

Somerset Bee-keepers' Association NEWSLETTER



Somerset County & Somerton Honey Show

The President of Somerset Beekeepers' Association, Mrs Caroline Butter, is pictured with the trophy winners, after she had presented the prizes at this year's county honey show, hosted by Somerton Division.

There were over 500 entries from nine of the twelve divisions, with strong representations from Exmoor, Burnham on Sea and South East divisions in particular. The car park was soon overflowing and visitors resorted to using the road outside the grounds.

A complete report on the County prize winners is contained within.



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www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

Oxalic acid for treating Varroasis

In the last edition of this newsletter, I gave a slightly inaccurate account of treatments that are available. I reported that *'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'*. That statement is very nearly true. Had I used the word licensed instead of permitted, it would have been, but with the advice and help of a couple of very knowledgeable people, I have been able to piece together the facts and some interesting details. It is true that only six products are licensed for use in the UK, and I listed those six items. Oxalic acid was not amongst them.

It appears that the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) were concerned that individual beekeepers and associations were mixing up their own concoctions to varying strengths, without any control and so they stopped the use of this way of treating bees. If you google oxalic acid however, you will come up with a BBKA leaflet, dated 2007, giving graphic details on how to use it (BBKA Advisory leaflet B13). That document is obviously out of date, but remains on the internet. So! No oxalic acid then. Not so! One of the very knowledgeable people I mentioned earlier, called me to let me know of two commercial products which are available by prescription from a Vet. under the Special Import Certificate Cascade system. What is the Cascade system? I hear you ask..

This could get complicated, so bear with me. Beebase (Fera) have their own take on the subject and I give their official statement from their website:-

The VMR state that if an animal or animal product is to be put into the human food chain, then:

- *only authorised veterinary medicinal products can be administered in accordance with the label instructions should be used;*
- *products administered in accordance with an animal test certificate may be used.*

Honey bees are classed as a food producing animal and therefore beekeepers must comply with these regulations. Generic substances such as Oxalic acid or self made

thymol solutions should not be used and beekeepers are liable for prosecution if traces are found during routine honey sampling. It is important to note that some products available on beekeeping manufacturers websites are not registered medicinal products and although available, should not be used.

Authorised products

A list of authorised medicines for honey bees can be found on the '[Product Information Database](#)' on the VMD website. To find products relating to bees only, use the [product search facility](#) and select 'bees' from the species drop down box.

Currently, there are no UK registered oxalic acid treatments for honey bees. However, beekeepers are able to apply for EU approved medicines which are available in EU Member States through a Special Import Certificate (SIC). There are a two registered oxalic acid medicines available to beekeepers and a list of products available under this scheme can be found [here](#).

Api-Bioxal is a registered oxalic acid treatment in Italy and Ecoxal is a registered oxalic acid treatment in Spain. These are both available under the scheme and you can either ask your local vet whether they take part in the scheme or you can buy Api - Bioxal directly from [Bee Vet](#).

The details of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate are stated here.

Veterinary Medicine Guidance Note (VMGN) No 13

The Cascade is a legislative provision in the VMR that allows a veterinary surgeon to prescribe unauthorised medicines that would not otherwise be permitted.

The principle of the Cascade is that, if there is no suitable veterinary medicine authorised in the UK to treat a condition, the veterinary surgeon responsible for the animal may, in particular to avoid causing unacceptable suffering, treat the animal in accordance with the following sequence, in descending order of priority:

A veterinary medicine authorised in the UK for use in another animal species or for a different condition in the same species.

If there is no such product, the next option is either – a medicine authorised in the UK for human use, or a veterinary medicinal product (VMP) not authorised in the

UK but authorised in another Member State (MS) for use in any animal species (in the case of a food-producing animal the medicine must be authorised in a food producing species) in accordance with an import certificate issued by the VMD.

In short, you can obtain Oxalic acid under the brand names 'Apibioxal' and 'Ecoxal' from a veterinary practice with an import licence for these products. Beevet, based in Exeter, is such a practice. In order to obtain either of these products, it will be necessary to register on the company's website. Once that has been done, an order is placed and the veterinary surgeon will have a telephone consultation with you to ensure that you know how to administer the oxalic acid. There will be a short delay on the website before you can order your winter varroa treatments, and they are not included in the website just yet.

