



83rd National Honey Show

The 2014 National Honey Show will be on Thursday 30th October to Saturday 1st November, once more at St George's College, Weybridge. As usual there will be lectures by world-class scientific researchers in the bee world. The provisional programme includes Dr Jamie Ellis, University of Florida, on the subjects of Honey Bee Biology and their diseases and pathogens; Ann Harman, Vermont, USA will talk on the topics of sugars and reducing stress on bees, and Pollination; Giles Budge on the work of the NBU; Prof Nikolaus Koeniger on honeybee diversity and preventing re-infestation of *varroa*, and Gudrun Koeniger on mating strategies to avoid inbreeding. Professor Stephen Martin will talk about life-cycles of wasps and hornets, and Michael Badger, MBE, on maximising honey production in the urban environment.



Saturday lectures for new to beekeeping or those just interested in the subjects will include Yearly Beekeeping Activities, and Products of the Hive for Showing.

On the subject of showing, we have three new classes this year: Class 6 for 2 jars of set honey; Class 41, one bottle of sweet and one bottle of dry mead, and a new 'Sussex' class on wax preparation.

As ever, the Show relies on a large team of volunteers, and all offers of help are welcome. Do contact the Show Secretary at showsec@zbee.com and he will pass on your offer of help.

Full details are on the Show's website at www.honeyshow.co.uk/

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An Opportunity To Support Your Executive

There is still time to register your interest in this honorary position by contacting the Secretary at secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk no late than 17th August. Full details were in last month's newsletter, and further details will also be provided on request.

***'Examination Secretary
Wanted'***

Booker Promotion



With the feeding season fast approaching the catering wholesaler, Booker is again offering a discount on granulated sugar in 25kg bags. This year the discounted price is just 60p per kg if two bags (or multiples of two) are purchased.

The offer is available until 30th September. Members are reminded that they must register with Booker using their BBKA Membership card as ID and can begin shopping immediately. Check Booker's website for your nearest store www.booker.co.uk.

New BBKA Telephone Number for Members

Due to the volume of calls the BBKA has been experiencing this season, the Association is aware that Members have had problems contacting the main office.

As a consequence an additional line has been installed so that calls may be answered quickly and efficiently. Priority will be given to those using the new number which is purely for Members' queries and requests; the number to call is **02476 698620**. The current number will, when all staff are on calls, be on an automated system, with no answerphone capability.



Dorset Beekeepers' Convention - 26th October



The venue for the Convention is Stratton Village Hall, Stratton, Dorchester, DT2 9WG. Keynote speaker is Professor Robert Pickard, Emeritus Professor of Neurobiology, University of Cardiff, and international authority on the biology of honeybees. Tim Baker, South London primary school principal will talk on 'Preparing Future Beekeepers'. At the time of going to press further speakers are to be confirmed.

The fee for the day is just £20 per person (£15 Dorset BKA members) including a ploughman's lunch and refreshments. Tickets and details from Doug Whyte douglas.whyte53@gmail.com or write to Doug at 53, Sandford Road, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 4DQ or telephone 01929 550760.

Rose Hives on Thorney Island

Colin Falla is a South Coast beekeeper and a member of Hampshire BKA. He is working in partnership with Chichester Harbour Conservancy's Harbour Honey Conservation project. In this article, his first of a short series for WSBKA, Colin explains his choice to use Rose Hives in his Thorney Island apiary and outlines his experiences.



Thorney Island Apiary

Rose Hives – a natural choice for bee conservation project.

You may have heard of the 'Rose Hive' or as Thornes refer to them, 'One Size Box' (OSB) Hives. So as the name implies you will have gathered there is no difference in size between brood boxes and supers. In fact if you were to follow the 'Rose Hive Method' designed by Irish Commercial Beekeeper, Tim Rowe then a whole new world of simple and flexible beekeeping management looms into view.

