



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

I heard that many members were able to do their first inspections last weekend – it's a pretty early Spring this year, at least by comparison to 2018, and having been in North America for 10 days, the growth spurts that plants such as oilseed rape (and my lawn grass!) have made is very evident. If your bees are close to OSR, then warm days will ensure that they really get going quickly now. You, of course, already have a plan of action for swarm prevention, and if that fails, then all the equipment to handle swarm control?! I see that Bee Equipment in Bridge has reinstated Saturday opening hours, for those "unexpected" purchases we all sometimes need to make – but the BBKA Spring Convention is usually the cheaper place to get additional equipment.

We hope to see a good turnout on Saturday for our first apiary visit of the year. Depending on numbers we will split up into groups, so that we can look at the bees, get some frames made up, and make sure that the apiary is ready for all eventualities. We defined some apiary objectives for the year,

which you can find on the apiary webpage [here](#): we'll hope to demonstrate comb changing, queen marking, queen replacement, and preparation of nucs, as the season progresses.

Look out for separate requests for help at the apiary – both beginners and more experienced beekeepers will be very welcome to help maintain our club apiary throughout the season, by attending as many of the weekly inspection visits as you can manage – and there will always be an

experienced person present to guide and coach the less experienced.

The BBKA have recently introduced a new system for membership management called eR2 – it shouldn't impact you directly, unless you want to be listed publicly as a swarm collector. So far 4 branch members have volunteered to do this - Joan and Jan are in the process of transferring the information so that they show up on the BBKA swarm collection map ([here](#)). If you want to be included on this, or would like to receive a swarm should one become available, then please fill out the swarm form on our website [here](#). Adrian

Apiary Meeting
**Inspection at
Palmsted
Wood
Bekesbourne
Sat 6th April
2.00-4.00pm
Details on p2**

CBKA Officers

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Michael Roberts
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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

APRIL 2019

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

2019

Sat April 06 **Apiary Meeting, Palmsted Wood, 2-4pm. Assuming weather is good, we will make a first Spring inspection**

Fri-Sun April 12-14 BBKA Spring Convention, Newport
<https://www.bbka.org.uk/Event/spring-convention-2019>

Sat April 12 West Sussex bee market and auction
<http://www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html>

Sat May 04 **Bee safari (tbc)**
Sat May 25 Meet the public – BeeDay at Whitefriars (to be confirmed)

Sat June 01 **Apiary meeting, Jan's place. Queen rearing preparations**
Sun June 16 Meet the public – Apple Festival at Brogdale

Sat July 6 **Apiary Meeting – Taranov swarm control**
Sun July 21 Meet the public – Cherry Festival at Brogdale

Sat Aug 3 **Apiary Meeting – Honey extraction and preparation for shows**

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>

APIARY MEETING

Palmsted Wood, Bekesbourne Lane,
Bekesbourne CT4 5DX

Saturday 6th April, 2-4pm

We hope that many of you can join us at Palmsted Wood this coming weekend. We need to assess the state of the hives, which should be thriving after the warm March – there are 4-5 hives (one was in dire straits when checked in March so may not have made it). Although the weather looks like it might be cool, we can make a quick inspection, do some oddjobs around the apiary, and have a natter about the season ahead.



Normal apiary hygiene rules apply – so please bring clean bee-suits, clean disposable gloves (no leather gloves), and wellington boots. If you need to borrow a beesuit, please email secretary@beekeepers.org.uk, so we can make sure to have an appropriate number of suits available.

Homework for everyone – note what is flowering in and around your own location: it's not just oil seed rape that bees visit in April! Bonus points if you actually see bees (honey or other species) feeding on the flowers, doubled if you can see pollen gathering, as that means they are raising brood.

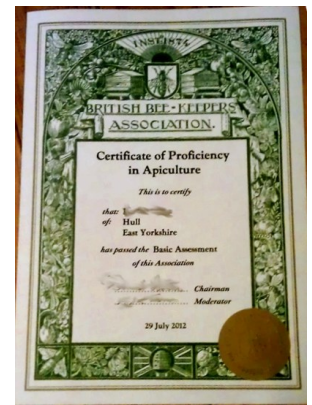
MAP: <https://goo.gl/maps/EA4SF5ugxTq>

The map marks the entrance to the wood – if you are coming down Bekesbourne Lane from the Canterbury direction, you will pass a 7-bar metal gate on the left, which is opposite a track. This is about 100yds from the main entrance, also on the left. The gate on the LHS of this driveway will be open for you to drive through. If you get to Highfield Care Home, you've missed the entrance! If you are arriving from the south/Patrixbourne, then it's 50yds past Highfield Care Home, on your right. Drive along the track for about 100 yds and park on the left. As a courtesy to our hosts, Sally and Chris, and to their neighbours, please make sure that you park inside the gate, so that no obstruction of the entrance place takes place.

