



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITORS MESSAGE

August and a time to reap the Honey and treat the bees! Sadly the weather has again had a different idea and many colonies are struggling to fill their supers. I'm hoping a few of you have been lucky in your harvest, I've had several reports from local beekeepers that many have not. The bees appear quite confused with what they should be doing at this time of year, with reports of queens laying large amounts of brood. (We are experiencing this too!) Whereas normally they are going off lay in readiness for preparing for winter bees.

Andy King has written an insightful article for us this month, which looks at the way our bees have been challenged by climate change in our own branch apiary. Hopefully, like me, you will find it thought provoking.

Normally, I would be looking at the jobs to do in October, however, I'm as confused as the bees... as I sit here while the drizzle is making another unwelcome appearance and I have a winter fleece on for goodness sake!

So, I'm going to look forward to the activities that we have planned in the next few months.... The Cider Festival at Brogdale at

the end of August, even if you have very little honey, there will be plenty of cider to try as the fruit has benefitted from the wet climate. Then in September there is the ploughing match at Eastry Court Farm, if you've never been, why not try it, it's surprising how engrossed you become and how in awe you are of the ploughman's skills. Finally, we have the return of the honey show at Sandown Park, I always find the variety and number of different types of honey on display quite mind blowing, and some of the things they can do with wax is... well ... extraordinary!

And check out the photo competition in our Branch Secretary section ... you too could win a prize but **get your entry in soon!**

As I mentioned last month, the NBU has useful information on managing Varroa in an integrated pest management approach. You may find it helpful to take a look at the BeeBase web pages on the NBU website <https://www.nationalbeeunit.com>

And, it is now officially wasp appearance time, so please do remember to check your entrance blocks and wasp traps.

Lisa

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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.

AUGUST 2021

A newsletter for friends and members of the Canterbury branch of Kent BKA

2021 YEAR PROGRAMME

August 28th & 29th – Brogdale Cider Festival. We have been offered a stall at this event to sell our honey.

September 29th - East Kent Ploughing Match at Eastry Court Farm. We will share a bee stall with Dover & Thanet BKAs. There is however, no competition for honey exhibits this year.

October 21st to 23rd – A return of the National Honey show at Sandown Park www.honeyshow.co.uk

November 2021 – return to indoor meetings

EXTRACTORS – REMINDER – HOW TO BORROW

The club has two extractors available to members and friends who do not have their own extraction equipment. If you would like to borrow one of these extractors from the club, please contact Magdelene Mei Halkes on magdelene.chau@gmail.com or 07587203808.

The hire charge is £5 direct to the clubs bank account and Magdelene Mei will provide these details.

Both extractors are manual ones, with one able to take 14 x 12 frames.

How the hire process works:

- Contact Magdelene Mei for club payment details.
- Magdelene Mei will provide the contact and location details of the last person to hire the extractor.
- You then arrange collection arrangements with this last person.
- At the end of the season, the last member using the extractor stores it over winter if they have space available.

(Please remember to wash them out thoroughly with cold water before passing on to the next user.)



(Image for illustration purposes only)



BRANCH NEWS

Andy King – Colony Management for Climate Change

Last year, 2020, was the first year to figure in the top 10 for heat, rain and hours of sunshine, in records stretching back more than a century. We are seeing higher daily temperatures (37.8°C in July at Heathrow), highest wind gust speed (106mph in December on the Isle of Wight), highest daily rainfall (239mm in August in East Wretham, Norfolk), etc etc. Moderate British weather is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. We're becoming so accustomed to weird weather and record-breaking statistics that our weather is now only widely reported in the media when it directly endangers human life, through flooding and wildfires. We tend to overlook the impact on our flora and fauna.

Bee husbandry is passed down from one generation to the next, largely unchanged, with little discussion of how to manage colonies in the context of a changing climate.

For example, I naively thought that mid-July to beginning to August was the time for a beekeeping holiday – a time where the beekeeper can hold off weekly inspections, a time when the colonies ripen their summer crop. This is folklore wisdom. However, to my consternation 3 of our big production colonies swarmed in the third week of July at Palmsted, taking of course, their honey crop with them. I was gutted: the bees got away after a whole season of regular inspections, at almost the very last week before harvest.



Sweet Chestnuts in flower

Recall that temperatures were consistently in their mid-20s in the day and mid-10s at night in July and the nectar flow from sweet chestnut increases with temperature (this relationship is

mentioned in Donald Sim's book, "Sixty Years with Bees"). So colonies in a chestnut wood need to be watched carefully when the temperatures soar, which promises to become the new normal in summertime.

