

The Newsletter



Vol no 30 Issue 5 June 2023

SBKA website www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk



And still they come

Swarms have persisted well into June, but this one is something special. Quinn Draisey is about to collect his first swarm and here he is pictured with it. Did he bag it? Yes he did. Many of us have failed to collect the queen when homing a swarm, but 10 year old Quinn managed it successfully.

That deserves to be recorded for posterity. Congratulations Quinn.



Somerton Beekeepers



present a spectacular

HONEY

SHOW

AND

ARTISAN MARKET



SATURDAY

SEPTEMBER 16TH

NOON – 5PM

at

Keinton Mandeville Village Hall

TA11 6ES

Come and see the bees!

Something for everyone:

Cider, Cheese, Cakes, Pastries, Pies,

Cards, Plants, Jams, Preserves,

Cosmetics, Candles, Gifts

and of course **HONEY!**



FREE
admission

FROM YOUR HONEY SHOW COMMITTEE



As you know last year's Honey Show was a great success with just over 400 entries and a lot of public interest. However, your Honey Show committee feel that with greater advertising the show could be even better, attracting more entries from members and outsiders and greater public interest. We are therefore asking Somerton & District Beekeepers Association members to help us achieve this.

HOW? By displaying posters in your community, writing letters to your local newsletter and Parish magazine editorial teams, placing posters on community notice boards or in local shops and in any other way you can think.

Your help will be greatly appreciated and will again make our Honey Show the "Best in the West".

Fred Clarke (on behalf of the Honey Show committee)

P.S. The 2023 schedule and entry forms have already been sent to you in a separate email.



Members may recognise the photo as that of the first reported Asian hornet nest (September 19th 2016) in Tetbury, Gloucestershire.

Bristol Live, that august and much revered online source of breaking news, had a completely different take on it. According to them, this is a photograph of a giant bees' nest in a park in Bristol taken in June 2023, which closed the park and families fleeing for their lives.

It's always good to read a well researched article.

Supplies available from the apiary

There is a stock of frames, foundation and jars at the apiary which are available for purchase every Tuesday morning and on Saturdays when there is a New Beekeepers' practical session. The stock of jars is rapidly decreasing and won't be topped up until late July. Check with Eric McLaughlin if you wish to visit.

All frames and foundation are for National hives

DN4 - Deep National Hoffman frames - £1.35 each

10 frames - £13.50

11 frames - £14.85

Standard brood foundation - £1.30 per sheet

SN1 Shallow National frames - £1.00 each

10 frames - £10.00

11 frames - £11.00

Super foundation - 80p per sheet

SN1 frames are straight sided and will need plastic/metal spacers

Apiinvert. Syrup ready to feed bees. Unlike sugar solution it requires no mixing, more readily accepted and less work required for the bees to invert (not wasting energy), more close to a natural food.

13kg 1 - 4 boxes £24 each, 5 + boxes £23 each

Apifonda. If you are venturing on a Queen rearing project this fondant is what you need. Very similar to Apiinvert, it is a paste not a liquid. If a colony becomes light through the course of the winter a dollop of fondant could well be the difference between life and death of the bees.

1 x 2.5 Kg bag £5.00, 1 box 12.5 Kg £25, 2 + boxes £24 each

The Apiinvert can be fed as a 'gee up' in the spring, emergency feeding during the 'June gap' and of course at the end of the season when preparing for winter.

Foundation. National brood and super, 14 x 12 brood available

Eddie Howe email:- redrascal444@gmail.com Mobile 07812 738793

Tel. 01458 272114

Mikes Bee Supplies

Click & Collect
www.mikes-bee-supplies.com
 E: mikes-bees@outlook.com
 T: 01278 445158

We take Cash or Card (no cheques)

Foundation
Bakers Fondant 12.5kg
Jars
Hives
Suits
And more!

Find us at
 72 Wembdon Hill
 Wembdon
 Bridgwater
 Somerset.
 TA6 7PZ

Last shout for visit to Buckfast Abbey Bees

This is the absolute last shout for this year's visit to Buckfast Abbey Bees on Saturday July 15th. It is really interesting to listen to the thinking behind the beekeeping at Buckfast and see one of the country's foremost bee personalities handling her bees. Martin Hann is pretty knowledgeable too. If you want to come along then please let me know as soon as possible. The maximum size of the party is 20 people, so get in quick.

The visit is free of charge but we make a donation of £7.00 each as a gesture of goodwill and to boost Martin and Clare's coffee & cake fund. We also try to share cars wherever possible to keep the costs to a minimum. Contact me at somertonbees@btinternet.com if you want to come.



Stewart Gould

FOR SALE

Hive 1 - 1 brood / 3 supers - replaced 3 brood frames for new today, small amount of larvae seen.

Hive 3 - 1 brood / 3 supers - very busy active hive, may need some old brood frames replacing, I have 5 new made up brood frames to throw in.

