



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS

A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITOR'S NOTES

If you read the textbooks and national beekeeping magazines, you'll be aware that the beekeeping calendar suggests that your beehives should have been put into their winter configuration by early September. East Kent has had a nice warm September, and the bees have been very active, but you should now be in the final stages of winter preparations, with queen excluders removed, any feeding finished, and entrances made small and mouseproof. Those of you with known woodpecker, badger or deer problems will be taking additional precautions.

Having said all that, as I was doing these things last weekend on a 19.C day, I was able to count 7 frames of brood in one hive – the combination of warm weather and a good honey flow from common ivy means that the bees have taken the opportunity to do one more big egg-laying spurt, and therefore giving me another few thousand *diutinus* or winter bees, to take the colony through to next April.

As we tidy away the excess supers into our bee-sheds,

the calendar swings into winter mode. Memberships subscriptions became due on 1st October, so we encourage you all to renew your memberships soon. See p3-4 for more details. It's also the time for Honey Shows and AGMs.

We have an entirely light-hearted honey tasting meeting on Wednesday, before the slightly more serious Honey Shows run by Dover and District BKA, and then the National Honey Show towards the end of October. Please don't feel intimidated about entering Honey Shows – the worst

that happens is you don't win first prize, and there's a good chance you'll get some tips about how to prepare honey for show (or for consumption) whilst you are looking at other exhibits.

Finally, we are gearing up for the Brogdale Apple Festival on 19-20 October. If the weather is kind to us, we typically sell a lot of honey at this two-day event – which is good, given that we have over 140lb of summer honey from Palmsted! As usual, we will need plenty of volunteers to help run the stand, so see p3 for how to get involved.
Adrian

Apiary Meeting

Indoor Meeting

Whitefriars Management Suite

Canterbury

Wed 9th October

7.30-9.30

Details on p2

CBKA Officers

Chairman:

Michael Roberts

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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

OCTOBER 2019

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

2019

Wed Oct 9

Indoor branch meeting – Honey Tasting, 7.30-9.30pm Whitefriars management suite

Wed Oct 17

Committee meeting, 7.30-9.30pm, Duke of Cumberland, Barham

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

Wed Nov 6

Indoor branch meeting – AGM, and a talk about training beekeepers in Zambia by Stuart Andrews, , 7.30-9.30pm Whitefriars management suite

Sat Nov 30

Canterbury Beekeepers Christmas party, 7-10pm, St Marys Hall, Harbledown

2020

Wed Jan 8

Swarms: collection, management and prevention, 7.30-9.30pm Whitefriars management suite

Wed Feb 5

invited speaker (bumblebees, or beespace, or treatment free beekeeping) , 7.30-9.30pm Whitefriars management suite

Wed Mar 4

Palmsted apiary planning, 7.30-9.30pm Whitefriars management suite

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

Honey tasting - and other honey and wax products.

Wednesday 9th October 2019, 7.30-9.30pm
Whitefriars Conference room, Canterbury

Please bring along a small jar of your honey from this year. We will taste and informally vote on the best honey. There will also be a display of other products which people have made with honey or wax during the year, so please also bring along anything which you have made - cakes, drinks, candles, polish - with a sign explaining what the product is, and a recipe if appropriate.



This is intended as a fun meeting to share ideas of products and relish the variety of honey gathered during the season - not at all high-powered judging! Look forward to seeing you all there - especially new comers to the club.

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

Meet the Public Events

Our last event of the year is the two-day Apple Festival at Brogdale on 19-20 October. We will need plenty of volunteers to help out on the two days. If you can help out, please let us know via this [web-form](#). Even if you can't make it over the Faversham, we'd like to put on a great show of honey, so if you have any high-quality honey, comb or wax to sell, do let us know.

Membership Renewal

On 1st October, Kent BKA subscriptions became due for the 2019-2020 season. As usual, we have an online form that you can use to submit your personal information digitally. You will still have to make your own arrangements for payment – either with a BACS transfer (preferred) or a cheque. The full details of membership rates are shown on page 4. Submit your renewal form by navigating to this page:

<https://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/membership-renewal-2019-20/>

You will be asked to confirm that we use your email details for management of branch activities, primarily by officials of the branch.

If you are joining as a friend by participation with the winter/Spring training courses run by Julian or Dougal, we encourage you to sign up (no extra fee!), so that we can get your consents documented. In exchange, this will ensure that you get all the branch communications sent to you electronically.

