



# CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

## EDITOR'S NOTES

Congratulations to Elizabeth Tee, Liza Jenkins, Robert Trickey and Peter Goddard, who all have been awarded the BBKA basic certificate of proficiency in apiculture. Well done all! We should also acknowledge Julian Audsley's role as teacher/mentor.

Many of you will have already taken a honey harvest, but if you are still to do this, don't forget that we have two extractors that are for hire at the very reasonable price of £5/day.

Magdalene Mei Halkes is tracking their locations, and we are finding that our FaceBook page is a good way for people to self-organise the pick-up/pass-on method of borrowing the equipment.

Once you have taken honey, now is a good time to treat for varroa with thymol based products such as Apiguard or ApiLife Var. You have to do it after the honey harvest, as thymol will taint any honey that is in the hive. Treatments based on formic acid – such as MAQS – don't have the same issue. It's getting late in the season for non-chemical varroa control (such as shook swarm or queen trapping), but whatever your

approach, do something. You can try to produce varroa resistant bees, but you will have to accept heavy colony losses (up to 90%) as you select for the resistant strains.

August is also the time to worry about wasps – and many of you will have experienced problems last year at this time. Reduce the entrances on all of your colonies to discourage wasp robbing, and ensure boxes are stacked squarely. Read more about entrances, on p6. Wasp trapping at this time of year is probably ecologically

acceptable – the wasp nests are dwindling having produced the queen wasps which will hibernate, so worker wasps are no longer collecting insects for the brood (who supply workers with sugar).

We should all be very attentive around the apiary for Asian Hornets – there's a few notes on p3, and you can also refer to our website [here](#). Hopefully through the summer, you've been getting some practice at identifying insects such as the [hornet hoverfly](#), which appear rather similar to the Asian Hornet, until you look closely. Adrian

Apiary Meeting

**Winter Preparations**

**Palmsted Wood**

**Bekesbourne**

**Sat 7<sup>th</sup> September**

2.00-4.00pm

Details on p2

## CBKA Officers

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Janet McDonald

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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

**AUGUST 2019**

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

### 2019

Tue Aug 13	Committee meeting, Duke of Cumberland, Barham, 7.30-9.30pm
Sat Aug 24	Complete applications for BBKA Microscopy Certificate (23/24 Nov 2019)
Sat Aug 31	Meet the public – BeeDay at Whitefriars
<b>Sat Sep 7</b>	<b>Apiary Meeting – Bekesbourne. Winter preparations</b>
Wed Sep 25	East Kent Ploughing Match, WEST COURT FARM, SHEPHERDSWELL, CT15 5PZ <a href="https://www.ekpma.co.uk/event">https://www.ekpma.co.uk/event</a>
Mon Sep 30	Complete applications to sit BBKA module exams (9 Nov 2019)
<b>Wed Oct 2</b>	<b>Indoor branch meeting</b>
Oct 19-20	Meet the public – Apple Festival at Brogdale
Sat Oct 19	DDBKA Honey Show, Shepherdswell Village Hall
Oct 24-26	National Honey Show , Sandown Park, Esher

You can get our calendar, either as a google calendar ([cantbees@gmail.com](mailto:cantbees@gmail.com)), or for other programmes using this URL: <https://calendar.google.com/calendar/ical/cantbees%40gmail.com/public/basic.ics>

## APIARY MEETING

At Palmsted Wood

Saturday 7 September, 2-4pm

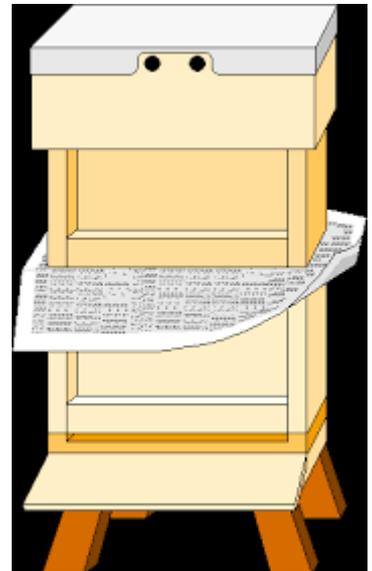
Palmsted Wood, Bekesbourne Lane, Bekesbourne CT4 5DX

We will be getting the hives ready for winter – with the honey taken off, August and September are critical times to ensure that the bees are healthy, and it's a good time to unite weaker colonies so that they can make the best of late summer foraging opportunities. A varroa treatment is typically applied in August/early September so that brood raised on the late summer flows (typically ivy) are exposed to less varroa-transmitted viruses - in particular deformed wing virus. Healthier brood now means healthier "winter bees", which have to live through the winter and forage in Spring to reboot the colony.

