



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS

A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

Happy New Year everyone! After a brief break for Christmas, the newsletter is back ready to set you up for the 2019 beekeeping year. I wonder if you made any New Year's

resolutions? If not, I can suggest a few that will definitely help your beekeeping.

Resolution 1: Read more books about beekeeping. Andy King has been doing that, and has written a review of the Collins

Beekeeper's Bible, which can be found on p4. **Resolution 2:** Register with BeeBase. I recently posted the 2018

NBU review of beekeeping in SE England wherein Sandra Gray, our regional inspector, gives the reasons why we should all register on BeeBase. You can go directly to her report from [this link](#).

Resolution 3: take advantage of the structured learning programmes offered by the BBKA. Whether it's the practical [Basic Assessment](#), the theoretical, examination-based

[modules](#), or self-directed learning (e.g. working through the BBKA [course in a case](#)), we can all learn more about beekeeping. We are particularly keen to help people prepare for the

Basic assessment, and some committee members have passed all of the written modules, so if you are interested, please let us know by [email](#).

Early January is the perfect time to reduce the varroa

load in each hive, in preparation for Spring. Most people opt for treatment with a formulation containing oxalic acid (OA) in the winter - although *Apivar*, a slow release formulation of amitraz can also be used. We plan to treat the hives in our branch apiary on **Saturday 12 January at 10am**, and anyone who wants to come

along to watch and learn is welcome. You'll need a beesuit, so if you haven't yet acquired one, just let us know beforehand.

As a reminder, varroa treatment in Winter is a preparation for Spring, not a therapy for winter bees.

Around the winter solstice, the amount of brood in the nest is minimised, so nearly all varroa will be phoretic (living on adult bees, not feeding on larvae). Hence, treatment with OA can be very effective. In Spring, this will delay the varroa population growth and attendant viral loads.

Indoor Meeting

Q&A; simple wax processing

All invited

Whitefriars Management Suite

Wed 9th January

7.30-9.30pm

Details on p2

CBKA Officers

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Dougal Hendry

Maggie McKenzie

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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

JANUARY 2019

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

2019

Wed January 09	branch indoor meeting, 7.30-9.30pm. Beekeepers' Q&A, with focus on simple wax processing, Whitefriars Management Suite
Sat January 12	10am, branch apiary (Palmsted Wood, Bekesbourne). Varroa control with oxalic acid
Wed February 06	branch indoor meeting 7.30-9.30pm, Lauren Kennedy, Bumblebee Conservation Trust. "Making a Buzz for the Coast" , Whitefriars Management Suite
Sat February 09	closing date for applications for BBKA module examinations
Sat February 28	closing date for application for BBKA practical examinations
Wed March 06	branch indoor meeting, 7.30-9.30pm, "Yellow-legged hornet management in East Kent", Whitefriars Management Suite
Sat March 23	BBKA modules examination day https://www.bbka.org.uk/modules

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

Q&A + Simple wax processing

Wednesday 9th January 2019, 7.30-9.30pm

Whitefriars Conference room, Canterbury

The first part of this meeting will be a short presentation on simple wax processing (getting wax from the comb to clean blocks).

We need your help for part 2 of the meeting - it's an audience-led Q&A. When we've done this before, what works quite well is if we get the majority of the questions by email, ahead of time. It helps us to structure the discussion into sensible "chunks". Please send the [secretary](#) your questions, ideally by the evening of 8th January.

DIRECTIONS

Whitefriars Conference room, Canterbury

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.

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.

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.





BRANCH NEWS

Upcoming Meetings

Looking forward to the rest of the winter, we will welcome Lauren Kennedy of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust to talk to us about the "Buzz for the Coast" project at our February meeting.

For March's meeting, we are working closely with Whitstable and Herne Bay branch of KBKA to put together a meeting focused on the yellow-legged (Asian) hornet, built around Sam Day's experience in nest-finding in Jersey in the 2018 season.

Anticipating that the weather will return to a more typical pattern than we saw in early 2018, we hope that by early April we can get into our hives at Bekesbourne for the first apiary meeting of the Spring.

