



## PLYMOUTH BEEKEEPERS' Apiary Programme 2016

JULY		
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Novice Meeting (7)	10 am
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Improvers Meeting	10 am
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Novice Meeting (8 + 9)	10 am
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup>	Novice Meeting (10)	10 am
AUGUST (Bank Holiday: Mon 29th)		
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	General Meeting: discussion on topical items	10 am
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	Novice Meeting (11)	10 am
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Improvers Meeting	10 am
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	No Meeting (Bank Holiday Weekend)	
SEPTEMBER		
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Novice Meeting (12) – End of Course	10 am
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup>	General Meeting inc. Apiary Maintenance – all members	10 am
OCTOBER		
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Winter Meeting ~ Elburton Village Hall	7.30 pm
NOVEMBER		
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Branch AGM ~ Elburton Village Hall	7.30 pm
DECEMBER		
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Branch Christmas Lunch ~ Boringdon Golf Club £5 deposit	12.30

**NB.** Meetings will be held at the Branch Apiary Site unless advised otherwise.

**Directions to Branch Apiary at Lee Mill, Ivybridge:**

- Turn left off the A38 at Lee Mill and follow the signs for Tesco
- Drive past the Tesco entrance & take next right for Central Avenue on the industrial estate
- Drive down the hill of Central Avenue, looking for East Way on your right
- Drive along East Way, looking for Cadleigh Close on your left
- Drive into Cadleigh Close and the apiary site is behind the big iron gates of the tyre factory
- Park inside the gates, walk up the concrete path & you will see the portacabin on your right

## ACTING CHAIRMAN'S BLOG

Hello again.

The season is now well under way and the main flow is just starting. It's been an unusual year weather wise; after such a cold Spring the March, April and May flowers were all one or two weeks late and many beekeepers had to wait until late April or early May before they could carry out the first hive inspections of the year. By this time of course, many colonies were already preparing to swarm! There does appear to have been one advantage emanating from the late flowering though, and that is that there has been little or no 'June gap' this year so hopefully nobody's colonies will die as a result of Summer starvation. However, it's always worth making sure that our colonies have plenty of stores to see them through any bad spells of weather, especially as this is the time of the year when colony populations are near their peak.

Elsewhere in this Bee Brief, Jean French has written an article about the very successful Bee Disease and Husbandry Day held on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June and it's well worth a read. What a superb day it was. One comment from a delegate that sticks in my mind was "*we learned more in that one day than we did from years of reading books.*" That just about sums up the general consensus. To be able to handle diseased comb (under strictly controlled conditions) and see (and smell) American Foul Brood and European Foul Brood was a great opportunity. Now we really know what we're looking for during colony health inspections. I just hope we never find it! The Branch owes a debt of gratitude to David Milford whose early discussions with Simon Jones, Regional Bee Inspector, ensured that the APHA team had sufficient confidence in Plymouth Branch to run this event at Lee Mill. John O'Connell kindly allowed us the use of his factory premises and they proved ideal. I must also thank Jean French and her army of helpers. It was a terrific feat of organisation and their efforts ensured that a complex programme of activities ran like clockwork. Well done all of you.

Valerie and I never cease to be amazed by the diversity of opinions among beekeepers relating to the technical aspects of beekeeping. It must be confusing for novices when they encounter this for the first time, but the best thing to do if you are a confused novice is to accept as a fact that beekeepers will often differ about the best way to manage their hives. You may well receive conflicting advice. As an example, when we started beekeeping a very experienced beekeeper told us that it was always best to remove the entrance blocks from the hives on warm sunny days as the foraging traffic is very high, and having the whole hive entrance open helps the bees to get in and out without having to queue. A year or so later another experienced beekeeper told us we should never remove the entrance blocks in summer as the smaller entrance gives the guard bees a greater chance of being able to defend the hive against invaders. Which is correct? I'm not even sure that there is a 'correct' answer. Very often these things are down to what works for you. I'll aim to feature another topic that divides beekeepers in my blog next month. Meanwhile, I hope that copious quantities of nectar flow into your hives this month and that the mites and diseases stay out.

