



Plymouth Branch Newsletter
July / August 2018

**PLYMOUTH BRANCH
OF DEVON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**

HONEY SHOW 2018

Tuesday 9th October 2018
Blindmans Wood Scout Centre
PL3 5TB

Q&A Panel with
Neil Downing-Waite, Martin Hann
and David Milford

Open to all members

New members especially welcome

Doors open at 6.30 pm; Judging starts at 7pm

See page 6-7 for more information

PLYMOUTH BEEKEEPERS' Apiary Programme 2018

OCTOBER		
Tuesday 9 th	Branch Honey Show, Blindmans Wood Scout Centre	Doors open 6.30 pm
NOVEMBER		
Thursday 15 th	Branch AGM – Blindmans Wood Scout Centre	7.30 pm
DECEMBER		
Sunday 9 th	Branch Christmas Lunch – Boringdon Golf Club	
Saturday 15 th	DBKA AGM / Beekeepers Day (hosted by Plymouth Branch)	9.30am start

PLYMOUTH BEEKEEPERS' Apiary Programme 2019

JANUARY		
Tuesday 8 th	Branch Meeting / Quiz: Blindmans Wood Scout Centre Outland Road, Plymouth. PL3 5TB	7pm for 7.30 start
Sunday 27 th	Wax Extraction / Frame Making Session: Branch Apiary	10am
FEBRUARY		
Tuesday 12 th	Branch Meeting: Blindmans Wood Scout Centre	7pm for 7.30 start
Sunday 24 th	Wax Extraction / Frame Making Session: Branch Apiary	10am
MARCH		
Sunday 3 rd	Improvers Meeting	10am
Sunday 10 th	Beginners Meeting (1) - Education Team	10am
Sunday 17 th	General Meeting	10am
Sunday 24 th	Beginners Meeting (2)	10am
Sunday 31 st	Apiary Maintenance Morning	10am
APRIL	Easter Sunday 21st April	
Sunday 7 th	Improvers Meeting	10am
Sunday 14 th	Beginners Meeting (3)	10am
Sunday 21 st	Easter Sunday	No Meeting
Sunday 28 th	Beginners Meeting (4)	10am
MAY		
Sunday 5 th	Improvers Meeting	10am
Sunday 12 th	Beginners Meeting (5)	10am
Sunday 19 th	Beginners Meeting (6)	10am
Sunday 26 th	Bank Holiday Weekend	No Meeting

JUNE		
Sunday 2 nd	Improvers Meeting	10am
Sunday 9 th	Beginners Meeting (7)	10am
Sunday 16 th	General Meeting	10am
Sunday 23 rd	Beginners Meeting (8)	10am
Sunday 30 th	Apiary Maintenance Morning	10am
JULY		
Sunday 7 th	Improvers Meeting	10am
Sunday 14 th	Beginners Meeting (9)	10am
Sunday 21 st	General Meeting	10am
Sunday 28 th	Beginners Meeting (10)	10am
AUGUST	(Bank Holiday: Mon.26th)	
Sunday 4 th	Improvers Meeting	10am
Sunday 11 th	Beginners Meeting (11)	10am
Sunday 18 th	General Meeting	10am
Sunday 25 th	Bank Holiday Weekend	No Meeting
SEPTEMBER		
Sunday 1 st	Improvers Meeting	10am
Sunday 8 th	General Meeting/Apiary Maintenance Morning	10am
OCTOBER		
Tuesday 8 th	Branch Honey Show: Blindmans Wood Scout Centre	6.30pm for 7pm start
NOVEMBER		
Tuesday 19 th	AGM: Blindmans Wood Scout Centre	7pm for 7.30 start
DECEMBER		
Sunday 8 th	Branch Christmas Lunch: – TO BE CONFIRMED	

Meetings will be held at the Branch Apiary Site, Lee Mill, Ivybridge unless advised otherwise

