



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS

A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

Our first meeting of 2014 is on Wednesday 5th February, and I hope that many of you will be able to come along to hear Nick Mengham speak.

Nick has been a bee keeper since 1991. That evolved into bee farming sometime after moving to

Kent in 1993 and he joined the Bee Farmers Association in the mid 90s. He has been secretary of the Weald branch of the KBKA since about the same time so has insights and experience of both the professional bee farming world

and the life of the hobbyist bee keeper. In recent years he has been providing education in bee keeping for new comers, beginners and improvers. He will be discussing becoming a bee farmer and how everyone is a commercial bee keeper to a greater or lesser extent.

On the education front, a last reminder for anyone

contemplating taking BBKA examinations, written or practical (other than the Basic assessment), that your forms need to be sent to Angela Merritt this week. See [last month's newsletter](#) for the details. I'm pleased to be able to report that members were successful in the November 2013 exams –

Dougal Hendry achieved a distinction in both "Honey bee Management" and "Honey bee Pests, Diseases and Poisoning"; Julian Audsley was awarded credit in "Selection & Breeding of

Honey bees". Well done both!

David Cockburn has arranged a top speaker for us in March – Prof David Evans from U of Warwick. You can see more details of this great opportunity on page 3.

Adrian

Next Meeting

BEE – FARMING

NICK MENGHAM

Whitefriars conference room, Canterbury
Wed 5th February

7.30-9.30pm

Joining instructions
– see page 2

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Contact Newsletter editor to contribute articles

FEBRUARY 2014

DATES FOR DIARY

3 February 2014	Last day to send off BBKA exams application to A Merritt
5 th February 2014	Branch meeting, 7.30pm, Whitefriars management suite. Talk by Nick Mengham on bee-farming
21 February 2014	Last day to send off BBKA Gen/Adv husbandry assessment application to Angela Merritt
1 st March 2014	Bee trade exhibition (link) Warwick and Stareton Hall, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG
5 th March 2014	Branch meeting, 7.30pm, Whitefriars management suite. Talk by Prof David Evans (U of Warwick) "The plight of the honeybee - identification of a virulent strain of Deformed Wing Virus"
22 nd March 2014	BBKA examinations, Lynsted Junior School
2 nd April 2014	Branch meeting, 7.30pm, Whitefriars management suite. Julian Audsley, Joan McAllister, Adrian Davis Basics of queen rearing
4-6 April 2014	BBKA Spring Convention (link) Harper Adams University Newport, Shropshire TF10 8NB

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 center 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 yds along this corridor.

MARCH MEETING

Prof David Evans visiting

We are pleased to confirm that David Evans, Professor of Virology at the University of Warwick, and a keen beekeeper, will be coming to talk to us on March 5th. His talk will be entitled "The plight of the honeybee - identification of a virulent strain of Deformed Wing Virus". David leads a research group studying the biology of viruses such as hepatitis C virus, poliovirus and deformed wing virus of honeybees

(www.evanslab.org.uk). His interests include the replication, transmission and evolution of these viruses. David is also a beekeeper and a member of Warwick and Leamington beekeepers, where he is on the executive committee. He is particularly interested in queen rearing and runs courses on grafting and queen rearing for beginners.



In his talk David will present studies of the role of Varroa in transmission of deformed wing virus (DWV), probably the most important virus of honeybees, and the consequences for the recipient larvae/pupae of acquiring DWV via feeding or from Varroa. This research has resulted in the identification of a specific strain of DWV that grows to hugely elevated levels in Varroa-exposed pupae, causing the overt symptoms of deformed wings that beekeepers are familiar with. These results have implications for colony management and future therapies directed at controlling DWV in honeybees.



If you have an opportunity, take a look at his website before the meeting – www.theapiarist.org - as well as his skills in beekeeping and virology, David appears to be a bit of a woodworking handiman, and an excellent photographer too!

2 frame Nuc boxes

© David Evans

David Cockburn

EU CLARIFIES LABELLING RULES

“Pollen is a natural ingredient of honey”

The European Parliament endorsed draft rules defining pollen as a natural constituent of honey, rather than an ingredient, in a vote on Wednesday 15th January. This statement of the “bleeding obvious” is slightly more meaningful, when considered alongside regulations regarding genetically modified crops (“GM food”). EU GM regulations require that GM pollen has to be labelled if it makes up more than 0.9% of the honey. *“The ingredient/constituent argument has arisen due to the labelling implications of each option. If pollen continues to be considered a ‘constituent’, any GM pollen present would not need to be labelled. This is because, according to the GM regulation, only GM content above 0.9 % needs to be labelled. Since pollen only forms around 0.5 % of any batch of honey, it would never exceed the labelling threshold,”* said the rapporteur, Julie Girling (ECR, UK). Her report was adopted by 430 votes to 224, with 19 abstentions.



The full Parliament rejected a proposal by the environment committee to consider GM pollen as an ingredient rather than a natural constituent of honey, in line with a Court of Justice ruling in 2011. With pollen defined as a constituent of honey, current EU legislation on labelling applies, which states that GMOs must be indicated if they are present as a quantity of more than 0.9% of the honey (and not of the pollen).

Current EU legislation does not state explicitly whether pollen in honey is, or is not, an ingredient. The Court of Justice sought to clarify this in a ruling in September 2011 which defined pollen as an “ingredient” of honey, thereby requiring producers to indicate “pollen” in a list of ingredients on the label of the product. However, in the rules proposed by the Commission and backed on 15/1/2014 by Parliament, pollen is defined as a constituent of honey, not an ingredient.