I'm a relatively new beekeeper, based in Emsworth between Chichester and Portsmouth. Having declared to my family a number of years ago that I was interested in becoming a beekeeper a chance swarm in a neighbour's garden four years ago kicked me into action. I phoned Portsmouth and District Beekeepers and embarked on a mentoring and winter training course. Numerous books later saw me emerge in the spring of 2012 looking for my first swarm to get this new hobby up and running. Whilst in the 'winter of book reading' I was given a copy of Tim Rowe's book *'The Rose Hive Method'* - yes, he does spell his hive ROSE, whilst his name is ROWE, but he reckons from an Irish tongue they both sound the same!

I started reading his book (a Christmas present) with scepticism. Anyone who claims to challenge modern-day beekeeping is bound to be a bit theoretical or idealistic, I thought. Anyway, as each page turned to my surprise I couldn't find much that good old common sense could disagree with. Yes, I thought, well that makes sense! At the same time I was on an eight week theory course and being asked what type of hive I'd be investing in. Summoning up some courage I ventured to suggest I liked the idea of a Rose Hive. 'Yes - well bees are adaptable and will probably survive in any sized box', I was told. But more than that, it was the system which Tim so clearly explains that interested me. It leaves bees to make more of the decisions for themselves than we beekeepers have perhaps become accustomed to. It questions why we fear swarming, and challenges the need to feed our bees. Over the next few months I'll explain how the Rose Hive Method works for me, and share my mistakes to date in building up to the 20 hives running today.



Harbour Honey Harvest

Colin Falla



'The Rose Hive Method' by Tim Rowe is published by Green Hat Books

Around the Divisions

All Members are welcome to attend any Divisional meeting, but please advise the organiser if you plan to attend.

Central Sussex Division

Saturday 9th & 23rd August - Apiary meetings at Peas Pottage training apiary 11am - 1pm.

Saturday 16th & Sunday 17th August - Honey harvesting week-end including extracting demonstrations at Nyman's Garden, Handcross.

Monday 25th August - Shermanbury Country Fair.

Further details from Melvyn Essen: chairman@centralsussexbka.org.uk or the Central Sussex website: www.centralsussexbka.org.uk

Chichester Division

Tuesday 12th August - Honey Workshop - extracting, processing and 'how-to' sessions. Further details from Henrietta Currey: secretary@chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk or the Division's website: www.chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk

Wisborough Green Division

Saturday 2nd August - 68th Cranleigh Show. www.cranleighshow.co.uk

Wednesday 6th August - Apiary meetings at 6pm.

Saturday 16th August - Apiary meeting at 1:30pm.

Sunday 17th August - Parham House 'Grow Your Own Festival'. www.parhaminsussex.co.uk/events-and-courses/events.html

Monday 25th August - Wisborough Green Horticultural, Craft and Honey Show on The Green.

Details from Sue Elliott: sj.elliott@ukgateway.net or website: www.wgbka.org.uk

Worthing Division

Friday 1st August - Apiary meeting at Holt Farm. 5pm.

Sunday 3rd August - Honey Extraction. Ferring Village Hall starting at 2pm.

Wednesday 13th & 27th August - Apiary meetings at Holt Farm. 5pm & 2pm respectively.

Further details from Phil Carter: philange5180@btinternet.com or the WBKA website: www.worthingbeekeepers.org.uk

... and Dates for your Diary

Friday 26th - Sunday 28th September - BIBBA 50th Anniversary Conference. Article in July's newsletter.

Monday 6th October - London Honey Show. Article in the June newsletter.

Sunday 26th October - Dorset BKA Convention - Article in this newsletter.

Thursday 30th October - Saturday 1st November - 83rd National Honey Show. Article in this newsletter.

Chairman, Jim Norfolk continues his jottings for the County News



I am old enough to remember the publication of Rachel Carson's highly influential book 'Silent Spring'. I was at University at the time and read a lot of the subsequent research on DDT, particularly the influence on aquatic environments and the build-up of residues in the food chain which affected top avian predators. The science was clear, DDT broke down to DDE which affected the gland responsible for making the egg shells. The result was the shells were too weak to be incubated by the parent birds and numerous species failed to rear young. It is a brave person who takes on the bird lobby and so DDT was banned. However, one unforeseen consequence of the ban was the death of millions of people from malaria while the wholesale prophylactic use of DDT in agriculture was an environmental catastrophe. As far as

mammals go DDT was a fairly safe compound and the use of small amounts locally to kill mosquitoes around housing in malaria areas could probably have been sustained in the wider environment. It was also a very effective and relatively safe treatment for dog fleas and human lice.