PREPARATION FOR BASIC ASSESSMENT

Further to Julian's message in last month's newsletter (and the earlier email), the Basic Assessment study group will be meeting on Tuesday 9th April for a first meeting, at the Five Bells in Eastry (7pm). If you would like to join the group, and haven't already contacted Julian, please let him know ASAP.

julian@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk or text 07761 839 119.



TRIP TO ZAMBIA



Women from the Chobaana beekeeping cooperative hanging a top bar hive in their apiary (photo by Phillip Nsakilwa, SRDA, Zambia).

At the end of April Stuart Andrews will be visiting Zambia on behalf of Bees Abroad in order to continue the management of a beekeeping project initiated last year by the late Roy Dyche. The aim of the 3-year project is to introduce modern beekeeping to women's groups as a source of much needed income. For those interested in learning more about the project please contact Stuart at: stuartjandrews58@gmail.com or have a look at: <https://beeabroad.org.uk/projects/zambia>

HORNET DETECTION TRAPS IN KENT

The object being to spot areas that aren't covered

Everyone can see the map at <https://tinyurl.com/kenttrapsmap>

I'd like to have some more traps to plot on the map. Particularly in the empty spaces! If members have a trap out, I'd like to know (roughly) where it is, so it can be added to the map.

I need to know at least the postcode sector (postcode minus the last two characters), but in rural areas that can be a large area - so trusting me with a bit more info would be helpful - I am deliberately only publishing the approximate location. For Spring detection trapping, there's no point in putting traps in an apiary. A sunny spot at home, which can be monitored frequently is a much better bet.

The other Asian Hornet detection work that folks might do is to check their sheds, garages, barns etc for something that looks like a wasp's nest - but with DARK wasp-shaped insects. AH loves making its small Spring nest in the protection of man-made shelter!

The nest might only be the size of an egg to begin with (early April, now!) and populated only by the Queen herself. But it grows to be the size of a football and containing hundreds of hornets by late May (when they decamp to make an enormous nest, usually - but not always - in a treetop.)

The point of dealing with a Spring nest is that it is quick, easy and cheap compared to dealing with the colony later in the year. It requires getting the Queen, otherwise she'll just start again. However, because the Queen goes out foraging, the only way of ensuring that she is dealt with, is to tackle the nest either very early or very late in the day.

Douglas Hendry





Positive Thinking No. 19

March, 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

From Margaret Wilson, BBKA Chair

Information from Bee Health Advisory Forum

“Dear BHAF Members

I have been asked by Michelle Wilson – Head of APHA's Plant and Bee Services to inform you that following the retirement of Mike Brown on Friday the 8th February, we are pleased to announce the appointment of Julian Parker as the temporary Head of the National Bee Unit. This is a key role to ensure that NBU services are delivered and integrated within APHA, implementing recommendations from the Plant and Bee Health Review.

Julian began his new role on Monday February 11th 2019. Julian has held a variety of roles within the National Bee Unit over the past ten years, including most recently the National Bee Inspector. Julian's appointment ensures we can benefit from his previous subject and business experience “

Exams

When the exam papers are completed and sent in for marking, it is quite distressing for the markers to see that the candidate has not read the question properly, and will answer what they think is asked rather than answer the specifics of the question. Also additional information is added to the core question to expand the answer. This takes your time away from other questions.

If you could please just read the question at least twice before answering and then stick to the facts. In a ten point question you will generally find there are ten specific points you must cover. Mostly this happened in the Module One exams, this is probably because like myself taking the Beekeeping Exams is the first time you have taken any kind of test since leaving education and certainly for me that was a long time ago.

In 2020 it is hoped to have the Microscopy exams taken in the excellent facilities at Harper Adams, so to those wishing to take that exam, now is the time to start studying.

There is to be a new special edition magazine on Queen Rearing, which is anticipated to be ready for the Spring Convention. I think this is going to be a very popular edition, the more beekeepers who take up this function with their bees, the fewer queens we will need to import.

Other special editions in the line are one on wax and another on the healthy hive guide, these magazines are great because you can just pick up the one to give you all the information on your subject without

having to leaf through book. I like the books, to sit and read to keep me up to date but if I want to perform a particular function, the special edition is my choice.

Insurance

The office have been asked many times about insurance for Juniors, I would like to confirm that Junior members are insured with the BBKA insurance plan.

Your Honey Show

If you would like to advertise your Honey Show, please send the details to Claire.hartry@bbka.org.uk and Claire will put the details on the website, This may just get more members coming to enjoy your shows. There is no charge for this, so why not give it a try.

