



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

Normally I would say that October-December are the quietest months in the apiary – once you've removed queen excluders, reduced the colony to one box (maybe with a well-stocked super), then we should be planning for the spring. So I was very surprised to find that I had lost a swarm in the 2nd week of

October! This was from a colony that started as a swarm in August. I'd diligently fed it, to get its numbers up, and then I let it alone through September. Unfortunately for me, the colony got up to a nice strength, gorged itself on the ivy flow, ran out of space, and not having read my textbooks, swarmed in early October! A shame to lose the bees, and given there were no drones in any of my other colonies, this

virgin queen had little chance of mating. So she was despatched, and the bees united with one of my smaller queenright boxes.

We have a couple of meetings coming up shortly, which will be good opportunities to share a joke about my lack of beekeeping abilities. Please come along to make a great event of both the AGM on 15th Nov, and our Christmas Party on Friday 1st December – more on pp2-3.

Apiary Meeting

Review of the Year/AGM

Whitefriars
Management
Suite

**Wednesday 15th
November**

7.30-9.30pm

Details on p2

A new chemical treatment for varroa was licensed on the 15th September, and can now be used legally. Apivar has the active ingredient Amitraz, which is also found in a number of products treating insects on dogs, as well as for crops. David found out more at the recent National Honey Show, and provides a report on p7, together with some commentary on queen rearing from a BIBBA meeting Adrian

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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

NOVEMBER 2017

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

Wednesday 15 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)
Wednesday 10th January	Indoor meeting, Whitefriars Management Suite, CT1 2LF 7.30-9.30pm Members tips on good beekeeping husbandry
Saturday 13 th January	BBKA annual delegates meeting, Myton School, Myton Rd, Warwick CV34 6PJ.
Saturday 3 rd February	Closing date for applications for BBKA module examinations
Wednesday 7th February	Indoor meeting, Whitefriars Management Suite, CT1 2LF 7.30-9.30pm Branch queen rearing (led by Jan Soetaert)
Wednesday 7th March	Indoor meeting, Whitefriars Management Suite, CT1 2LF 7.30-9.30pm Kay Wreford (North Kent Seasonal Bee Inspector) on European Foul Brood management and prevention

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, 15TH NOVEMBER

We hope that many of you will be able to come along to help shape the direction of the branch in 2018. Branch officers will summarise this year's activities, and we will elect a new committee. We're always looking for new volunteers! However, the major part of the meeting will be given over to discussion about what you as members would like to see from your branch in 2018.



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.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

We have organised a party for Canterbury beekeepers at St Mary's Hall in Upper Harbledown on **Friday 1st December at 7pm**. Beekeepers, friends and partners are all welcome: we'll be charging £10/head to cover food and hall hire. We are still finalising the details, but it will be a three course meal, with options for both vegetarians and omnivores. Magdalene Mei Halkes has kindly offered to organise the catering for us, so the price will be substantially less than what we might pay at a commercial location. Here's an approximate idea of the menu, which will expand or contract, dependent on the numbers attending:

Cold:

broccoli, beetroot, sprouts salad
tomatoes and mozzarella salad
green leaves salad mix
boiled gammon with cheddar cheese

Hot:

Chinese Roasted Duck with wraps
Grilled prawns on sticks
Satay chicken
Spicy squash
Roasted root vegetables
Stuffed peppers, or grilled vegetables stick with hallumi cheese for vegetarian

Puddings: We welcome help with this course

apple/pear crumbles with custard
Lemon and honey cake (recipe supplied by Janet McDonald)
Apple Flan
Festive pastry (toppings not decided yet)

If you want to bring along something to drink (alcoholic or not), that would be very welcome! Please let us know that you are coming by **Saturday 25th November**, so we can get the catering right. Email [the secretary](#) to confirm your attendance. Ideally you'll pay by bank transfer: Account name: Kent Beekeepers' Association/Canterbury Branch Sort code: 30-91-60, Account number: 00371771

Alternatively, send a cheque payable to Kent Beekeepers' Association to our treasurer, Joan – whose address is on the front page.



