



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

Although we have just about escaped the worst of winter (so far), this time of year is always a nervous one for beekeepers. It's hard to know how well a colony is doing, but on a warm day, the sight of bees taking cleansing flights, or better yet, collecting pollen gives some indication that the colony is OK. If you feel the need to feed, it's common to put on fondant, though some may be thinking of stimulative feeding with sugar and pollen substitute. Try to get it as near the cluster as you can, and remember to remove any that is left, before you start adding honey boxes in April.

Whilst we are in "worry mode", the Asian, or yellow-legged, or dark hornet should be right at the top of your list of things to learn about in 2019. The alternative names indicate that the beekeeping community is trying to find a name that will best discriminate between the invader (*Vespa velutina*), and our native hornet, *Vespa crabo*. There's more on page 3, but many people worry that 2019 will be as big a turning point for

beekeeping as 1992, when varroa mites were first recognised in apiaries across England.

More than 25 years later, we are still discovering the reasons why varroa became such a nuisance to European bees.

Recent [academic work](#) demonstrates that varroa actually feed on the "fat bodies" of adult bees, rather than just using them as an in-hive transport network. In the short term, this discovery merely reinforces the need to reduce varroa loads in hives before the winter bees are raised. However, it will

also change the way that scientists who are developing management regimes for varroa reduction will think about targeting the parasite.

Having dwelt on some negative aspects of beekeeping, let's finish on a positive note, as we look forward to Lauren Kennedy of BBCT explaining how concerted action along the Kent coastline can help wild bee numbers. Her talk on Wednesday promises to be interesting and should offer tips for how we can all help support local bee populations. I hope to see you there. Adrian

Indoor Meeting

Making a Buzz for the Coast

All invited

Whitefriars Management Suite

Wed 6th February

7.30-9.30pm

Details on p2

CBKA Officers

Chairman:

Michael Roberts

1 Orchard Street
Canterbury CT2 8AP
07874 631890

Treasurer and Membership:

Joan McAllister

42 Canterbury Road
Lydden, Dover
CT15 7ER
07824 668042

Secretary & Newsletter Editor:

Adrian Davis

24 The Grove
Deal CT14 9TL
07816 975286

Committee Members

Stuart Andrews
Julian Audsley ([courses](#))
David Cockburn
Simon Daniell
Dougal Hendry
Maggie McKenzie
Janet McDonald
Magdalene Mei Halkes
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

FEBRUARY 2019

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

2019

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
Sat April 06	Apiary Meeting, Palmsted Wood, 2-4pm. Assuming weather is good, we will make a first Spring inspection
Sat May 04	Bee safari
Sat May 25	Meet the public – BeeDay at Whitefriars (to be confirmed)
Sat June 01	Apiary meeting, Jan's place. Queen rearing preparations

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

Making a Buzz for the Coast

Wednesday 6th February 2019, 7.30-9.30pm

Whitefriars Conference room, Canterbury



Lauren Kennedy of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust is coming to talk to us about the "Making a Buzz for the Coast" project. This exciting and ambitious project spans 135 miles of Kent's coastline from Dartford to Deal, and focuses on restoring and creating habitat for Kent's wild bees, especially the Shrill carder bee (*Bombus sylvarum*).

One of the primary aims of Making a Buzz for the Coast will be to safeguard rare bee populations by creating and restoring habitat and linking isolated populations together through the creation of flower-rich 'stepping stones' and habitat along the coast. Habitat and bee surveys will be an essential part of the project to help us build better data, evaluate our activities and monitor bee populations around the coast.

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

From Your Committee

Meetings early in the year have a lot to discuss, and January's meeting was no exception. Some of the topics are called out as separate items below, and here are some of the key points of discussion.

Membership numbers are somewhat down (currently 68.v.87 in 2018). We will be doing a bit of phoning around for last reminders, and to discover if we are overlooking anything that we should be doing.

We've confirmed most of the year's schedule, which can be found on our Google [Calendar](#) (or on our website [here](#)). The pattern will remain much as it was last year, with monthly branch meetings, and 6 "Meet the public" events through late Spring to the Autumn to educate, inform and sell our honey crops.