All the best

*Terry*



**Dorset BKA invites PBKA members to join them for a Bee Health and Husbandry day with the new Regional BI, Julian Parker**

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July      10am to 4pm**

**Stratton Village Hall, near Dorchester**

**Lunch, teas and coffees are provided**

**The day will cost £10**

**Contact:** Lesley Gasson, Chairperson, Dorset BKA

**Email:** [imgasson@btinternet.com](mailto:imgasson@btinternet.com)

**BeeCraft** Timely Reminders

Don't forget, the offer on 'Starting Out with Bees' by John Williams at just £10 is coming to an end next week, so get your orders in soon and don't miss out. It makes an excellent book for new beekeepers, perhaps as a course prize.

Alternatively you could watch one of our recorded webinars [here](#) and put **13th July at 8.00pm** on your calendar to join us live and ask the questions that are bothering you. It's a bit of fun as well as being informative and, of course, the more the merrier!

So please try to get everyone involved. See you there!

**Wendy and the *Bee Craft* team**

[wendy@bee-craft.com](mailto:wendy@bee-craft.com)

[www.bee-craft.com](http://www.bee-craft.com)

## **BIBBA Conference 2016**

### **20-22 September**

### **Isle of Man**

The conference is open to all beekeepers, everyone is welcome.

Three full days of quality international speakers with lectures on many aspects of beekeeping: from beginner to expert there will be excellent content for all of us to improve our beekeeping.

Disease occurrence and spread and future threats to our bees are high profile; now is the time to focus on breeding from the best, locally, for less defensive, robust stocks of honey bees. Where better than a conference with like-minded beekeepers?

Speaker profiles, lecture content summaries and booking are all now available online, link below. Please take a look and whatever you do **don't miss the Early Bee prices, available now.**

Large choice of accommodation, conference dinner, lots to see, so why not extend your visit? See you there!

Find out more: <http://bibba.com/conference/>

Trisha Marlow, Publicity Officer, BIBBA

## **WARNING**

Beekeepers may wish to monitor their colony food levels closely over the next month as many colonies, particularly those which are strong and had their spring honey crop removed, will be at risk of starving. In some parts of the UK, the weather is still cold and foraging opportunities for large colonies are few and far between.

It is important to check and monitor all your colonies feed levels, if you do not wish to open them up because of poor weather, lift below the floor, in turn, on both sides of the hive to see how much it weighs. Where the hive is light, liquid feed should be applied directly above the bees. Feed can be prepared from refined white sugar and water mixed at a 2:1 ratio or one of the proprietary ready mixed syrups available from Beekeeping equipment suppliers.

More information about mixing up sugar can be found in the Best Practice Guidelines no. 7 [[Click Here to View](#)]

Large starving colonies of bees will take 1 gallon (approx. 5 Litres) of syrup very quickly while smaller colonies will take half a gallon (approx. 2.5 Litres). After feeding, heft the hives again and check the weight and if in doubt feed some more in a few days.

# National Honey Show Newsletter June 2016

## 2016 Venue: Sandown Park Racecourse

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Preparations are well underway for this year's show at the new venue with our usual excellent programme of lectures and workshops. It's over to you all now to plan your visit, your entries, give the stewarding and staging entry teams something to do, and make it the most spectacular display ever. As always, do please get in touch if you can spend any time helping with the stewarding please e-mail our chief steward [steward@honeyshow.co.uk](mailto:steward@honeyshow.co.uk).



