



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS

A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

David Cockburn has arranged a top speaker for us this month – Prof David Evans from U of Warwick. Our previous month's newsletter provided a biography, and we hope that lots of you will be able to join us for what promises to be a fascinating talk. If you are not a CBKA member, please email us beforehand so we can get a good feel for numbers. Please note the slightly earlier start for this meeting.

The worst of the winter rains and wind may be behind us, and the BBKA is interested to see

what havoc has been dished out to beekeepers. On page 4 is a note from BBKA about a storm survey. This may be particularly relevant to you if you live near the Nailbourne

Blackthorn and crocuses are in full flower now, so the gardeners amongst us will undoubtedly be getting their

seed trays ready for sowing. If you are interested to contribute towards a citizen science project on the effectiveness of pollination by bees, please read the article on page 5, and consider signing up to the "Bees n' Beans" project.

The CBKA committee have been thinking hard

about our meetings schedule for the summer months, and a first draft of the full programme is shown on page 3. We'd be glad to hear from you – is it too much, too little, does it cover the things you are interested in?

Please tell us!

Finally, in response to discussions at the AGM, we are trying to assess the branch's appetite, resources and enthusiasm for a branch library. Read more on page 4.

Adrian

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The easiest way to contact us is via the website, but you can also e-mail

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Contact Newsletter editor to contribute articles

MARCH 2014

DATES FOR DIARY

1 st March 2014	Bee trade exhibition (link) Warwick and Stareton Hall, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG
5 th March 2014	Branch meeting, 7.15pm, 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
5 April 2014	Apiary meeting (location tbc) Theme: Comb changing
27 th April	SBI tour focus on build-up; disease checks; colony assessments

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.

SUMMER SEASON

First Draft of Summer programme

At recent committee meetings we've been trying to map out the spring and summer events for the branch. Whilst things are always subject to change, it's good to have the shape of the beekeeping year ahead in some kind of focus. Below is the first draft. Hopefully we won't need to make too many changes, but you'll see that we are planning for a "more normal" Spring, in that we hope to be able to open hives in April.

The help and support of members is always appreciated, so if you would like to host a meeting this season, please let us know. Equally, we need a lot of help to make the "meet the public" events successful, so please try to make yourself available for these activities – they are good fun, are a chance to show bees, honey and general knowledge of all things apidological. We will likely include a couple of Saturday events in Whitefriars, once these dates are known. Let us know what you think – will you attend all the meetings, just a few? Tell us what you want!

5 April 2014	Apiary meeting (location tbc) Comb changing
26 th April	Seasonal Bee Inspector tour (to be confirmed) focus on build-up; disease checks; colony assessments
10 th May	Apiary meeting: Queen-raising preparations
17 th May	Meet the public: Ecofest, Canterbury
31 st May	Apiary meeting: Queen rearing
14 th June	Apiary meeting: Introducing new queens to colonies, nuc making
15 th June	Meet the public: Brogdale strawberry fair, Faversham
28 th June	Apiary meeting: Marking/caging/clipping
12 th July	Meet the public: White Mill demonstration, Sandwich
19-20 July	Meet the public: Brogdale cherry festival, Faversham
26 th July	Apiary meeting: Varroa assessments
9 th Aug	Apiary meeting: Extraction of honey
6 th Sept	Apiary meeting: Varroa control and IPM
24 th Sept	Meet the public: East Kent Ploughing match
18-19 Oct	Meet the public: Brogdale apple festival, Faversham

BBKA BUSINESS



The British Beekeepers Association

Storm Survey

A message from Jane Moseley: general secretary of the BBKA.

"As the the bad weather seems to have now subsided many are left with the task of clearing up, assessing the damage and facing the challenge of moving forward to rebuild their lives; while others are still living in the chaos. The BBKA is interested to learn how many of our members have been affected so that we can if possible pull together to help those reinstate equipment and bees for those who have suffered from the hurricane force winds and flooding.

To help us identify where help is needed, if you have been affected, please fill in the online survey by following this link: [CLICK HERE TO TAKE PART](#)

Once we have analysed the returns, we shall share it with you, so that we all know where assistance and support is needed.

