



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

MEETING REPORT

AGM

At our November meeting we elected the CBKA committee members for 2013 – several familiar faces, and we are pleased to welcome Maggie MacKenzie and Chris Bailes to join us on the committee. They've both been involved during 2012 in the public shows, and Maggie has led the efforts to make the rooftop apiary on Whitefriars a greener place.

We also recorded our thanks to Deborah Kellond, who as publicity officer has worked closely with the Whitefriars team, and also local newspapers, and is standing down. Also, the committee thanks Stuart Andrews, our Chairman for the last two years, who despite his increasing work/travel commitments has been an enthusiastic

chairman. We will continue to see both Stuart and Deborah at meetings.

We also watched two videos - Mandyam Srinivasan on "[Vision, Robotics and Bees](#)", as well as Jonathan Drori on "[The beautiful tricks of flowers](#)". If you missed these, they are available on

the web, and well worth a watch – just click the links above.

David Cockburn has organized us what should be an enjoyable evening at the Foundry brewery on the 5th December.

We'll meet at 6pm for a tour, followed by a buffet starting at 7pm. If you haven't signed up yet, please do ASAP!

Later in this newsletter you'll see some new sections, in addition to the familiar "Apiary Notes" and "Dates for Diary". We've taken the opportunity to refresh the style of the newsletter, so any feedback you have will be gratefully received by Adrian.

Next Meeting
**CHRISTMAS
SOCIAL**
Wed 5th December
6pm
The Foundry
White Horse Lane,
Canterbury, CT1 2RU
01227 455899

CBKA OFFICERS

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Committee Members

Chris Bristow
Michael Roberts
David Cockburn
Chris Bailes
Maggie McKenzie

The easiest way to contact us is via the website, but you can also e-mail cantbees@gmail.com

Contact Newsletter editor to contribute articles

DECEMBER 2012

A newsletter for friends and members of Canterbury BKA

APIARY NOTES

December

I was on the roof of Whitefriars a week ago and the bees in our two hives were flying freely. The windbreaks are taking a battering and one had blown down. It looks as though we are going to need to link the planting boxes together and secure the posts with a larger fixing perhaps coach bolts.



I have now secured protection against woodpeckers on my own hives. I also usually put insulation over the coverboards – I have tended to use Rockwool. There are two problems we are likely to experience over the winter.

Firstly unless we have fed our bees very well they may run short of stores in the early spring. One insurance to help overcome this is to add fondant either over or under the cover board. Under the coverboard is more accessible for the bees although you may need a small eke to provide space. The disadvantage is that the higher temperature from brood rearing may cause the fondant to slump between the frames as the colony builds up in the spring. If you place on a queen excluder this helps to stop this. Over the coverboard holes is less accessible to the bees but when covered by a clear plastic bag it is easy to see when the bees start taking it so it is easy to top up when needed. Secondly because of the poor mating conditions through most of the year this year's queens may fail in the spring and become drone layers. These colonies can be united with a good colony after killing the failed queen.

Make sure all equipment is cleaned and sterilised where needed and now is a good time to buy cheaper equipment. Maisemore have sale and clearance items available now including clothing. Thornes sale begins 7th January. Julian

DATES FOR DIARY

Wed 5th Dec	Join our Christmas social including family and friends at The Foundry in Canterbury – a brewery tour and buffet included for £10.95/head
6 th February 2013	Indoor meeting, Whitefriars
3 rd February 2013	BBKA Module 1,2,3,6,8 Examinations, applications must be with Angela Merritt
6 th March 2013	Indoor meeting, Whitefriars
23 rd March 2013	BBKA Module 1,2,3,6,8 Examinations
6 th April 2013	Outdoor meeting, Westbere Apiary
12- 14 April 2013	BBKA Spring Convention, Harper Adams University College, Newport. <i>The national beekeepers' event</i>

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Beecraft is available as a download

Our Treasurer, Joan, will be sending in the Return of renewed/new members to KBKA at the beginning of December. The KBKA secretary then has to pass this information to BBKA and Members who have not renewed by then *will be removed* from the BBKA list, with subsequent loss of insurance cover and membership benefits. Please help Joan by sending her your membership renewal form ASAP ([link](#))