## National Honey Show Posters and Leaflets

We have some A3 and A4 posters, plus A5 leaflets available for distribution at your local meeting, county show or other events in the lead up to this year's National Honey Show. If you would like some, and particularly if you can display posters in the Esher area, please e-mail [publicity@honeyshow.co.uk](mailto:publicity@honeyshow.co.uk) and let Val know how many and what size posters, how many leaflets, and whether you would like some raffle ticket booklets too. Remember to add your address. Val would also like to hear from you if you have any contacts in the schools, scout groups etc in the area surrounding Esher. It would be great to encourage more entries and young visitors.

## National Honey Show Schedule

The 2016 Schedule will be going to press shortly, when the last pieces of information are finally added, and should be mailed out to National Honey Show members at the beginning of August in good time for the Show. This year it will include a programme of events over the three days.

**New class for 2016:** Skep. To be made by the exhibitor using traditional materials and suitable for use. If it has been used the skep must be in a clean condition with no comb inside. So all those of you who have attended the skep making workshops over the years will have a chance to show off your new skills.

## The Trade, Educational Stands and Attractions

There will be a children's table with candle rolling, a children's quiz, a (virtual) observational hive, a skep making demonstration on the Saturday. It will be a very welcome novelty to have everything happening under one roof. Our usual supporters have already booked, plus some newcomers, so there will be lots to see alongside our competitive display. As we have more space this year, there is still time for new traders and supporting groups to contact us with a view to taking space over the three days: e-mail [tradestands@honeyshow.co.uk](mailto:tradestands@honeyshow.co.uk).

## National Honey Show Membership

Just to mention that if you take out or renew membership across the summer, as many of you do, you'll not only receive your copy of this year's Schedule in the post, but it makes admission the day a much faster process which will really pay off if you're delayed in traffic. It's a slightly longer trek to the lectures upstairs for 2016!

Val  
NHS Publicity Sec  
[publicity@honeyshow.co.uk](mailto:publicity@honeyshow.co.uk) [www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk)



# BEE DISEASE & HUSBANDRY DAY



Plymouth Branch hosted its first ever Bee Disease & Husbandry Day on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June with support from Simon Jones (Regional Bee Inspector on behalf of APHA) and his Team of Seasonal Bee Inspectors.

The event was free of charge and in total, 50 people attended.....and not only Plymouth members; some from Exeter, Newton Abbot, Okehampton, Tavistock, Totnes & Kingsbridge and Cornwall.

After Registration and a welcoming cup of beverage, the day started with a talk by Simon Jones on Apiary Hygiene and Disease Control.

Following this talk, the group then split into their various allocated Workshop Groups and attended the four sessions throughout the day:

- Varroa Biology, IPM and approved Veterinary Medicines Workshop – David Packham (A copy of the presentation can be obtained via Jean French)
- Small Hive Beetle and Asian Hornet Workshop - Meg Seymour & Hazel Vallis
- Diseased Comb Recognition Workshop with Martin Hann and Peter Auger
- Practical Apiary Disease Inspection including checks for Foulbrood/Exotic Pests with Simon Jones & Eric James





**Here is some of the feedback received after the event:**

- John from Princetown commenting on David Packham's Workshop on Varroa:  
I really enjoyed this session, David was great to listen to. May I take this opportunity of thanking you for organising this event, I learnt a great deal and enjoyed the process.
- I really enjoyed the day. And I learnt so much. I particularly liked the diseased combs - now I've seen AFB and EFB, it all makes so much more sense (the smell, the scale, the sunken cappings etc. Lilah, Totnes & Kingsbridge Branch
- Thanks for this and for a very well organised and informative day.  
Keith, Exeter Branch
- Thanks for inviting Tavistock along it was a well organised and very worthwhile event. I am questioning Tavistock members as to why they did not take up the offer.  
Bill, Tavistock Branch
- We all learnt something! The day was superb, above all expectations. We are so lucky in the branch to have so many willing volunteers. Jean's commitment to this project was, in a word, outstanding. Those members who could not make it have missed out big time.  
David, Plymouth Branch



**An email Terry McA sent to Simon Jones and Simon's response, which I think sums up the day perfectly:**

Dear Simon, on behalf of Plymouth Branch of DBKA, I would like to express my thanks to you and your Team for providing such a stimulating and rewarding day yesterday. I'm writing this on the following morning and I have already seen one e-mail from a Tavistock Branch member who said what a fantastic learning experience it was. She said she had learned more in that one day than she had done from years of reading books about beekeeping. Judging by the verbal feedback I have been receiving from members, I think there are many of us who will agree with that.