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](mailto:secretary@beekeepers.org.uk), so we can make sure to have an appropriate number of suits available.

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.





## BRANCH NEWS

### Brogdale

The summer season at Brogdale continued with the Cherry Festival on Sunday 21 July. We had a little more difficulty recruiting a full complement of helpers for the stall, but nevertheless, talks were given and we sold £387 of honey, raising £93 in sales of our Bekesbourne apiary honey, together with a modest commission on sales of members' honey. Thanks to Michael, Simon, Rebecca and John, David, Joan, Dougal and especially Maggie for the time commitment to ensure we had a good day.



We received a nice thank you letter from Georgia Cranwell, the events coordinator at Brogdale, who reported that a conspicuous quantity of cherries were eaten, in nice sunny conditions. Not all of the cherries were eaten by the Canterbury Beekeepers team!

Our next "meet the public" event will be in the precincts of Canterbury on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August, so look out for emails requesting help.

### Honey Extraction Meeting



We met at Debbie Burton's home at the end of

July to extract our honey. The plan worked well, as the weather was not conducive to visiting the bees for an inspection. Debbie generously gave us access to her garage, Dougal Hendry marshalled the honey extraction process and provided the motorized extractor; Andy King was the hired muscle for moving honey boxes, and Adrian tried to convince people that Honey Shows are a fun activity for any level of beekeeper. Everyone pitched in to uncap the frames. In total, we harvested approximately 140lb of honey, which if all sold at Brogdale prices, could yield £1000 gross, depending on how we package the honey.



### Notes on Asian Hornet

While it may seem as if the beekeeping year is slowing down, we are now in the period when we might expect to see hornets 'hawking' at bee hives. Therefore, please take a few minutes to improve your Asian hornet knowledge:

- 1) We all should be able to identify an Asian hornet. The free, 'Asian hornet Watch app' is available on both Apple and Android operating systems, and is well worth having.
- 2) Check you would see hornets if they are hawking within your apiaries. Asian hornets are harder to spot if they have access to the underside of the hive - they will only dart out in front of the colony to catch their victim. The easiest way to force the hornets to hawk in front of the colony is to pin some fabric, e.g. an old tea towel, across the front of the hive stand. This will also make them easier to spot as they will stand out nicely against a light background.

## THE WOMEN'S BEEKEEPING PROJECT, MONZE, ZAMBIA:

Stuart Andrews

Stuart is a project manager for the charity Bees Abroad, and in April-May this year spent time in Zambia working with a local non-governmental organization (NGO) to develop the beekeeping skills of subsistence farmers in the Monze District. Below is an extract from his report, the full version of which can be read by clicking on [this link](#).

### Introduction

I have just returned from Monze District, located in the Southern Province of Zambia, where I was helping to evaluate the first one-year phase of the project, initiated last year by the late Roy Dyché, and to launch the second one-year phase. I was also wanting to carefully assess the capabilities of our local partner there, the Sustainable Rural Development Agency (SRDA), a small NGO with whom Bees Abroad (BA) has successfully worked with in the past.

The main aim of the three-year project is to introduce modern beekeeping, using top-bar hives, to approximately 120 women in six groups as a source of much needed income. Each group will have been carefully selected following an interview process by SRDA together with representatives from the local Forestry Department.

The beneficiaries of the groups are all subsistence farmers, many of them are unmarried or widowed, with sole responsibility for the wellbeing of their households, which contain on average eight members. Monze District is recognised as one of the country's least developed districts in which the levels of poverty are very high. In recent years their situation has become even more precarious as a result of the reduced rainfall causing crop failure.

### The ongoing drought

As I drove around during my stay I could quite clearly see evidence of the drought and its adverse effects on crop production. As with many smallholder farmers in the district our group members tend to grow only maize, a crop which is particularly dependent on rainfall.

Articles in the local newspapers talked about a significant reduction in crop production (38% over the past eight years) and the need for the country to diversify and adopt new methods of agriculture.

One particular article caught my attention which talked about "embracing crop diversification" and highlighted the story of a local farmer that

had not only started to grow other crops such as cassava and millet rather than just maize but was also involved with beekeeping and fish farming.



During my stay I had conversations with clinicians working for local hospitals and aid workers who were very interested in Bees Abroad's project, especially as the success of such an enterprise was not so directly dependent on rainfall. Quite clearly, as well providing an income for our beneficiaries, the production of honey would become more important in terms of food security within the rural population.

### SRDA

Having not met with Phillip Nsakilwa before, I felt that it was important to meet with the director of our local partner at the earliest opportunity to ensure that our working relationship got off to a good start.

