

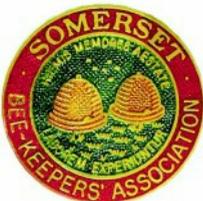
Somerset Bee-keepers' Association NEWSLETTER



OUR COUNTY HONEY SHOW.
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20th at 1pm.
LONG SUTTON VILLAGE HALL, nr. SOMERTON.

Our County Honey Show is a celebration of Beekeeping in Somerset. After several years of poor weather and poor yields for most of us, we have something to celebrate, good weather and much improved yields. Come and be part of the celebrations.

This year's County Show is being hosted by the Somerton Division at Long Sutton Village Hall. It will have all the traditional favourite elements of the County Show with some new innovations as well.



issue 119
Autumn 2014

www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

If you have never shown your honey or wax before, then don't be shy, we have special Novice Classes for you judged by our very own David Charles, and you are even able to stay for the judging of these classes if you have entered them. In a kindly way David will tell you what is good about all the exhibits and how they could be even better. You can learn more about presentation in that hour, than by ten years of trial and error.



We will be having a competition outside the Hall for the best decorated hive, without bees I should add, and as well as the presentation of our usual cups, we will be presenting a certificate to the entrant from each Division who won the most points in the Show.

There is a wealth of classes to enter, and you don't even need to have bees in order to be able to take part. There are our traditional honey and wax classes, photographic classes, cookery classes, children's classes, and mead and wine-making classes too. There is indeed something for everyone!

Outside we will be holding a "bee-themed" Farmers' Market. There will be lots of local produce to buy, a chance to buy bee-favoured plants and bee-based cosmetics, and of course delicious refreshments.

Attached to the electronic form of this Newsletter will be the Show schedule, entry form, and the recipes for all the cookery classes. The schedule etc is also available to download on the County website <http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/>. If you don't use the internet then please give me a ring and I will send you a printed copy. We look forward to seeing you on the day!

County Honey Show Secretary
Joe King

Allowable Bee Treatments

As soon as your feeding is done, you should contemplate treating the varroa in your hive. We have already lost a major medicine from our stocks with the demise of Fumidil B (fumigilin) for the treatment of Nosema and now the Veterinary Medicines Directorate have dropped another bombshell. As from 1st April 2014 only six products are permitted to be used in the treatment of bees and they are all miticides used to combat varroa infestation. Below is the complete list.

- *Apistan – Tau fluvinate (pyrethroid)
- Bayvayrol – Flumethrin (pyrethroid)
- Apiguard – Thymol
- ApiLifeVar – Thymol, camphor, eucalyptus, menthol
- Thymovar – Thymol
- *MAQS – (Mite Away Quick Strips) – Formic Acid

*Only those with an asterisk can be used when honey is present, but be careful when making comb honey and using Apistan. The wax can be affected.

Because of problems with dosage, MAQS have reportedly adjusted the strength of their product to accommodate Modified National hives.

There is one obvious omission from the list. Oxalic acid is no longer a permissible treatment for varroa. It is freely available in France and Spain, but not here. There is some debate regarding its availability on prescription, but this is yet to be resolved. Some people are arguing that it can legally be used as a treatment for wooden hive parts, and it is marketed by Cuprinol, in particular, as a wood bleach, but be warned that if it is considered that the bees have come into contact with it, this may be seen as contravention of the regulations. There is a specific concentration for oxalic acid to be effective against varroa and I, for one, have no idea of the strength of Cuprinol wood bleach, or what else it contains.

editor

**FREE
admission**

Honey Show



and

Farmers' / Craft Market

on **Saturday 20th September**
at

Long Sutton Village Hall

TA10 9NT

1.00 pm to 5.00 pm

Come and see the bees and taste their honey!

Sign-up and become a Friend of the Honey Bee.

Something for everyone:

Plants, Cut flowers, Wood Craft,

Cider, Cheese, Cakes, Ice-creams,

Jams, Preserves, Pottery, Glass,

Knitwear, Cards, Prints, Gifts and more.