Thank you for your participation.

Jane Moseley

General Secretary & Operations Director

PROPOSAL FOR A BRANCH LIBRARY

Feedback sought

At the AGM, a proposal was made that we consider developing a library so that folks could access a wider range of reading materials than perhaps they otherwise might. Dougal Hendry undertook a little research on our behalf, and recommends that we think about a scheme similar to that operating by Brighton and Lewes Beekeepers.

"A librarian brings the library to all [indoor] meetings. Members can borrow books for a deposit of £5 fully refundable. The normal loan period is upto three months after which a fine of £1 per month is levied. If you have read the book it is common courtesy to return it at the next meeting for someone else to have a chance to borrow. Should it not be required by another member then of course you can extend the loan. In the event of books/videos that are not returned within three meetings there is a fine of £1.00 per month. Fees and fines go towards a fund to obtain new books for the Division." A full list of books is available for all to browse on Brighton BKA's website ([here](#))



Four questions for you all to ponder – and reply on our discussion board ([here](#)):

What books/DVDs would you be prepared to donate to the branch?

What books/DVDs would you like the branch to acquire?

What books/DVDs do you own that you would recommend to others as a good read?

Are you interested to be the librarian?

BEES AND BEANS

Citizen Science at University of Sussex



Hopefully many of you will know of LASI – the laboratory of apiculture and social insects at the University of Sussex. Their ranks have been

increased recently by the arrival of Prof Dave Goulson from Stirling. He's the author of "A sting in the tale" – a great little book about bumblebees and conservation, with an enthusiasm for nature reminiscent of Gerald Durrell.

LASI have been formally assessing the attractiveness of plants to bees and other insects (see December 2013 newsletter). They are now running a program called "Bees and Beans" that will seek to harness the enthusiasm of garden and nature lovers in a Citizen Science program.

All you have to do is grow some broad beans – which they provide! To be slightly more specific, the idea behind this project is to do a simple experiment, measuring how much pollination activity bees are managing across the country, and see if anywhere seems to be running low. The project will compare:

- Plants that are covered in a fine net, to keep out pollinators.
- Plants that are hand pollinated, to make sure that all the flowers are definitely pollinated.
- Plants that are left alone, free to the attentions of the local insects.



Broad beans will be used as the experimental plant. They are easy to grow, and the dwarf variety to be used reaches an easily-manageable 50cm in height (rather than the several metres achieved by some of its ganglier cousins). The flowers are attractive – to both bees and the eyes – and easy to hand-pollinate; plus they will be providing suggestions with what to do with your tasty beans at the end of the experiment.

The number and weight of the pods harvested and beans within will be counted, and compared across the country, seeing how well bees are doing at their pollinating. There are a couple of other things to count as part of the experiment – keeping an eye out for which visitors are present, and if any of them are cheating at the role – but the bean measures are the most important.

If you are interested to find out more, go along to their website, and join over 300 other people who have already signed up to take part. You need to do this before end of March 2014.

<http://www.ljbees.org.uk/>

BEEKEEPERS @ KSRC

Courses in 2014

Beekeepers @ KSRC



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. The target audience are those who have kept bees for two seasons, and have achieved the Basic Certificate.

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:

Practical Husbandry	Fri 14th March
Microscopy 2 – Adult Bee Diseases	Mon 24th March
Starting Queen Rearing –	Thur 10th April
How to pass the Basic	Sat 12th April
Advanced Queen Rearing	Thur 24th April

An innovation this year are some practical beekeeping classes. The aim is to provide coaching in reading the bees, proactive management, apiary hygiene and smooth, confident handling. You will get plenty of access to hives, working in small groups so that there's practical learning for each delegate. There are events on 28th April, 11th May, 28th May, and 18th June.

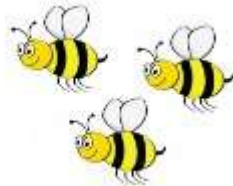
www.ksrcbees.org.uk

Bob Smith, Julie Coleman and Adrian Davis

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