



## Small Hive Beetle in Italy

The National Bee Unit has reported the following: - On 11th September the Italian National Reference Centre for beekeeping confirmed the first detection of the presence of Small Hive Beetle in South West Italy, in the port city of Gioia Tauro.

The samples were taken from a bait trap belonging to the University of Gioia Tauro. Since its discovery, urgent measures are underway to measure the extent of the outbreak, complete tracings (sales and movements of bees from the area) and eradicate and control its spread

in line with EU legislation and safeguards.



Measures include that in all apiaries where the beetle is found colonies are destroyed and all soil surrounding the land is ploughed in and treated with a soil drench.

Since 2011, there has been a substantial level of imports of package bees and queens from Italy into the UK. The NBU is arranging for further inspection of colonies belonging to these beekeepers.

For more information about this exotic pest and the things beekeepers should do are illustrated in the NBU advisory leaflet '*The Small Hive Beetle*'. Please see the NBU website for more details:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/>

Letters from Dr David Aston, Chair BBKA Technical and Environmental Committee and Tim Lovett follow in this newsletter.

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## Letters from David Aston & Tim Lovett

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You will no doubt by now have heard about the detection of the Small Hive Beetle in South West Italy. The Italian and EU authorities are investigating the situation and the UK authorities have activated their contingency plans.

The BBKA is a member of Government's Bee Health Advisory Panel and this is meeting next Wednesday. We have asked that the topic be put on the agenda and the BBKA will ensure the matter receives the appropriate attention and that we can agree to and support the measures to be taken.

Members can be reassured that if the BBKA representatives at the meeting believe the response planned to track and prevent the SHB entering the UK is inadequate we will take up the matter directly with the Minister responsible for bee health.

It is important that the authorities can interact in the most effective way with beekeepers and this is best achieved through the BBKA at this point in time. Members are requested not to heed calls to write to their MP's for the moment, as this may cause a distraction and divert resources away from dealing with the potential problem itself.

### ***Dr David Aston***

Chair BBKA Technical and Environmental Committee  
17th September 2014

BBKA representatives attended the meeting of the Bee Health Advisory Forum held at Defra's offices on Millbank, on 23 September 2014. At our request, the discovery of Small Hive Beetle (SHB) in South West Italy was a priority item on the agenda. We learned that the Italian authorities have established a 100km exclusion zone around the apiary where SHB was first found. No exports of bees will be permitted from within this area. However, we expressed the strong view that movements of bees carried a far lower risk than that of the shipment of fruit, vegetables and other plant materials from this area and which are more likely to spread SHB.

The BBKA and other stakeholders at the meeting pressed Defra hard to take steps to avert this major risk via shipments of produce. We are unhappy with an approach which is dependent principally on the actions of the local authorities or on containment measures once SHB is found in the UK. We have insisted that Defra keeps us fully informed of developments and the measures put into effect to combat this threat with all vigour. We will share this information with members as and when received.

### ***Tim Lovett***

BBKA  
25th September 2014

## BBKA Honey Survey

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Last year, BBKA members achieved 24.7lbs of honey per hive. This is still well below expected levels, although nowhere near as bad as the 8lbs which was recorded after the prolonged, cold winter of 2012. There is huge public interest in how much honey beekeepers will produce this year and we can only find out this information with your help.

Please spare five minutes to tell us about your experience of beekeeping and honey production this year. Your information will form a vital part of this unique record of honey production and beekeeping activity. Results will be published in the December issue of BBKA News. You could win £200 worth of beekeeping equipment by taking part.

The survey will also be published in the October BBKA News if you prefer to complete it in pen and paper format, but taking part online here is the quickest option. [www.bcdponline.com/honey14.htm](http://www.bcdponline.com/honey14.htm).

Whichever way you choose please reply by Friday 10th October 2014 at the latest. This survey is being conducted according to the Market Research Society Code of Conduct. All individual submissions will be treated in confidence. Thank you for taking part.

***Jan Alcock***

BBKA Stoneleigh Park

## Congratulations to Sheila

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Sheila Abrahams, President of Central Sussex Division for over 30 years is commemorating 50 years in beekeeping. Sheila is also celebrating her 85th birthday. Her friends arranged a celebratory tea party at the Central Sussex teaching apiary in Peas Pottage during September.