- 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; the apiary site is behind the big iron gates of the Bandvulc tyre factory
- Park inside the gates, walk up the concrete path & the portacabin is on your right

The Blindmans Wood Scout Centre is on Outland Road, Plymouth PL3 5TB

Hello Again

Oh woe, woe and a thousand times woe. After decades of being held high in public esteem, we beekeepers are now pariahs, environmental wreckers, enemies of the people etc. etc. Why? You may well ask. A number of universities have this year published research into the effect on introduced honey bees on local flora and wild pollinating insects. In particular, research published this year by Dr Olivia Norfolk and others of Anglia Ruskin University has caught the attention of our beloved press and as usual the wrong impression has been created. I think the first law of journalism always was “never let the facts get in the way of a good story” and I have seen this maxim in operation here. Dr Norfolk’s work has indeed shown that honey bees, when newly introduced into an ecosystem do have a detrimental effect on wild pollinators and some native plants. However, the research, although well-presented and rigorous in its scientific approach, was carried out in an atypical location; a mountainous area of the South Sinai desert in Egypt. It examined the effect of local Bedouins importing honey bees, relative newcomers to the area. The results, which concur with the results of similar research in the USA and other UK universities, make fairly depressing reading for what I call ‘ecocentric’ beekeepers. However, while the BBC was quite measured in its approach, newspaper reports gave the entirely erroneous impression that beekeeping in general is harmful to the environment. The research did not say that. In fact, Dr Norfolk has written a paper in plain English as opposed to scientific research-speak, that explains the outcome of her research. It’s well worth a read Olivia Norfolk - the conversation. However, it’s also worth remembering that *apis mellifera* has been part of the UK’s ecosystem for thousands of years and has been on Earth for millions of years. Beekeepers probably came on the scene at the time of the ancient Greeks, so not for nothing is beekeeping sometimes called the second oldest profession!

I mentioned that this research is not good news for ‘ecocentric’ beekeepers. I should explain. I believe that beekeepers occupy a spectrum of attitudes to the craft. At one end are the ‘ecocentric’ beekeepers, at the other, the ‘melocentric’ beekeepers. ‘Eco’ beekeepers care only about their bees and the environment, the honey yield does not matter to them. ‘Melo’ beekeepers, who could simply be called honey farmers, care about nothing other than their honey crop; their bees are simply a means to an end. I tend to the view that most of us are somewhere between the two ends of the spectrum. But if you very much tend to the ‘eco’ end of the spectrum, the essence of Dr Norfolk’s research can be summed up by saying that if your motive for keeping bees is to help the environment, then don’t bother; there are much more effective ways to help than by keeping bees. However, if you want to produce lovely honey, then that’s fine as long as you are a responsible beekeeper. It appears that *apis mellifera* is a good pollinator for agricultural purposes, but not for environmental purposes.

Turning to less controversial matters, in early September it was my pleasure, to host a visit to Plymouth by Tony Lindsell and Viv Thorne, Chairman and Vice-chairman respectively of Devon Beekeepers' Association. They were keen to see our apiary and its teaching facilities and were impressed with what they saw. My thanks go to Patrick and Allen who looked after our guests at the apiary. Our DBKA guests were also very impressed with the rooms in the Future Inn Hotel that we booked for Devon Beekeepers' Day on 15 December. I do hope that you will be able to come as it will be a great opportunity to meet and chat with beekeepers from other branches in Devon. There will also be 'pop-up' shops selling beekeeping equipment, branch displays and two excellent speakers; John de Carteret, a Jersey beekeeper who will update us about Jersey's battle with the Asian hornet, and Dr Claire Bethune, a consultant immunologist, who will explain in depth about bee stings and their effects. I have never met or listened to Claire, but I understand that she is a very entertaining speaker and I'm looking forward to hearing her in December.