Committee/AGM

The branch AGM will soon be upon us. We are always keen to get enthusiastic people join us on the committee, so if you are interested and want to know more, please contact any member of the committee – you can email us all at committee@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

Bee Calendar

Well done to Andy King for remembering about the article in the February Newsletter about creating a Canterbury Beekeepers calendar 2020 and sending some photos. As yet these are the only ones received - so please - dig out all the bee related photos you've taken this year - hives

in your garden, club gatherings, bumble bees in the wild, swarm collections - the more the better - send me as many and as varied as you can by the closing date of **30th October , 2019** and if we receive sufficient then I'll put them together into a calendar to sell in the club. Send in any format - and permission, please, to use if any under 18's in photos.

Janet McDonald
(janet.mcdonald@btinternet.com)

Winter Schedule

You will notice from the diary on p2, that we have a draft programme of monthly events through to March next year, but we have yet to schedule a speaker for the indoor meeting in February. If you have **any suggestions for topics** you would like to see covered, please let the committee know, whilst there is still an opportunity to add to the programme. In the meantime, look out for an invite to our Christmas party, on Saturday 30 November in Harbledown.

Neighbourhood Groups

Did you know we have run informal groups to support beekeepers locally? Because we have members from Folkestone to Thanet, and from Faversham to Deal, it's nice to be able to call on local support, whether for winter oxalic acid treatments, or to help each other with a problem such as moving hives.

We currently run groups in Canterbury, Folkestone, Grove Ferry, Womenswold and Deal. If you are not currently part of one of these groups (or even if you are), please contact localgroup.leaders@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk to be put in contact with your local convenor.

Asian Hornet – follow [this link](#)

With the news this week that a fully formed Asian hornet nest was found and destroyed at the top of an oak tree in Dorset, no one should be in any doubt that we need to get the message out. Print out the information that was published in September's newsletter and pin it up at work. Download the "Asian Hornet Watch" app on your phone, and follow the "See it, Snap it, Send it" mantra.

KENT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION (KBKA)

Canterbury Branch



RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP between 1st Oct 2019 to 30th Sept 2020
or for NEW MEMBERS applying before 31st Dec 2019

www.kbka.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS *(not all benefits are available to all membership levels – see below)*

- Information and advice on beekeeping
- £10m third party public liability insurance
- £10m product liability insurance
- Bee disease insurance (BDI)
- Monthly magazines – Bee Craft and BBKA News
- Online resources - education/training, forum, etc.
- Beekeeping examinations to the highest level
- Regional, national and international representation
- Annual Honey Show, Spring Convention & Exhibition
- Regular meetings/talks held by all 13 KBKA branches
- BBKA Membership entitling you to additional benefits

WHICH MEMBERSHIP LEVEL IS FOR ME?

Use the 'matrix of benefits' below to work out the best level of membership for you, according to your needs.

Membership Level	Local Branch Info	BBKA Member	BBKA Insurance	Disease Insurance	BBKA News	Bee Craft
Registered ¹	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Junior ^{2,3}	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Friend	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Friend + Insurance ⁴	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Friend + Bee Craft (BC)	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Friend + BBKA News	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Friend + BC + BBKA News	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES

¹ You can only be a Registered member of ONE county association at a time

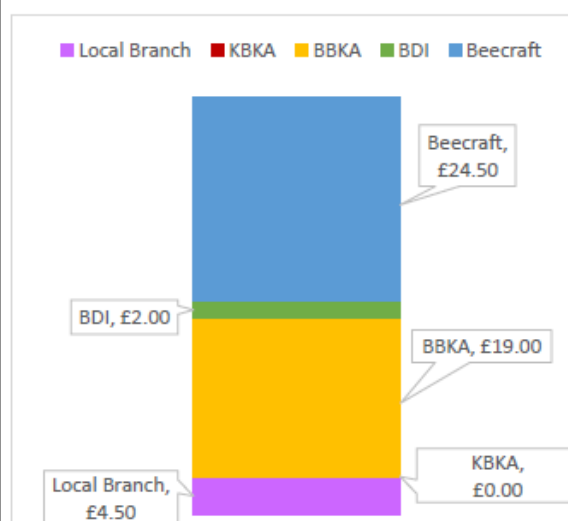
² Aged 18 or under on 1st October

³ Juniors must have a named parent/guardian who will appear on the BDI receipt

⁴ Must be resident at the same address as a Registered member

WHERE DOES MY MONEY GO?

Your subscription charge is made up of numerous constituent parts, payable to different organisations. This chart shows the breakdown of a Registered membership (totalling £50.00) for reference.



BBKA 3rd PARTY and PRODUCT INSURANCE

The two insurance policies the BBKA offer protect you in the event you, your bees or a "product of your hive" is accused of causing damage to other people or their property – whether the event relates to your apiary, collecting a swarm, participating in a show or most other normal beekeeping activities.

