



CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS



A branch of Kent Beekeepers Association

EDITORS MESSAGE

March has certainly been an interesting month. Hopefully your bees have made it through the winter and you are seeing pollen laden bees entering your hives, a good sign that your Queen is busily laying brood.

Sadly, for some, there have been significant losses over this winter and much of this is attributed to high Varroa load. I learned today of a way to check for winter varroa death from our Regional Bee Inspector Dan Etheridge. Where you have many dead bees on the floor, take one of the bees, turn it on its back and then bend it so that the segments separate – Varroa can easily be seen tucked into the segments in this way. Another clue are the many white dots that can be seen in the comb, which is Varroa 'poo' and not as is sometimes thought, fondant crumbs that have fallen into the combs. It's made me realise that I need to be much more methodical and vigilant about my own Varroa monitoring and I'll

be moving to CO2 or alcohol wash monitoring from now on in addition to Varroa floors.

Thinking about other ways to help the bees here's a few jobs to consider for your apiary.

Plan any planting and tidy up the apiary

Decide what you are going to plant, sow or grow for your bees this year.

Clear vegetation away from the front of the hives. A paving stone below the entrance ensures it stays clear and allows you to see the corpses; more than 100 deserves investigation.

Check hive entrances for dead bees choking them and help the living ones get out.

Later, remove woodpecker and mouse guards. Keep hives tied down until the end of the month.

Check for Varroa levels and have a cracking session preparing new frames for a good season this year!

Lisa

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George Jenkins

Lisa Jenkins

Maggie McKenzie

Magdalene Mei Halkes

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.

MARCH 2022

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

2022 YEAR PROGRAMME

06 APRIL 2022 7.30 – 9.30 PM

Branch Meeting to be held at Littlebourne Village Hall

Swarm Control and Swarm Collection.

It's that time of year again and reports are suggesting that some of our bees are rearing to go... the oil seed rape is already out in flower and in some hives, drone brood is in abundance! It won't be too long before the swarming season starts!

Come and join the meeting to refresh or find out as a new starter how you can manage your swarms and what to do when collecting or receiving a swarm.

It's worth considering, that any swarm call you take may not be what it seems as approximately 90% of the calls taken at the BBKA swarm hot line last year were for wasps or bumble bees, very few were for honey bees. It may be worth reviewing at the meeting how you can help any caller to identify a swarm correctly.

23RD APRIL 2022 2.00 PM – 4.00 PM

First outdoor meeting of the season. Come along to help/observe how to check hives for space and disease.

7TH MAY 2022 2.00 PM – 4.00 PM

General inspection of the branch apiary at Palmstead

BROGDALE EVENTS

- Cherry festival 16th and 17th July
- Apple festival 15th and 16th October

SWARMS! SWARM! SWARMS!

With swarm season nearly upon us, the committee is creating a register of members who would like to receive swarms and members who are prepared to collect swarms, to help others in their bee keeping career.

Please register your interest by email to newsletter@canterburybeekeepers.org.uk

Stating:

- Preference to Receive or Collect swarms
- Your name
- Best contact phone number
- Address **with Post Code**
- Best availability times for collecting or receiving swarms.

For more information on swarms, please read the handouts on 'Collecting swarms' <https://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/2022/03/collecting-swarms/>

and the 'The Swarming process'

<https://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/2022/03/the-swarming-process/>



BRANCH NEWS

Over-Wintering in the Country versus Over-Wintering in the City

Andy King

I took yesterday afternoon off work to peek into my colonies. I've treated them, hefted them and fed them through the winter and yesterday was the big reveal when I could quantitatively compare my colonies in the city (Canterbury) against those in the country (Littlebourne) by counting seams.

It has been difficult winter in my out apiary, which sits at the top of an incline, overlooking a narrow field, with a stand of woodland to the left and orchards to the right (which effectively sets it up as a wind tunnel). My heart sank as I went to check my stock after Storm Eunice as the wind had ripped a huge branch was off a squat, ancient yew not far from my bees. As I got nearer, I could see branches of silver birch which were strewn around the stands.

