



Plymouth Branch Newsletter

September 2015

PLYMOUTH BEEKEEPERS' APIARY PROGRAMME 2015/16

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 6th 10 am General Meeting - Apiary Maintenance – all members

OCTOBER

Thursday 8th Winter Meeting: Talk by Clare Densley on 'Drones'
(Elburton Village Hall – starting at 7.30 pm)

NOVEMBER

Thursday 19th Branch AGM (Elburton Village Hall - starting at 7.30 pm)

DECEMBER

Sunday 13th Branch Christmas Lunch at Boringdon Golf Club
(sit down for 12.30 - £5 deposit)

JANUARY 2016

Thursday 7th Branch Honey Show - Elburton Village Hall- starting at 7.30 pm.
Thursday 21st Winter Study Group (Kathy Lovegrove) TBC

FEBRUARY 2016

Thursday 11th Branch Meeting:
David Corney-Walker: 'The Chemistry of Beekeeping'
(Elburton Village Hall - starting at 7.30 pm)
Thursday 25th Winter Study Group (Kathy Lovegrove)

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.

Chairman's Blog



Image from BBC website

Let's hope the weather in September is better than the August we have just experienced.

I hope that you have managed to check your bees to ensure that they have enough food. I have had a few colonies that needed it. If in doubt, feed. Talking of which, it will soon be time to feed for Winter. This should be done with thick syrup, 2lbs granulated sugar to 1 pint of water. In metric terms, this is not 2kgs of sugar to 1 litre of water, but 0.9 kg to 575 mls of water, or roughly 10 kgs to 6 litres of water. So that the syrup stays fresh, it is a good idea to mix some "mould inhibitor" with your feed. Thymol works well. You mix 20 grams of Thymol crystals with 100mls of either methylated spirit, surgical spirit or any alcohol – eau de vie is used in France, but vodka will do, preferably a cheap brand and not my wife's Grey Goose! The crystals will dissolve and you add 1 teaspoon (5mls) to three gallons of thick syrup. It does the bees no harm, in fact it has been suggested that the Thymol is good for them. Thymol crystals are available from Maisemore or, more expensive, from Thornes.

The honey crop should be in and the messy job of extracting the crop is over for another year. My advice is to make sure your equipment is all clean and put away for next season. It makes life much easier when you need to use it again.

If you haven't treated for varroa yet, do it as soon as possible. The counts may be low before you treat, but once you have, you will be amazed at the size of the drop. There are plenty of products available, but bear in mind that the mites in our area and most of Devon have built up resistance to Apistan and Bayvarol.

On September 19th there is an EGM of the DBKA and all members are welcome to attend. It has been called to obtain approval of the new (very long!) constitution, which you can read in full at:

<http://www.devonbeekeepers.org.uk/draftconstitution.html>

You may have to log in. See the detail on the contents page of Beekeeping. If you have any concerns, let me or Jean French know.

The Winter programme will soon be upon us and I know that Steve and Jean Russell have booked some good speakers, so do please come along and enjoy the evenings. The refreshments are always very tempting as well!

David



The English Team lining up at the opening event of the 2015 International Meeting of Young Beekeepers

We need more beekeepers to ensure the future of our craft

I am writing to you to ask for your help. Many of the beekeepers I have met over the last 35 years or so had their first experience of bees whilst they were still at school – either through the school or through a friend or relative. With changes in our society, this does not happen so often now and we need to find ways of bringing on more young beekeepers.

You will have read of the success of the English Team at this year's IMYB but unless we can develop more young beekeepers that success will be short lived. In some countries competition for places is fierce – one country had over 120 applicants! The International Meeting of Young Beekeepers is one way of encouraging them but can we do more? It would be a great step forward if we could hold regional training days or selection events. Please let me know what you can do in your area and please cascade this flyer on to as many of your members as you possibly can.

The average age of beekeepers is increasing all of the time – do your bit, fight back and enlist a younger beekeeper!



International Meeting
of Young Beekeepers



**Young Beekeepers
are our future**

Can **you** help us to
develop a greater
awareness of
beekeeping
amongst young
people?

**Start a
beekeeping club
in your local
school**

**Encourage
members with
young children to
bring them to
meetings**

Ian Homer

BBKATrustee and IMYB
coordinator for the BBKA
✉ ian.homer@bbka.org.uk

August 2015



12th September 2015

Cornwall's Beekeeping Convention - A Bit of a Do - at Truro School

Contact Mark or Sue Hoult
Tel: 01566 774618

Ctrl + Click for West Cornwall BKA - A Bit of a Do



Saturday 19th September

Extraordinary General Meeting

At Meldon Village Hall, Meldon, Okehampton EX20 4LU - starting at 9.30 am.

This meeting is being held to discuss and vote on the revised DBKA constitution document. David Milford (Chairman) and Jean French (Branch Secretary) will be representing Plymouth branch but please do come along and have your say if you are able. I am sure some 'car sharing' could be organised.