The success of yesterday's event was down to a lot of hard work and organisation by several people, not least yourself and the seasonal bee inspectors. Not only did the delegates learn a lot, they also enjoyed the event and their interest was kept alive by the knowledge and enthusiasm of your team as they delivered their talks. I'm sure your own written feedback will reflect what I have said but I would be most grateful if you will pass this e-mail on to your team. You have all been instrumental in giving us the tools to be better beekeepers. Thank you again. Kind regards, Terry McAuliffe - Acting Chairman (Plymouth Branch)

**And Simon's response:** Hi Terry, thank you for the feedback; it was good to work with a group of beekeepers that were so interested and engaged. Please thank, on our behalf, Jean and all the other helpers who made the day run so smoothly. Best regards, Simon Jones - Regional Bee Inspector, South West England

Ending this article, I think some 'thank you's' are in order - firstly to John O'Connell for the use of the Bandvulc premises, as without his kind offer, the event would not have been possible.

- to the 'Refreshment Team' (all non-members) who were kept busy throughout the day, making copious cups of tea, coffee and squash and keeping everyone well fed!
- to those who very generously donated the delicious cakes and biscuits
- and to everyone who helped/supported in various ways

The day was a resounding success and I am sure it will be repeated at some time in the future.

**Jean French – Branch Secretary**



# Two LASI Queen Bees coming to an apiary near you!

*(Honey bees bred for disease resistance using hygienic behaviour based on scientific research)*



Worker bees exhibiting hygienic behaviour by removing infected pupae.

You may have heard Ron Hoskins speak about his hygienic bees in the Swindon area or even seen him in interviews on television. Or maybe you have read in the monthly bee magazines about Sussex University's research through systematic rearing of hygienic bees. Well, now you have a chance to get involved in such projects yourself because, in our efforts to improve the quality of our branch apiary, the committee has decided to invest in two LASI queen bees.

As beekeepers we put a lot of time and effort into learning about and controlling pests & diseases. It would be convenient if bees took care of their own colony health. Hygienic behaviour is a natural form of disease resistance where worker bees uncap sealed cells containing diseased brood and remove the contents. In this way the disease is less likely to spread within the colony. That's the kind of bee we would like at Lee Mill.

## Where are these bees coming from?

LASI is the Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects which is attached to the University of Sussex. The scientists there have been working on the identification of hygienic bees for ten years and have now established a sub-organisation called LASI Queen Bees. This was set up to provide workshops and to supply queen bees to UK beekeepers.

On behalf of the committee I have ordered two "Open-Mated Daughters of Hygienic Breeder Queens". These will be daughters reared from hygienic breeder colonies which have already been tested using the freeze-killed brood (FKB) bioassay. This type of daughter queen is open mated at apiaries at LASI and nearby. LASI research has shown that colonies headed by these daughter queens have a high level of hygienic behaviour, 95.5% FKB removal on average.



Dead drone pupae on the landing board in the early morning. About an hour later, all bodies had been removed by undertaker bees.

### **Why purchase open-mated queens?**

There are four types of queens we could have ordered: Virgins (£20); Open-mated (£45); Tested open-mated (£500); and Instrumentally inseminated (£mega-bucks! but not available until 2017)

Apart from cost-effectiveness, the decision was largely made on reliability. Virgins could have mated with our local stock of drones but it was felt that this was too risky a process, especially in the current variable climate. The queens are also released in monthly batches. We wanted to delay their arrival until after the Bee Disease & Husbandry Day but to give the colonies the best chance to establish themselves before the winter.