We wish Sheila many happy returns for her birthday and congratulations on reaching half a century of beekeeping.

## Around the Divisions

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

### Central Sussex Division

Details of the Division's activities this month from Melvyn Essen: [chairman@centralsussexbka.org.uk](mailto:chairman@centralsussexbka.org.uk) or the Central Sussex website: [www.centralsussexbka.org.uk](http://www.centralsussexbka.org.uk)

### Chichester Division

**Tuesday 14th October** - *'It's Funny You Should Say That!'* Presentation by Ian Holmer. 7:30pm at the Fishbourne Centre, Blackboy Lane, Fishbourne, Chichester, PO18 8BE. Further details from Henrietta Currey: [secretary@chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:secretary@chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk) or the Division's website: [www.chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk](http://www.chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk)

### Wisborough Green Division

**Tuesday 28th October** - *'Bees In The Wild - What Can We Learn From Them?'* Presentation by Roger Patterson. Loxwood Village Hall, Loxwood at 7:30pm. Further details from Sue Elliott: [sj.elliott@ukgateway.net](mailto:sj.elliott@ukgateway.net) or website: [www.wgbka.org.uk](http://www.wgbka.org.uk)

### Worthing Division

**Saturday 4th October** - 2pm at the apiary - preparing the bees for winter.

**Tuesday 14th October** - 2pm at the apiary - preparing the apiary for winter.

Further details from Phil Carter:

[philange5180@btinternet.com](mailto:philange5180@btinternet.com) or the WBKA website: [www.worthingbeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.worthingbeekeepers.org.uk)

***'Share your Division's  
activities with readers of the  
County News'***

### ... and Dates for your Diary

**Saturday 4th October** - Surrey BKA Training Day. Article in the July newsletter.

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

**Tuesday 7th October** - Meridian BKA open lecture. 7.30pm at St Peter's Church Hall, Free Street, Bishops Waltham. Dr Chris Jackson will be giving a talk on *'Seeing is Believing'*. Article in this newsletter.

**Sunday 26th October** - Dorset BKA Convention - Article in the August newsletter.

**Thursday 30th October - Saturday 1st November** - 83rd National Honey Show. Articles in August and September newsletters.

## Meridian Beekeepers' Open Lecture

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Meridian Beekeepers invite you to an open meeting on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October, 7.15 pm for 7.30pm at St Peter's Church Hall, Free Street, Bishops Waltham, Hampshire, SO32 1EE.



Dr Chris Jackson will be giving a talk on '*Seeing is Beelieving*'. He has raided his University laboratory to bring you a hands-on practical demonstration of some of the research equipment used in studying bee behaviour, particularly visual aspects. To include specialist ultraviolet photography, how to watch bees in the dark (infrared video), heat sensitive digital imagery, how to measure colour with field spectrophotometers, artificial flowers for foraging studies, Proboscis Extension Response etc.

Please bring along the following: yourselves, sunglasses (normal and Polaroid), any fresh flowers.

Tickets £5 per person, to include a finger buffet and a glass of wine.

Please contact Nina Jetten by email: [nina.jetten@btinternet.com](mailto:nina.jetten@btinternet.com) or telephone: 02380 767956.

## Surrey BKA Training Day - Bee Behaviour

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Saturday 4th October 11am to 4pm. Dan Basterfield will discuss the behaviour of honeybees. This workshop is designed to appeal to all beekeepers, but will be of special interest to those wishing to take the BBKA Module 6 examination.

£15 per person to include refreshments and a light lunch. The venue is East Horsley Village Hall, KT24 6QT.

There is still time to reserve a place by emailing me at [rickwoodsuka@gmail.com](mailto:rickwoodsuka@gmail.com) or by telephoning 01932 244326. Full directions and payment details will be provided with confirmation of place.

**Sandra Rickwood**

Secretary Surrey BKA

## C Arden - Bookseller

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C Arden is an independent bookseller based in Hay-on-Wye. One of their specialist subject areas is Bee & Beekeeping books; new, second-hand, collectable and antiquarian.