AGM notes

As I didn't produce a December newsletter, it's worth rehearsing the key outcomes from the AGM in November. Michael Roberts has taken over the role of chairman, whilst David Cockburn will continue as a committee member and as one of our KBKA representatives. David is now a Director of BeeCraft too. Dougal Hendry was appointed as our other KBKA rep.

Financially, we have seen increases in both our current account balance (£4498.77), and our membership numbers (69 members and 33 friends). The secretary and outgoing chairman gave a review of the year, mostly in the form of a slideshow. Links to the treasurer's and secretary's reports can be found within the minutes:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/pwgsucaeqzjskq1/AGM%20agenda%20and%20minutes%207th%20November%202018.pdf?dl=0>

Subsequent to the AGM, the committee co-opted Stuart Andrews (a previous past chairman)

onto the committee, to further enhance our capacity to organise events.

Contacting the Committee

Whilst we are ringing the changes, it might be helpful to re-iterate the email addresses to contact folks. The following email addresses ought to be self-evident:

chairman@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

treasurer@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

secretary@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

committee@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

For specific activities within the branch, here are the associated addresses, which will be forwarded to the correct people:

training@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

shows@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

extractor@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

newsletter@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

reps.kbkacouncil@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

Unmanned aerial vehicles

We will be spending a good deal of the winter season making sure that we have plans in place for monitoring of yellow-legged (Asian) hornets. In the meantime, we are keen to hear from anyone who has acquaintances who are pilots of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV, or drones) especially if their UAV are equipped with thermal imaging capability. Experience in France and Jersey suggests that thermal imaging can be a good way to identify the location of hornet nests; however, such equipment is expensive so will normally be found in the hands of professionals rather than hobbyists. If you are connected in any way with the drone community, members of the [committee](#) would be keen to talk with you.

BOOK REVIEW FOR “COLLINS BEEKEEPER’S BIBLE”

HarperCollins; authorship/contributions from “zillions” of people

review by Andy King, Canterbury Beekeepers

Julian's recommendation of Haynes' Bee Manual was a great way in for new-starters, but it is only 166 pages long, so what do you do when you've read it, and reread it? In the search for literally a bigger bee book, I stumbled across the “Beekeeper's Bible”, which is 412 pages long. It has a hard cover, glossy pages, and a coherent design, so seemed to me to be good value. The book is not structured as a continuous narrative, but is broken up with quality pictures, drawings and fact boxes, so it is easy to read and digest in small chunks.

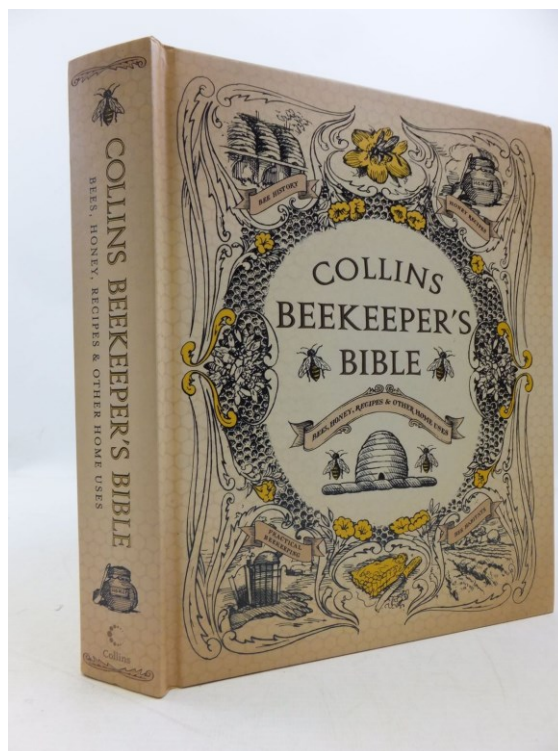
The book complements “how to” books because the bible starts with 78 pages on the genesis, history and symbolism of bee keeping. For example, there one page on beekeeping in Nile delta around 1500BC where beekeeping was organised on an industrial scale. Reliefs have been found where beekeepers are depicted manipulating hives made with reeds bonded with mud (like cylindrical skeps turned through 90 degrees) with mud-disks used as access hatches at either end. The cylinders were arranged in arrays so that an Egyptian beekeeper could divide a colony, though merging would presumably be trickier. Hives of this design have been excavated in Israel and Greece suggesting that bee know-how was carried over long distances. This section is utterly useless in practical terms, but is nevertheless a fascinating read.