Lesson 1: July is not the time for a beekeeping holiday, even if it once was.

Apart from young queens, the only device that we have for responding to rapid nectar flows is to pile on the supers. Supers of drawn comb are less effective at holding off swarming than foundation, which was a problem for Palmsted because rats gnawed through most of our lovely drawn comb over the winter of 2020/21!

During the active beekeeping season, the boxes of drawn foundation were added first in May, then the boxes of undrawn foundation were added underneath in June. This worked fine until July when the bees could not draw out the foundation fast enough to store away the nectar.

Lesson 2: reserve the boxes of drawn foundation for later in the season when the nectar flows at their maximum.

Of course, bees have to work around family and work constraints, which means that we have to shoehorn in inspections around other activities. This meant that I often found myself inspecting at Palmsted from mid- to late-afternoon on a Sunday. Recall that in late June and early June, we frequently had thundery build-ups because of the heat. and, in fact, I had to abort the inspection of one colony on three separate occasions this season because of thunderstorms.



Maybe the colony is jinxed (it is the first colony on the right as one enters the glade) but maybe the lesson to learnt to take away.

Angry Bees with unknown beekeeper

Lesson 3: it's better to inspect colonies earlier in the day in a heat wave.

Andy King 15th August 2021

Beekeepers Health August 2021

Two third of the year 2021 has almost gone. The long day is slowly getting shorter. Have you thought about how much time you put back to your body? Lisa is so generous to give me this space. It is to inspire you to give 20 seconds back to your beloved body who works constantly very hard for you, take you everywhere, doing everything you command it to do. Do you know, your body is your best friend?

This month I am shouting, I am asking you, if you so wish to give 60 seconds, not 20 this time, back to your best friend. Let's do 3 banging keys for your hands:

1. Fold your elbows in front of you, relax your fingers, bang both wrists together for 20 seconds.
2. Hold both fists, fingers facing down, bang the inside of the fists together for 20 seconds
3. Hold both fists as above but fingers facing up, bang the outside of the fists together.

Be curious, notice how and what you feel while you are doing all the above. The more you bang the more cells you will wake up so you can feel more and make better choice to stay safe and healthy.

Magdalene Mei Halkes, Ministry of Body Wisdom

Bee 'Stuff'



The unbelievable engineering of nature! Next time you look at your bees... this is what's looking back at you!

(Shot with a high resolution camera)

Lisa Jenkins - Product review

My favourite choice this month.

YBS General Purpose Thermawrap Insulation



This month, I'm thinking ahead for winter preparations! This was a great tip from Andy King last year – hive insulation that is quick and easy to install, comes on a convenient roll, is lightweight and can be stored away in a small space. and most importantly...it works!

We used this on our hives last winter, and it kept them cosy warm and protected them from drafts. All you need is a pair of scissors and lots of drawing pins. If there was one small snag, it was trying to wrap the hives in a small gale, it's so lightweight that it can be lifted away before you have the drawing pins in place, Once done, however, it was rock solid and stayed on all winter. There's easy access for the bees as you can cut out a space for the entrance and it tucks up under the roof, so that you can still open the hive to check on food supplies and add fondant when needed. It's ideal for those of you who don't have the space to store the bulky Recticel insulation boards, or the patience to cut and tape them together!

The other good point is that its available from Tool Station, Wickes, Screwfix and eBay. Simple to buy, simple to use!

However, watch out for your first midnight stroll with a torch light as it looks as though you've had a return of the Daleks! (Spooked me!)

News from around the world

After last month's terrible floods in Germany, this month it's the dreadful wildfires in Europe which have devastated bee colonies.

Sardinia: Sardinia has suffered in the July wildfires, which ravaged 20,000 hectares (50,000 acres) and destroyed olive groves, forests, farms and vineyards. More than 1,500 people had to evacuate their homes, with many not yet able to return home.

Beekeepers on the Italian island have said 500 beehives have been affected, amounting to 30 million bees. Environmentalists estimate the damage could amount to €1 billion.

Agronomists and environmentalists believe it will take at least 15 years to rebuild the woodland areas destroyed by the fire.

Turkey: The wildfires ravaging Turkey's southern and western coastal regions, which firefighters have been struggling to contain due to strong winds, have already caused great damage to agricultural fields and farms. Now the production of olives, honey and many fruits and vegetables is at risk.



A Bee Farmer in the devastating aftermath - Turkey

In Muğla, pine trees – from which the bees collect honeydew – were particularly damaged.

According to the preliminary assessment of the Agriculture and Forestry Ministry, the wildfires in the last five days left the honey production significantly at risk in Muğla since some 80% of the region, which is home to 45% of Turkey's total bee breeding, was burned to ashes.

