



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

Last month I was writing optimistically about the signs of Spring, but little did we know that on the second day of Spring we'd be experiencing rain that froze on contact with roads, cars or beehives. Provided your bees can keep dry and out of the wind, they will be fine in cold conditions such as we

experienced this week. However, March is a very vulnerable month for colonies – they will be trying to accelerate broodraising, and so will be using a lot of stores. Isolation starvation is a real threat when the temperature is <10 °C, so don't be afraid to crack the coverboard off for a quick check. The number of adult bees will be at its lowest point this month, so whenever there's a dry, quiet day, put your suit on

and take a peak to make sure they have stores close to the cluster/brood.

Even if Spring is not yet in the air, BeeTradeX took place yesterday, and the

BBKA Spring Convention will soon be upon us. Demand for beekeeping equipment and knowledge is high – a Bee Health course I am helping to organise sold out 100 places in <7 days last week – so take advantage of the opportunity to

hear Kay Wreford this week at our meeting.

Whilst most of us regard beekeeping as a hobby, for some it is a route out of poverty. On p.5-7 there is some information about two British charities that provide training and education for beekeepers in more disadvantaged communities than ours.

Bees Abroad in particular has strong connections with the Kent beekeeping community. Adrian

Apiary Meeting

EFB

Kay Wreford

Whitefriars
Management
Suite

**Wednesday 7th
March**

7.30-9.30pm

Details on p2

CBKA Officers

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Cockburn

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Committee Members

Julian Audsley
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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

MARCH 2018

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

Wed March 07	branch indoor meeting with Kay Wreford (North Kent Seasonal Bee Inspector) on European Foul Brood management and prevention Whitefriars Management Suite Canterbury CT1 2TF
Fri March 23	Complete applications for Bee Health Certificate
Sat March 24	BBKA modules examination day
Tue March 27	Committee meeting. The Old Gate Inn, New Dover Rd, Canterbury CT1 3EL
Sat April 07	Apiary meeting, Bekesbourne apiary (tbc)
Fri April 13	BBKA Spring Convention Harper Adams University, Newport, TF10 8NB
Wed April 18	Julian's beginner beekeeping course (1) this course is fully booked – Barham Village Hall Valley Road Barham CT4 6NX
Thu April 19	Julian's beginner beekeeping course (2) this course is fully booked – Barham Village Hall Valley Road Barham CT4 6NX
April 28-29	Fast Start to Beekeeping course by Dougal Hendry, Folkestone. For more details, see this link
Sat May 05	Branch Spring Safari
Sat May 19	Canterbury in Bloom – meet the public event at Whitefriars
Tue May 22	Committee meeting The Old Gate Inn, 162-164 New Dover Rd, Canterbury CT1 3EL
Sat June 02	Branch apiary meeting
Sun June 10	Brogdale Strawberry Fair

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, 7TH MARCH

This meeting will be a presentation about **European Foulbrood**. Kay Wreford, one of Kent's seasonal bee inspectors will be talking to us about this notifiable disease. Unfortunately, there's been an uptick in incidence of this brood disease over the last season in our area. Whilst it is a relatively rare condition, beekeepers are the principal vector for transmission, and Kay will tell us how best to both manage and prevent this bacterial disease.



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 SatNav 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

Swarm Management

Hopefully you saw an email earlier in February inviting members to sign up to provide swarm collection services to the general public. This is achieved through a BBKA website, which is being constructed. We are collecting details on our website [here](#), to pass along to BBKA. Given that the BBKA will effectively be advertising services, we need to ensure that the folks listed are confident around bees, as members of the public are often very nervous of a swarm. There is no obligation to keep a collected swarm, and the branch is very happy to arrange re-homing of unwanted swarms. Julian Audsley continues to coordinate this activity for us.

Julian is also interested to hear from beekeepers who will collect swarms locally, but who don't want to be listed publicly. Please [sign up](#) if you will collect swarms, and we will keep your information for branch use only.

If you need to replace lost bees, or start out on your beekeeping journey, then the swarm list is also the place to register your interest. You are welcome to sign up now, but don't expect anything to happen until May (or even later). To minimise unnecessary sharing of personal information, you need to log into the website (contact Adrian if there are any problems).

<http://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/swarm-management/>

Mentor and Neighbourhood groups

We always recommend that folks attend as many apiary meetings as possible, to see bees in different hives and situations, and also watch how people approach the management of bees. To that end, we promote "Neighbourhood groups", which is simply a way for branch members who are geographically close to each other can get together in a mutually supportive way.

We currently have groups in Canterbury Central, Westenhanger/J11, Womenswold and Eastry/Deal, but it would be great to extend this number across the range of our members. Areas that may benefit from a neighbourhood group include Boughton-under-Blean, Whitstable, Upstreet, Wingham, Stelling Minnis and Chilham. If you would like to help organise one or two

gatherings in your area, please email David at [this address](#).

