

Springwatch Visit

Toward the end of April I was approached by BBC Bristol asking if they could come along to my apiary and make a short film about my research. The film was to be for the next Springwatch series.

At 8.30am on May 11th 2011, they turned up. I had expected an interviewer and a camera person but I was faced with not two people, but five. There was a cameraman, a sound engineer, a director and a young lady taking notes for subsequent editing and continuity; then there was the interviewer, Chris Packham. Five people in all, I was overwhelmed.

A short discussion ensued to plan the filming which started about half hour later and went on until nearly 6pm. Every shot was rehearsed with the camera man checking for light quality and the sound man for sound quality. The director gave the word and filming started, Chris Packham asked questions and I answered, then "Cut". We stopped while the scene was reset. The camera was re-sited (and light checked). The sound engineer moved his microphone (and did another sound test). Then the same questions asked and the same answers given. This went on all day with each piece being filmed several times from several angles. All this, when edited later, to give the impression that there were lots of cameras making the film.

Chris Packham was quite taken with the amount of work I had put in to my Varroa Hygiene Project and felt I was worthy of being awarded one of his 'Geek' Award Cups which is now on show at my apiary. Quite a lot of the filming took place at the apiary, including pictures of a bird nest in a bait hive which was shown by Chris in a later show. This bait hive was set among all the other hives and a Great Tit decided to make her nest and lay seven eggs in it. She did manage to raise five chicks among the frames in this unusual location.

I was notified by BBC that the article was to be shown on May 11th at 7.30pm. With a certain amount of trepidation I sat myself in front of the TV to see what kind of fool I had made of myself.

When it finally came on I was seen walking across the field near my bees to the tune of the Dam Busters March or similar. The whole day of filming had been compressed into less than five minutes of actual viewing. I must confess to being rather disappointed at that as there was so much more that could have been included. However, I have had many messages from people who say they enjoyed it. If you saw it I hope that you also found it informative and interesting.

Ron Hoskins