At the time of writing there have been reports of confirmed sightings of the Asian hornet in Fowey, near Liskeard and in Hull. The Fowey nest was found and destroyed (reports suggest it may have been a preliminary nest) and sightings this year have been sporadic, but nonetheless I have an uneasy feeling that they probably represent the vanguard of a much bigger wave of invaders in future years. I very much hope that I am wrong about this and that we will be able to continue to repel the efforts of this most unwelcome invader to colonise southern England. Dedicated work by the National Bee Unit assisted by various Asian Hornet Action Teams appears to have bought us some time for the moment.

To return to my opening theme, I should state quite categorically that I am proud to be a beekeeper, and regardless of misleading newspaper articles, I think all beekeepers have good cause to be proud of what we do. And if we get the opportunity, we should never be afraid to show off our wonderful craft to the general public. Valerie and I were guests of the Seven Stars pub in Tamerton Foliot on 2 September for a 'bee and honey' afternoon. We took along a dummy hive, a populated observation nuc, some beekeeping equipment and two different jars of honey for people to taste. The afternoon was a great success and we had a continuous stream of adults and children looking at the bees, tasting the honey and asking questions. Then on 12 September I gave a talk on beekeeping to the Ivybridge branch of the University of the Third Age (U3A). The audience was made up of intelligent people many of whom asked pertinent, probing questions. It was at this talk that I first realised that some members of the public are prepared to challenge us about the environmental effects of keeping honey bees. That realisation prompted me to read this research carefully; the only way to ensure that I am able to mount a robust defence of honey bees and beekeeping, which I shall continue to do. I hope you will too.

Until December,

All the best,

Terry

SCHEDULE OF HONEY SHOW CLASSES

- | | | |
|-----------|--|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 x 1lb Jars of light run honey
(in standard 1 lb jars with plastic or metal tops) | Slater Cup |
| 2 | 2 x 1lb Jars of medium run honey
(in standard 1 lb jars with plastic or metal tops) | Edwards Cup |
| 3 | 2 x 1lb Jars of dark run honey
(in standard 1 lb jars with plastic or metal tops) | Tucker Cup |
| 4 | 2 x 1lb Jars of crystallised honey
(in standard 1 lb jars with plastic or metal tops) | Winnicott Cup |
| 5 | 2 x 1lb Jars of creamed honey
(in standard 1 lb jars with plastic or metal tops) | Perpetual Trophy |
| 6 | 1 Pair of beeswax candles
(One pair of identical candles made from pure beeswax.
One candle may be lit by the judge) | Prosser Tray |
| 7 | 1 Bottle of Mead (any type)
(all bottles to be clear punted with new flanged corks) | Mansfield Tray |
| 8 | 1 Frame of comb for extraction
(may be any type of shallow frame) | Eric Goss Tray |
| 9 | 1 Jar of honey labelled for sale
(Labelling to E.C. regulations. Honey may be of any variety.) | Interserve Tray |
| 10 | 6 x 1ox blocks of beeswax
(all blocks must be identical and may be from any shape mould) | Poole Tray |
| 11 | Beeswax Open Class
(any wax item or product eg polish or wax block etc) | Bandvulc Tray |
| 12 | 1 Honey Sandwich (see recipe)
(white paper plates will be provided for display) | Ward Cup |
| 13 | 12 pieces of Honey fudge (see recipe)
(white paper plates will be provided for display) | Barton Cup |
| 14 | Novice Class
(any category of beekeeping exhibit from classes 1 to 12 entered by a novice) See Show notes for further guidance. | Milford Cup |
| 15 | Open Class eg photo, gadget etc
Open to all items of beekeeping interest not covered by classes 1 to 12) | Mayflower Marina Cup |

SHOW SCHEDULE CLAUSES

- 1 This show is held in accordance with the show Rules (1994) of the British Beekeepers' Association and Exhibitors are bound by them.
- 2 Entries must be made on the form provided and filled in on the evening of the Show.
- 3 The entry fees are free!
- 4 Judging will commence at 7.30pm.
- 5 No exhibit or any part thereof shall be removed until after the prize giving.
- 6 The Show will be open to members and exhibitors at the close of judging.

