



Newsletter July 2024

Committee members:

Pat Coleman (President), Ken Jeanes (Chair), Mat Phillips (Treasurer), Anne Collyer (Secretary), Jane Jeanes (SBKA Trustee), Tony Johnstone (Programme Secretary), Jeremy Lee (Apiary Manager), Brian Magor, Dennis White and John Wood

Welcome to our July newsletter. Thank you to our regular contributors and also to Mike Craddock who has written about the excellent visit to Brian Magor's apiary to learn about the art of queen rearing. We are very fortunate to have a core of highly experienced beekeepers within our branch who are so willing to share their knowledge with us all.



The year is marching on and is time for our thoughts to be turning to the Annual Honey Show! In the newsletter this month there is a list of classes and recipes so that you can start to think about what you are going to enter. There are classes for everyone so come and have a go! Entry is free and open to all. Please encourage children/grandchildren/nieces/nephews/friends to take part in the Children's Classes. Some of the recipes have changed slightly but I have listed them in the 'Recipe Corner' so you will have plenty of time to practise. The full schedule and entry forms will be published in the next newsletter.

As ever, if anyone needs more information or has a question to ask, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will put you in touch with someone who can help.

Anne Collyer, Branch Secretary SESBKA

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Lionel's July Bee Notes

For further information please contact Lionel: lhorer934@talktalk.net

First can I ask anyone who has requested a nuc from the apiary to contact me. I have a short list but I'm sure some names are missing. There has been a problem with queens mating this year [more than usual] so it will take some time to fulfil our requirements.

Our branch apiary is like everywhere else. When the weather allows the bees to fly there are no flowers in bloom to collect from and when the flowers are there it is either raining or too cold to fly. Every year seems different from the last but it usually comes right in the end, or maybe it won't. All this means your bees may have eaten any stores they have built up so you need to check and be prepared to feed if necessary.

It's now a week since I wrote the above note and I have just checked my bees again and it's surprising the difference a few decent days make, last week I was telling friends there would be very little honey this year due to the weather conditions and now a few days later there is honey in the supers and some of it is capped. Aren't bees wonderful. Let's hope for a good crop from the clover and lime.

News From the Apiary

For more information, please contact Jeremy Lee, Apiary Manager jlee@me.com

Sadly, we were unable to do today's planned apiary trip due to quite a serious crash on the road between Castle Cary and Wincanton. It would have been a hot one but hopefully we can enjoy some other evenings during the rest of the summer. It does mean that Anne hasn't had to hassle me (again) for some words of limited wisdom to fill the pages of the newsletter.

Our visit last week was far more successful than the one on the previous fortnight. It appeared that our initial attempts to create Nucs had been very unsuccessful and only two of the 8 had managed to get a mated queen back and laying. I think the cool spring hadn't helped along with the sudden cessation of the spring nectar flow. Anyway, we managed to cobble a few more Nucs together harvesting queen cells from a couple of colonies that had got itchy feet and lo and behold we appear to be back in the game. Hopefully some Nucs should be finding new homes very shortly. I'm hoping those that joined those afternoons learnt as much as I did - namely you can do what you think is right but the bees generally know best. They have been on this planet far longer than us - according to Google between 72 and 144 million years longer.

We did witness two extraordinary things on our visits. Brian and I (on James's instructions which he soon retracted) tried to move a queen onto new brood frames. A week later, obviously missing her babies, she had been slimmed down and squeezed through the queen excluder back to the original frames. Fast forward a month, we tried again and fortuitously found they were making swarm preparations. So, we split the hive, moved her down onto new frames and took out any extra queen cells. Brian and I checked back a week later to find this time she had stayed put. However, on lifting off the top box we had obviously missed a cell and found her virgin daughter desperately trying to squeeze back through the same excluder to conduct matricide. You will be pleased to hear we took this charming young lady away and made up another nuc. Hopefully that makes 9!!!

2024 Programme of Events

Tony Johnstone, Events Secretary tmj67@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 07973341557

Important. When visiting any Apiary, including our own, it is important to be mindful of Apiary Hygiene. Please ensure your bee suit is clean and that you use new disposable gloves. If carrying tools make sure they are disinfected please.

In line with the changes imposed by the SBKA we will be asking members to sign in on arrival for an apiary visit, as a health and safety matter and just in case someone suffers a serious bee related response. It is essential that members carrying an EpiPen disclose this and ensure that it is not out of date.

Hook Valley Apiary.

Jeremy Lee will continue to open the Apiary every Wednesday evening, weather permitting, and will publish details on WhatsApp each week. This is a great opportunity for new members, and others, to get hands-on experience.

Saturday 27th July 2024 From 10.00am. Our Annual Safari. Please see the full programme and directions below.

Sunday 25th August. Set-up 11.00am, Pack-up 5.00pm Castle Cary "Fun in The Field"

"Stop Press" It now seems unlikely that this event will now take place.