More details will be published in the September issue of Beekeeping Magazine. A DBKA Executive Council meeting will follow and you are more than welcome to stay and listen to what's being discussed.



Saturday 17 October 2015

South Devon Beekeepers Convention

Practical, Positive and Profitable Beekeeping

A great day out!

See back page of August Beekeeping magazine for more details.

Ctrl + Click for South Devon Beekeepers Convention



Wednesday 4th November – Celebrity Lecture

More details will be published in Beekeeping Magazine nearer the date.



Sunday 13th December - Branch Christmas Lunch

At Boringdon Golf Club - sit down for 12.30

A £5 deposit per person will be required.

Names can be given/deposits taken at the October meeting or the AGM in November.



Special stamps illustrate the beauty of British bees

On the 18 August the Royal Mail issued sets of stamps highlighting ten of the UK's 250 species of bees.

If you haven't seen the stamp sets yet, you can see them at this link:

[Ctrl + Click for the Royal Mail Bees stamp set](#)

Or pop down to your local Post Office.

Win some BEEautiful prizes with the Woodland Trust

Fancy winning £45 worth of bee-themed goodies from the Woodland Trust shop? Just answer one simple pollinator question and they could be yours.

Just answer one simple question and some lovely honey and beeswax-based toiletries and a solitary bee house could be yours. Or if you prefer we'll give you £45 to spend on any items in our bee-themed range which includes scarves, jewellery and children's gifts.

To enter, answer the following question:

Name one of the insects which forages on the nectar and pollen of ivy flowers.

If you need help or want to find out more, [take a look at our ivy page](#).

Please enter by emailing your answer to naturescalendar@woodlandtrust.org.uk

The closing date for entries is 9th September - we'll choose the winner at random the next month.

Beehives Around the World

Czech Republic taken after a recent visit by friends





The Buzz – Bees in the news



10/8/15



Pitcher plant in France eats bee-killing Asian hornets

Bee-killing Asian hornets spreading across Europe now face a natural enemy that lures them to destruction - a carnivorous North American plant, French experts say.

Nantes botanical garden found dead Asian hornets in a Sarracenia stem

Picture from BBC website

[Ctrl + Click to READ MORE on the BBC website.....](#)



Temporary approval for two of the three neonicotinoid pesticides linked to decline in bees and banned by the EU is to be challenged in the high court.

[Ctrl + Click for this Guardian article](#)



26/8/15

Banned pesticides pose a greater risk to bees than thought, EU experts warn.

New study by European Food and Safety Authority finds 'high risk' to bees from neonicotinoid pesticide sprays prompting calls for extending ban

[Ctrl + Click to read this article on the Guardian website](#)



Buzzfeeds: the effects of colony collapse disorder and other bee news
Concerned about the worldwide bee crisis? Introducing **Buzzfeeds**, a weekly analysis with our resident bee expert

[Ctrl + Click to read the latest Buzzfeeds on the Guardian website](#)



On the 22 July 2015 the Government temporarily lifted a ban on neonicotinoid pesticides to allow farmers to spray their oil seed rape crops. Given the scientific evidence that shows how bees are damaged by even the smallest doses of neonicotinoid pesticides this is madness!

Bee killers – the following products contain neonicotinoids

Product	Neonicotinoid	Shops
Westland Plant Rescue Bug Killer	Thiamethoxam	Wickes
Provado Vine Weevil Killer	Thiacloprid	B&Q Homebase Wilkinson
Bug Clear Ultra Vine Weevil Killer	Acetamiprid	B&Q
Bug Clear Gun!	Acetamiprid	Homebase B&Q
Provado Ultimate Bug Killer Spray	Thiacloprid	Wilkinson Homebase
Provado Ultimate Bug Killer Ready to Use	Thiacloprid	Wilkinson Homebase
Provado Ultimate Bug Killer Concentrate	Thiacloprid	Wilkinson Homebase

Details in the table were correct in January 2013.

[Ctrl + Click for the Soil Association - Keep Britain Buzzing](#)



PBS Nova Tales From the Hive (2000, 2007)

NOVA chronicles a year in the life of a bee colony with stunning images that take viewers inside the innermost secrets of the hive. The documentary team spent a year developing special macro lenses and a bee studio to deliver the film's astonishing sequences. These include the "wedding flight" of the colony's virgin queen as it mates in mid-air with a drone; the life-and-death battle between two rival queens for the colony's throne; and the defeat and death of a thieving wasp at the entrance to the hive. A vivid picture emerges of the bee's highly organized social life, revolving around the disciplined sharing of construction tasks, the collection of nectar, and warding off enemies. (53 minutes)

Original Broadcast Date: January 4, 2000

[Ctrl + Click for the video on You Tube](#)



What's coming up and when?

Here are the topics of *Bee Craft's* hangouts / webinars for the remainder of 2015 and the scheduled dates for 2016. The next one is taking place in a fortnight.