Hive 5 - 1 brood / 1 super - swarm caught this year and doing very well, super half full & may need another soon, I have 14 new made up super frames throw in.

As you can see, these hives have supers on and apparently they contain honey.

Contact Nikki Sage

07809 302720

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

Catherine Fraser has come across a gold mine of used equipment which belongs to a prolific beekeeper who has given up the hobby because of his increasing age. It is all reported to be in excellent order.

The seller's name is **Keith Rogers** and he lives in Montacute. He can be contacted at: **07933 766008**

Equipment includes full hives each with 2 supers, brood box, floor (some solid, some mesh) alighting board, queen excluder, crown board, roof and round feeder. All scorched and treated with linseed oil.

Homemade honey warming cupboard

2 nucleus boxes, some repair required on one.

Thornes 6 frame tangential extractor with gated settling tank both heavy duty plastic.

Multiple other supers and brood boxes and a lot of used frames in variable condition.

Equipment has been stored dry and unused for 9-10 years. Keith and his father kept up to 20 hives successfully over many years. He is open to offers.

These are photos of just some of the equipment available. There is a lot.



Memories of the Late Andrew Pugh.



Sadly Andrew Pugh, one of our long standing members, has passed away after a short illness. Andrew went through the Beginners' Course many years ago and kept his bees near his home at North Wootton. For a number of years we shared an apiary.

Andrew was from an engineering background and was always finding clever solutions to beekeeping problems. He was also a very proficient home carpenter and made most of his hives and equipment.

He was a keen Church bell-ringer and lay preacher, and we often rang together over the years. He regularly worked on one of the Welsh narrow gauge railways that are run by enthusiasts, and his engineering skills were always in high demand. He was a man of many parts and lived life to the full.

Andrew found it hard to retire as his skill set was particularly important to the firm that he worked for, updating the safety systems for nuclear power stations was one of the projects that he told me about. He was eventually able to retire and continued to enjoy life to the full. He and his wife Flo were keen gardeners.

Our thoughts go out to Andrew's widow Flo, and their sons and daughter. The funeral will be at North Wootton Church at noon on Tuesday July 4th.

Joe King.

Giving up beekeeping & selling up

When I started beekeeping 15 years ago I was soon made aware of a lady beekeeper who lives quite close to, who has lefty a lasting impression. She is seen as the authority on skep making and held annual skep making days for many years. She was a constant at the Bath & West Show where she would sit quietly in the middle of the Bees & Honey Tent making skeps for 4 days. Eventually the skep making days became a little too much, and the Bath & West slot was handed over to a South East Division member.



We used to take bees down to Exmoor for the heather honey, and I'll never forget this lady running up the hills, and everywhere in fact. As is the case for all of us eventually, Diana Robertson has decided it is time to hang up her smoker and hand her 4 colonies of bees over to a younger beekeeper who will look after them. She will extract the honey at the beginning of August and place the supers back above the crown boards, so that they can be cleaned up by the bees. They will be ready to move in mid to late August. Whoever buys them will have healthy colonies to take into winter, and full colonies with young queens to kick start the 2024 season.

If you are interested, please contact Diana on 01749 860230 or her beekeeping partner Rob Mckie on 07792 382294.

You will be buying a bit of beekeeping history.

Honey Jar bulk purchase

For many years now we have purchased jars for our members, in bulk, so that they can gain financial advantage from the much larger order that we place. When you look at the prices below, you will see that prices have increased quite a lot since last year. Rest assured that we are getting you the best possible deal.

Jars can only be ordered in complete containers (split with a friend if needs be). Contact Stewart Gould - somertonbees@btinternet.com with the jar type, quantity and amount to be paid. He will make a request for payment by BACS

| Product | Quantity | Price |
|---|-----------------|--------------|
| 1 lb squat honey jars with screw gold lid | Box of 72 | £38.88 |
| 1 lb squat honey jars with white screw plastic lid | Box of 72 | £36.72 |
| 4oz. hex jars with gold lids (separate) | Tray of 72 | £25.20 |
| 8oz. (227g) hexagonal jars with gold lid | Tray of 41 | £17.63 |
| 12oz. (340g) hexagonal jars with gold lid | Tray of 33 | £15.18 |
| 190ml panel jars with gold lid | Tray of 35 | £15.75 |
| 12oz. (340g) round jars with gold lid | Tray of 28 | £16.52 |
| 8oz. (227g) honey jar with gold lid | Box of 72 | £40.32 |
| 8oz. (227g) honey jar with white plastic lid | Box of 72 | £37.44 |
| 12oz. (340g) round jar with gold lid | Box of 72 | £42.48 |
| 12oz. (340g) hex Jar with bee on honeycomb or hive lid | Tray of 33 | £16.17 |
| 12oz. hex jar with bee on yellow, pink, multi flower or multi fruit lid | Tray of 33 | £17.49 |
| 190ml panel jar with bee on honeycomb or hive lid | Tray of 35 | £16.80 |
| 190ml panel jar with bee on yellow, pink, multi flower or multi fruit lid | Tray of 35 | £18.20 |
| Gold metal screw lids for 1 lb jars | Bag of 72 | £11.00 |
| White plastic screw lids for 1 lb jars | Bag of 72 | £8.00 |
| 1oz mini round jars with gold lid | Carton of 126 | £36.00 |
| 1.5oz mini round jar with gold lid | Carton of 126 | £32.00 |



These are the available alternative lid types, where listed on the previous page. From left, bees on honeycomb, bees on hive, bee on yellow flower, bee on pink flower, bee on multi coloured flowers & multi fruit.