I shouldn't have worried, as both Phillip and I enjoyed a most productive and relaxed first meeting arranged to briefly review Phase One and to go over itinerary arrangements for the week.

### Phase One: a summary of main features

My evaluation is based not only from observations made during my stay but on the very full reports that Phillip has sent me throughout the year.

Over the next two days I visited the apiaries of the two phase one groups: Kabwenbala and Chobaana East

..... continued at [this link](#)

## ENTERING HONEY SHOWS

Whilst everyone has different reasons for keeping bees, producing high quality local honey must be amongst the most popular reasons. Honey Shows encourage us to think carefully about the production and presentation of honey, and taking the time to get your honey ready for show will help you become a better honey producer. They are also part of the rich tapestry of country life, along with flower and produce shows, County Shows, and the WI. And of course, they are another excuse for us to talk about beekeeping with like-minded individuals!

Here's a list of the upcoming shows you might be interested to enter.



### Thanet Honey Show

Part of Acol Horticultural Show (Saturday 21st September)

Typical schedule - otherwise known as the Competition Class list and the all-important Rules, as well as the timetable. ([link](#))

### 2019 East Kent Ploughing Match

September 25, 2019

West Court Farm, Shepherdswell, CT15 5PZ

Despite what is shown on the website, they do have a section for a jar of set honey, and a jar of clear honey (sections L and M in Class 8)

([link](#))

### Apple Festival at Brogdale

19-20 October

Not a show, but Canterbury Beekeepers will be selling honey to the public

<https://www.brogdalecollections.org/festivals-events/>

### DDBKA Honey Show

Saturday October 19th  
Shepherdswell Village Hall

[Here](#) is the schedule from last year's show – they don't change much from year to year. And [here](#) is a report on a recent show.

### National Honey Show

24-26 October 2019, Sandown Park, Esher

Last year's schedule for illustrative purposes is [here](#).

[Kent Classes](#), [National classes](#)



## PREPARING FOR A SHOW

Here are a couple of useful reference articles from the web, which might help, if you have a competitive streak.

### Bedfordshire BKA

Preparing Honey and other exhibits for Showing  
Your aim is to get the judge to look at your honey – it must have no obvious faults which allow the judge to put it aside. Once over this hurdle you are in with a good chance of a prize because so many other people make the mistakes you will find described below.

<https://www.bedsbka.org.uk/honey-show/preparing-for-the-honey-show/>

### Petersfield and District BKA

This page contains advice on how to prepare your entries to stand out on the show bench to give a better chance of producing winning entries. At present only advice on honey entries appear here; it does cover set and clear honeys, with a few notes on frames and sections.

<http://www.petersfieldbeekeepers.org.uk/honey-show/preparing-for-a-honey-show/>

## REDUCE YOUR HIVE ENTRANCES TO DETER ROBBERING BY WASPS

Dougal Hendry

### The problem

Towards the end of the summer, worker wasps are desperate for carbs - like sugar - which is why they go for your picnic jam sandwich at this time of year. And your honey-filled hive is literally a honeypot for them.

They can battle their way in, killing as many bees as they have to (potentially destroying the colony - a real problem with a nuc), or try to sneak in individually. Whichever way, they are a menace to both your bees and your honey.

Even after you have taken your harvest, the wasps are still a threat to your colony's winter stores - if they take that honey, the colony will soon be starving.

Additionally, being attacked and robbed by wasps will make your bees behave more defensively - which you might mistake for "aggressive" behaviour during an inspection!

At this point in their season, the worker wasps have done their life's work and are soon going to starve to death now that their own colony has raised wasp queens for next year - the only individuals that overwinter. Starving makes the worker wasps really desperate, so you need proper deterrence to keep them at bay.

### So, what can you do?

You can buy special wasp-confusing entrances. Some say you can baffle the wasps but not the bees by placing a sheet of glass in front of the entrance (not too safe in a strong wind!)

But I've found it enough to simply reduce the entrance right down, so that it is 'busy' with bees. The wasps won't dive into a scum of bees at the hive entrance. So I just reduce the entrance, if necessary right down to "one finger" size, so that it is really very easy for the bees to defend - or rather, so hard for the wasps to attack that they don't!

### OK, but how do you reduce the size of the reducing-block entrance?



I do it with sponge strips.

A single sub-pound pack of scouring sponges yields more than enough for the average beekeeper.

Just be sure to cut away the scouring pad - its "wooly" material snags and offends the bees, who will waste lots of effort trying to remove it. Save them the hassle, cut it off for them.