Julian and Adrian would like to offer some coaching to anyone who has been keeping bees for at least 1 year, and would like to prepare to be assessed for the BBKA Basic Certificate in beekeeping husbandry. The "Basic" asks you to demonstrate the skills you apply to manage a hive, and will hold no fear for anyone who has already attended an introductory course run by either Julian or Dougal. Applications need to be sent off before the end of February, so if you are interested, please [email Julian](#).

Finally, we've tried to identify committee members who can step in, should anyone become indisposed, through family commitments, work or similar.

Asian/Yellow-legged/Dark Hornet

There continues to be a regular stream of information in the beekeeping press about the arrival in mainland Britain of *Vespa velutina*, the Asian or Yellow-legged or Dark Hornet. BBKA is providing some leadership in this space, and KBKA have asked all branches to identify members who will form an Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT), across the county. Jan Soetaert and Dougal Hendry have volunteered to do this for our branch.

The yellow-legged hornet a ferocious predator of honeybees (especially in late summer) and other pollinators, but it has also gained a reputation for hospitalising people who stumble upon its nests. Colonies have now spread all the way to Calais, and individuals were spotted last year at Dungeness. It is that close to us!

In the short term, the effort will be focused on education and monitoring. As you will have seen from our programme, we are dedicating our March meeting to discussion on this topic, based around a talk from a Kent beekeeper who spent some time in Jersey late last summer helping with the tracking of Asian hornet nests.

This topic is something we all need to pay attention to, so please try to join us at the March meeting; any questions/comments/possible sightings should be communicated to the AHAT by email to hornet@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

Palmsted Apiary

We've been running Palmsted as a branch apiary since 2016, with various management plans in place. What seems to work best is a single point of contact, or Apiary Manager, to orchestrate activities through the season. This year, Adrian Davis has volunteered to take on this role – but it will only work if lots of branch members offer to help, at least on an occasional basis.

Jan and Adrian have undertaken an inventory of our equipment at Palmsted, and are seeking to acquire additional equipment to get us ready for the season. Unfortunately, Thornes had sold out of the boxes we wanted, so we are hoping that a member is going to one of the two big tradeshow of the Spring, to take advantage of the discounts that are on offer. We have a smallish order that would easily fit in the footwell of a car!

Bee TradeX: 9th March, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire [website](#)

BBKA Spring Convention: 13-14 April, Newport Shropshire, [website](#)

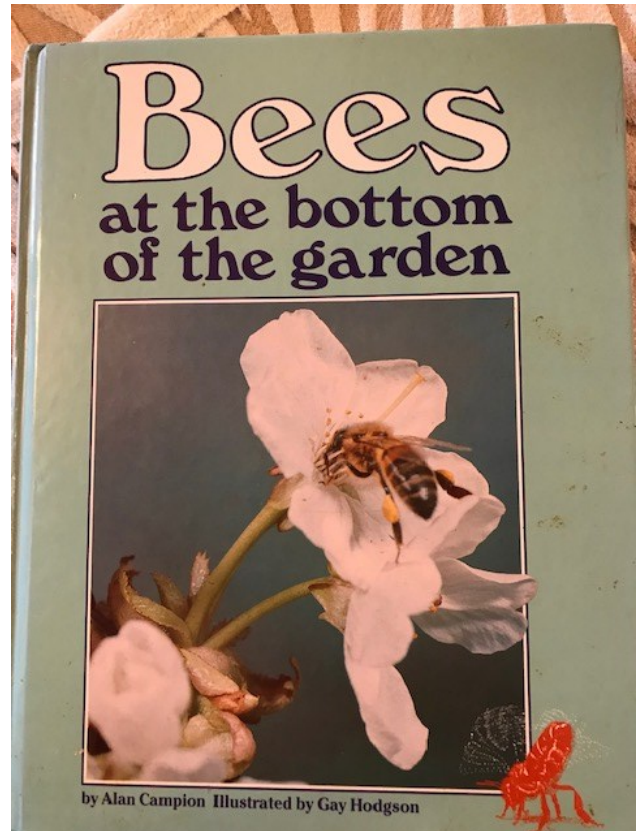
BOOK REVIEW

While many book reviews focus on recent publications this book was first published over 30 years ago: 'Bees at the Bottom of the Garden' By Alan Compion , Illustrated by Gay Hodgson (first published 1984 and revised in 2001).