The KBKA secretary has informed us that any subscriber of the hard copy version of Beecraft is eligible for access to the digital version at no extra cost. The subscription year for the hard copy version starts in February and the electronic version will be available to them in January. However, if a subscriber is interested they can only apply once a year when they take out the subscription to hardcopy Beecraft. If you want to take advantage of this offer, please contact Joan directly at joan.mcallister@virgin.net before the end of December. If this date is missed, free electronic Beecraft will not be available to you until the following year

HIVE ASSEMBLY

An opportunity for new
beekeepers

David Cockburn has recently taken delivery of some new hive-boxes for our apiaries and Westbere and Whitefriars, thanks to some generous sponsorship from Whitefriars.



If you fancy practicing how to put together broodboxes, supers, floors, roofs or

frames, please get in contact with David. He's based in central Canterbury and can be contacted on 01227 457517 or

dcockburn@eldaka.demon.co.uk

THE BEE-MASTER

On the enemies of
bees

*Snow is very harmful
when it diffolves, for the
Bees, with the Heat, being
invited out of the Hive,
are dazzled and blinded,
flying a while up and
down, being weary, think
to rest themselves on the
Snow, which they no
fooner touch but are killed,
be sure therefore, at such
times, to shut them in.*

*Sharp Frosts, nipping
Blafts, drifting, fleet, cold
Winds, and boisterous in
the Spring are very
prejudicial, for the Bees
coming Home weary and*

*laden, are beaten down
after in Multitudes, and
unless the Sun shine out
presently or the Winds
Calm, never recover the
Hives, take heed of an
Eddy Wind from some
Building, and let them
stand not above a Foot or
little more from the
Ground.*

*If you desire to have
your Bees thrive and
prosper, keep them well
from Winds and Wet, Heat
and Cold, destroy their
Enemies, and let them
enjoy a sufficiency of Food,
gotten by their own
Industry, and if there be a
Want in some, timely
supply them, and doubt*

*not of (by God's Blessing on
your Endeavours) the
Increase and Prosperity of
your Bees.*

*John Gedde Esq in
"The English Apiary: or
the Compleat Bee-Master
unfolding the whole art
and mystery of the
management of bees"*

London 1721

Whilst the language might be different, the essential observations from nearly 300 years ago are still true today – feed your colony well, keep them sheltered from the elements, and the bees should thrive.



Always make sure you have good protective clothing
– like this Brazilian beekeeper's assistant

WEBSITE registration

Whilst updating the website, and having got an up-to-date membership list from our treasurer, Joan, I noticed that a number of members haven't registered on our website yet.

It's easy to do, and gives you the benefits of access to the members forum, where Canterbury beekeepers can discuss all aspects of beekeeping with other members of our association. The newsletters that you receive by email are also available on the website, and during the swarming season, there are pages for those of us who want to go out to collect swarms,

or be recipients of swarms. To make sure it's just CBKA beekeepers that benefit from all of this, we ask that people register first. You don't *need* to register on our website - information about all our meetings is available to allcomers - but you'll miss out on the things above.

A small number of people may have received an email suggesting that they will be deleted from the website database. Don't panic - I'm just trying to flush out where we have differing email information for members. There are also a number of non-members who have asked to subscribe to our forum/newsletter, but unless they join as a friend (for only £6), their access is limited to the general information

about meetings and events. If you haven't tried to login to the members' forum yet, have a go: [click here](#)! Any problems just drop Adrian an email:

cantbees@gmail.com

Registration on our website gives you access to our private on-line discussion forum, to back-issues of newsletters, and to swarm collection & management activities in the spring and summer

FROM THE FORUM

To encourage you to participate in the forum, here's a few active threads that people have been talking about in the last few weeks.

Where to buy fondant has been discussed – a bakery in Folkestone has been identified as being beekeeper-friendly, in case you need to do some winter feeding. Does anyone know

of other sources of fondant that can compete with the price of £13 for 12.5kg? See [Dougals thread](#).