They produce a free catalogue in both hard copy and searchable pdf file twice a year which can be requested by providing contact details to Darren Bloodworth at [ardenbooks@btinternet.com](mailto:ardenbooks@btinternet.com) or by telephone on 01497 820471. Books in the current catalogue range from just £3 to a staggering £1850 for a book described as '...the greatest early British bee book...' published in 1623!

Books can also be viewed online at [www.ardenbooks.co.uk](http://www.ardenbooks.co.uk)

# BeeCraft Seeking New Directors

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BeeCraft is seeking three new directors to replace those who have decided to retire in the next two years after many years of good service to BeeCraft Limited.

The success of BeeCraft is due to a number of key issues, the main one is felt to be affability amongst all those involved, especially amongst the consultants and volunteers. We pride ourselves on a more or less non-existent churn rate amongst those involved in the running of BeeCraft.

With this in mind we are looking for individuals to join us on a voluntary basis. They will be fully reimbursed for travelling and other disbursements that they may expend in their roles and acting for us. Each director is assigned to a consultant to assist in their work portfolio. In addition, we hold 5 board meetings per year and two social events. All directors are properly insured for issues concerning their duties as a director including personnel injury whilst acting on BeeCraft business.

If you are interested please contact Andrew Gibb by email in the first instance [andrew@andrewgibb.com](mailto:andrew@andrewgibb.com) introducing yourself with a short narrative of your expertise.

We look forward to hearing from you.

***Michael Badger***

BeeCraft Ltd



## Can You Help Jack?

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My name is Jack Diggle and for my GCSE DT project I am making an Observation Hive. If you could please answer the following questions I would be very grateful:-

1. Would you like it to be made of:
  - 1.1 Oak
  - 1.2 American Black Walnut
  - 1.3 Redwood
2. Would you prefer it to be glass on both sides or only one:
  - 2.1 Both sides
  - 2.2 One side
3. Would you want it to be more functional or aesthetic:
  - 3.1 Functional
  - 3.2 Aesthetic
  - 3.3 Balanced



Thanks you very much. Please email me at [jdiggle@merchiston.co.uk](mailto:jdiggle@merchiston.co.uk)

***Jack Diggle***

*Chairman, Jim Norfolk continues his jottings for the County News*



I attended the BBKA Forum on Saturday 13 September, representing WSBKA. The aim of the forum is to act as a line of communication between those running the BBKA and representatives of each county. In the event I believe less than half the counties were represented. The first session was a presentation on the 5 year plan, mainly with the aim of receiving feedback on the work done so far. Clearly this is work in progress but it is moving forward and represents a framework of where the BBKA is involved. Most of it seemed to be a statement of the obvious but that is the world we live in and I leave it to the wordsmiths to ponder their mission statements, policies, stakeholders and partners, key objectives, and strategic enablers, going forward. If anyone would like to see a copy of the overview document, I would be happy to send it to you.

Next up the budget. I was pleased to see a clear budget presented on a single sheet of paper which was intelligible even to me. Well done to the new treasurer, Chris Lake. Again if you want to see a copy just ask.

Membership Records and Insurance highlighted the problem of communication. Should membership records be held at division, county, or BBKA level and what were the implications for data protection and accuracy of data? I don't think anything was resolved other than to highlight the problems, in particular the lack of accurate e-mail addresses for most members at the BBKA level. Insurance was more successful and it was revealed that Towergate have an all risks policy with BBKA which from £84 gives £5000 worth of cover for Association's stuff, be it cups or equipment. They will even cover individuals I believe.

Then a break for some beekeeping matters, or rather neonicotinoids. It seems that the BBKA Technical and Education Committee may not have explained its position clearly enough and evidence to support its position was called for by John Hoar. Tim Lovett responding for the BBKA pointed out that their evidence was the same as was available to everyone and it was a question of interpretation of what little there was. To me it is quite clear and has been for some time that we know so little about these pesticides in the environment, that governments are making decisions on the basis of political lobbying, rather than objectively based research. It was felt that the current 2 year EU moratorium would almost certainly be extended.