DIRECTIONS

St Mary's Hall, Roman Road, Upper Harbledown, Canterbury CT2 9AT

Coming out of Canterbury on the A2050, pass through the traffic lights at Palmars Cross Hill, and look out for a right turn onto Roman Road, about 200m past the lights. Try not to miss it, or you will end up on the A2, and have to go up to Dunkirk! Follow Roman Road for about 600m through Upper Harbledown. There is a left turn signed to "Boughton, Faversham, A2": the hall is on the right hand side at this junction. Parking is on the street – please be considerate of the neighbours and park beyond the "access to London Road" sign.

By foot / BUS

The 3/3B service from Canterbury to Faversham stops very close to St Mary's Hall, and takes about 10min from the Canterbury bus station.





BRANCH NEWS

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to Kent BKA became due on 1st October 2017. 46 of you have already renewed your membership using the webform, available at [this webpage](#) : thanks for doing this promptly. We encourage those of you who have not yet renewed, to do so before the end-of-year rush starts! Any problems, please contact [Joan McAllister](#).

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](#).

Meet the Public

Our weekend at Brogdale Apple Fair on 14-15 October was a great success – helped by beautiful weather and a great turnout of branch members to help run the stall. Magdalene took a number of pictures, which I've included as a separate page to give them a little more space. There were record honey sales, and particularly popular were the lovely wax wrappers, body cream and furniture wax provided by Phyllis, together with wax bars, which Jan also bought along.

The talks given by Michael and Julian were very well attended and it seems Julian has more people signed up for his next beekeeping course next year.

Thanks to all the helpers: Peter Goddard, Phyllis Church, Robert and Isabel Trickey, Michael Roberts, Julian Audsley, Magdalene Mei Halkes, Karen, Rosie and Mike Turner, David Cockburn, Jan Soetaert, and Maggie McKenzie, our redoubtable Brogdale Liaison officer!

National Hive Census

If you are registered with BeeBase you will shortly (or already have) receive an email inviting you to update your records to show the number of hives in your apiary (or apiaries). Canterbury Beekeepers encourages all its members to a) create a BeeBase entry for each apiary managed and b) keep the hive number accurate, as requested by the NBU. This helps with planning and coordination of the government-funded bee support mechanisms:

The National Bee Unit is again asking beekeepers to take part in the National Hive Count and update BeeBase with their colony numbers. This information is vital for our planning and preparation for outbreaks of disease or exotic pest incursions. Outbreaks of the Asian hornet in 2016 and September this year demonstrates the need for accurate and up to date figures for the number and location of beekeepers, hives and apiaries in the UK. This data helps to inform where we need to deploy Bee Inspectors and Asian hornet traps, improving our chances of early detection of this damaging invasive species.

We are asking all beekeepers to notify us of the number of hives they owned on 1st November 2017. Using this date helps us to ensure consistency across the country by reflecting the national position at a single point in time. Please provide this information by 31st December. If for any reason you are unable to update your BeeBase records before this date, your submission will still help with our contingency planning and preparation.

Here's the website [link](#)

BROGDALE APPLE FESTIVAL

Photos and story by Magdalene Mei Halkes



I had an interesting experience myself. I did not have much money but I decided to take three jars of honey to the show to contribute my tiny share of the honey harvest. I gave one jar away to a long lost classmate I have not seen since 2002. The other two jars went to a gentleman asking if we had credit card facility as he did not have cash with him. 'No' was the answer given but the clever me said, 'I trust you!' implying that he could pay me by a cheque or bank transfer later. He said he could pay via Paypal and asked me for my email with Paypal. He tasted my honey and decided to buy two jars, and two jars I only had! He punched a few keys on his phone then my phone 'dinged' and the transaction was through!