This year we want to emphasise the mentorship of new beekeepers, and so will be asking those of you with a few years' experience to offer your help as a mentor for 2018, whether or not you are participating in a neighbourhood group.

The way you do this is up to you, but the idea is to provide a first port of call for advice and support. Most of the beginners will not have bees at the start so will need to get experience handling bees and help in getting bees. Once keeping their own bees, the help they need will probably be just phone or email support with occasional visits, but this will be up to you. Look out for specific emails inviting you to be a mentor.

Beginners Course

There continues to be a strong demand for beginner beekeeping courses, and although Julian is running two this Spring, in addition to his course in autumn 2017, yet more people have made enquiries. Dougal Hendry has volunteered to provide a further course, in a slightly different style to Julian's weekly approach. You can read more about it on our website (at [this page](#)), but in essence, Dougal is teaching a "Fast Start to Beekeeping", over two Bank Holiday weekends in late April and May. If you are interested, please sign up via the website.



A full meeting room discussing Queen rearing at our February meeting

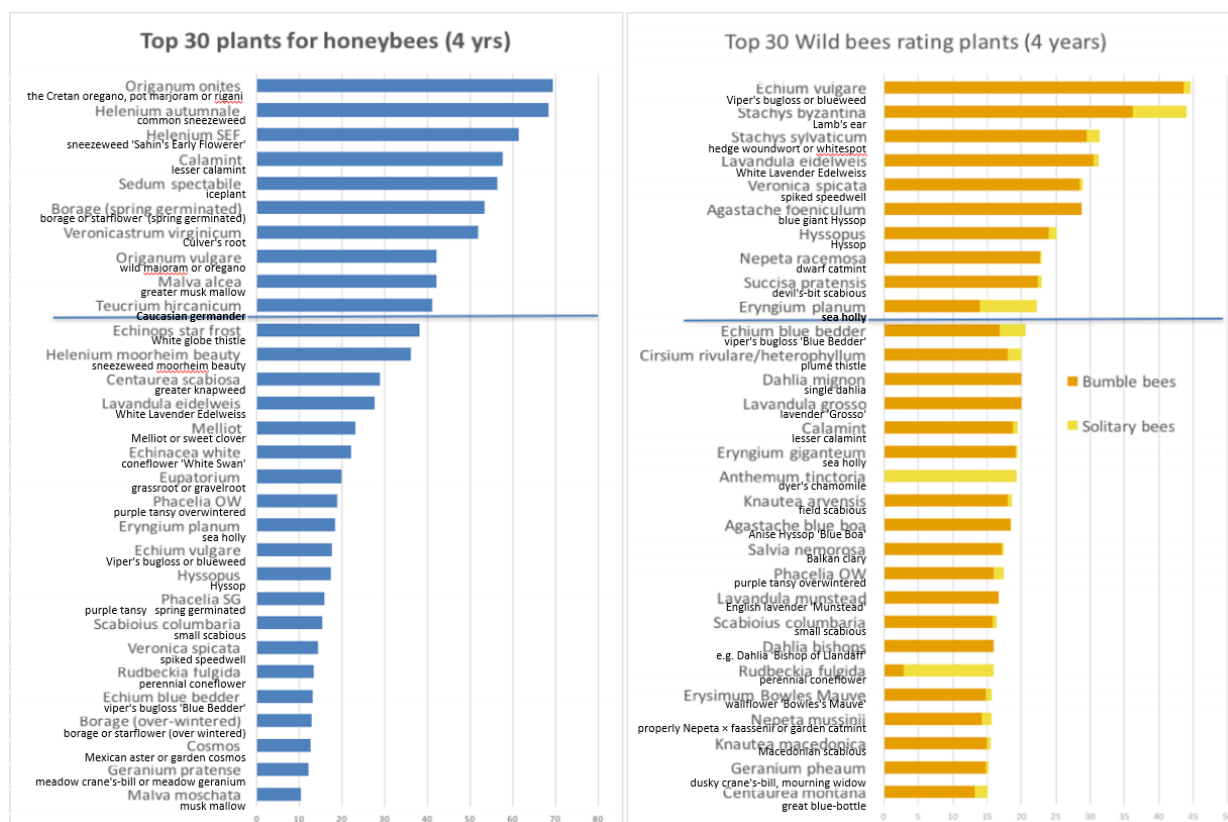
PLANTING FOR BEES

One of the questions that came up in our January meeting was which plants to select that would best support healthy populations of bees. This is still an active area of research – the University of Sussex published some work on this several years ago, and a plantswoman in Oxfordshire, Rosy Rollings, has been continuing the work in her nursery.

She's now summarised her 4 years of study ¹ with nearly 100 species of plants, and can rank them in terms of numbers of visits by honey bees, and other bee species. Of course, the findings are coloured by the environment around the area of study, but it certainly extends the original work by Garbuzov and Ratnieks².