Organised by Somerton Beekeepers



LECTURE DAY 2015

Saturday 21 February 2015

at

**The Kings of Wessex Academy,
Station Road, Cheddar. BS27 3AQ**

www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

PROGRAMME

- 9am - Coffee
- 9.30am - Opening by Caroline Butter, President of SBKA
- 9.35am - A World of Scents – Celia Davis, NDB
- 10.40am - The Sustainable Apiary – Michael Palmer
- 11.40am - Coffee
- 12.10pm Varroa and Deformed Wing Virus: A Dangerous Combination - David Evans
- 1.10pm - Lunch
- 1.10pm - Simon Jones, RBI and his team will be available to help with your queries about bee diseases.
- 2.20pm - Thanks and Presentations
- 2.30pm - The Roles of Winter and Summer Bees – Celia Davis, NDB
- 3.30pm - Raffle
- 4pm - Queen Rearing in the Sustainable Apiary – Michael Palmer
- 5pm - Close

Lecture Day 2015

The Lecture Day is a highlight of the beekeeping year at a quiet time when we are just beginning to think about the new season ahead. The day is made even more special by the star quality of the speakers drawn from near and far. 2015 will be no exception. Details of the speakers are given below and booking details will be available soon from your divisional secretaries.

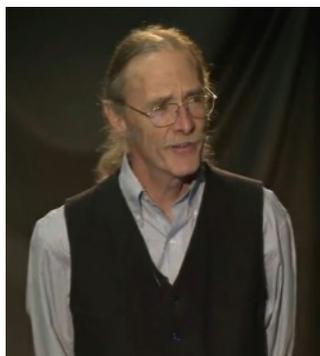
Celia Davis, NDB - A world of scents



Celia began beekeeping in 1980 with a nucleus. For many years she, with her daughter, managed fourteen stocks in two apiaries. She now maintains only five colonies and quite likes the idea of three, but never actually gets there. She is particularly partial to nucs, using them for various purposes, including swarm control, and often having at least as many three, four, and five frame nucs as full colonies, usually overwintering two. She rears a few queens, using a Jenter kit and likes the precision that this gives when selecting larvae. She does a great deal of lecturing and teaching and has written many articles and two books which have been well received and are both now into second editions. Having worked through the BBKA Examinations, she obtained an NDB in 1994 and now acts as an assessor/examiner at all levels. She has also held various offices both at Branch and County level, including County Secretary for eleven years and President for five. She spends a great deal of time on Branch activities and firmly believes that the time spent teaching new beekeepers is time well spent.

Michael Palmer - The sustainable apiary

As a child, Michael spent most of his time outdoors, fascinated by the plants and insects and animals living in his suburban New York City environment. He escaped the city by going off to the University of Vermont, where he fell in love with the countryside, his future wife, and eventually the little bugs that we all hold so dear.



The first colonies of honey bees arrived in 1974 as packaged bees, and over the following twenty years, he built French Hill Apiaries into a farm of nearly a thousand colonies. About 1990, Acarine mites and then Varroa mites arrived in his bees. The result was not pretty. Beekeeping became way more difficult and way more expensive. With ever increasing losses, the wisdom of buying in replacement bees came into question. Splitting strong colonies reduced the honey crop, and pollinating the local apple orchards caused the whole operation to fall apart with failing colonies, broken equipment, and one thoroughly exhausted and frustrated beekeeper.

In 1998, Mike tried raising a few queens, wintering them in nucleus colonies. The results changed his beekeeping forever. Not only did the bees winter more successfully, and store larger surplus honey crops, the fun level rose to new heights, far above the clouds.

Believing that quality should always trump quantity, a decision was made to cut back on the total number of production colonies in the apiary, and focus on raising the best queens possible. With a thousand nucleus colonies of various configurations to help support the seven hundred honey producing colonies, French Hill Apiaries produces, on average, some twelve hundred queens and thirty to forty tons of honey annually.