NOT A CLOUD IN THE SKY



MIKE, JULIAN AND KAREN TAKE A SHIFT



ISABEL AND ROBERT TAG-TEAMING THE CROWD



MAGGIE AND JOAN BEHIND A STACK OF HONEY



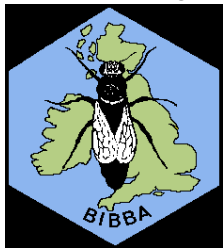
MICHAEL WITH THE OBSERVATION HIVE; JOAN TAKES CHARGE OF TASTING

NATIONAL HONEY SHOW 2017

I spent the morning of the 27th October at a Bee Improvement Workshop run by Nick Bentham-Green and Steve Rose. This was sponsored by BIBBA and to some extent reflected their commitment to Northern European Brown Bees. It seems however that they've come to realise that nationally not everyone shares their enthusiasm for British Black Bees while everyone wants to run better bees and many people are coming round to their distrust of relying on imported queens. Nevertheless Britain continues to import 10-15K queens annually, mostly from Italy which immediately raises the risk of importing small hive beetle. UK bees, despite the imports, remain genetically 30 to 60% Black Bee and there has been little effort at improvement so are very heterozygous and therefore offer large scope for improvement.



They recommended working in local groups and to that end BIBBA is prepared to assist in setting up breeding groups which would be assessed annually and within which genetic material would be shared. Further information can be found here: <https://bibba.com/groups/>. Financial support is also available from Tesco. Starting with our mongrels and selecting purely for the single parameter of docility we could expect it to take a couple of years to see a valuable difference unless we were to start by bringing in half a dozen nice local queens to provide the initial genetics.



They address the drone problem by the use of isolation apiaries, on MOD land for example, and use the previous year's breeder queens to provide the drones for the following year. They are also running instrumental insemination courses to deploy where an isolation apiary is not available. I described the Folkestone Warren situation and they judged that this sounded promising as a mating site.

Because they are not proposing that we become commercial queen producers they recommend the simplest possible approach to queen raising. For example; select a colony to breed from and do a split. One or two of the emergency queen cells would be retained for the split, a few others put into 3 frame poly nucs and the rest put in an incubator once sealed. They briefly discussed the different methods of grafting, use of cupkit and Apidea but placed more emphasis on the cell punch method and polynuc.

Black bees were mentioned and this was justified as a marker of localism, there was a mention of studies looking at correlation between wing morphology, docility and other valuable traits but no data was presented. There was little enthusiasm for the German queen breeding project and none for involvement in COLOSS. The whole emphasis of the talk was on eliminating the need to import queens annually by working with the best 25% of locally adapted ones and improving progressively.

I felt the emphasis on selection rather than queen raising was useful from our perspective and consider that those in the club who are interested should take the group idea further with BIBBA.

While at the Show I also talked with the lady selling [Apivar](#) and subsequently followed up by looking to see what Randy Oliver [had to say](#) about it. Oliver's summary is: 'I'm not one to tell anyone how to keep bees. But with regard to amitraz, I could make some suggestions. If what you've been doing works for you and you're not complaining, then maybe no need to change.'



- Consider cleaning up your own act before you start pointing the finger at other suspects.
- Amitraz is most effectively (and safely) applied in a time-release strip such as Apivar.
- Avoid contributing to pesticide synergies—amitraz may not be your best choice if your bees are exposed to certain agricultural chemicals.
- Time the application of amitraz treatments to avoid other pesticide exposure.
- Rotate contaminated combs out of your operation.
- In order to slow the development of miticide-resistant varroa, alternate treatments with different active ingredients.
- Have a Plan B at hand should varroa develop resistance to your favored miticide.
- Learn to use products that don't leave persistent residues.
- Use locally-adapted varroa- (and perhaps pesticide-) resistant bee stocks.'

Apivar strips containing amitraz cost £32 per pack which has a 2 year shelf life and treats 5 hives. It's not to be confused with Apilife Var which contains thymol. It is certainly a good idea to have a new miticide and this looks like a useful addition to the autumn treatment regimen.