The National Horticultural Society have also been running their "Perfect for Pollinators" (P4P) scheme for several years now, and list >400 plants that are beneficial to insects³. You may also be aware that the "other" bee professor at Sussex, Dave Goulson, has discovered that some plants labelled with the P4P badge do carry traces of insecticides – specifically some of the neonics⁴. I take this as a sign of intensive horticulture, rather than as a weakness of the P4P scheme itself. The NHS explain why on their P4P website³.

So, if you are looking for some new plants for your garden, then grow some pot marjoram (*Origanum onites*), sneezeweeds (*Helenium autumnale*), Vipers bugloss (*Echium vulgare*) or Lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantina*). Note that plants lower down this list are still great for feeding bees – all will be better than the double forms and other pollen or nectar-free plant variants that are so common in the plant catalogues. Pick the perennials for long-lasting impact! From my own garden I can recommend the everlasting wallflower (*Erysimum linifolium* Bowle's Mauve).



¹ Which 'bee-friendly' plants attract the most bees?, Rosy Rollings (Dec 2017) ([link](#))

² Quantifying variation among garden plants in attractiveness to bees and other flower-visiting insects. Mihail Garbuzov and Francis L. W. Ratnieks ([link](#))

³ National Horticultural Society "Perfect for Pollinators" ([link](#))

⁴ How safe are garden centre plants? ([link](#))

B.A. Learning for Beekeepers

- Exploring beyond the Traditional -

1. Options for Beekeepers -
conventional v natural/
sustainable approaches



2. An Introduction to
Top Bar Hives –
includes make your
own.

Courses are offered by Bees Abroad and run by our expert volunteer beekeepers to raise funds for our projects. The fees will support our work in the relief of poverty through beekeeping.

Course 1: Options for Beekeepers – conventional v natural / sustainable approaches

We will explore the issues with conventional beekeeping and the opportunities for more natural, sustainable and less intensive approaches. We help you make choices based on a sound understanding of the issues. We draw on experience from the UK and Africa.

Topics include:

- Lifecycle of the Honey Bee – and how it guides us to understand the best beekeeping practices
- Bee Behaviour – and how to keep bees more sympathetically
- Bee Diseases – and how to keep bees more healthily
- Choosing A Hive – we compare framed hive designs with theirs including Warre and top bar hives
- Getting Started – where to get help, equipment and bees
- Apitherapy – how products of the hive can benefit human health



Warre Hive

Suitable for those with and without beekeeping experience.

Course Tutors Jane & Richard Ridler – BBKA Master Beekeepers & Bees Abroad Project Managers

Dates Sunday 20th May (World Bee Day) & Saturday 14th July

Start/Finish 9.30 to 4.30

Venue Writtle University near Chelmsford, Essex. CM13RR

Price £89 includes refreshments and lunch
Book via Bees Abroad on-line shop at www.beesabroad.org.uk

Course 2: An Introduction to Top Bar Hives – includes make your own

This thought provoking and practical course aims to introduce participants to top bar hive beekeeping and its application in Africa and the UK.

- We will discuss the practice of beekeeping in both East and west Africa and various styles of hive.
- You will taste a selection of African honeys.
- We will demonstrate making top bar hives from both wattle and daub and wood.
- You will be provided with materials to make your own wooden top bar hive to take home. If you prefer you can help someone make theirs. The hive will be fully functional and suitable for use in the UK.
- We discuss beekeeping in the context of sustainable social enterprises for the relief of poverty.



Suitable for those with and without beekeeping experience.

This course is run in conjunction with the Fell Edge Farm Centre who are generously providing the venue.

Course Tutors Dawn Williamson & Paul Bloch – Bees Abroad Project Managers

Dates Saturday 7th April

Start/Finish 9.00 to 17.00

Venue Fell Edge Farm, Skipton, West Yorks. LS299JX

Minimum Suggested Donation:

Waged: £45 unwaged: £25

Cost of materials to make one hive:

Waged: £70 unwaged: £50

Light lunch and refreshments included.

Accommodation is available

Book via Bees Abroad on-line shop at www.beesabroad.org.uk

Bees for development

The specialist international beekeeping organisation



Dear Sir or Madam,

To celebrate Bees for Development's 25th Year we are offering fantastic Birthday Giveaways throughout 2018. This month's prize is the high-power Brunel SP 22 Microscope and complete Pollen Identification Kit, kindly donated by Brunel Microscopes. The Brunel SP 22 Microscope meets all BBKA specifications for microscopy exams.

For a chance to [win the microscope](#), simply enter your details here:

www.beesfordevelopment.org/giveaway/index.html

Please forward this message to your Members so that they have the chance to win this super package! Thank you.

Louise

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Development Manager

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