Michael lives in St. Albans, Vermont, with his wife Lesley, a cow named Meat, and Betty Boop, their Blue Tick hound. When not helping his crew manage the honey production colonies, or spending countless hours in the queen rearing apiaries, Mike travels the country teaching sustainable beekeeping to anyone who will listen.

David Evans - Varroa and DWV

David Evans is Professor of Virology at the University of Warwick. He leads a research group studying the biology of viruses such as hepatitis C virus, poliovirus and deformed wing virus of honey bees (www.evanslab.org.uk). His interests include the replication, transmission and evolution of these viruses. David is also a beekeeper and a member of Warwick and



Leamington BKA, where he is on the executive committee. He is particularly interested in queen rearing and runs courses on grafting and queen rearing for beginners (www.theapiarist.org).

In his talk David will present studies of and the consequences for the recipient larvae/pupae of acquiring DWV via feeding or from varroa. This research has resulted in the identification of a specific strain of DWV that grows to hugely elevated levels in varroa-exposed pupae, causing the overt symptoms of deformed wings that beekeepers are familiar with. These results have implications for colony management and future therapies directed at controlling DWV in honey bees.

Healthy Bee Training Grants

Our chairman Jonathan Friend brought some interesting information back from the Chairmen's day at Stoneleigh. He is uncertain if this has been well publicized, but it matters not, because this is the content from the BDI website that Jonathan discovered. The grants are for £100 association/event, meaning that BDI will not make several grants to the same association or to an event if hosted by more than one association.

Healthy Bee Training Grants

Whilst Bee Diseases Insurance Ltd's primary aim is that of providing insurance against losses incurred when disease is found, its aims also include the '*Promotion of other measures for mitigating the losses suffered by beekeepers through bee diseases or other causes*'. In other words, working towards a healthy bee population in England and Wales.

With the increasing drive from Government that beekeepers should be helping themselves rather than relying on support from the bee inspection service, BDI has decided to introduce a series of grants to member associations to support practical disease recognition and training at a local level.

Starting in the 2014 season, BDI will be giving a fixed grant of £100 per member association to support disease (healthy bee) training days.

Eligibility for a grant

All member associations of BDI will be eligible to make one claim per calendar year of £100 for an event. Where the BDI member is an area association, each branch/division within the member association will be eligible for a separate grant.

Members will not be eligible for a grant in their first year of membership and must have a minimum of twenty BDI insured members during the relevant year.

Events covered by the Healthy Bees Training Grant

A practical event, with leaders/demonstrators who are knowledgeable in disease recognition. This could include Regional or Seasonal Bee Inspectors or other suitably qualified beekeepers. BDI are pleased to be working with the National Bee Unit to promote bee health. These events can cover a range of topics, including for example, maintaining healthy bees, disease recognition, integrated pest management and approved medicines. The event can be a bee Inspection Service arranged event or a locally arranged event.

Pre-approval of a programme is required as a prerequisite of making a claim. The application form is available from this page. Acknowledgement of BDI is required both at the event and in all advertising material for the event. The BDI logo is available as a download from this page for this purpose.

Claims Procedure

Claims should be made retrospectively and sent to the BDI treasurer, on the claim form that can be downloaded from our website. Evidence of the programme should be provided together with a signed declaration by an association official that the event met the objectives. The grant is fixed at £100 irrespective of the actual cost of holding the event. Please note that only one claim can be made per event, even if two associations are involved in the event.

Claims should ideally be made within three months of the event, and by 31 October 2014 at the latest. Claims received after this date will not be considered.

BDI – Working for Healthy Bees

<http://www.beediseasesinsurance.co.uk/home/healthy-bee-training-grants>

Somerset Beekeepers Annual Lunch

Sunday 5th October 2014

12:00 for 12:30

at

Langport Arms Hotel

Cheapside

Langport

TA10 9PD

Menu

Carvery served with a selection of Seasonal Vegetables & Roast Potatoes

Choice of Sweets from Chilled Display or Cheese and Biscuits

Coffee & Mint

Price £13:00

Numbers are limited to a maximum of 40 people.