Adopt a Beehive

Many years ago Nicky Smith, owner of TwelvePR, approached the BBKA with the fundraising idea of Adopt a Beehive. We want to thank Nicky and her team for their work which has produced additional funds for BBKA sponsored research projects. Some of our members have written many articles for the Hive Talk newsletter which is sent out to 'adopters' and these have been greatly appreciated. Associations and Branches have promoted Adopt a Beehive by distributing leaflets at shows they attend and we thank you for your support and encouragement.

However, we have decided it is time for new ideas and the fundraising team are busy working on these and talking with potential sponsors. I will bring you more information once plans have been finalised. We will not be promoting or selling anymore Adopt packs from 1st April but we are of course carrying on for the next year to fulfil the scheme for those people who have already purchased Adopt.

Spring Convention

We are again approaching the spring convention, this gives you a chance to catch up with friends in a lovely atmosphere, the chance to listen to learned speakers, attend workshops and buy equipment at the Trade Show.

It appears that this is the last year when Harper Adams will be able to offer the depth of accommodation, we have till now enjoyed, so next year some members may have to book in local hotels.

Average attendance is only about 4.5% of the membership and from experience seem to be the same visitors each year with some new beekeepers coming along but not sustaining their visits year on year.

By comparison the Beetradox Exhibition which is just for one day and has limited speakers available and no workshops attracted 10% of members this year.

As we had agreed that we would accept the offer to have a BBKA stand at Beetradox this year, we took the Special Editions, members of the staff were on hand as were Trustees, to answer any questions, we also devised a questionnaire regarding the Spring Convention to find out if those at Beetradox went to the Spring convention and if not why not.

The result was enlightening, so we would like to extend those questions re the Spring Convention to the whole membership (or at least the 95.5% of members who do not go to the Spring Convention)

May I ask that you complete the simple questionnaire below and return this to Alex at Stoneleigh on ta.answers@bbka.org.uk. this will help us to give you what you want regarding lectures, workshops, trade show or location at the beginning of the beekeeping season.

Spring Convention - Questionnaire

Please scan this sheet with your answers and send to Alex Danks at BBKA, Stoneleigh
fa.answers@bbka.org.uk . Thank you !

Have you ever attended Spring Convention ? Yes / No

If yes – how many times have you attended : _____ (approximately)

What discourages you from attending Spring Convention? (you can choose more than one answer).

a) Cost of tickets

b) Distance to, or accessibility of Harper Adams, Shropshire

c) Not interested

d) Timing (ie Easter Holidays)

e) Lectures are repetitive (each year the content is the same or similar)

f) Other

Please add any other comments in the space below:

LASI SUMMER AND AUTUMN WORKSHOPS 2019

The Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects (LASI)



We have just put the details of our forthcoming workshops on-line now, and perhaps some of your members may be interested in attending one or more of these. We have 2 workshops on integrated varroa control, one on planting for bees and other flower-visiting insects, there is also one on how to decode the waggle dance and finally one exploring ivy, an amazing winter forage for many flower-visiting insects. The details are given on the link.

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/lasi/newsandevents/events>

Determining the Most Attractive Plants for Bees and other Flower Visitors

Saturday 13 July from 11:30 until 15:00

Bees and many insects visit flowers to gather nectar and pollen. One reason why bees and other flower-visiting insects have declined is because there are fewer flowers. However, not all flowers are equally good for insects, and some insects preferentially visit certain plant species. So which are the best flowers?

Integrated Varroa Management

Saturday 14 September from 11:30 until 15:00

Varroa mites are a serious problem to beekeepers. They harm honey bees directly and also spread virus diseases that can kill the whole colony. Until recently Varroa could be controlled using Apistan strips. However, Varroa are now resistant to Apistan. There are many alternative treatments but how effective are they, and how can they be combined to provide integrated control?

Integrated Varroa Management

Sunday 15 September from 11:30 until 15:00

Exploring Ivy: Autumn Food for Honey Bees and Flower-visiting Insects

Saturday 5 October from 11:30 until 15:00

Ivy is one of the most abundant and widely distributed UK plants. It is also native to most of Europe. Ivy is known for its distinctive leaves and for climbing on trees and walls. Less well known is the fact that ivy flowers, which bloom in autumn, are a major source of nectar and pollen for flower-visiting insects.

Decode the Honey bee Waggle Dance

Sunday 6 October from 11:30 until 15:00

Honey bees have sophisticated communication systems which they use to coordinate colony activities. The best known is the "waggle dance". Foragers who have located profitable flower patches make waggle dances back in the hive. These communicate the direction and distance of the flower patch to nestmate bees who follow the dance. In 1973 Karl von Frisch received a Nobel Prize for discovering the waggle dance. The waggle dance is one of the few scientific discoveries awarded a Nobel Prize that can be seen with the naked eye. The honey bee is the only animal that "tells you where it has been". This can be used in many ways by scientists. It can be used, for example, to investigate how flying insects measure distance. It can also be used to learn where honey bees are collecting food, and to study their foraging patterns and they vary with time.