



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

Although the weather in the last week has been 5-6 °C above average during the day, our colonies should really be almost ready for the winter. Aside from checking that colonies have ~20kg of stores (equivalent to at least a full super plus 4 full National brood frames), make sure the colony is secured against ingress of rain, wind and pests (mice, woodpeckers etc), has reduced entrances, in case of wasp attacks during the autumn, and for hives with more than one box, ensure your queen excluder has been removed.

We move indoors for our meetings, starting with the ever-popular honey tasting and hive products meeting on this coming Wednesday. Please bring your honey, or any honey-based products. Also samples of wax and

any other hive products. Janet and Magdalene are baking, which should be reason enough to come!

October is traditionally the month of honey shows and equipment sales, so check out the dates of both the local show run by Dover and District, as well as the National Honey Show on page 2.

Whatever your trials and tribulations in beekeeping, it's unlikely that you've had to flee your home country and

resettle elsewhere. The "j" newspaper this week [reported](#) the story of Ryad Alsous, former professor of agriculture at Damascus University who lost 200 hives in the violence in Syria, before leaving for the UK. Now in Huddersfield, he is establishing a project to teach beekeeping to other refugees and the long-term unemployed. An inspiring story for us all, which I'm sure will get more publicity soon. Adrian

Apiary Meeting

Honey Tasting

Whitefriars Management Suite

Wednesday 4th October

7.30-9.30pm

Details on p2

CBKA Officers

Chairman: David Cockburn

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Committee Members

Julian Audsley
Simon Daniell
Magdalene Mei Halkes
Maggie McKenzie
Michael Roberts
Jan Soetaert

The easiest way to contact us is via email using the links above, but you can also use the contacts page on the website.

Contact [Newsletter Editor](#) to contribute articles

OCTOBER 2017

DATES FOR DIARY: yearbook at <http://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/calendar/cbka-list/>

Wednesday 4th October	Products of the hive; honey tasting, Whitefriars Management Suite, CT1 2LF 7.30-9.30pm
Monday 9 th October	Closing date for National Honey Show entries
14-15 October	National Apple Festival at Brogdale - meet the public display and honey sales
Saturday 21 st October	DDBKA Honey Show, Shepherdswell Village Hall, 2.30-4pm
Sunday 22 nd October	KBKA autumn lectures, 2-4pm, Lenham Community Centre ME17 2QT
26-28 October	National Honey Show, Sandown Park racecourse, Esher KT10 9AJ
Wednesday 8th November	Indoor meeting, Whitefriars Management Suite, CT1 2LF 7.30-9.30pm
Saturday 11 th November	BBKA examinations day
Saturday 25 th November	BBKA microscopy examinations day
Friday 1st December	Christmas social, St Michael's Hall, Roman Road, Upper Harbledown, CT2 9AT (7-10pm)

You can get our calendar, either as a google calendar (cantbees@gmail.com), or for other programmes using this URL: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/ical/cantbees%40gmail.com/public/basic.ics>

INDOOR MEETING, 4TH OCTOBER

Our always-popular honey tasting meeting will be held in the management suite at Whitefriars next Wednesday. Please bring along small samples of your honey, any product you've made/baked based on honey, and other products of the hive, such as wax, candles etc. Janet McDonald and Magdalene are planning some baking, so make sure to have a light dinner beforehand!

DIRECTIONS

Whitefriars Conference room Canterbury

Free parking in the multi-storey car park. Collect your ticket and this will be processed during the meeting. Park on the 1st floor on the left and take the corridor down to the management suite at the bottom of the corridor on the left. Please car share if you can, since Whitefriars have to pay the cost of this on our behalf.

By car Set Sat Nav post code to CT1 2TF

Go around the ring road and at the roundabout opposite the Police Station turn through the city walls into Watling Street. Go past the bus station on your right and the Whitefriars multi-storey car park is straight ahead and right at the mini-roundabout. If coming from the south go down the Old Dover Rd and straight across the roundabout through the city walls.

By foot / BUS

Between the Bus Station and Whitefriars centre there is an alleyway between Boots and Next. Here there is an entrance to the car park. Go to the first floor by lift and turn left out of the lift through double doors. The management suite is 20 yards along this corridor.