June in the Divisional apiary.

June has been a busy month in the Divisional Apiary. We meet every Tuesday morning to complete the tasks of the day, enjoy good company, drink prodigious amounts of tea and coffee, and generally put the World to rights. We may not have as yet achieved world peace and galactic harmony, but we are surprisingly close.

Eric has been running Eric's Emporium which carries a stock of frames and foundation for sale, so if you find yourself short you can always pop over on a Tuesday morning. It may be worth ringing Eric in advance as stock is sold on a first come first served basis.

Naturally we have been running this year's Beginners' Course on some Saturdays and this is going well. We have also been running a short preparation course for those who are taking their Basic Assessment and the first group of examinees took their Assessment on Saturday. We would like to thank Dr Richard Bache for giving up his time as examiner.

If you fancy taking the Basic which, as its name suggests, is the equivalent of the Beekeeping driving test, that you can take after a years Beekeeping, then do please contact us so that we can arrange it. It's not too daunting and it's always a nice feeling to have your competence acknowledged.

If you fancy coming over on a Tuesday morning and joining in you are always very welcome. We look forward to seeing you.

Joe King
01749 890357

Beekeeping Taster Day

If you know anybody who would like to dip their pinkies into the mysterious World of beekeeping, but aren't too sure if it is for them, then why not tell them about our Taster Day at our apiary (Saturday July 29th).

The morning consists of Talks, demonstrations and the all important honey tasting. Embarrassingly the favourite has, on a couple of occasions in the past, been a supermarket own brand cheapo.

We break for a buffet lunch supplied by two wonderful members of the team and then in the afternoon we don bee-suits and head out for some bee juggling.

All of this for just £40.00, and they will get to take home a jar of real Somerset honey. Why, if you bought that from the Newt in Somerset, it would cost you £90.00, all on its own.

Contact Stewart Gould - somertonbees@btinternet.com

New Leaf Award 2023



Becky Wright, Stewart Gould & Adam Bacon

For the last couple of years, Somerset Beekeepers' Association has been the extremely fortunate recipient of significant donations from New Leaf Life Design. New Leaf is the company run by Becky Wright, offering help with workplace wellbeing. Becky has a strong commitment to the World around us, and as a part of her commitment, gives a proportion of her income to Somerset Beekeepers' Association so that a new beekeeper who might otherwise find it difficult to start along this road, is able to do so.

This year's recipient is Adam Bacon who is part of a fruit and vegetable growing co-operative near Barton St

David. The co-operative's mission is to supply organically grown produce to the local market, with as low a carbon footprint as possible. To enhance this goal, Adam and the rest of the team intend to produce good pure honey for the local market as well. Setting up isn't cheap, as we all know, and so the New Leaf Award has provided a colony of bees and a hive. You can't manage bees without protective clothing and some essential hardware, so Adam is also receiving a BBWear bee-suit, a smoker and a hive tool.

The hive and bees were delivered on Sunday June 25th. Stewart Gould and Adam installed the bees in the new hive while Becky looked on from a distance, although one ungrateful bee did manage to find her.

It might be a little late to ensure a harvest this year, but at least they will be set up to get off to a flying start next season.

As Becky's generosity has been so fulsome this year, we were also able to supply a new hive and colony of bees to Ben Bullard of Pylle, and a new hive to Harry Hawkins of central Division.

If you know somebody or a project which might struggle to get started without help, give Maggie Norris – secretary@somerswetbeekeepers.org.uk or me, Stewart Gould - somertonbees@btinternet.com a short, but informative, explanation of why you think that the New Leaf Award could help and, who knows, perhaps we can.

Stewart Gould

Swarm at Glastonbury Festival Glamping site



When you've got a log cabin in the woods overlooking the Glastonbury Festival site, which you rent out at nearly £2000 for the week-end, the last thing you want is a swarm in the wall. Little wonder then that the owner wanted this one moved in a hurry.

Dates for your diary

New Beekeepers 4th practical session

Saturday Junly 4th

At the apiary - 10.00am

Visit to Buckfast Abbey Bees

Saturday July 15th

10.00am at Buckfast Abbey

Baltonsborough Village Day

Village Hall and playing fields

Monday August 28th

12 noon - 5.00pm

Somerton Beekeepers Honey Show

Sat September 16th

Keinton Mandeville Village Hall

TA11 6ES

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