



1906 Centenary Year 2006

SBKA Exmoor Division

Newsletter: July – August 2017 edition

Agricultural Unit has stay of closure

If you believe everything you read in the newspaper then you will be pleased to have read in the Free Press two weeks ago, that the West Somerset College Farm is not going to be sold, but more akin to being moth-balled.

To quote the Free Press “The livestock was sold as there had being no demand from students to take horticultural or agricultural courses in the coming academic year, said Peter Elliot, chief executive officer of Bridgwater College Trust, which West Somerset college is part of.

Mr. Elliot also said “There is a huge emotional bond for the farm in the community, given the rural nature of West Somerset. However, a lot of young people do not want to work in agriculture or see a farming future as particularly attractive, he added. The school ran a consultation to ask parents for their views and only five people responded.

“If the results of the consultation had been favourable the school would have applied to the Secretary of State for Education for permission to dispose of it. However Governors realised the income benefit would be too small to achieve their objectives”.

EXMOOR DIVISION BEEKEEPER'S PROGRAMME 2017

August

Sunday 6th Porlock Show – *Working party details will come via Sue Hosegood.*

Friday 18th Dunster Show – *Setting up Thursday details to follow.*

September

Saturday 2nd Agricultural Unit: 2.00 p.m. – *Making feed and winter feeding.*

Saturday 30th Agricultural Unit: 2.00 p.m. – *Wax workshop .*

October

Saturday 7th EBKA Honey Show, Dunster – *Details to follow.*

November

Friday 24th Agricultural Unit, 7.00 p.m. – *AGM and Evening Lecture.*

* Agricultural Unit, West Somerset College, Bircham Road, Minehead TA24 6AY

The remaining programme will be confirmed through the newsletter. Please also check for any changes in venues and dates. Any items for publication would be most welcome,

please email them to:

ebkanews.eastaugh@btinternet.com

A related article in an adjacent column went on to say. “Exmoor Beekeepers Association have 15 hives on the farm, and its work there training local people to keep their own bees will still carry on”.

The next few weeks will be busy at the West Somerset College Farm, with courses running over the summer on chainsaw maintenance and cross cutting, basic tree felling, wood chipping and car trailer tests.

For further information on available courses please contact 01643 822125 for dates, times and fees.



David and Mary's Bee Tea

Yet again David and Mary chose a balmy Sunday afternoon to hold their celebrated barbecue and tea in their secluded back garden.

The day was hot and ideal weather for the peacock to get excited over the attention he was getting. Closer to the hives we were greeted by eight lambs who, having satisfied themselves that we were harmless, retired further up the bank to watch the cabaret.

Such entertainment it turned out to be; using a camera to check if a queen cell was charged; building a two storey nucleus without planning permission; close examination of comb building; the usual frantic search for a queen; the courage and wonderment of mankind for choosing to stand in front of a hive entrance.

David and Mary. A delightful afternoon.

Thank you.



Bee stings - acid or alkaline?

This was a question I asked the doctor at Southmead Hospital when my wife commenced her immunisation program. He was unable to tell me.

Subsequently I asked the nurse at The Musgrove Hospital to where my wife had been transferred to continue her treatment, after five minutes she gave me a bundle of pages off the internet which went some way to answer my question.

What it did do however was to provoke the thought that perhaps as beekeepers we have become obsessed with the health of our bees, but are ignorant of the risks to our own health. Sadly it takes a business man to draw it to our attention.

The print out that I was given was extracted from the internet at www.insectstings.co.uk. It was written by David Glaser, a businessman from Surrey who having had a severe reaction to a wasp sting wanted to know more, and then more still, such that the majority of critters that give stings and their various treatments are reported.

I have every confidence that beekeeping members in the medical profession will find gaping holes in what he says and if they do, I hope they will plug them on these pages.

There is too a thought provoking item on the EpiPen and their suitability for women. Reading the item, I know a number of men in our midst that it could apply to.

As for my original question? Bees stings are acid with a pH of 5, and wasps are alkaline with a pH of 6.9.

John Eastaugh

SO BRIEFLY THEN

Sugar for Exmoor beekeepers is becoming available thanks to Tricia Nelson and her negotiations with Tesco. Each week they have several kilos of damaged sugar bags which are wasted but are willing to pass on to beekeepers. Talks are in hand to discover the likely full annual amount, to glean how/where we can store it.

No sightings of the Asian hornet

To date there have been no sightings of the Asian Hornet, which is good news for all of us in the west, however vigilance is still needed. If you have not made a hornet trap, do make one as soon as you can, the threat has not gone away. See page 275 of the BBKA News or the May/June edition of the newsletter.

How does this work then?

Lance Moir entered honey into the Bath and West show. There were five entries, three were disqualified, two of which had wrong jars and lids, the third was all white(?). One jar was excellent honey and was Highly Commended, but Lance's entry came fourth(?). Am I missing something here or what?

Extracted from the Home page
www.insectstings.co.uk

Wasp stings, bee stings and hornets stings had never been important in my life until one day I had to be resuscitated, the result of an allergic reaction to wasp venom called anaphylaxis. I was a healthy man with a young active family, relishing life, and I had nearly died as result of a tiny little wasp. I just couldn't believe it!

I had never even heard of the allergic reaction called anaphylaxis before and I decided then that I wanted to spend part of my life finding out more and helping other people who have suffered from an insect sting – from the simple sting that just hurts a lot to the potentially deadly sting reaction that I suffered. This is what this website is all about understanding reactions to wasps, bees, hornets and ants.

Launched in February 2002, the Insect Stings website is therefore a serious but hopefully accessible resource on this strange subject and offers lots of information. It is meant to be educational and informative, and particularly helpful to those individuals who have had a particularly unpleasant reaction to an insect sting or bite.

The site is a lot bigger than it looks and includes the following information:

- the story of the adventure so far
- the hunt for and successful discovery of a safe and effective medical treatment called venom immunotherapy or desensitization
- information, knowledge and support about hornet stings, bee stings, wasp stings and ant stings
- insect repellents and insect sting relief products
- the effects of insect stings
- the treatments and the remedies

Lots of younger visitors like to know for their school work whether bee and wasp stings are acid or alkali and this question is also answered in this website!

I hope you find this website helpful and informative!

David Glaser
Surrey, England