The second part of the book is about the honey bee itself. There was less new material in this section for me, except for a few pages on haplo-diploid sex determination and the evolution of the worker caste (which I still don't follow) and an interesting explanation of what happens when a bee stings.

The third part of the book is on practical keeping. There is a picture of Adrian Waring moving a hive in wheelbarrow, presumably taken by Claire Waring, and there is a bit of an overlap in material with the Haynes manual, so I guess they were the main contributors. I would really like to have seen some step-by-step diagrams on different swarm prevention and control methods. But there is new material too, like how to present honey, the beekeeper's back, and hive designs such as the funky beehaus and the futuristic solar hive. The pictures in this section are great.

The fourth part is on honey products and food and drink. Some of the suggestions seem archaic or even decadent (like the milk and honey bath) but others look enticing such as the Iced Honey Earl Grey Tea, which is a non-alcoholic alternative to Pimm's, ideal for garden parties where you need a mix of summer drinks. The Honey and Berry Smoothies look fun for teenagers, and the Honey Polenta cake looks perfect for some winter comfort food when we need to be reminded of the warmth of an Italian holiday.

In summary, this is a good-value read which is reasonably comprehensive and therefore lives up to its title. If this was my only book, then I would certainly go with this. I would particularly recommend this if, like me, you are a sucker for trivia and food and drink.



<https://www.waterstones.com/book/collins-beekeepers-bible/9780007279890>

Andy King

SUSTAINABLE BEES & QUEENS

Just a quick note to alert you to a unique opportunity early in 2019 - a new series of all-day BIBBA courses are planned and I've been able to negotiate for one in Kent.

This course is just £10, far less than the price of a purchased queen and the aim is to show how easy QR is and how even small-scale beekeepers can produce their own queens, while producing a honey crop as well. Medway BKA will be hosting the event at the Lenham Community Centre on 3rd February; as an association we are signed up to the idea that we should demystify QR and include simple QR methods in our beginners' course - this event ticks all the boxes for us but I'm certain that applies to many others beekeeping associations in Kent so opened up to all.

Hope to see you there, please make bookings via the BIBBA website at <https://bibba.com/sustainable-bees-queens/>

Bob Smith, Medway Beekeepers

FOR EVERYONE USING LOW-COST, SIMPLE METHODS

There is growing concern amongst beekeepers of all abilities and experience about the ever-increasing importation of bees and queens. This is on several grounds, including the possibilities of introducing pests, diseases and pathogens, aggression in subsequent generations and the unsuitability to our fickle climate.

Defra has recently conducted a Queen Replacement Survey that shows the majority of beekeepers prefer home-reared queens but need help to produce them. In addition, many BKAs are unable to produce enough bees for their beginners and queens to head them.

In response to the obvious need the Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association (BIBBA) are staging a series of one day regional events during the 2018/19 winter. These are to help and encourage everyone from the small-scale beekeeper upwards and BKAs to produce bees and queens from local stock, by using simple techniques that may be little more than a variation of what many beekeepers already do and at little or no cost.

Topics include:-

- Why raise queens?
- Addressing perceived problems in producing queens in the U.K.
- Overwintering bees and queens.
- Demystifying queen rearing.
- Simple queen rearing methods.
- Simple and efficient ways to produce nuclei.
- Suggested methods for BKAs to supply bees and queens to members/beginners.
- Methods for small and larger quantities.
- Benefits of teaching apiaries.
- Queen rearing facility in teaching apiaries.
- Queen rearing as a collective exercise.
- Producing bees and queens, yet still getting a good honey crop.
- Including queen rearing and bee improvement in BKA teaching programmes.
- Reducing winter losses.
- Other events that provide relevant tuition.



It will be helpful to beekeepers of all abilities from beginners to the most experienced, as well as BKA officials, beekeeping teachers, apiary managers, and demonstrators.