Please make cheques payable to Somerset BKA for the numbers attending and send to:

Suzy Perkins

Tengore House

Tengore Lane

Langport

Somerset

TA10 9JL

Cheques to arrive no later than Monday 29th September

At the Royal Bath & West Bee and Honey marquee, 2014

Those of you who are fortunate enough to know Stewart Gould will have shared my delight on seeing the excellent progress Stewart made at the Occupational Therapy for Beekeepers stand this year. During the course of the day Stewart gradually learnt how to put pieces of plastic, paper and metal together to make delightful badges, often with the safety pins the right way up and the pictures facing outwards. Well done you!



He has promised me that next year he will also try to colour in the pictures before making them up into badges. People with determination like this are so valuable to the SBKA.

It is refreshing to see our older beekeepers setting such an excellent example to the younger generation.

Jonathan Friend
Chair - Somerset BKA



Artist Lily Hunter-Green has installed a colony of honeybees in a piano to demonstrate the plight of bees, and she got a grant to do it.



Where to buy your sugar

As full members of Somerton & District Beekeepers, and therefore members of the BBKA, you are entitled to buy goods at Bookers Foods, the wholesale food company who supply shops. Now, that has to be a good thing, doesn't it? Maybe not. Prompted by new beekeeper and confessed 'sugar anorak' Clive Ball, I did a bit of sleuthing.

The waters are muddied by the different sized packs available. You might think that buying 25 kg sacks is the way to go. Read the figures first. I have cleared things up as much as my aging brain will allow, so here goes.

Supplier	Branches	Pack size	Pence per kg
Booker Foods	B'water, Taunton, Yeovil	2kg x 6	77
Tesco	Everywhere	5kg	77
Sainsbury	Frome, B'water	5kg	77
Morrison	Glastonbury	2kg	77
Waitrose	Gillingham, Dorset	2kg	77
Lidl	Everywhere	1kg	69
Booker Foods	B'water, Taunton, Yeovil	25kg x 2	60
Farm Foods	B'water, WS Mare, Yeovil	1 kg	59

There we have it. Farm Foods are the cheapest, but only by 1p and offer you the convenience of having your sugar in smaller bags. This also means that you don't have an open sack of sugar hanging around, and the smaller quantities needed for making up syrup are already measured out for you. Booker Foods are the next dearest, by 1p per kilo. provided you are prepared to buy at least 50kgs. in 25kg sacks and they share the dearest slot with the High Street supermarkets, if you buy from them in 2kg bags. If you buy 100kgs from any supermarket you will be paying £18 more than at Farm Foods, and they may not let you have that much. I purchased 50kgs. from Farm Foods in Yeovil and

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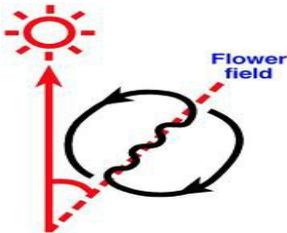
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Hive Alive BBC2 – The Waggle Dance

Like a lot of beekeepers I watched this latest escapade from BBC2 with some trepidation, having seen Martha Kearney's previous foray into the subject (The Wonder of Bees - BBC4) . In both programmes the photography and film production have been truly stunning, but she, this time with the aid of Chris Packham, has done it again. The 2 part mini-series 'Hive Alive' had a few absolutely basic errors, but the real schoolboy howler was the description of the Waggle Dance. I missed it in the first episode, but it smacked me in the face during the second. Below is a still from the programme which supposedly demonstrates that bees use the vertical of the frame as an indication of **North** and the direction of the waggle shows the direction of the forage as a deviation from **North**. In the first episode Martha Kearney went on at some length to describe this and in the second episode, and using an almost identical graphic, Chris Packham did exactly the same.