One colony had its 6 inch deep roof removed, the roof sitting upside down, collecting water, about 6 feet away the colony. The insulation had been sucked out by the wind (which was stuck in with Gorilla glue). Thankfully, I could recover the slab of Celotex as this was impaled onto a branch (which I had pruned back last year when clearing the site). I peered with dismay into the brood box, which was now exposed to rain, and I could not any signs of life. So I put on the roof and placed an 18 x18 inch paving slab on the top, as a house brick was clearly not man enough for the job.

Rather incredibly, the colony survived and yesterday they were on a single seam of bees, with the other colony also on one seam. By way of contrast, the bees in my back garden are on 6, 4, 3 and 2 seams. The treatment regime has been the same at both sites, but in my out apiary I have not used insulation around the brood boxes as I do not want to draw attention to the stock as they are located 200 metres from a bridleway. Probably the insulation would have been

destroyed by Eunice anyway, as it is not structurally rigid.

Reflecting on this sobering experience, next year I'll try some of those Swienty 14 x12 brood boxes in the out apiary. They are compatible with 460mm x 460mm National boxes, but crucially are made of high-density polystyrene, and dovetail together to achieve the required rigidity. All the rest of the kit will stay timber; so it will be an unconventional, but hopefully effective, poly/cedar mashup. I'll paint the Swienty boxes wild thyme, like all my other kit, to give a stealthy way of keeping a colony warm when it sits in an exposed site.



Swienty 14x12 poly ready to paint

Rev Magdalene Mei Halkes, Ministry of Body Wisdom

I have been writing a few lines every month here for over a year. I have no idea whether anyone finds the tips useful. Then I said to myself, 'No news is good news!'. Lisa is so kind to grant me this space so I will continue to share my understanding in Body Wisdom here. This month I would like to share a few remedies tried and tested by myself and I find them useful.

1. Turmeric and Honey:

in 2018 I had a terrible cough keeping awake for 4 nights straight. On day 5 I met a friend Lucie who went to India very often. She suggested this remedy as she learned this

from her Indian friend to relieve stubborn coughs. Here is what to do:

- Mix 1 tablespoon slightly warm honey with 1 teaspoon of turmeric swallow it neat, do not drink anything for at least one hour.

I did it just before bed that day, and I had the first sweet 5 hours of sleep that night. I must say that the taste is unusual. It took me a while to get used to it. I took the same for 2 more nights and my cough went very quietly.

I now have a small jar ready made in my store cupboard.

2. Golden Milk

This is a very nice bedtime drink. Whisk one teaspoon of turmeric powder in one cup of hot milk, you can add honey to taste.

3. Lingering cough buster - Steam orange with salt

Whenever there is a chest infection most of us find the cough lingers for many weeks. I had a cough after our X'mas party last December and it was still with me early January. A Chinese friend Fanny came to visit me and noticed my cough. She suggested the following:

- sit an orange in a small bowl, cut the top off to expose the flesh.
- use a knife to make a few cuts into the flesh
- sprinkle 1/4 teaspoon of salt over the flesh
- put the top of the orange back on.
- cover the top of the bowl with tinfoil.
- put the bowl with the orange in a saucepan filled with water
- bring the water to boil, steam the orange for 20 minutes.
- When ready, eat the orange by spooning the juice and fresh out.

Be prepared for this unusual salty sweet taste but the warmth was very soothing to the air passage. This worked for me, My lingering cough went in two days.

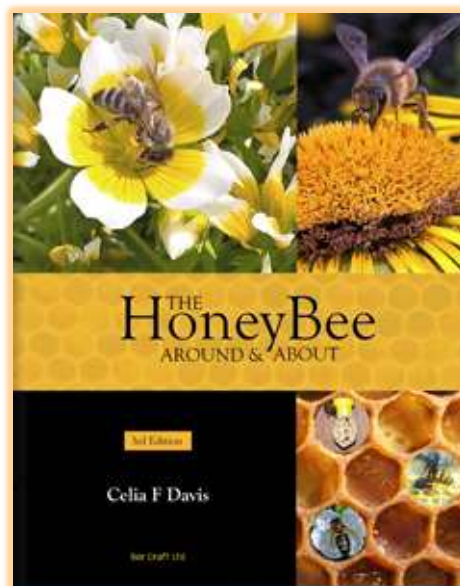
Stay curious, do a little less, rest even a little bit more to prepare for more actions time,

Rev Magdalene Mei Halkes,

Ministry of Body Wisdom

Book Review

The Honey Bee around and about by Celia F Davis



If you are looking for a good book as a reference guide on bee pests and diseases, or you are planning to take the BBKA module three exam, this book is a great choice.