SHOW NOTES

- Honey** Keep everything clean and shiny, no odd bees, legs etc. A clean jar makes the honey look clear and bright.
- Classes 1 – 5:**
- Class 6:** Candles may be displayed free-standing or in candlesticks. Do not overheat the wax as this makes the wax become darker and most judges prefer a bright amber colour. Use fine filters, if possible, to remove impurities which may come to the surface and spoil and otherwise fine exhibit. Polish the candle to get a good smooth shiny appearance.
- Class 7:** Mead. Again cleanliness is a must. The punt will show up any debris and any fermentation will show up at the bottle neck. A nice clear yellow always looks pleasing but the ultimate goal is the flavour. Use good quality honey for good quality mead.
- Class 8:** When choosing a frame make quite sure that it is not granulated or weeping honey. The capping must cover the surface to the edge. Cleanliness is desirable but not essential if it is an old well used frame.
- Class 9:** Make sure that you are up to date on all the E.C. regulations.
- Class 10:** Make sure that your blocks are 1 oz, some judges will weigh them. All six blocks should be identical in colour and shape so melt all the wax together first for uniformity.
- Classes 12,13:** Keep to the recipes provided
- Class 14:** Novices – choose your exhibits from any of the above classes. A novice is someone who has never won a prize in the category entered eg an option for beginners honey if you have not won a honey prize before.
- Class 15:** Open to all beekeepers, young and old, to show off photos, gadgets, poems etc.

Honey Show Recipes



Class 12

Honey Sandwich

6oz Margarine

4oz Caster Sugar

1 tbsp Honey

3 Large Eggs

6oz Self-Raising Flour

Pinch Salt

Cream margarine, sugar and honey until light and fluffy. Whisk eggs and beat into creamed mixture. Fold in sifted flour and salt. Divide into two prepared 7" sandwich tins and bake in moderate oven for about 30 mins. Turn onto a wire tray and when cold, sandwich together with honey filling.

Filling

4oz Icing Sugar

1 Tablespoon Honey

2oz Butter

Blend together until smooth.



Class 13

12 Pieces Honey Fudge

1lb Granulated Sugar

¼ Pint Evaporated Milk

¼ Teaspoon Salt

2oz Butter

2 Tablespoons Honey



Boil sugar and milk for 5 mins. Add honey and boil until "soft ball stage" at 240°F (Thermometer is needed as the temperature is critical). Add butter. Beat until creamy, pour into buttered dish. When nearly set, mark into 12 squares. Use full amount for entry.

2018 Beekeeping for Beginners Course

The final session of the 2018 Beekeeping for Beginners Course was held on Sunday 12 August. The course consisted of 11 sessions, each lasting for 2 hours. The first hour was a theory session covering various aspects of beekeeping throughout the year. One session on Bee Diseases was delivered by Martin Hann, our Seasonal Bee Inspector. The second hour was given over to opening up the hives under the guidance of experienced beekeepers. At the last session certificates were presented to the seven beginners who had successfully completed the course and hopefully they will now go on to attend the Improvers' sessions next year and continue their journey to becoming good beekeepers.



Left to right: Peter Greene, Tim Olssen, Ian Staples, Claire Law, Chris Roch and Liz Hill. Brian French was not able to attend.

This was my first year running the Beginners' Course and I would like to thank all those who helped me by giving up their time to deliver lectures and help with bee inspections, making this a very successful course for Plymouth Branch.