In the intervening years a succession of pesticides have been developed and each has been banned or superseded by a 'safer' product. All of which brings me to neonicotinoids. Why now? Well we have recently been sent a letter by the Airedale BKA asking us to take part in a survey:- www.surveymonkey.com/s/JFYVYRP which seeks opinions to put pressure on the BBKA to support a ban on neonicotinoids. There is already a 2 year EU moratorium on the use of neonicotinoids in place. Dr David Aston summarised the main elements of the regulation as follows:

- Restriction in the use of three neonicotinoids; 1.clothianidin, 2. imidacloprid, and 3. thiametoxam for seed treatment, soil application (granules) and foliar treatment on bee attractive plants and cereals.
- In addition, the remaining authorised uses will only be available to professionals.
- Exceptions will be limited to the possibility of treating bee-attractive crops in greenhouses, in open-air fields only after flowering.
- The restrictions will apply from 1 December 2013.
- As soon as new information is available, and at the latest within two years, the Commission will review the conditions of approval of the three neonicotinoids to take into account relevant scientific and technical developments.

Two neonicotinoid treated crops are of relevance to UK beekeepers, oilseed rape and maize. Oilseed rape this year was sown last autumn and so the seeds were treated before the moratorium came into effect. Maize is not a major honeybee forage crop but this year would be untreated. There is no doubt that in the laboratory bees are affected by neonicotinoids but do they actually get such high doses in the field? OSR can make up a very high proportion of honeybee forage in many areas in springtime and has done so for years. Surely if there was a problem we would have seen some effect on our colonies in OSR areas, yet they continue to multiply and yield honey. Outwardly then as far as honeybees are concerned, neonicotinoids on OSR do not appear to be a major problem. This autumn's OSR crop will not be treated with neonicotinoids, so what will the farmers do to protect their crop and hence their livelihood? *Syngenta* applied for emergency exemption to treat just OSR seeds for 2014 autumn sowing on the grounds that there were no available alternatives to use on aphids and flea beetles in the spring. The lobbyists marched and sloganised and *Syngenta* were forced to withdraw. Next year, farmers will have to use whatever the current regulations permit on OSR, and I have to confess I have no idea what those products are. They will not be new products, but products of the last century.

I am too new to beekeeping to remember the days of spray liaison officers and closing up hives during spraying but that is what we will probably have to go back to. The BBKA has expressed its concerns about the risk of alternative pesticides which may be used and intend to raise the profile of the increased risk with various organisations.

The 2 year moratorium is to allow the effects of a temporary ban to be evaluated and I hope the effects on bees of the use of alternatives will also be included in the evaluation. Meanwhile a quick check in my local garden centre has plenty of plant pest control products with systemic action for sale to the general public. I was also struck by the recent article by Rusty Burlew in *Beeecraft*, in which she points out that plants bought from garden centres in The Netherlands contain so much systemic pesticide that they are toxic to bees even though they are being sold as bee friendly. The Netherlands is where most of the plants sold in the UK come from! There are two garden centres near to me, one less than 100 yards away reopened recently with a massive plant sale. Maybe that is why I keep finding dead bumblebees and see very few live ones in my garden. I have been aware of several bumblebee colonies in my garden, all have failed.

I try not to use pesticides or herbicides and have been against their use in principle since my student days. I believe that in the commercial world their use should be reduced to the minimum to sustain agricultural production but they should not be sold to the general public for use in the environment, including in plants in pots, in seeds and in pest control products. With neonicotinoids we appear to have the reverse outcome!

Jim

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We're on the web:

www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk

MEMBERS' COUNTY NEWSLETTER

Thanks to all this month's contributors. If you don't have access to the internet and want further details of anything in this newsletter, please contact the Editor & County Secretary. Likewise, if you would like to contribute to future newsletters please send articles and photographs to:

Graham Elliott, Editor & County Secretary, no later than the 20th of the preceding month.

secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk

Previous newsletters from the last 12 months are available on the website.