Mutlu Ayhan, chairperson of the Marmaris Chamber of Commerce, said that an area of 8,000-8,500 hectares had burned down.

"We were producing approximately 3,000 tons of 165,000 honeycombs every year. Marmaris is the capital of pine honey in the world ... 80% of the production areas remained in ashes," he said.

Only the pine trees in Muğla's center and Fethiye district remained."

Our hearts go out again to our European neighbours.

Information from our branch secretary - Jan Soetaert

BBKA HORNET AND WASP PHOTO COMPETITION 2021

Prizes await the best digital photograph in each of the following 3 categories:

1. Wasps or hornets foraging, this does not need to be for nectar or on a flower but those

images are acceptable

2. Wasps or Hornets in flight

3. Wasp or Hornet nest

Rules for entry

Each digital photograph must be in a jpeg format and be 1.5Mb – 5Mb. Images entered in the wrong format will not be judged.

Please clearly state your Name and Address on each entry but do not embed the information into the image. A maximum of 2 Entries for each class may be submitted. The images may be of the Asian Hornets (*Vespa velutina*) or European Hornets (*Vespa crabro*) or Wasps commonly found in the UK.

By entering the competition you are agreeing to the use of your images by BBKA News, the BBKA Website, BBKA course material and our sponsors E H Thorne (Beehives) Ltd but we will of course acknowledge you on the photo.

Entries must be received by 20th September 2021. The decision of the judges is final and the results will be announced 5th October on the BBKA website and in BBKA NEWS. The winners and runners up will be informed individually.

Prizes

Many thanks to Thornes for donating vouchers for £40 for the winner and £10 for the runner up of each category.

Prizes will be awarded for the best image in each category and the runner up. Only one prize per person will be awarded to the winner and runner up of each category, (ie they will not be eligible for the winner and runner up prizes).

Please send your entries to:
erica.challis@bbka.org.uk

Good Luck , most people have mobile phones and there are plenty of wasps around!

Anne Rowberry, BBKA Chair

IMPORTANT MESSAGE from Diane Drinkwater, Chair of Communications:

BBKA's social media needs you! We would love to share your bee related photos on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

If you would like us to use your photos and videos - we can share them with your name and association and help educate the public about beekeeping with descriptive information explaining what is in the picture. Videos do especially well, catching people's attention and being able to show so much more than a single photo.

If you have your own social media accounts, please follow us and tag BBKA tags to ensure we can share your photos.

If you're not familiar with social media but have photos or videos that you are happy to share with us for BBKA to use, acknowledging you, please email Erica.challis@bbka.org.uk

Whether it's a bee on a flower in your garden, or a video of your extractor spinning out honey, we'd love to share these with the public.

<https://twitter.com/britishbee>
<https://www.facebook.com/TheBritishBeekeepersAssociation>
<https://www.instagram.com/britishbeekeepers>

Please go to the BBKA webshop for more details and to book a place:

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

If you have any queries, please contact Sarah Snelson: sarah.snelson@bbka.org.uk

Kind regards

Anne Rowberry, Chair

And finally don't forget...

BBKA Calendar

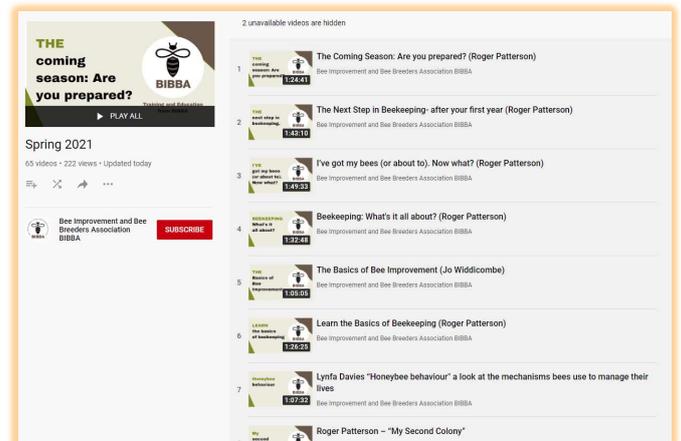
The BBKA calendar where branches can add their own events and view forthcoming lectures and much more.

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/calendar-listing-page>

Plus the Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association BIBBA

<https://bibba.com/>

Whilst the spring season of BIBBA videos have finished, there are a wealth of video's still available!



All 66 videos are available to watch on the BIBBA Spring 2021 YouTube Playlist

And for those of you struggling to identify the different bees.... Here's a light-hearted look at how to identify them!

