitats. Only honeybees nest inside beehives, wild bees need these other sorts of nest sites to breed and hibernate.
4. Practice exemplary good apiary hygiene which reduces disease risk spread to wild bees. Keep bits of wax, honey and hive products sealed and out of reach of robbing bees. Regularly clean equipment including scorching of hive bodies. Dispose of beekeeping waste efficiently.
5. Keep small apiaries. Saturating urban areas with many hives literally takes food out of the mouths of wild bees.
6. Avoid imported bees which can bring in novel pathogens lethal to our native bees as well as being more productive than locally adapted bees which means they consume more floral resources and are more likely to rob neighbouring colonies or apiaries.



more companies should install a wild bee nest habitat rather than honeybee hives



BEE TALKS FOR SCHOOLS – Piers Pollard



On Thursday 26th May I visited The Gatwick School, Crawley and gave two Bee and Pollination talks to Year 5 children (9–10-year-olds). The talks were received with interest and enthusiasm by the children and staff.

Apart from the normal information and the chance to handle and smell some beekeeping items, such as beeswax and propolis followed by the ‘nectar and pollen’ activity, this talk had an extra dimension! I also covered asexual reproduction, which is a part of The National Curriculum Programme of Study for that age group. Hence, I talked about strawberries and their runners, as well as plants such as spider plants etc., which reproduce with no need for the passing of the male parts of the flower to the female parts.

I also mentioned drone-laying workers, which can be a real problem, with some bad memories for more than a few members of the CSBKA! With the aid of a couple of photos, the children were shown the difference between normal brood and drone brood. Some of the questions, as usual, proved a challenge. One child asked, *“how can beekeepers justify stealing honey from the bees?”* - possibly from a family of vegans!





PHOENIX STROKE CLUB – Yolanda Noye

Phoenix Stroke Club, Horsham

CSBKA were recently contacted by The Phoenix Stroke Club in Horsham to ask if anyone would be interested in visiting them to deliver a presentation on beekeeping.

Elaine Allen and I accepted the invitation and went along on the afternoon of the 24th of May to the Club. Elaine delivered an informative and well-received talk, and I took along a traditional WBC hive enabling the audience to see up close all the components and how one is set up.

A few of the club members asked some very interesting questions and one lady was keen to share her experience of buying honey in Senegal to which Elaine was able to respond with some of her equally “interesting” beekeeping experiences in Ethiopia.

We must have gone down well as they have requested us back!

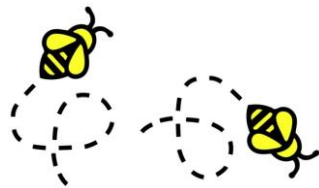




EVENTS

10th to 12th June - South of England Show: Selsfield Road, Ardingly, RH17 6TL - (9am to 6.30pm)

If you are visiting the South of England Show this year, remember to seek out the Bees and Honey Marquee where several of our members are staffing the marquee and helping out. There will be an abundance of stalls selling a wide range of locally produced honey and wax products, crafts, and beekeeping equipment. You'll also be able to sample fresh local honey and watch some amazing live demonstrations.



26th June – Bee Boot Sale: Half Moon Pub, Plumpton, BN7 3AF - (8am to 12pm)

Sellers – the perfect opportunity for you to sell your unwanted beekeeping items free of charge. Please arrive and set up for an 8am opening time. Gates open from 6.30am

Buyers – the perfect opportunity to buy beekeeping equipment from local sellers – come and grab a bargain!
Tea and coffee available from the Half Moon Pub.



24th/25th September - South of England Honey Show: Selsfield Road, Ardingly, RH17 6TL - (9am to 6.30pm)

Previously held in the Bees & Honey Marquee at the South of England Show during June now more conveniently later in the beekeeping year and indoors, the South of England Honey Show is being held as part of the Autumn Show & Horse Trials. Bill Fisher has been secured as judge and for those that do not know, Bill is a leading judge and convenor at the National Honey Show, so this is going to be a great opportunity to get some feedback at regional level before your entries go to the Nationals in October! See flyer attached ...

South of England Honey Show

- A unique opportunity open to Associations, their members and individual beekeepers.
- Competition judged by Bill Fisher.
- Hone exhibit preparation ahead of Local, County or the National Honey Show.

Bees &
Honey
SECTION at the



Previously held in the Bees & Honey marquee at the South of England Show during June ... now more conveniently later in the beekeeping year ... and indoors at the **Autumn Show & International Horse Trials**.

Same location - **SoE Showground, Ardingly, West Sussex, RH17 6TL** - New dates

Cash prizes for each class.

Trophies awarded to the winner of the "Bounty from the Hive" class and for "Most Points in Honey Classes".

NHS BLUE RIBBON AWARD for the Best Exhibit in Show.

Honey Show Schedule & Honey Entry Form

available to download via our link or the **South of England Showground** website from June 2022

Registration of entries accepted up to the 17th September 2022

Get together with your fellow members to register entries on behalf of your Association or Division.

Drop off entries at the Showground during the 23rd September.

Be smart, arrange for one person to deliver and collect entries from your Association.

Supply Honey from yourself or Association to have sold from our popular Sales Stall

Promote your Association or Division by providing flyers or notices about your Membership, Training and Taster Days.

For Enquiries & Info, contact:-

beesandhoneyinfo@gmail.com

Help as a Show Steward

for a day on honey sales & info. stands.

For Enquiries & Info, contact:-

chief.steward@deodar.org.uk

Visit us via this link ...



www.seas.org.uk/info/competing/competing-autumn-show-horse-trials

South of England Agricultural Society,
South of England Showground, Selsfield Rd, Ardingly, West Sussex RH17 6TL
Tel: 01444 892700 Email: info@seas.org.uk Website: www.seas.org.uk

The South of England Agricultural Society is a registered charity no. 227033





NOTICES

Wildflower Verges Petition

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/616394>

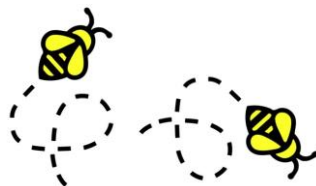
At 10,000 signatures government will respond to this petition. Please do consider adding your signature as there are several advantages in replacing roadside grass with wildflower “meadows”. Wildflower meadows require less mowing, are more attractive and require less use of harmful weedkillers and most importantly provide habitat for wildlife including pollinators.



Location for x1 Hive available in Haywards Heath

The garden is surrounded by trees and backs onto another garden and Clair Park with easy access.

Please contact Marilyn Dalrymple the owner direct at daimaff@yahoo.co.uk if you are interested in this opportunity.



Small nuc colony for sale

Three frames of brood and two frames of stores, queen, and lots of bees!

Please contact Dennis Chow at dennischow@gmail.com or 01293 449565.