Saturday 14th September 2024 Yarlinton Fair @ Yarlinton House- All Day

We will take our gazebo to promote beekeeping and sell our honey. I am looking for two volunteer teams please, one to set up and one to pack up. Please let me know if you can help. Further details in due course

Thursday 19th September 2024 At The Market House Castle Cary- Meet at 19.15 start at 19.30 hrs

A presentation by Ken Edwards of the Quantock branch. Ken is going to give a presentation about his visit to East Africa where he was surprised by the ability of the African beekeepers.

Saturday 28th September 2024 from 10.00am. At the Ansford Academy carpark.

Dianne Sleigh will be offering her "Click & Collect" service to furnish your apiary needs. Sadly, she is unable to be at our Honey Show this year. Her contact details are- sales@thebeedepot.com or 07879 811967 to place your orders

Saturday 12th October (Set-up on Friday 11th) At the Market House Castle Cary. The SESBKA Honey Show.

We are lucky to have Jack Mummery as our judge this year. Jack is a BBKA accredited honey judge.

Please see the full schedule attached.

It may be possible to organise another "WAX" practical evening. Please let me know if you are interested



Thursday 21st November. At The Market House Castle Cary. The SESBKA Annual General Meeting followed by an invited speaker.

Safari Programme 27th July 2024

All of our Branch Members are invited to our Annual Safari the details of which are outlined below.

It is important, however, that you let **ME** know- **Tony Johnstone** tmj67@hotmail.co.uk, that you will be participating and whether it is for all day or a part of the day. Please don't reply to Anne's Newsletter!

We will be visiting three diverse apiaries and, as previously announced, the day will be facilitated by Eleanor Burgess, and her Mum. Eleanor, previously, was a Somerset County Bee Inspector and currently is a progressive beekeeper. Pippa Shillington has kindly invited us to enjoy our Picnic Lunches in their field/barn. Please remember to bring plenty of drinks, particularly, if it is a hot day.

First Visit Meeting at 10.00am

John MacPherson, Hill Farm, Buckhorn Weston

Postcode SP8 5HT. What/3/words- clays/picture/vets

4 miles SE of Wincanton. From the mini roundabout at the bottom of the town centre take Moor Lane and follow signs to Buckhorn Weston;

From the Stapleton Arms in the middle of Buckhorn Weston, drive up the hill past the church. 400 yards from the pub, the road narrows and gets steeper as it goes under ash trees. Emerging from the trees, with a 30-mph road sign on your right, take the private road opposite heading back on your left, passing a Caution Bees sign. Hill Farm is the 1st house on that private road. The apiary is 75 yards away, above the road.

NB Parking is limited – there will be signs on the private road showing where to park.

Second Visit.

Pippa Shillington, Quarr Farm, Quarr Post Code SP8 5PA What/3/Words- swooning/meanest/ahead

From Hill Farm continue up the hill out of the village and follow the road right into Shepherd's Hill for

¾ mile. At the crossroads turn left. Quarr Farm is ¼ mile on the left. The gateway will be signposted.

Following our inspection of their extensive and varied apiary we can stay and enjoy our Picnic Lunches.

Third Visit.

Ken & Jane Jeanes Apiary, Vine Street Templecombe Post Code BA8 OJZ. What3Words- scored/aside/pedicure

From Quarr Farm retrace your steps to the Stapleton Arms in Buckhorn Weston and immediately turn right. Follow this road directly into Templecombe (about 4 miles). At the sharp uphill "T" junction turn left. Almost immediately take the second right, by the 30mph sign, into Vine Street, keep right past the social club. After 100 yards turn right into the driveway to park

Apiary filming locations:

The BBKA is often approached by media companies wanting to film beehives and beekeepers at work and would like to compile a list of apiaries around the country that could be available for filming at relatively short notice. The BBKA are often asked for visually

*Editor's Note: If you would like to be included on the list of potential filming sites just let me know
amcollyer838@gmail.com*

pleasing apiaries with good access for cars, vans and ideally with nearby toilets.

Would you like your apiary to be considered?

SEBSKA Visit to Brian Magor's Apiary at Lattiford

Saturday 15th June *Mike Craddock*



Brian's enthusiasm for all things bee related is highly infectious and on a sunny Saturday afternoon in June, he demonstrated the arcane art of queen rearing, with James, his equally able helper at the apiary in Lattiford.

Brian gathered us into his garage workshop and explained that queen rearing in the UK starts in late spring or early summer with the identification and selection of a suitable breeder queen with desirable traits; e.g. size, colour and productivity, as well as other traits identifiable only from years of bee-keeping experience. We were shown his well-organised queen rearing bench and bespoke, temperature-controlled incubator, from which Brian showed us a queen rearing frame with uncapped cells, an orange transport box with separated queen bee rearing cages and a tray with 15 home-made hatching roller cages, containing emerging young virgin queens. Brian then showed us how he marked the immature queens with a pink dot or even glued a tiny, numbered sticker on the "special" ones to keep a track on them.