Each section of the book has fun chapter headings which make it perfectly clear what each chapter contains, for example 'when the kids are ill', 'problems with the grown ups' and 'mighty mites'. As a reference tool, it's easy to find the pest or disease you're looking for with lots of diagrams and pictures to illustrate what to look out for in your bees.

Celia writes in a style that takes complex descriptions and makes them easy to understand, adding little touches of humour along the way. Take a look at page 74 where she refers to the Acarine mite as a hitch hiker for example.

Chapter 10 'Food of the Gods' details the bees basic energy food 'nectar'. Who knew that Hawthorn which is flowering in abundance in our hedgerows about now, is actually a fickle nectar yielder and yields only one year in seven! (I won't be planting any more of those!)

A great read, superb reference tool and an invaluable aid to studying module three.

Lisa Jenkins

Information from our branch secretary -
Jan Soetaert



Spring
Conve

Friday 8 – Saturday 9 – Sunday 10 April

Harper Adams University,
Shropshire, TF10 8NB

**Lectures Programme starts 10.00
daily: A wide range of practical and
scientific topics, for all levels of
experience, presented by:**

Lars Chittka, Gene Robinson, Celia Davis, Robert
Paxton, Mark Barnett,
Norman Carreck, Jo Widdicombe, Geraldine
Wright, Juliet Osborne, Julian Parker, Lynne
Ingram, Nigel Semmence, Joyce Nisbet, Chris Park,
Lynfa Davies, Tom Pope, Pete Sutcliffe, Jane
Medwell & Joe Roberts

**After March 29th Convention
Tickets available On-the-day:
Friday £18 - Saturday £25 -
Sunday £15 - all three days £35**

**Bumper Trade Show
Saturday 9th only £6**

Full details: Spring Convention pages at
www.bbka.org.uk

With just over a week to the BBKA Spring Convention at Harper Adams University, TF10 8NB, a reminder that Advance ticket sales (£10 - £30) close, on 29th March. Thereafter, Full Convention tickets (£15 - £35, card payments only) will be available 'On-the-Day'. Free entry for under-18s.

The Convention is again on-track to be the sociable event many of us have enjoyed before. Three days immersion in 'all things' honeybees, with the opportunity to meet and mingle with old friends and make friends we don't yet know. All in Harper Adams' spacious campus, with plenty of parking, in the Shropshire countryside. Plus, there is Harper Adams' legendary (and reasonably priced) catering to look forward to!

Though workshop bookings have been brisk, there is no need to pre-book the 25-plus lectures over the three days of the event. With a three-day or single-day Wristband Ticket (not Trade Show only) there is no further charge for lectures. These cannot be booked - just be at the lecture theatre in good time. The lecture programme starts at 10.00 each day.

Although several workshops are now fully pre-booked, some extra ones have been opened. Any places remaining after 29th March can be booked at the Convention from Friday 8th.

Saturday 9th April 08.30 – 16.30 – Convention Trade Show - One Day Only.

THE major Trade Show of the year. Meet the traders; inspect the kit; handle the hive tool; try on that new bee-suit; trade-in beeswax; collect pre-orders and so much more. Tickets available only on-the-day, just £6. Card payments only please.

For full details, see:
<https://www.bbka.org.uk/spring-convention-2022-updates>

BBKA Courses

The following BBKA Training Courses are now available and still have spaces. You can book your place via the BBKA Web Shop by following this link

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

Advanced Husbandry Assessment Preparation Training 2022 – Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

A programme of three days will cover both theoretical and practical aspects of the Advanced Husbandry Assessment, aiming to give the participants an understanding of what the assessment entails and what they need to do to be successful.

An intensive residential course, with high tutor to student ratio, providing time and space for both tutor to student, as well as student to student interactions.