BRANCH NEWS

Meet the Public

Unfortunately, we didn't have a presence at the Canterbury in Bloom event at the end of August, as we didn't get enough volunteers to run the stand. We are hopeful that we can do better at our final "Meet the Public" event of 2017, at the [Brogdale Apple Festival](#) on 14-15 October. It's the usual format – observation hive, honey for sale, a few talks on the basics of beekeeping, and we need plenty of volunteers! You get free entry into the event, in exchange for a couple of hours' enthusiasm about bees.

We've even got a fancy new web-form so we can make sure that it's clear who is doing what. I will send out a separate email, but for those of you who are ready to commit a couple of hours, supply honey etc, please [sign up here](#). Any questions – please contact [Maggie MacKenzie](#)

Exam Success

We're pleased to hear that 5 of our members successfully negotiated the assessment for their BBKA Basic Certificate in beekeeping this summer. Congratulations to all – Janet McDonald, Jan Soetaert, Magdalene Mei Halkes, Martin Neame and Kyriakos Tsafaras. Thanks also to Julian Audsley, who organised some revision sessions to make sure folks were confident going into the assessment.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to Kent BKA become due on 1st October 2017. There are limited changes to the costs this year, but there is a change in the available membership types. You can be a registered member, including BBKA news, Beecraft, insurance for public liability and product liability, BBKA membership and bee disease insurance for £46. Alternatively, you can be a friend, which excludes the insurances. The partner membership category has been eliminated, for simplicity. Steve Clarkson, the membership secretary, has produced a nice summary of the options, which you can see [here](#).

We will invite you to renew your membership by a webform, as we did last year – the form is already

available at [this webpage](#), and we hope the electronic process is convenient for all. Any problems, please contact [Joan McAllister](#).

Equipment for Hire/Coordination

There's still some honey extraction going on in the branch, using the two extractors we have available. For those of you who have found the two-part extractor a little difficult to use this year, I recently replaced the crank and gears, and it's working much better now. 10 years of heavy use had worn down the gears.

One issue that has emerged is the need to keep a firm grasp on where the extractors are. Inevitably, everyone needs to use them at roughly the same time, and although we try to keep track using the forum on our website, it's not always completely up-to-date. If anyone would like to help the branch by being the coordinator, please let one of the [committee](#) know. The role is primarily needed in late May and August/September, and would suit anyone with an organised frame of mind.

AGM

The next meeting in November will be our annual general meeting. Branch officers will give reports on the year, and elections will be held for all the positions. If you are interested in taking a more active role in the branch, please let us know. We will also use the AGM to gather feedback on what our members would like to see more/less of in 2018, so please try to make it to the meeting on November 8th at 7.30pm in Whitefriars.

European Foulbrood

Throughout this summer, members who are signed up to the National Bee Unit's BeeBase programme were notified of outbreaks of EFB in apiaries close by. There have been a surprising number this year in East Kent, so we have invited Kay Wreford, our SBI, to be one of our winter speakers. In the meantime, if your apiary is not registered with [BeeBase](#), take a few minutes to add your information, and help to protect the health of our bees.

Fruitful Harvests

The apple trees in our garden have done us proud this year, groaning with fruit, which we are slowly converting into crumbles, pies, juice and whatever. After our trip to the Brogdale Apple Festival last year, we invested in an apple press and scatter, which is a fun way to reduce excess fruit down to something manageable. Of course, there's lots of rotting fruit around, and whilst the weather remains mild, there's lots of insects who



sip on the juices. Hopefully this is more enticing to wasps than my beehives! I wrote last month about the best ways to prevent weak colonies from succumbing to wasps – a small entrance is good, a small tubular entrance is better.

The ivy flow is in full swing at the moment, and it is very satisfying to stand under a buzzing canopy of ivy flowers, with its huge diversity of insect life attracted to the last nectar and pollen bonanza of the year. Of course, the aroma of ivy (and its honey) is powerful and not to everyone's taste. I've already had several emails from folks worried about swarms of bees on their lawns, but these



are almost always the ivy mining bee, *Colletes hederæ*, which do look a lot like overly stripy honey bees, but are actually ground-nesting solitary bees, who time their emergence and breeding cycle to coincide with the ivy flowers. In my suburban garden, the only time I've seen a European Hornet (*Vespa crabro*) is when I found one feeding on the ivy.