For new beekeepers and those who do not know, the bees do not use **North** as a datum. They use the direction of the **Sun**. If the direction of dance is 90° to the left of vertical, the forage is 90° to the left of the sun. This will change during the day as the sun travels across the sky. According to 'Hive Alive' it would always be 90° to the left of North – or due West.



Because I was so bemused by what I saw, I verified my information using The British Beekeepers Association Guide to Beekeeping by Ivor Davies, The Guide to Bees and Honey by Ted Hooper and Haynes Bee Manual by Claire and Adrian Waring. The programme makers should have done the

same, because there are now a lot of people believing their version.

I don't have it in for either Martha Kearney or Chris Packham, as they were probably going from a script, but I do believe that those who disseminate information should be absolutely sure that what they are stating is correct, and I am somewhat amazed that the experts, who put their names to these programmes, did not vet the content prior to their release.

editor



Dates for your Diary

Sat. Sept. 13 th - 2.00pm	Somerset BKA	EGM - Ash Village Hall, Martock
Sat 13 th Sept	Burnham	Apiary visit - Ian Tiley Processing the honey
Saturday 13 th Sept	Exmoor	Fun Honey Show - Tithe Barn, Dunster
Tuesday 16 th Sept	Yeovil	Bees' eye view of beekeeping -at AM
Saturday 20th September 1.00pm	Somerset BKA	County Honey Show - Long Sutton Village Hall
Saturday 20 th Sept - 6.00pm	Taunton	Practical training wk6 - feeding
Saturday 20 th Sept - 2.30pm	Mendip	Concerns for Autumn - Dr Richard Bache
October 4th	Somerton	Skep making workshop - Diana Robertson
Oct 8 th - 7.30pm	Taunton	Beekeepers Question Time
Oct 9th - 7..30pm	Burnham	AGM & Honey Competition Watchfield Village Hall
Oct 9 th - 7.30pm	Somerton	Work of Somerset Lavender Farm - Judith Green
Oct 17 th - 7.00pm	Exmoor	Trees for Bees - David Charles
Oct 10 th - 7.30pm	Frome	AGM and Q&A - Frome Rugby Club
Oct 10th	Mendip	AGM
TBA	Wedmore & Cheddar	AGM
Oct 24 th - 7.30pm	Mendip	AGM - Chilcompton Church Hall
Nov 1st	South East	AGM & Honey Show - Charlton Musgrove V Hall
Nov 15 th - 2.00pm	Taunton	AGM
Nov 18th	Yeovil	AGM and Honey Show
Nov 21st	Quantock	AGM
Nov 27 th - 7.30pm	Somerton	AGM

Members are welcome to attend the meetings of any SBKA division, but it is suggested that you check with the host or secretary as the time or venue may have changed. Further details are often available on the website or divisional newsletters. This list is taken from the Yearbook and may have changed or been added to since it was originally published.

STOP PRESS

Bee Improvement for All

In conjunction with the Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association (BIBBA), Yeovil Division of Somerset BKA will be holding a '**Bee Improvement for All**' day. This is one of a number that BIBBA will be staging throughout the country on a regional basis. We have tried to select a date as far ahead as possible in the hope that it does not clash with other events.

The purpose is to help all beekeepers to continuously assess their colonies, so they have a good idea of which queens to cull, and which colonies to take queen cells from when they need new queens. There will be tuition on how to raise queens using queen cells that bees often present us with during the summer, as well as some simple 'artificial' techniques that may be suitable for the more advanced beekeeper, or those working in groups. Further details: <http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/beeimprovementforallday.html>

Date:- Saturday 21 March 2015 9.00 for 9.30 - 4.30 approx. At Odcombe Village Hall, Higher Odcombe, Somerset BA22 8XP

£10 adult. £5 for under 18, who must be accompanied by a fee paying adult. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided but bring your own lunch.

Enquires to:

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web site www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

Copy deadline for next newsletter:
26th Aug 2014

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