Both policies offer cover up to £10m.

Management Liability cover is also included, should you wish to take up a position on your branch (or county) committee.

Full details are available from the BBKA website.

BEE CRAFT

This magazine is supplied from February to January – so if you're joining as a new member in October – you may have to wait a little while for your first copy.

They offer an "electronic only" version – for which you can deduct a sum from your membership fee, if you are happy not to receive the paper copy through the post.

Please note – due to HMRC rules, we cannot claim Gift Aid on the Bee Craft component of your subscription.

BEE DISEASE INSURANCE (BDI)

Registered and Junior membership levels include cover for up to 3 colonies at no additional cost.

When insuring, potential increase in the year must be taken into consideration, this includes nuclei and swarms.

If the number of colonies managed exceeds the number you have paid for, no cover will apply under the BDI policy.

No claims can be made in the first 40 days of a new policy. Renewing members are covered immediately on renewal.

Premiums payable for additional colonies are as follows.

No. of Colonies	Premium	No. of Colonies	Premium
4-5	£2.00	21-25	£11.10
6-10	£5.25	26-30	£13.60
11-15	£7.75	30-35	£16.10
16-20	£9.50	36-39	£18.10

APIMONDIA 2019

The 2019 world beekeeping conference in Montreal was an eye-opener for this British beekeeper;

thousands of delegates, hundreds of trade stands, a four day scientific program with five parallel tracks. It made me realise that British beekeeping is a very small affair with different concerns from those affecting many of our colleagues in other countries. The organisation and facilities were excellent, the hotel was comfortable and the city of Montreal a most interesting venue.

The highlights for me were the detailed discussion with software developers from Sweden on tracking hive status electronically, hearing how a beekeeping family in Nova Scotia makes its living, and a series of lectures on breeding for mite resistance.

By way of contrast there was a competition to find 'the best honey in the world' but it didn't compare in scale with the National Honey Show and, shockingly, 47% of the samples were listed as having been rejected for failing the lab testing. This was on grounds of excess moisture, adulteration, contamination or a combination of problems. So it was no wonder that there were several labs offering to detect problems with commercial honey.

David Cockburn



CAN YOU SPOT DAVID IN THE AUDIENCE?

BEGINNER'S BEE BOOK

by Ted Hooper

It isn't

Not so much a review, more a warning. This book isn't suitable for beginners. And it's not really by the esteemed Ted Hooper.

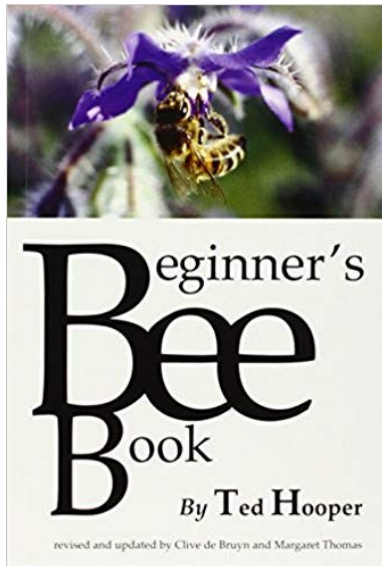
The late Ted Hooper is rightly famed for his "Guide to Bees and Honey", which was first published in 1976. Though its introduction says the aim of that book was "to provide the beginner with the information he will require to start up and to work his colonies", it is generally regarded as a text on classical (pre-Varroa) beekeeping for the intermediate to advanced student. It features long sentences, the author's own (not entirely scientific) opinions and very few photos!

In the 1980's Hooper worked on a manuscript for a more basic book. That manuscript has then been revised and completed after Hooper's death by Clive de Bruyn and Margaret Thomas, both well-qualified and established beekeeping pundits. The result is sadly a bit of a mish-mash, with disorganised text, a collection of photos old and new, and too many straightforward errors for my liking.

One confusing error example - the photo of the Ashforth feeder captioned as being a Miller feeder, along with the text that *begins* "A Miller type feeder, preferably the Rowse feeder with the feeding station at one side of the box and entry for the bees into the main box when they have taken most of the syrup so that they can clean it up - see illustration, is the best for general use." Clear?

If you want to buy that sort of feeder today, you'd need to ask for an "Ashforth", not a "Miller" which is different. (But cheaper, plastic leak-free feeders are a much better idea for today's beginner!). Incidentally, the "Rowse" was the 1930/40's ancestor of the 1950's Ashforth. The 1980 text has been respected where it could have been updated.

Another example of jumbled writing is the description of bees using water for cooling being



found in a discussion of clustering, in a paragraph headed "Winter Survival".