### **What kind of bees are they?**

They do not belong genetically to an established subspecies like, for example, *apis mellifera ligustica* (known as the Italian bee) or *apis mellifera mellifera* (known as the European dark bee). In FAQs on the LASI website the species origin of the queens is not stated because this is not what is at stake - they are simply described as 'mainly dark in colour'.

Hygienic behaviour is, however, a genetically-controlled trait found amongst all subspecies of honeybees. Although it is widespread, most colonies only have it at a low level. By rearing queens from the most hygienic mother colonies, LASI has been able to build up the best hygienic breeding stock.

So, the main point of buying these queens for the branch apiary is to support our colonies' healthy development. Hygienic behaviour in bees should aid in the control of brood diseases such as chalk brood and viruses spread via varroa mites.

### **What will happen to the queens at Lee Mill?**

The Apiary Management and the Education Teams will be working together to follow the development of the colonies headed by the LASI queens and compare them to the other colonies. This is why we have ordered only two queens rather than re-queen all the colonies.

The bees on order are booked to arrive in early July. It is planned to introduce them to nucleus colonies which will have been set up beforehand so that they will be highly receptive to a new queen.

### **Want to know more?**

If you would like to know more, you can view the websites below and read the articles in recent beekeeping magazines. Also, speak to the Apiary and Education teams about the monitoring programme and join in the action over the next few months.

<http://www.swindonhoneybeeconservation.org.uk/about-us/>

<http://www.lasiqueenbees.com/>

- **Kathy Lovegrove**



## The Buzz – Beekeeping in the news



### Cardiff University bid to be 'bee-friendly' campus

Cardiff University has launched a campaign to become one of the UK's first bee-friendly campuses.

The School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceuticals has several research projects on bees - including one using honey to find plant-derived drugs.

It has teamed up with charity Buglife to plant pollen-rich flowers around its Redwood Building.

Dr James Blaxland said it would "increase awareness of the plight of bees".

Read more: [Click Here](#)



### Welsh honey 'as potent as Manuka' found in new drugs hunt



Scientists who enlisted the help of bees to hunt for plant-derived antibacterial drugs have discovered a "Welsh Manuka honey".

Cardiff University experts analysed the honey created by bees from 250 Welsh hives to find plants they had visited with high antimicrobial properties.

They uncovered a honey in Gwynedd "as potent" as New Zealand's famed Manuka.

The team is now setting up an urban honey-making scheme to see if it can be brought to market.

Read more: [Click Here](#)



# Contact Details

## Plymouth Branch

<b>Acting Chairman</b>	Terry McAuliffe	219573	<b>tjm1952@hotmail.com</b>
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<b>Editor</b>	Dawn Clarke	309483	<b>oakwoman@gmail.com</b>

### **DBKA Website - Members Area Password:**

If you have forgotten the password, please contact Terry McAuliffe or Jean French.

## MEMBER ADVERTS

### BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

*(Surplus to requirements as moving abroad – hence everything must go!)*

National brood chambers (used) £15

National supers (used) - 9 slot spacers) £10

Cover/clearer boards £3

Floor boards + entrance block £5

Roofs £5

Hive stands (ideal for temp. site) £8

Wire queen excluder £5

5 frame Nucleus box £20

Ashforth style feeder (2gal cap.) £15

Plastic honey buckets (12L /30lb) £1.50

Rapid Alu. Feeder (4pint) £4

Plastic contact feeder (1gal) £1

50kg Stainless steel honey tank with tap £50

Stainless steel cutter (cut comb) £10

**N.B.** All hives etc. have been flame sterilised. Available to view/collect from Forder, Saltash

**For more details**, please contact Francis on 01752 651041 or 07845 237130

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**Bill Finnemore**  
**Tel: 01752 404184**





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