The participants are required to hold the BBKA General Husbandry Certificate and to be eligible to take the Advanced Husbandry assessment in the near future.

Venue Location:

Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

- Course Dates: Friday 15th July, Saturday 16th July and Sunday 17th July 2022
- Course Fee: £350.00 per person – including accommodation and meals
- Maximum number of participants is 12

General Husbandry Assessment Preparation Training – Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

A programme of 20 hours over three days will cover both theoretical and practical aspects of the General Husbandry Assessment, aiming to give the participants an understanding of what the assessment entails and what they need to do to be successful.

The participants are required to hold the BBKA Basic Certificate and to be eligible to take the General Husbandry Assessment in 2023.

Venue Location: Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

Course Dates:

- Saturday 30th April 2022 – Theory
- Sunday 1st May 2022 – Theory
- Sunday 22nd May 2022 – Apiary Practical
- Course Fee: £150.00 per person

Participants must provide their own lunch.

Maximum number of participants is 12.

Sarah Snelson

Deputy Manager/Examinations Officer

BBKA Exam Flow Chart

For anyone thinking of 'taking the plunge' into the BBKA Bee examinations, please follow the following link to the exam flow chart, to identify what exams are available and how they fit into the overall exam and assessments system for BBKA

<https://canterburybeekeepers.org.uk/2022/03/bbka-exam-flow-chart/>

Notice from Martin Smith

Bee Insurance and a talk on 'The Journey towards Varroa Tolerance' by Prof Stephen Martin

I enclose the formal agenda for the Annual General Meeting of Bee Diseases Insurance Ltd (BDI) of which your association is a member. The draft minutes from last year's meeting and the 2021 financial statements are also enclosed for your reference.

We are pleased to be able to return to our practice pre-pandemic of holding the AGM on the Friday morning of the BBKA Spring Convention at 11.00am. The AGM will be held in the teaching block at [Harper Adams University](#) Newport TF10 8NB. Unfortunately we are unable to stream the meeting on Zoom.

Key points from the BDI Financial Statements for the year ending 31st December 2021.

BDI remains financially strong, with an increase in the value of investments of £64,000 during the year. These investments are held for the long terms and enable us to fund research, as well as to build up a buffer in case of a major outbreak of disease, particularly any new 'exotic' pest that might arrive on our shores. They are in addition to the reserves we hold in cash equivalents to cover our insurance requirements.

The company continues to use some of the investment surpluses to fund research into bee diseases, with £40,000 invested in this area in 2021. Details of all the projects being funded by BDI can be found on the [research pages of our website](#)

During 2021, BDI started our two year trial on the whole apiary shook swarm method of controlling EFB. This trial, held in conjunction with the National Bee Unit, will continue on in 2022 after which the results will be evaluated. Associations are encouraged to make their members aware of this offer to replace all frames and combs in an affected apiary, in a case of an outbreak of European Foul Brood. [Full details of the trial can be found here](#)

Immediately after the formal business, there will be a talk:

'The journey to Varroa Tolerance – An update by Professor Stephen Martin and his team from Salford University, as more people start to move to treatment free management of this endemic pest.'

Over the last few years, BDI and its member associations through the original ReVive project and a subsequent follow up project have funded Salford's bee research with grants of around £150,000. As this research draws to a conclusion, the results and actions beekeepers can take as a result are explained in [this video hosted on BDI's website](#). In addition a [BBKA news special edition](#) is available [here](#).

The AGM and talk are open to all BDI association officers and their members.

Your board look forward to seeing as many as possible at the meeting.

martin.smith@beediseasesinsurance.co.uk

<https://www.beediseasesinsurance.co.uk/>

Request from Alex Evans-Crane secretary of Ashford Beekeepers

I'm the Secretary for Ashford branch of Kent and had a couple of things I wanted to ask.

Firstly this year marks the 50th year that we have been undertaking an exchange with German beekeepers, and we wanted to see if any of your members would be able to host a German beekeeper – they would arrive on the 7th July and depart on the 11th – Trevor Atkins on the club organises events during the day for all – and in return members who host would be able to travel out to Germany for their chance of an exchange and see beekeeping in a different country.