If all this leaves you scratching your head, then turn to English law: The Honey (England) Regulations 2003 and their 2005 amendments defines “filtered honey” thus: Filtered honey is defined as “honey obtained by removing foreign inorganic or organic matters in such a way as to result in the

significant removal of pollen”

The guidance notes that accompany the Honey Regulations state:

It is common practice in the industry to filter honey under pressure in order to remove unwanted matter from the honey. As a result of the way in which honey is produced and harvested, a certain amount of unwanted matter (e.g., small pieces of comb, dead bees etc.) is effectively unavoidable. It will still be acceptable to treat honey in this way without requiring it to be labelled “filtered honey”. However, where fine filters are used such that a significant amount of pollen is removed e.g., where honey is finely filtered to improve the shelf-life and honey is finely filtered to improve the shelf-life and clarity, the product will need to be described as “filtered honey” and not simply “honey”. “Significant” is not defined within the Regulations or the Directive. In cases of dispute the onus would therefore be on the supplier to provide evidence and demonstrate the amount of pollen removed.

I don't think any of our members have high pressure filtering apparatus; we confine our selves to producing blossom honey, nectar honey, comb honey, chunk honey, cut comb in honey, drained honey, extracted honey, or pressed honey – all of which are defined in the Honey Regulations.

So, whilst I am not qualified to give legal advice, it does seem that we can continue to produce honey for sale in the traditional ways, and we won't need to trace the source of the pollen loads of our bees during a honey flow!

Adrian

HONEY IS A FRAGRANCE SENSATION

As newsletter editor, I'm always on the lookout for slightly off-beam references to beekeeping. So I was struck by a headline reporting the limited edition "Hip Note Honey" fragrance, that perfumiers Firmenich created. To be honest, I was bewildered by the review that was given on the perfume blogsite [CaFleureBon](#) (who style themselves "the Number 1 niche and natural perfume blog in the world and a top five international fragrance site"). So, in a fragrant piece of plagiarism, I've reproduced it for your amusement and delight.

"Hip Note Honey (Fall 2013) is [a] limited edition, a "hip note" scent that captures the elegance of a particular note. Honey has a soft balsamic quality and also can add a gourmand edge to perfumes. The blending of various honeys (such as blackberry honey and rose honey) helps softly raise other floral aromas, depending on what type of flowers were being pollinated by the bees. It can also add a sheer golden woodiness in the dry down. Perfumers Pierre Negrin and Ann Buzantian of Firmenich created this lovely scent that is so much more than a single note scent.

If it were not for the flowers, there would be no honey; so it is rather poetic that Honey opens with a silky delicate freesia, deep and rich hedione and verdant muguet. The soft yet enchanting floral aroma they weave is enchanting and the more I smell it, the more I WANT to smell it! Though this is intensely floral it is not overly feminine. Not too innocent or too naughty, the words impish elegance spring to mind. As it warms to the heart, and the golden sticky nectar begins to flow, the sweet soft aura of honey pervades. Creating using a "Smell the Taste" technology, this perfume has the thick yet sheer sweetness of honey impregnated with full flowers and sweet blossoms. One can almost imagine the hive of bees working effortlessly. The scent of sun-warmed wood covered with flower pollen frames the central theme of the soft amber kisses of honey absolute from Provence and a sheer sensual musk."



After my laughter had subsided, I realized that there's some interesting botany and chemistry that been sneaked into this article. Hedione, it turns out, is a component of the aroma of jasmine, and would be more accurately described as methyl 2-(3-oxo-2-pentylcyclopentyl)acetate. Muguet is the French name for Lily of the Valley, and fragrance chemists can simulate the characteristic aroma of that native British perennial, with a molecule known colloquially as bourgeonal, or 3-(4-tert-butylphenyl)propanal. Whilst jasmine doesn't feature in any beekeeper's list of plants that bees visit, Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis* (Asparagaceae)), does provide a source of pollen for honeybees, although Kirk and Howes note that the flowers appear in May and June when there are many other, possibly more appetizing, sources of pollen available.

I don't suppose Firmenich will be tackling the problem of bottling the smell of OSR or Ivy, the two most important flowers for bees and beekeepers, which is probably just as well!

Image acknowledgement: Rachel Johnson on [pinterest.com](#)

BEEKEEPERS @ KSRC

Courses in 2014



Beekeepers @ KSRC is now in its 3rd year and its prime purpose remains essentially the same – to provide training and education opportunities for “Improver Beekeepers” from any of the 16 Kent Associations and Branches.

All of the classroom and laboratory-based courses are delivered in the excellent facilities available at KSRC (Kent Science Resource Centre) near Sittingbourne, a location that is reasonably central for all of Kent.

Courses will run throughout the season – here are the first few:

Beekeeping for Improvers	Tues 4th February
Microscopy 1: Introduction to Microscopy for Beekeepers	Fri 14th February
Practical Husbandry	Fri 14th March
Microscopy 2 – Adult Bee Diseases	Mon 24th March

www.ksrcbees.org.uk

Bob Smith, Julie Coleman and Adrian Davis

BBKA BUSINESS



The British Beekeepers Association

Special Interest Days

BBKA is running three special interest days at Stoneleigh February and March. Regrettably the first, on Schools and Young People took place on 1st February, but you have a little more time to consider attending two further days:

Forage & the Landscape – 15th February

Objectives are to

- Gauge the amount of work being done by member associations
- Exchange ideas
- Share your experiences and learn from others
- Create a more co-ordinated approach
- Discuss Funding and Resources

Varroa - 8th March

Objectives are to

- Understand the current state of varroa management and control measures and varroa research in progress
- Identify management tools and research needs for varroa control
- Consider options for the funding of research and the supporting role of beekeepers in carrying out research and trials

Further information can be gleaned from the BBKA website [here](#). Note that places are limited, and representatives from either local or area associations should be by those with specific interest or experience in the topic.