2015

- 16th September** Removal of supers/treatment
- 14th October** Configuration of winter hives
- 18th November** Winter projects DIY ideas
- 16th December** Relax - Beekeeper to Beekeeper

2016

- Jan 13th** Beekeeping with Children

Bee Craft's annual editorial meeting will be taking place in September. This is when we discuss and plan what articles to include in the magazine the following year. This time we have decided to ask for your input.

We would be pleased to receive suggestions from you and your members on what you would like us to cover, with contact details of potential authors, enabling us to tap in to the wealth of knowledge that exists within county and local associations.

Email me at wendy@bee-craft.com.

Best regards

Wendy and the *Bee Craft* team



Queen Bee Safari Spring 2016

by Kathy Lovegrove



What is a Bee Safari?

A Bee Safari is a day of bee-related activity, usually moving from hive to hive and site to site.

These events are a fantastic opportunity to see how and where other members keep their bees; compare their bees' progress with your own; and to pick up and exchange tips with one another. They are also a great chance to meet other beekeepers and swap bee stories.

How does the NBU organise Bee Safaris?

The [National Bee Unit FAQ 2](#) outlines how a Bee Safari can be organised with your local bee inspector. The association arranges a schedule of volunteers' apiaries to maximise the number within the area and time span. A branch member accompanies the bee inspector to direct him to the apiaries.

The bee inspector will examine the bee colonies for signs of brood disease and varroa. He/she will show those present how to examine colonies with this in mind. They will also make general observations about the colonies. They will not criticise the beekeeper but may make suggestions to help them improve their bee management skills. It should be an educational experience.

How will the Queen Bee Safari differ from this?

At a recent Improver's meeting (during the swarming season) I did a quick survey of how many members had found/located their queens. A large proportion of members said they had problems finding their queens. This obviously would affect whether they could carry out successful hive manipulations such as Artificial Swarms.

1. A Queen Bee Safari would move from apiary to apiary to help members locate their queens.
2. The safari would not simply be a service provided by an experienced beekeeper but part of the Improver's Education Programme to give members the skills for finding their own queens on this and future occasions.
3. The overall aim would be to help Improvers get the season off to a confident start by assessing the quality of their queens and being in control of each colony's development.

How will it be organised?

It will run in the spring when colony numbers are relatively low and it will be more obvious whether there is a laying queen or not.

It will take place over a series of 2-3 Sundays when the Novice course is running so that Improvers are free and the activity will be at members' sites away from the branch apiary.

The timing will be between 10a.m. – 12 noon i.e. not a whole day event as in other associations, however hosts may provide tea and biscuits to end the session on a social note.

The Education Team will co-ordinate the safaris by drawing up a plan, making directions to the sites available, and by ensuring appropriate apiary hygiene is followed. I will host the first one at my home apiary to demonstrate techniques. Numbers will be limited per session so, even though it's months away, if you would like to be involved please contact me and details can be included in next year's programme.

Roger Patterson's Honey Recipes Website

Roger has been keeping bees in Sussex since 1963, and at one stage kept 130 colonies, but has now reduced to a hobby level. He feels that honey is grossly underused, especially by beekeepers, and this site is an attempt to encourage everyone to make more use of a natural product.

The purpose of this site is to provide a source of recipes using honey that will appeal to both beekeepers and non-beekeepers worldwide.

They have been collected from a variety of sources worldwide.



[Ctrl + Click for the Honey Recipes website](#)

Contact Details – Plymouth Branch

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I have twelve colonies of bees in brood boxes for sale.

£100 each

Patrick Mansfield

Apiary Manager

FOR SALE
Double Hive Stand
Made out of 4" x 2" wood
£10
Contact: Bill Finnemore
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Ligustica (Italian) Queen
All on 6 to 8 frames £80
Contact: Roger Round 01752 701945
Email: roger.round@hotmail.co.uk



City Bees

Apistan Pouches (10 strips per pouch)	£17.50
Apigaurd Trays (per 2 trays enough for a single application for one hive)	£4.20
Apigaurd Trays 10 (1 Box enough for 5 hives with a single application)	£21.00
ApiShield National Floor (Hornet, Asian Hornet, Wasp and wax moth trap, replacement open mesh floor)	£45.00

Prices are kept as low as we can to help as many beekeepers to look after their bees well.

If you can collect your order it will save on postage and environmental costs.

If you would like to have it posted please call me and we will work out a total price for you.

If you are a member of a local association put in a combined order, ring me with your order and we can arrange for one person to collect or we may be able to deliver it to you free.

Sad to say there are no discounts for bulk orders as these prices are as low as we can go!

City Bees, are a not for profit organisation, providing free swarm rescue, bumblebee nest relocation and advice to individuals and organisations in and around Plymouth.

Tel 01752516619

citybees@hotmail.co.uk

Provisional 2015 price list

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