The sponge strips can then be poked into the entrance with a hive tool. Just be sure that you leave the bees with ONE smaller entrance - dividing the entrance, so the bees can go either side of the sponge is a bad idea. The bees are most relaxed when they have one, and only one, entrance to defend. You can reposition the sponge(s) as often as you like, changing the size of the entrance depending on the bee-traffic and the wasp-interest.

If you have a nuc with an entrance disc, you can turn the disc so that the entrance is partially obstructed. The vitally important thing to remember is to then securely 'pin' the disc so that it cannot accidentally rotate. I find taller, longer "map pins" much better for this sort of thing than standard drawing pins.

It is also worth remembering the wasps whenever you have the hive open in late summer or autumn. Be as quick as you can, because when the hive is open, that is an enormous second entrance that you are creating. And more than ever, avoid dripping honey anywhere in the apiary ...

Do wasp traps do more harm than good, by attracting wasps into your apiary? That's a question for a discussion over a few pints of beer during the winter. People do have different views! For now, just reduce those entrances and make it easier for your bees to do better.





**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**

## BBKA QUEEN REARING COURSES

The BBKA is organising courses for beekeepers, with at least three years' experience, at several venues around the country:

Warwickshire: September 14th & 15th at BBKA Apiary, Stoneleigh

Cleveland: September 17th & 18th, venue to be confirmed

Details of other courses will be posted on the website when confirmed.

The whole course is focussed on the General Husbandry standard with the objective of each attendee going home able to run their queen rearing matched to their needs. It will not be prescriptive and will enable the attendees to make up their own mind about the method they would like to employ. It will not focus on grafting, although it is a method that everyone should at least have tried at some point.

The course will be theory plus time in the apiary when different methods of queen rearing will be discussed and demonstrated. There will also be several queen related manipulations, again to the General Husbandry standard.

There will be a maximum of twelve on each course and there will be two tutors. The lead tutor will be Sean Stephenson who has a lot of experience in queen raising and delivering courses.

The cost of the course will be £75 which will covers coffee, tea and biscuits but please bring a packed lunch with you. The timing for the courses will be confirmed later but will start on Saturday morning and end on Sunday afternoon.

If you would like to apply for a place on the course please apply through the website shop:

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/pages/shop/department/training-courses>

or contact the BBKA office on 02476 696679.

We have received an email from the National Bee Unit regarding European Foulbrood and thought you would be interested in having this information to share with your members.

Please note that two of our trustees, Anne Rowberry and Pam Hunter, both attend meetings of the Bee Health Advisory Forum to represent the interests of the members of the BBKA. If you want to contact either Anne or Pam their emails are: [anne.rowberry@bbka.org.uk](mailto:anne.rowberry@bbka.org.uk) and [pam.hunter@bbka.org.uk](mailto:pam.hunter@bbka.org.uk)

Regards

Leigh Sidaway

General Manager

**Email received from National Bee Unit – 24 July 2019**

In light of recent concern expressed over the potential future legal status of European Foulbrood, we wanted to clarify the current EU rules, and our understanding of upcoming new rules under EU Regulation 2016/429, the 'Animal Health Law'.

Currently, European Foulbrood is listed in Annex B of COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 92/65/EEC, meaning national programmes may be recognised by this Directive and, where freedom from this disease exists, trade measures can be put in place stopping trade in bees. This means that where a country is recognised in legislation as free of EFB, bees cannot be consigned to that country. However, in the 27 years since Directive 92/65 was enacted, no country has submitted to the EU a case for being free from EFB.

It is for this reason that under the new Animal Health Law, and its tertiary legislation, this option is being removed. Under the proposed new rules, no country can declare itself free of EFB. Similarly, no country can put in place trade restrictions on the basis of EFB.

IMPORTANTLY, however, countries can choose to operate their own control programme for EFB, and to make it notifiable within their own territory. There is some flexibility afforded by Article 171 of the new Animal Health Law, whereby national measures may be introduced for non-listed diseases. On this basis, and under this rule, Defra and devolved administrations have no intention to de-list EFB in the UK. EFB will continue to be notifiable in the UK and will be controlled by the bee inspectors in line with current operations.

We hope this clarifies the situation. Please be assured that any change to the position in the UK would be subject to a full consultation with all beekeeping stakeholders.

Regards  
Defra Bee Health Policy

Kind regards,  
Becky

**Rebekah Clarkson**  
Healthy Bees Plan Project Manager  
National Bee Unit

Note from Adrian/Dougal: this email may appear a little arcane, but be aware that the bacterial infection of bees that is commonly known as European Foulbrood continues to be a problem in Kent, especially around Kingston and Barham. The key comment is "*EFB will continue to be notifiable in the UK and will be controlled by the bee inspectors in line with current operations.*"