I'm amazed that *beginners* would be advised to hold a Queen in their fingers for marking. It must have been different 50 years ago!

There are quaintly bizarre touches like the photo showing how to kneel beside the ground-level hive to save one's back during an inspection. Surely it would be better to advocate the use of a hive stand - both to make the work more ergonomic and to reduce dampness for the bees and (wooden) hive?

And there are some truly wacky ideas in there too - I would NOT dream of suggesting that a beginner reduces queen cells to one and leaves the old Queen in there, as I don't think there's much chance the bees will thereby be "induced" to supercede rather than swarm (as claimed). And putting that nonsense on page 15 of a 128 page beginner book (before mentioning swarming) really isn't going to help to build a clear understanding.

But there are some interesting ideas hidden in there. I'm quite taken by the detail of putting the Queen safely in an introduction cage while doing a quick 'confusion unite' of two nuc colonies (on page 120). However I don't believe that method has to be in a book for beginners.

On the other hand, beginners will need to look things up. But this book has no index.

So, definitely not for beginners. And being based on an uncompleted script by Ted Hooper, I'd suggest it'd be better to dive straight into his "Guide to Bees & Honey" - unless you have already!

Reviewed by Dougal Hendry

Published by Stenlake Publishing

[ISBN 9781840336214](#) £9-95

Winter Study

The long dark evenings are ideal for beekeeping - learning, that is!

The BBKA organise various tests to recognise the development of your skills and knowledge, with certificates (and some badges) for those who pass.

And the Kent BKA (of which Canterbury is a branch) have a deal to offer you. When you pass, they refund your exam entry fee - so, if you know the stuff, it costs you nothing to prove it to yourself and everyone else!

Hopefully most members will be familiar with "The Basic" (BBKA Basic Certificate in Bee Husbandry). Taken any time after you've had bees for a year, it is the **foundation stone** of beekeeper education, but really shouldn't be (though all too often is) the **tombstone**!

It is a practical assessment of proficiency in the most basic beekeeping tasks. It is a conversation, with added bees, rather than a written exam.

If you've had bees for a year or more, you really ought to do this - if only to reassure yourself that you are doing it right (and get the Bronze badge for your beesuit!) Remember, its free if you pass (and not very many fail.)

The club organises (essentially free) 'revision classes' in the early Summer for those interested in doing The Basic.

But that's about the limit of the formal qualification training that Canterbury has been doing. We can do more and I think we should.

The next practical assessment after The Basic is "General Husbandry", which has a requirement that you have had bees for at least 5 years. You get a Silver badge to show you've passed this one! General Husbandry is the minimum requirement for being approved as an examiner for The Basic, so it is a significant step up.

I hope to organise a General Husbandry study group next Spring, hopefully also involving any potential candidates from neighbouring associations. If you're interested, let me know.

What the club CAN help with, and offer to all interested members, is training/revision for the BBKA's written exams, "The Modules". Previously, you had to have The Basic before you could apply to take any Module exam. Not needed now, but still actually a good idea.

I'd like to help get more Canterbury members better qualified as beekeepers, and passing Modules is how your understanding of the theoretical and academic side of beekeeping can be recognised.

In recent years, the club has left such study to individual members, but I'd hope that we could get a decent group together, to study under the tutelage of one or more who have passed that particular module.

Doing written exams initially seems quite a shock to the system, years after leaving school, but it certainly helps prevent the brain from fading away! And sitting one Module exam a year is a great way of continually deepening (and clarifying) your understanding of bees and beekeeping.

The Modules each cover a (largely) separate chunk of beekeeping theory.

Modules 1, 2 and 3 cover the same sort of stuff as The Basic, but in a little bit more detail - hence I call them 'the basic modules'. Module 1 focusses on Management (hives, swarm control ...), Module 2 on Products and Forage, Module 3 is on Pests, Diseases and Poisoning.

There is no longer a Module 4, but 5 (Biology and Anatomy), 6 (Behaviour) and 7 (Breeding) make an 'advanced' group. Module 8 has to be taken last, and summarises things as well as including a bit of history.

I'd like to think that we could plan to promote studying at least one club-nominated Module every Winter, (one basic and one advanced would be even better!) The exams can be taken in November or March - aiming for March gives the whole of the Winter for study, so it needn't exactly be intensive.

We are all likely to do a bit of bee-related reading over the Winter - my suggestion is that we try a little coordination so that several of us are reading about the same things and thus able to meaningfully discuss those topics.

The Modules can be done in any order, and there is no commitment to doing the lot, so new folks could join in each and every year.