No doubt most of you will have received email notifications about the Asian Hornet nest found in Devon, but in case you haven't here's the [press release](#). Whilst it's great to see that the level of awareness of *Vespa velutina* is being raised by all the publicity, I do worry about the general instinct to trap and kill wasps and hornets indiscriminately. Yes, the Asian hornet is a serious nuisance to beekeepers because it seeks out honeybee nests.



On the other hand, thoughtless use of non-selective methods of control will lead to a significant reduction in native species too. The European hornet is a fabulous creature, and whilst defensive of its nest, has an undeserved bad reputation, as provocation is required to get it to sting. Some countries, including Germany, are so worried about the unwarranted destruction of European hornet nests, that significant fines can be handed down – up to €50K.

Andrew Durham's two-part analysis of Asian hornet control strategies published in BBKA News [Aug-Sep](#) 2017 is well thought-through, and uses observable behaviours in both bees and hornets to tip the balance in favour of bees over Asian hornets. However, like many thoughtful contributions, his recommendations require discipline and continued vigilance to implement. I worry that most people will prefer the quick-fix of "kill 'em all" solutions.



BBKA NEWS

GM 2017-18 : BBKA Office General Information to all Branch Secretaries
Hon Members, Trustees & Individual Members

28th Sept 2017



Stoneleigh Office Opening Hours

With effect from Monday 2nd October 2017 the opening hours of the office will change to 8.30am to 4.30pm. Traffic leaving Stoneleigh Park around 5pm is very busy and is much worse during exhibitions. The road junction has a history of accidents and we want to support our staff in getting home safely and quickly. We have monitored the phone usage and noticed the phones do go quiet after 4.30pm. Please remember that Members have a special phone number to use: 02476 698620 but don't forget you can email us anytime on bbka@bbka.org.uk for general topics or membership@bbka.org.uk

Honey Survey

This is the 10th year that BBKA has carried out a honey survey and the 2017 survey is open now but closes 9th October. The October edition of BBKA News contains the paper survey but if members would be able to use the online version we would be really grateful to have your data. It only takes 5 minutes and of course no postage is required ! This is an important record of the honey crop in the UK and your contribution is very much appreciated. It is conducted according to the MRS Code of Conduct which guarantees your anonymity and there are eleven gifts, including Sophie Allport Bee Mugs, BBKA Spring Convention Tickets, Burts Bees Gift Sets available in a prize draw for all those who take part. Please record your honey crop as on September 30th this year, and submit your response online by Friday 6th October. Results will be published in BBKA News later in the year or you can request a copy by email from bbka@bbka.org.uk

Please go to <https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh//s.asp?k=150565176605>

Project Officer

We have ambitious plans to develop the BBKA training apiary and main hall at the National Beekeeping Centre, Stoneleigh so we can better use the facilities for the education of school children, young adults, disabled people, community groups etc. We want to appoint a part time Project Officer for approximately 6 months to help us research and create the feasibility study which will assist with the funding of the project through grants. This will involve visiting and meeting with our target 'clients' within an approximate range of 50 miles of Stoneleigh. This part time position might suit a retired person who used to work in education and has experience of keeping bees. The hourly rate will be agreed by negotiation and travelling expenses will be paid on top. For more details or an informal discussion, please contact George Brown, BBKA Relationship Manager : George.brown@bbka.org.uk

Asian Hornet

Last, but definitely not least, please be vigilant and also share the news with non- beekeepers, that the National Bee Unit has confirmed a sighting of the Asian hornet in Woolacombe, Devon. Work to identify, destroy and remove any nests is already underway. In the case of a suspected sighting, please contact alrntnonnative@ceh.ac.uk I am attaching [a link](#) to the NNSS information poster. If you can print this off and arrange for it to be displayed in shops, garages, libraries, bus stops etc that would be helpful.

Yours faithfully

Leigh Sidaway

General Manager