Valerie McAuliffe
Education Officer 1

DEVON BEEKEEPERS' DAY AND AGM

(Hosted by Plymouth branch)

Saturday 15th December 2018

Lister Room & Fleming Room

The Future Inn

**Plymouth International Business Park
1 William Prance Road, Plymouth PL6 5ZD**

LISTER ROOM PROGRAMME

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 09.30 | Refreshments on arrival outside the Lister Room |
| 10.00 | Welcome and Introduction - Christopher Smith, DBKA President |
| 10.15 | DBKA Annual General Meeting - Chaired by Tony Lindsell |
| 11.15 | John De Carteret from Jersey Beekeepers and a leading member in their campaign to deal with the Asian Hornet |
| Lunch | - see note below |
| 13.30 | Presentation of awards including Education Certificates, Frank Alston Memorial Skep |
| 14.30 | Dr Claire Bethune - Consultant Immunologist at Derriford Hospital. 'Reactions to Bee Stings' |

DBKA Prize Draw

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 15.00 | Q & A Session with DBKA Officers on any issues members would like to raise. |
| 15.30 | Closure by Christopher Smith |

FLEMING ROOM

Branch, NBU & DARG Displays & National Bee Supplies

Free entry including a cup of tea/coffee on arrival but does not include refreshments.

PARKING: there is plenty of free car parking but drivers **MUST** register their cars at Reception as soon as they arrive. Failure to do this could result in the vehicle being clamped and its driver incurring a £100 release fee.

LUNCH: can be taken on site in Fishbone Restaurant or you may bring your own packed lunch but this **MUST** be eaten within the confines of the conference rooms. A variety of meals are available from sandwiches, salads and main courses.

DIRECTIONS: From the A38 use the left lane to take the A386 slip road to A374/City centre/Tavistock/Torpoint. At Manadon Roundabout, take the 5th exit onto the A386 slip road to Tavistock/Airport/Derriford/Southway/Belliver/Estover then merge onto Manadon Hill/A386. Continue to follow A386 for 0.8 miles then use the right 2 lanes to turn right onto William Prance Rd. Take the first left and left again to enter the hotel car park.

• ***Please note this programme may be subject to change***

PLYMOUTH BEEKEEPERS LIBRARY



The library books and DVDs are permanently kept at the apiary site on a very smart new shelf unit.

The books are still separated into the three categories (Novices; General; Specialised) and have been re-numbered with a colour-coded system to help you more easily choose the right book for you.

The new numbers are on the website.
The DVDs remain with their old numbers.

If you have a request on a particular topic and would like help to choose the right book please contact me and I'll be happy to help.

If you read one of the books and can recommend it (or otherwise) then please let me have your feedback.

Liz Wallis, Windlestraw, Penquit, Ivybridge PL21 0LU

**01752 698384
windlestraw@btinternet.com**

Link to PBKA Library

www.plymouthbeekeepers.btik.com/LibraryBooks

30 July 2018

Why there's a buzz about Helen Jukes' beekeeping memoir

Ground down by office work, the author took up beekeeping to find a new purpose ... and love. She explains why honeybees are good counsellors in her book '*A Honeybee Heart Has Five Openings*'.

www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jul/30/helen-jukes-interview-beekeeper-memoir-a-honeybee-heart-has-five-openings



The Buzz – Honeybees & Beekeeping



28 September 2018

Life is sweet: Slovenia's 'rapid response' beekeeper unit

One in 200 Slovenians is a beekeeper, and they're fighting the decline of bees worldwide with an unprecedented programme – to make Ljubljana the world's most bee-friendly capital by Luka Dakskobler in Ljubljana

Read more on the Guardian website:

www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/sep/28/swarm-alert-slovenias-rapid-bee-response-team-in-action

24 September 2018

Monsanto's global weedkiller harms honeybees, research finds

Glyphosate – the most used pesticide ever – damages the good bacteria in honeybee guts, making them more prone to deadly infections.

Read more on the Guardian website:

www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/sep/24/monsanto-weedkiller-harms-bees-research-finds

29 August 2018

'Like nicotine': Bees develop preference for pesticides, study shows

Insects' acquired taste for pesticide-laced food is similar to nicotine addiction in smokers, say scientists.

Read more on the Guardian website:

www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/aug/29/like-nicotine-bees-develop-preference-for-pesticides-study-shows

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DBKA Website - Members Area Password:

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



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