Needless to say, as these are commercially prepared products, they will cost more than oxalic acid as previously obtained, but the very important point is that it is legally possible to obtain oxalic acid for the treatment of bees. It will not be possible for divisional or county associations to order in bulk. Individuals have to order their own requirement direct from the veterinary practice, but there may be the possibility that orders received from members within a division can be aggregated and a bulk discount applied to all the orders. Please don't try and order any yet, as you may miss out on any advantages that could, and I stress, could be available. This is yet to be decided, but I will keep you abreast of events.



Stewart Gould

County Honey Show Trophy Winners



Overall Champion and winner of the Jubilee Cup - Janet O'Neill of Burnham on Sea



Miss MD Bindley for Medium Honey
Catherine Fraser of Somerton Division



Duffin Challenge Trophy for Wax Classes
Jenny Dennes of Somerton Division



Clifford Langford Award for Mead Classes
Suzy Perkins of Somerton Division

Janet O'Neill also won the Terry Arnold trophy for the Cookery Classes

Taunton Division's New Apiary Building



Taunton Beekeepers' new centre of excellence at Bradford-on-Tone was officially opened by Taunton MP Jeremy Browne on Saturday July 19th. Mr Browne, who champions the work of Taunton beekeepers, joined the President of the British Beekeepers' Association, Dr David Aston, Somerset Beekeepers' Chairman Jonathan Friend and local members at the new £83,000 building. Other VIPs included Councillor Marcia Hill, Deputy Mayor Taunton Deane, and Councillor Dave Mitton, Mayor of Wellington.

Mary Adams, Chairman of Taunton Beekeepers, said the new eco building provided a fit-for-purpose teaching environment with a lecture room, workshop, honey extraction facilities and a kitchen. She added: "The new building marks a major milestone for Taunton Beekeepers. We now have a facility which we can use to provide a year-round education programme and lectures.

Jeremy Browne said: "I enjoy hearing about beekeeping at so many different levels. It is obviously important for the ecology and conservation of the area; bees are vital for pollinating flowers and many food crops. But also, beekeeping is a magnificent social activity and beekeepers from all over the area will come together in this new building to discuss the intricacies of the craft."

Jenny Gammon, President of Taunton Beekeepers, added: Today is a major milestone for Taunton Beekeepers-we now have a building that will enable us to offer a year around programme of education and lectures at our own facilities. Indeed, this new building is fast becoming a Centre of excellence for the West of England. We have already had bookings from Defra and the Devon Beekeepers Research Group. Visitors from the other Somerset Divisions as well as members of the Taunton Beekeepers were able to enjoy a cream tea and take home with them a 'potted history' of the Apiary.

Anne Pike – Press Officer

An unforgivable slip of the editing tool meant that the opening of the new Taunton Apiary Building was omitted from the last issue and I apologize unreservedly for the error.

Stewart Gould - editor

Lecture Day 2015

Tickets are now available from Divisional Secretaries and are priced at £12 for Somerset BKA members for the day with meal/refreshments and £25 for out of county people. For Somerset BKA members wishing to have just refreshments the cost is just £4. Places are available on a first come, first served basis, and it is a very popular event with people coming from all over the country, so book early to avoid disappointment.

Sponsors of the event include E H Thorne (Beehives) Ltd), Northern Bee Books, BJ Sherriff, Abbotsbury Swannery, Dorset, National Trust, Montacute House, Octagon Theatre, Yeovil, who have all kindly donated raffle prizes for the day.

Saturday 21 February 2015
at
The Kings of Wessex Academy,
Station Road, Cheddar. BS27 3AQ



County Honey Show Exhibits

Well!!! What can I say? FANTASTIC. Well done to all concerned at this year's Somerset County Honey Show, hosted by Somerton Beekeepers. I think I can safely say that, for its first outing around the County for over twenty years, it was a resounding success with entries I believe over 500. This I think probably makes the 2014 Somerset Beekeepers honey show the largest honey show in the South West this year.

I have to say as Steward in charge of the honey show at The Royal Bath & West show, I am both envious, but also greatly encouraged by this incredible county wide support, with only 3 of the counties 12 divisions failing to support the show. It is for this reason I am writing this small item.

I WANT YOUR ENTRIES at The Royal Bath & West show next year Please. I know that many beekeepers fail to enter the show because they say the show is too early in the year, and they have nothing to enter? Too early to produce a photo, a piece of beekeeping equipment, a Honey cake or a beeswax candle?

