

## BCOG Bee Report August 2014

After a succession of positive reports there is now some sad news. The swarm hive has lost all its bees. The hive swarmed in June and I suspect that the virgin queen failed to return from her mating flight. The bees started to decline in number during July and by the end of the month had propolised the mesh floor. This in itself was unusual because this is the source of ventilation and we were experiencing hot weather at the time. I have been unable to find any satisfactory answers to this behaviour.

There is a lot of honey in the combs that I shall crush and strain. It is a simple method of gathering honey you get everything that was in the comb, in your honey. Pollen, propolis, the lot. Which is good for you, in all sorts of ways. You also get honey that is not heated in any way during the process, which means none of the delicate antibiotics and enzymes within the honey are destroyed. It all makes it into the jar.

It is also good in a strong colony to remove some combs each year because the natural comb is then not re-used year after year preventing environmental toxins building up, affecting both the colony, and the honey. I will be clearing out the hive and hope that an early swarm finds it next year. The split I took from the original hive are doing well at Litton Cheney and if they look strong enough I can bring some bees back to populate the empty hive.

I now have a small quantity of wax and will be experimenting cleaning it up and trying to make a few candles.

The original hive is doing extremely well. It is full of bees going about doing the things they know best. It has been cheering watching them flying in and out.