The all-day event (10.00am-4.00pm) costs £11/head (around 30% of the price of one queen and 5-10% of a nuc!). Refreshments will be provided, but please provide your own lunch. Booking must be made in advance. <https://bibba.com/sustainable-bees-queens/>



Positive Thinking

December, 2018



- **Mission Statement:** To further and promote the craft of beekeeping
- To advance the education of the public in the importance of bees in the environment.

The unified voice of British Beekeeping



#ADOPTABEEHIVE

BBKA.ORG.UK

Welcome! If we could ask one thing of you this weekend it would be to buy an Adopt a Beehive and see collectively how many we can sell as one big final push this weekend. Please show us your support!

As this is our final Newsletter of 2018, I would also like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

-Margaret Wilson, Chair of the BBKA

The Annual Delegates Meeting

(ADM) The Annual Delegates Meeting (ADM) papers have been sent out to your delegates and are available in the

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02476 696679

Bulk orders

Order NOW for collection at the ADM

Thinking ahead to the New Year and the 'Introduction to Beekeeping' courses you will be running – you may want to purchase a bulk order of some of the BBKA Special Edition Series Booklets or the BBKA Guide to Beekeeping 2nd Edition book.

members' area of the website under 'compliance'. This meeting is the policy making forum for the BBKA and I encourage you to have a look at what is proposed. In particular the Trustees are proposing a new grievance procedure which would, if needs be, progress through on appeal to the use of binding arbitration using a professional arbitrator. This, the trustees feel would be a better final route than such matters being considered by upwards of 80 delegates at an ADM. At last year's ADM the trustees were given the go ahead to proceed with conversion of the BBKA to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This is a much more suitable vehicle for an organisation of the BBKA's size where we own property and employ staff. The final version of this CIO document will be put the delegates for approval at the meeting. I would encourage you to feed your views through to your association delegate in good time for the meeting in January.

YOU WILL FIND THE PROPOSITIONS HERE

Special Editions

The BBKA has created special A4 laminated sheets showing how to take three actions in our apiary, the Bailey Comb Change, a Shook Swarm and a Pagden swarm control. These were the product of Wendy Maslin who again gave her expertise without charge to the BBKA.

The cost is £1.00 each and they are two sided, a visual instruction then overleaf the written instructions. This allows you to take the sheets to the Apiary without fear of the sheet blowing away, any propolis or bee poo that gets on the sheets can be easily wiped off when the task is done. They are also a very good educational tool at the local branches, for beginners or even in some cases for experienced beekeepers.

Exams Forthcoming major change to our exams. In the interests of becoming more inclusive and removing barriers for some people, the Exam Board has decided to remove the requirement that you must have a pass in the Basic Assessment in order to take the written modules.

The change will probably be introduced from late next year....

We still fully support the Basic Assessment and want to encourage as many members as possible to take it. It is the start of the path to becoming a fully qualified beekeeper. However, we recognise that there are some members who will always find it difficult or even impossible to take their Basic because e.g. they may be severely allergic to bee venom. So, it is really for exceptional circumstances.

Candidates for all BBKA exams still need to be members of the BBKA. If you wish to take any of the practical exams you will still need the Basic.

General Husbandry Training We are very pleased to announce that the BBKA Education and Husbandry



If so please give us call on 02476 698620 – we can take your order and bring it with us to the ADM for collection – this cuts out the postage costs. All items must be paid for by either credit/debit card when placing the order. These prices are for 10 copies of each book/booklet and over:

BBKA Guide to Beekeeping
2nd Edition £12.00 each
BBKA News – In the Apiary
£3.00 each

BBKA News - Honey Bee
Anatomy £3.00 each

BBKA News – Feeding Honey
Bees £3.00 each

BBKA News – Flower Families
for Forage £3.00 each
BBKA News - Swarming
£3.00 each

BBKA News – General
Husbandry £8.00 each
BBKA News - Advanced
Husbandry £8.00 each
**Order NOW for collection
at the ADM**

Thanks to Ken (a trustee for 7 years and he has really made a difference to our Education programme) his dedication and service to the BBKA will be sorely missed, also to Simon Cavill who is now standing down after three years although he has agreed to organise the English team for IMYB

Committee will again provide support to those who plan to take the General Husbandry (GH) Assessment in near future. The training is running between January and June 2019, and will be facilitated by a team of six Master Beekeepers who are also GH assessors, in the following locations:

Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

23rd and 24th March 2019 - Theory

8th June 2019 - Apiary

Epsom, London

2nd and 3rd March 2019 - Theory

11th May - Apiary

Sheffield, Yorkshire

27th and 28th April 2019 - Theory

9th June - Apiary

The programme of 20 hours will cover both practical and theoretical aspects of the General Husbandry assessment, aiming to give the participants an understanding of what the assessment entails and what they need to do in order to be successful.