This is a recommended book for anyone wanting to sit the BBKA module exams but for those thinking about getting into beekeeping or those who have recently acquired bees I would say this is a delightful and very helpful book. It is a short introduction which covers all the basics and is beautifully illustrated - not just a nice book with pictures (I like books with pictures!) but the illustrations are immensely helpful for the basic techniques of, for example, the process of carrying out an artificial swarm, or making up frames. I have taken it a couple of times to the apiary with the page open at 'carrying out an artificial swarm' and followed the diagrams provided.

The book begins with an introduction to the honey bee and a description of equipment needed to keep bees and then describes a year of beekeeping with the relevant issues. The age of the first edition copy is most evident in the section on varroa which begins 'we hope that none of us in the British Isles will ever see the varroa mite on our own bees.' I suspect the later edition will have different advice! I got an online second hand purchase for £0.01 and have used it a lot and enjoyed it. It's certainly not an in depth guide for experienced beekeepers, but for those who want to have clear, concise basic advice accompanied by charming illustrations I would recommend it.

Janet McDonald



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS CALENDAR



I had an idea that we could gather photos from the beekeeping year from members of Canterbury beekeepers to make a calendar at the end of the year. I've done similar projects with different groups and the results are fun and inexpensive. Sooooo.... this means a supply of photographs from every month of the year being gathered so that the best ones can be used to make our calendar. Please can you send me your snaps - no need to be an award winning photographer - just mobile phone snaps of what is happening in your apiary to add to our joint collection over the year. Send by email to janet.mcdonald@btinternet.com I'm sure there must be a few snowy hive photos to start us off?

Janet McDonald



Positive Thinking

January, 2019



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

Welcome!

The New Year is here and our ADM has already taken place. More on that below. Here's to a wonderful year in beekeeping

-Margaret Wilson, Chair of the BBKA

The Annual Delegates Meeting (ADM)

The day started quite well, with everyone in good spirits, there was a change this year in the set up, all Trustees sat facing the delegates, so that if questions were asked the Trustee was in a position to answer and face the person who raised the question, it seemed to work very well, Leigh Sidaway was on this table too and was able to advise the delegates on the progress of administration within the BBKA.

The first part of the ADM is generally confirming the events of the previous year and that they were accepted, this included the accounts and we were

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02476 696679

pleased to report that once again we had a slight surplus of £50K.

We then went on to the propositions which included the new CIO constitution and Discipline and Grievance procedures, although it was felt that some changes would enhance them, they were both voted through on condition that we could make changes as appropriate during the year and present them again next year. This shows the improvement of co-operation between delegates and trustees and makes such meetings much more sociable.

Although there were five vacancies on the board of trustees, there were only three candidates, two of which are already trustees, myself, Diane Drinkwater and a new trustee, John Canning from Cleveland, I am sure that he will be able to help in moving the BBKA forward in all the aims that we have.

I am sure that your own delegate will update you on the way the proposals were voted however if anyone need further clarification, please let me know. We have put the screen shots of the slides showing the results of the voting on the website in the members area. This is the link: <https://www.bbka.org.uk/adm-2019>

Next week we have the induction of Trustees and the allocation of Link Associations; some will remain the same but as we had two trustees leaving there may be some changes to cover the area's they supported. I am sure that as soon as the allocation is finished, you will be contacted by your Link Trustee, so please make sure that your secretary has your correct contact details, otherwise we will not be able to get in touch.