Members have enjoyed this, and I have a DVD of the clubs last exchange trip which I am digitising – Trevor would also be able to do a talk on zoom about the exchange with anyone interested to answer questions.

Is this something that you think you would be happy advertising to your members?

Many thanks

Alex

a.evanscrane@icloud.com

Social Media Survey and BBKA Calender

Diane Drinkwater

Please complete a very quick survey about how members use social media. I would be grateful if you distribute this link to everyone in your association:

<https://forms.gle/Qyxc9NN33yStwRBL7>

What are you planning for World Bee Day, Bees Needs Week, and any of the other events listed on the Bee calendar? BBKA would like to share what you have planned to inspire other associations.

For example, Harrogate BKA is opening its new apiary at RHS Harlow Carr on World Bee Day. Whether you're just planning to have a stand at the local market to tell people

about the importance of bees or hold an event, please let us know as soon as possible. We would like to have a page where we can share all our member's events for these celebrations of bees.

Dates for your calendar

World Bee Day 20th May
Bees Needs Week 11th-17th July TBC
Asian hornet week 5th -11th September

Additional Event weeks of note

Pollinator Week 20-26th June
Solitarybeeweek.com 27-3rd July

Diane Drinkwater, Vice Chair BBKA and
Chair of Communications Committee
Diane.Drinkwater@BBKA.org.uk

And Finally... from around the world!



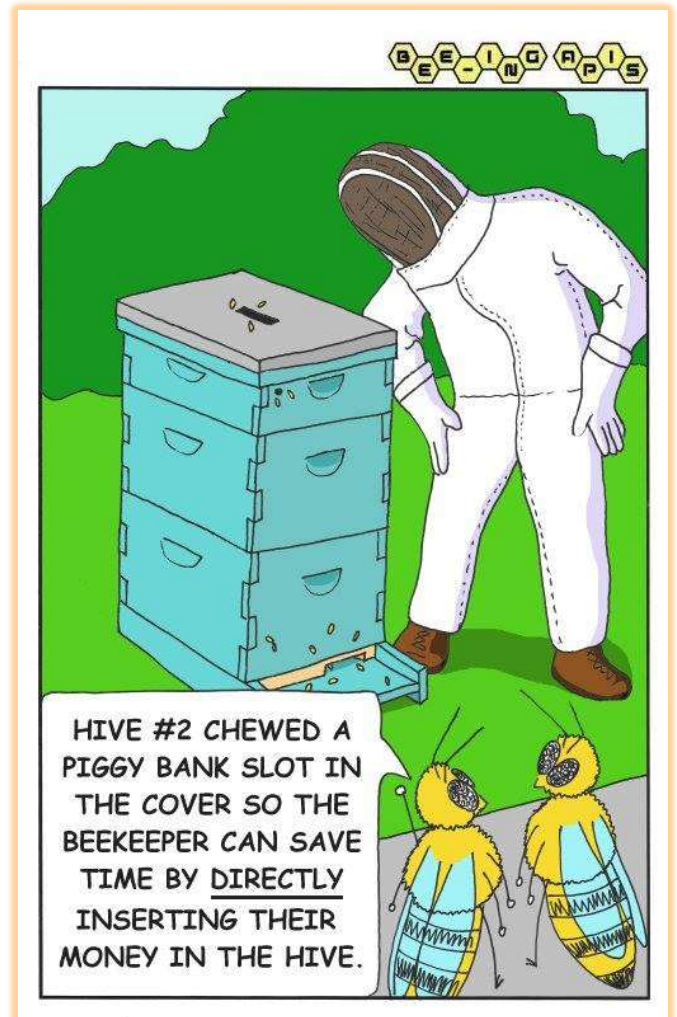
Varroa in New Zealand

Varroa was first seen in New Zealand 22 years ago and now seems to be on the rise again. Barry Foster, chair of New Zealand's Science and Focus Group says that in the Gisborne area about 4% of beekeepers surveyed did not treat for varroa in 2020/2021, and about 25% did not monitor the success of their treatments.

Recently, varroa has overtaken "queen problems" as the prime suspect and thought to be responsible for nearly 40% of colony losses.

Bee-ing Apis

This months carton caper from Bee-ing Apis



Happy Easter everyone!