The candidates are required to hold the BBKA Basic Certificate, and to be eligible to take the GH assessment in 2019 or 2020. Course fee £90.

For more information or to subscribe, please contact Marin Anastasov, NDB manastassov@aol.com

Asian Hornet and your Insurance

cover With the prediction that next year we will have more sightings of the Asian Hornet we have consulted with our insurers to confirm what cover we have if we are Asian Hornet Hunting. Although this is not really a beekeeping activity although it is important to all beekeepers and other conservationists. Below is an extract of that response.

- **It is high risk**
- **It appears that it might be starting to grow into much more regular national activity**
- **This would depart from main Beekeeping activity**
- **Such activity might not be exclusively undertaken by beekeepers which could get very complicated**
- **Many are at a height which is effectively excluded from the insurance cover.**
- **Dangers have already been highlighted with the incident of a Jersey Beekeeper where a member of the public was attacked when a nest was disturbed and suffered an anaphylactic shock and almost lost his life.**
- **Premiums over the past three years have been reduced by over 50% aided by low claims, one claim for a serious incident could reverse this. Two or three incidents could cause irreparable damage to the BBKA insurance record and premiums/subscriptions.**
- **By restricting the activities to those approved and mandated by the BBKA Board of Trustees (which as**

again for us in 2019 after his recent success in France last year.

Forum

<https://bbkaforum.co.uk/>

The BBKA forum is a welcoming friendly place to come and discuss bees and beekeeping. With new conversations being added all the time with topics such as 'Advice on finding a site, mouse guards and chicken wire!

Spring Convention - Microscopy 2020

From 2020 the Exam Board and the Spring Convention Committee hope to work together to hold the BBKA Microscopy Assessment at the Spring Convention. It will depend on availability of Assessors and facilities but we think it is feasible. It cannot take place at the 2019 Spring Convention because there is insufficient time to allow candidates to prepare their pollen slides because these have to reflect bee plants across the year. So, we hope to hold it at the 2020 Spring Convention if all goes well and the assessors agree.

Recyclable Wrapping for the BBKA News

The Editor of the BBKA, Sharon Blake has researched different wrappings and has experimented with some methods of delivery. The best option is to use a potato starch wrapper when the current stocks of wrapping have been exhausted. The potato starch wrapping is more expensive than the one currently used so the cost

we understand, are incidents occurring in an apiary) would ensure that there is cover when it is needed.

May we suggest that if you intend to take an active part in Asian Hornet Hunting that you ensure that your own household insurance gives you the insurance cover you need.

New Category of Membership - School & Educational Establishments (SEEs)

One of the propositions that will be voted on by your delegate at the ADM is whether or not to allow a new category of BBKA membership. At present branches have 5 categories of BBKA membership they can use - Registered, Partner, Country, Junior or Honorary. A lot of branches have contacted us about a school, after-school club, brownie pack or youth group that they are working with, who want to become branch members, but the branch doesn't know what category to join them as. Hence the BBKA is proposing a School & Educational Establishment category. One person from eg a school would be the contact point receiving BBKA News Magazine and have access the new website for '[Bees in the Curriculum](#)' which has lesson plans and general information about the wonderful world of bees. The cost for this membership would be the same as for a registered member.

Most schools who contact us for help do not want to keep bees themselves but would love to have a closer relationship with their local beekeeping group who might go into school to talk about their bees, show the children their suit and equipment or perhaps an observation hive. Branches who are working with schools in this way have reported to us how rewarding it is.

will increase but we feel that we should proceed with the changeover to remove plastic wrapping from our magazine. Another alternative is to use a paper envelope but in order to keep the weight below 100g for postage costs, the dimensions of the magazine would need to be trimmed. We are asking the delegates at the ADM to vote on what to do.