And so to the matter of volunteers and succession planning. It seems that to get the skills needed to drive the BBKA forward, we may need to look beyond beekeepers who may not have the skill set required. The feeling of the meeting was that some link to beekeeping was needed and that the need to have specific skills would put off some otherwise admirable potential trustees. At a more local level it was felt that people need to be asked to volunteer and are generally reluctant to put themselves forward.

*Bees in Trees* was one of those slightly off the wall topics which aroused quite a lot of opposition. The concept is not without merit, the idea being to create and monitor semi-natural colonies in areas where there were few bees. Would they be reservoirs for disease? Would they even survive? Is there room for them in crowded lowland Britain with so many beekeepers? The proposal received little support. I have had one such colony in my roof for 7 years, but each spring it dies out and another swarm takes its place.

I made a presentation with Roger Patterson on queen problems in West Sussex. In general most people agreed they had experienced similar problems while a few were adamant that these problems were part of the normal experience of raising bees and had been for years. While we had many positive comments and even offers of colony records to help confirm the problems none have arrived in my inbox! The whole issue hinges on evidence. I can look back through my records and can see evidence of the extent of current problems but unless someone can find a dusty old record book in an attic somewhere and publish an analysis of what beekeeping was like before *Varroa* and pesticides, the past will always be based on conjecture possibly tinged with nostalgia. We can at least try to set up a framework to try to confirm the extent and nature of current problems so that they will be available to future beekeepers to compare. Meanwhile if anyone has old records we would love to hear from them. My Great-Grandfather was a Victorian tenant farmer and proud of the fact he could read and write, he kept a diary of his daily activities on the farm and in the village. Unfortunately he didn't keep bees but I know about his beans and potatoes!

On balance it was worth going and it is always interesting to talk to other beekeepers and begin to fathom the inner workings of the BBKA.

**Jim**

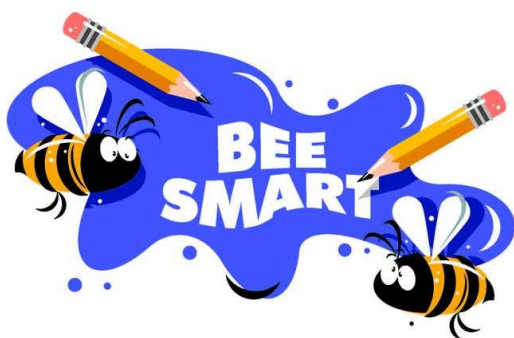
[chairman@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:chairman@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk)



## Inter-Division Quiz Night

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Chichester Division invite you to a Quiz Night at The Fishbourne Centre, Blackboy Lane, Chichester at 7:30pm on Tuesday 11th November. 50% of the questions will be based on beekeeping topics and 50% on general knowledge.



Teams can be made up of a maximum of 6 people with one official team from each Division, plus as many other teams as can be assembled. Early booking is advisable in case we have to limit numbers.

The winning Divisional team will host the Inter-Division Quiz Night in 2015. In addition there will be an award to the winning Divisional team and an award to the winning non-official team.

To enter your team contact Jim on [jimnorfolk@btinternet.com](mailto:jimnorfolk@btinternet.com)

**The Fishbourne Centre has a bar!**

**Jim Norfolk**

And Finally...

## Thymol Crystals in Winter Feed

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Thymol crystals are used as an antifungal or anti-fermentation agent in producing sugar syrup feed. Such a feed is also thought to be beneficial in the control of *Nosema*.

The crystals are not readily soluble in the syrup and should first be diluted in surgical spirit and the solution then added to the syrup at the required strength. R.O.B. Manley is credited with being the first to use thymol in the winter feed and his recipe has become the standard - 30gms thymol crystals dissolved in 150ml surgical spirit added to the syrup at 45ml per 13.5ltrs syrup (often referred to as 3 x Manley strength).



Further details are available on the Dave Cushman website [www.dave-cushman.net/bee/thymolx1.html](http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/thymolx1.html)

**Thymol crystals are corrosive and nasty...take care!**

***Roger Patterson***

**We're on the web:**  
**[www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk](http://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](mailto:secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk)

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