Hopefully some would then have a go at the exam, pass with Distinction, get their fee refunded, frame their certificate and maybe even be recognised as having a worthwhile opinion on those subjects!

If you are interested, email me - dougal@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk



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

POSITIVE THINKING NEWSLETTER NO 25 – SEPTEMBER 2019

From Margaret Wilson, Chair of BBKA

Positive Thinking number 25 September 2019

Dear Members,

Where I live in the north, this is most likely to be the last month that the bees can increase their stores, Himalayan Balsam will be finishing as will most flowers, just leaving the Ivy for foragers. I hope that everyone's bees are well stocked for winter and that this year the winter will be less damp, but is that a pipe dream??

We have had notification of an outbreak of EFB in Middlesex, this is recurring in certain areas and is considered to be a hot spot by the Bee Inspectors.

Please look on Bee Base to see where this is recorded and take special care for your own bees.

One worry expressed by Middlesex is the fact that there are many beekeepers who are not members of any association and may not have registered on Bee Base. There is also a worry about new beekeepers trying to keep costs down by purchasing used equipment which may carry the disease and be unaware of how to sterilise this equipment before they use it.

If you do know of anyone in your area who keeps bees but is not a member, perhaps they could be approached to at least get registered on Bee Base so that they can receive help and also be aware of local problems.

Another item raised by Middlesex, and I thank them for this, is the fact that restaurants, cafes and hotels may use honey in their products or just as a spread, how do they dispose of those containers, it is not enough just to recycle, the containers must be washed out to prevent the bees from foraging from honey which is not off their hive.

In Middlesex there were also 5 cases of AFB recorded last year, can we all be aware of this and try to be especially hygienic with our bees, hives and other equipment.

This problem is also now an item for the next Executive Committee of Trustees meeting and the BBKA will do all it can to support this. We do use our web site to inform people of items but perhaps we need to do more in the public arena to make people aware that their actions could be bad for our pollinators.

The hunt for Asian hornets at this time of year is not only important it is vital, but it is also important that you have your mobile phone with you so that you can photograph the insect. Please, please do watch your own hives for hovering hornets, waiting for your bees to come home. If you do see a hornet, or think what you have seen is a hornet, please photograph it and send it to: alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk if it is confirmed that you have sighted an Asian Hornet the authorities will take over and give support.

If we can find the nests before the existing queens start to lay next year's queens, we stand a chance, but if we miss a colony, then a further ten or so queens from this year will survive the winter and start all over again.

A really good hard cold spell may help, but with global warming it is likely to be damp rather than cold this coming winter.

The National Honey show will take place next month, the 24th October through to the 26th October 2019. This show attracts exhibits from all over the country, the judges have an enormous task trying to make sure that the best exhibits are the winners in each class, I have stewarded at this show and will again this year, it is an education to do this, you learn so much about the honey, mead, wax, even the baking of cakes. Some of the judges are even able to tell you what flower or fruit the bees have harvested for the honey in the jars, what fantastic knowledge and experience those judges need to get this important job completed.

You may have realised that we need more Honey Judges, but to qualify to be a judge it is a very long training period. One of the essentials is that you have to have been a steward at many Honey Shows and the trainee has no way of knowing where all the honey shows are being held. Can I please ask that if you are going to have a honey show, and are able to accommodate a steward that you make contact with Claire at head office and she will put your honey show on the web site, her email address is claire.hartry@bbka.org.uk

You need to include the name of the branch, the venue, the date of course and also the judge you have chosen. This will enable the trainees to the judge and the branch to see if you would welcome their services. May I thank you in advance for helping us in this way.

As well as the honey show there are lectures and a full trade show, there are also stands showing the experience of other beekeeping branches and associations, it is such a learning curve just to walk round the show.

The BBKA will have a stand there, as the National Honey Show is an independent organisation, but one that we willingly support.

There will also be a stand for the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers (IMYB) to show what we have previously achieved and to try to encourage the young beekeepers to enter for next year.

It is important to us all that the skill of beekeeping is passed on to the next generations, they are the ones of the future who will hopefully make sure that our honey bees survive in the future. Please do go and look at what the IMYB team have done, they are led by Simon Cavil, who was a trustee till this year but has taken this role of IMYB Manager forward, we owe a debt of gratitude for his involvement in this as do the youngsters who represent the BBKA in this global competition.

It amazes me how many beekeepers give their time without thought of reward, I like the other Trustees, make up that number, but looking around the country, the associations and branches have a multitude of members giving their valuable time year after year. Here is a heartfelt thank you from me to all those volunteers who help us to keep our honey bees alive and safe.

Margaret Wilson