David Cockburn



BBKA NEWS

Bee Positive 3 - October 2017

Dear Members,

The weather is getting wetter and the nights are certainly drawing in. I have not been able to get into my bees for over two weeks and with the forecast it may be another two weeks before I can give them their final check before winter really sets in.

BBKA HQ

So, what is happening at BBKA? Well, the building work has well and truly started.

As you can see, it has opened the space out considerably, there is a wall to be built but you get the general picture, all the staff are now temporarily working from the board room and kitchen upstairs, so if there are delays in answering any requests please bear with them.

As we approach the year end, we will have to take stock of all that we have of value. It is our intention to start a new and effective stock control system from the beginning of the new financial year. We should be able to start with the numbers that we have to produce for the accountants. This will make life easier as we will include minimum stock dates so that we can re-order effectively before the stock runs out.



Asian Hornets

By now, you should all know that there has been a sighting of Asian Hornets in Woolacombe in Devon. We know that every available inspector has been working on this and they have found and destroyed the nest. Hopefully they managed to do this before the new queens have left home to hide somewhere over winter.

We have had an offer from Nigel Semmence from DEFRA to come to the Stoneleigh Office to train staff and trustees about the Asian hornet. What exactly to look for and how to identify and who to report to. That will help if any members think they have a sighting and are not sure what to do.

DEFRA have released a mobile phone App to help people correctly identify the Asian Hornet, the App is free from both the [Apple](#) and [Android](#) App store and works on all suitable smart phones. Apparently the nest for the Asian Hornet in Jersey was found in a shed, so they are not necessarily up in the tree tops.

More information here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-app-to-report-asian-hornet-sightings>



Apimondia Convention – Istanbul, Turkey.

Whilst Margaret Murdin and John Hendrie were at the Apimondia Convention, they entered our own BBKA News and all the Special Issue Booklets into the World Beekeeping Awards competition, sadly it was not a winner as the judges went for more scientific journals. But at least we tried.

It is nice to note that a BBKA judge (Margaret Davis) was in charge of all the judging at the World Beekeeping Awards at Apimondia.

More details at: <http://www.apimondia2017.org/default.asp>

New BBKA Schools Scheme

We have just been told that Calderstones School which was first to get the Junior Certificates in the new School Scheme has been shortlisted for Eco School of the Year in the North West - this is based on the wildflower meadow and presumably the beekeeping. Here's the article from Educate Magazine showing the shortlists:

<http://www.educatemagazine.com/schools-react-educate-awards-shortlist/>

National Honey Show

We will have a stand at the National Honey Show and the initial run of 'How to' laminated leaflets will be available; the first one is on a Bailey Comb Change, kindly written by Wendy Maslin. You will be able to take it with you to the Apiary without the fear of it being damaged by weather or bees'.

We also have a new BBKA News Special Issues booklet out, which should also be available at the stand. It's called Flower Families for Forage, by Celia Davis, Master Beekeeper, NDB. It will be £3 from the BBKA stand at the NHS and £4 (inc P&P) afterwards from the BBKA shop.

Visitors to the BBKA stand at the NHS will also be able to get an early view of the new BBKA website. There has been a lot of work put into this especially by the office staff and George Brown and we do hope you like the results of all their labours.

The Northern counties are looking to work together in a similar way that the South West counties do, this is still work in progress, but it looks good.

We have some interesting meetings scheduled with companies who want to be involved in promoting bees and beekeeping. These will happen in the next few weeks, so when we have some positive news resulting from the meetings we will let you know.

The Shows committee held a meeting recently and we are still looking at providing a 'Trailer' which can travel to any Association which may want to use it for their show. One option might be a self-contained unit with a drop down walk-in front and 'wings' that open out with display boards. Hopefully it will hold the Hive Experience and all the equipment you will need for a show. It would be good if Associations would let us know if there is any interest in using this - after all, the whole idea is to support you as major stakeholders in achieving our Charitable Objectives.

Margaret Wilson