Trustees and Office staff

I show below the elected officers for the year 2019 in alphabetical order:

Stephen Barnes
Suzanne Bennett

*John Canning

Diane Drinkwater
Pam Hunter
Margaret Murdin (President)
Howard Pool
Gareth Morgan
Anne Rowberry
Margaret Wilson

*new Trustee

BBKA News wrapping

Sharon Blake our Editor of the BBKA News has spent many hours researching how to get the magazine delivered to you in an eco-friendly way after our supply of plastic runs out.

We can get them delivered in a potato starch envelope but this increases the cost considerably. This was passed at the ADM so we will go forward as soon as existing stocks have been used.

General Husbandry Training and Advanced Husbandry Training

The training of beginners across many associations has been very effective and there are consequently beekeepers who are now looking to further their skills and knowledge beyond the beginner level. We are very pleased to announce that the BBKA Education and Husbandry Committee will provide the local support to those who plan to take the General Husbandry or the Advanced Husbandry assessments in near future.

The courses aim to give the participants an understanding of what the assessments entail and what they need to do to be successful, including both theory and apiary training. The team of 6 Master Beekeepers will act as tutors and facilitators in London, Stoneleigh and Sheffield, between January and June 2019.

Please contact Marin Anastasov, NDB on manastasov@aol.com to register your interest in attending or to get further detail on the courses.

2nd Conference of Sustainable Beekeeping: A Future Without Imports. Saturday February 16th 2019, The Eden Project, Cornwall

This event has been organised in response to increased interest in native and heritage honey bees.

Also here are the members of Staff at BBKA headquarters with their phone extensions: You can contact them direct by calling 02476 696679 and then when prompted the extension numbers proceeded by #:

Leigh Sidaway

#2001 gen.manager@bbka.org.uk

General Manager

Sarah Snelson

#2003 sarah.snelson@bbka.org.uk

Deputy Manager, web shop and exams,

Claire Hartry

#2006 claire.hartry@bbka.org.uk

Website (including swarm collectors) Bees in the Curriculum, schools liaison,

Michelle Walsh

#2004 michelle.walsh@bbka.org.uk

Sales accounts and eReturn2 membership database,

Sarah Laidler

#2005 sarah.laidler@bbka.org.uk

Management Accountant, purchase accounts,

Alex Danks

#2002 ta.answers@bbka.org.uk

Office Administrator,

George Brown

#2007 george.brown@bbka.org.uk

Fund Raising.

We also have the following email addresses that are regularly monitored:

members@bbka.org.uk for all membership updates & enquiries

bbka@bbka.org.uk for general enquiries from public

International Meeting of Young Beekeepers 2019

Selection day on Sunday 10th March at the BBKA HQ at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire from 10:30 am

[Link for info.](#)

For more details and for booking tickets see <https://www.b4project.co.uk/upcoming-events>

Housekeeping

It is the time of year to monitor your bees and make sure that they have enough food to get through to Spring, whenever that may happen this year, I already have snowdrops and aconite flowering but it is too cold for the bees to take advantage, much the same as last year. Let's hope that we move towards spring in a gentle controlled manner and not as last year when we had that terrible cold snap after we have experienced a few weeks of milder weather.

University of Sussex - Final Year Research Project

Problems and Issues in Bee Keeping - please click here to help with this [5 min survey](#)

AHATS

With the help of Trustee Diane Drinkwater, the new Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT) map has now [gone live](#). Please note our deadline is the 31st of Jan to get your information in to the office. Please email gen.manager@bbka.org.uk with the details of your nominated coordinator.



BOOKING NOW OPEN!

It's that time of year again when we start recruiting young beekeepers for the 2019 IMYB which is in its 10th year and is being held in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, on the 3rd July - 7th July 2019. As before, we are looking for a team of three teen beeks aged between 12-17 with either the BBKA Basic or Junior Assessment (or equivalent experience) to come on an all expenses paid, life-changing trip. You will meet, work and learn from fellow young beekeepers from almost 30 countries around the world and a great time is guaranteed! Email Simon for further details and to register! simon.cavill@bbka.org.uk

Please visit our website at www.bbka.org.uk