Both Debbee and David have been asking about moving their colonies during winter. Debbee has a long distance to move, whilst David just wants to relocate within a garden apiary. Do you have any experience of moving hives in winter? Share your story [with Debbee](#).

Why not start a thread of your own? What equipment

are you planning to get over the winter? Are you waiting for the Thorne's winter sale, or do you prefer another supplier? How do the local companies and agents compare with on-line purchases? Are you unsure what frame type to purchase? There's lots of people who've struggled with the same problems, who can give you the benefit of their own experience via the forum.

Adrian

NEW BOOK Recommendations

New beekeepers don't suffer from a lack of choice in books they could buy to help them on their first steps in beekeeping. In fact, the problem is probably the "tyranny of choice", as new books seem to come out all the time. Are you a keen reader? Do your family encourage your new hobby with Christmas gifts of books? Why not make a recommendation – positive or not. Many of us have probably got beekeeping books we're unlikely to get off the

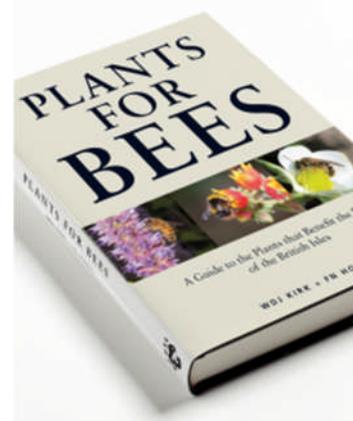


bookshelf anytime soon, so why not save someone else the wasted purchase? I'm keen to hear members' opinions on the new "BBKA Guide to Beekeeping", that has recently been published.

To start things rolling, I can recommend my most recent acquisition "Plants for Bees" by WDJ Kirk & FN Howes, published by IBRA in 2012. This is a beautifully presented guide to bee-friendly plants – although it's main use will be as a reference text for gardeners, it's got four introductory chapters, which cover the challenges for bees, and how choice of plants can help.

The main section of the book is an illustrated alphabetical list of plants for the four categories of bee – honey, solitary, long-tongued bumble, and short-tongued bumble. It's fabulously

illustrated compared to the older texts of Howes (Plants and Beekeeping, 1945) and Hooper and Taylor (The Bee-friendly Garden, 2006).



This is an extremely well presented book, and will give gardeners a welcome hand in selecting plants to benefit bees.

Adrian

BBKA BUSINESS



The British Beekeepers Association

The annual delegates meeting (ADM) of the BBKA happens on 12th January 2013. Much work is undertaken by the BBKA executive committee, although the complexities of running an organisation for over 24,000 beekeepers is often difficult to see.

This [link](#) will give you quick access to the documentation prepared for this meeting where the executive committee are held to account by the county associations. Julian, as our KBKA representative, will have given the Kent

representatives thoughts on where BBKA is doing well, or could improve – the national swarm collection coordination site being a particular hot-topic.

quicklink for [BBKA ADM](#)

NEWSLETTER

General secretary

The GenSec Review is an e-publication from the BBKA Operations Director & General Secretary sent to branches for general circulation. This [link](#) will give you quick access. There's stuff about fundraising,

volunteering, the BBKA office, literature available to members and even some Christmas gift ideas. The BBKA webshop is full of inspiring gift ideas in all price ranges. All profits from product sales come back into the BBKA to help fund our charitable objectives. So, whether you are looking for

Christmas Cards, Stocking Fillers or a primary gift then look no further. And for those who have everything but are fascinated by your hobby and bees, why not buy them an [Adopt a Beehive?](#)

quicklink for [GenSec Reviews](#)

MESSAGES FROM TRADERS

Personal endorsements

We regularly get emails via the website, and directly to the officers informing us of opportunities to spend our money with various suppliers. Generally we like to help, and particularly for Kent-based businesses, we're happy to put their links up on [our website](#), as a service to members. If you'd like to recommend a local bee-based business to our members via this newsletter, please let Adrian know. Of course, if you have a personal interest in the business, it would be appropriate to declare that first.