Most successful people in the honey show world store exhibits so they can show them in more than one show. If you have a prize winning frame for extraction, or jars of honey, keep them and you can enter them in other shows. If you check the rules in show schedules, you will find they say "All exhibits must be the products of the Exhibitors Apiary" There is nothing to say they should produced this year!!! At the Bath & West Somerset Beekeepers are competing not only against one another, but also beekeepers from Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and our arch rivals Wiltshire for the coveted County Challenge Shield. Somerset have won this for the past 2 years and with you support I look forward to us winning it again at the 2015 show.

If you want any advice about storing your exhibits etc for future shows, ask any successful show person, it's really not difficult, and I look forward to receiving your entries at the 2015 Royal Bath & West Show.

Bernie Perkins

THE ROYAL BATH & WEST SHOW 2014

Once again the hard work of the many helpers who took part in the preparation and dismantling of the Bee and Honey Marquee is, as always, very much appreciated.

The Somerset stand again received many glowing comments thanks in no small way to the team who helped put it all together. Jackie Mosedale, Bridget Knutson, Mary Barnes-Gorell, Gerald Fisher and Stewart Gould all willingly gave up many hours of their valuable time to achieve this excellent stand. I am pleased to say that the Bath & West 2014 plaque for the person putting the most work into any of the County stands was won by Jackie Mosedale.

Thanks must also be due to all those who took time to produce such high-quality entries, thus enabling Somerset to retain the County Shield. Paul Harper, in particular, assisted in our win with his entries in the Show being awarded the highest number of points given to any one exhibitor.

The Past President of the B.B.K.A. and the S.B.K.A., David Charles, presented the cup to the winners. He then, in his own extremely eloquent way, talked about the history of the cups. This has never been recounted before but was very much appreciated by all those present.

To all those who so willingly gave their time and effort in making the Bee and Honey Marquee such a success, a very sincere thank you!

Ken Tredgett

Somerset BKA Equipment

The county association has quite a lot of equipment for use by members. Among this equipment are display stands and a 32" TV which was purchased for use at the Bath & West Show. All county property is available to all divisions. The TV is presently with the Treasurer Steve Horne on 01278 662335 or steve.horne1@btinternet.com

Somerset County Lunch 2014

At the May Council meeting after discussion it was agreed that some members would still like to have an annual County Lunch even though it was thought by some to have been poorly attended in the past.

I said that I would be happy to arrange a County Lunch this year. It was thought by those at the meeting that the Langport Arms would be a good venue as we had the SBKA Centenary lunch there and it was centrally situated. The lunch was well attended by people from across the County's divisions and apologies from a similar number of people who were unable to attend this year due to other commitments e.g. holiday, family wedding etc.

Those that I spoke to, as we were leaving, said that they had an excellent Sunday lunch and that they had thoroughly enjoyed it, and it would be a shame not to do it again next year.

To keep the event running is, I think, important as we have a diverse membership some of whom like to meet and chat in a pleasant environment and enjoy a meal together.

Given this positive feedback I would be more than happy to arrange a lunch for next year. Perhaps you could suggest a different centrally situated venue that we could go to next year? What are your thoughts on the time of year that would be best to hold the event? We could even have an after dinner speaker?

Email me at apicrepe.tengore@talktalk.net with your ideas.

Suzy Perkins

Bee Improvement For All

An all day event aimed at encouraging all beekeepers to improve their bees. 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.

A booking form is included with this newsletter.

Further details: <http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/beeimprovementforallday.html>

Date:- Saturday 21 March 2015

Time:- 9.00 for 9.30 - 4.30 approx.

Venue:- Odcombe Village Hall, Higher Odcombe, Somerset BA22 8XP

Cost:- £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.



Dates for your Diary

November

Sat. 1 st	South East	AGM & Honey Show, Charlton Musgrove Village Hall
Sat. 8 th - 2.00pm	Somerset BKA	Council Meeting- Heatherton Park, Taunton
Thursday 13 th - 7.30pm	Somerton BKA	Candle Making with Chris Rawlings
Sat. 15 th - 2.00pm	Taunton BKA	AGM
Friday 21 st	Quantock BKA	AGM
Thursday 27 th - 7.00pm	Somerton BKA	AGM - Parish Rooms, Somerton

December

Saturday 6 th	Taunton BKA	Annual Dinner - venue TBC
Saturday 13 th - 2.00pm	Quantock BKA	Oxalic Acid Workshop - Apiary
Friday 19 th	South East BKA	Christmas Dinner - venue TBC

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.

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