A mystical queen rearing wheel helps Brian track and determine timings for the various stages of queen rearing, based on grafting date. Brian estimated the success rate from grafting larvae to young healthy queens emerging, varies between 50% and 95% and that colonies should be re-queened every year to increase honey output and enhance the genetic pool.

After this enlightening session, the group moved to Brian's apiary with four marked virgin queens. He then opened his "P14" queen top bar hive used to resource the whole rearing process and showed us the busy national frames, which had black foundation for easy spotting of eggs/larvae. One frame was removed and used to show us the grafting process later, described below. The four young queens were then put into small poly mating nucs, together with scoops of nurse bees that James had shaken from the top bar frames and added some 1:1 sugar solution. Only sound selected queens make it to Brian's small poly mating nucs. After a few days in the dark, they will emerge from the nucs and undertake mating flights. If they return, Brian can keep track of them to evaluate brood patterns, temperaments, and each of their colony growths. Maintaining colony health, ensuring genetic diversity, and managing environmental conditions are crucial for successful queen rearing.



We then returned to the workshop/garage and Brian was able to demonstrate the start of the process, namely how the young larvae (1mm long) are very carefully and dextrously removed from the cells, with a special Chinese grafting tool, and then put into artificial queen cups with royal jelly on the rearing frame and placed into his specially set up starter/finisher hive to begin the rearing process. (Note from Lionel: If a larva is to become a worker or a drone it will be fed royal jelly for one day and then it will be fed a lesser food made up of honey and pollen until it pupates. These larvae will not be fed as generously as queen larvae. If a larva is destined to become a queen, she will be fed royal jelly all through her larval stage and she will actually be floating in it all the time so that she is never short of food. A secret ingredient of royal jelly is a protein called Royalactin which affects the growth of her two ovaries and the ovarioles, which allow her to produce thousands of eggs per day.)

We were all pretty much spellbound with Brian and James' queen rearing work and the afternoon was rounded off nicely with a delicious selection of tea and cake on a sunny, blooming terrace overlooking a splendidly bountiful garden.



2024 SESBKA Annual Honey Show

A	Two 454g (1lb) jars of light, clear, run honey		
B	Two 454g (1lb) jars of medium, clear, run honey	T	One bottle of mead of any type.
C	Two 454g (1lb) jars of dark, clear, run honey		
D	Two 454g (1lb) jars of naturally granulated honey	U	Any handicraft item with a beekeeping theme
E	Two 454g (1lb) jars of soft set, (creamed) honey	V	Wax flowers or other decorative item made from wax
F	Novice Class. One 454g (1lb) jar of honey of any clear, run honey.	W	Any homemade item pertaining to beekeeping
G	Novice Class. One 454g (1lb) jar of honey of soft set, (creamed) honey	X	Homemade item using hive products, e.g., polishes
H	One shallow frame of honey suitable for extracting	Y	Homemade item using hive products, e.g., cosmetics
I	Two cartons of cut comb, 7-9oz	Z	Single photograph pertaining to beekeeping. Mounted. Unframed. Maximum size mounted A4
J	One piece of beeswax, not less than 6ozs.		
K	Five 1oz cakes of beeswax.	ZZ	Skep
L	Two molded beeswax candles, of any type, one candle will be lit by the judge. To be displayed erect, candle holder not judged.		
M	Honey Tea Bread, to recipe given.		
N	Honey Sponge, to recipe given.		
O	Six Honey and Cardamon Biscuits, from the recipe given.		
P	Six small cakes, using honey as an ingredient, recipe of own choice, copy to be displayed with cakes	aa	Drawing or painting pertaining to beekeeping. Mounted. Maximum size A4
Q	One jar of jam, jelly or preserve using honey as an ingredient. To be labelled with list of ingredients	bb	Craft Item pertaining to beekeeping
		cc	Photograph of a bee. Maximum size A4
		dd	4 small cakes to recipe of own choice and decorated with a 'bee theme'. Copy of recipe to be displayed with cakes
R	One jar of chutney using honey as an ingredient. To be labelled with list of ingredients		
S	Six pieces of fudge to recipe given.		

Children's Classes

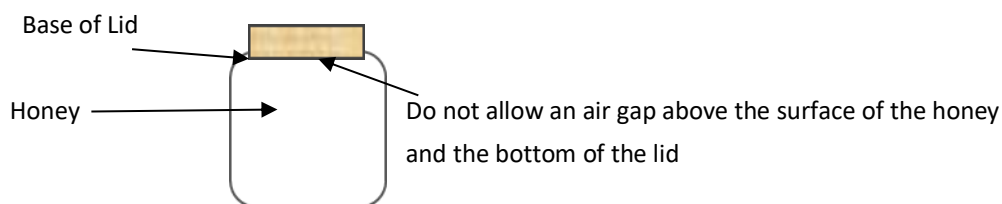
(up to the age of 12 on day of show)

Age to be declared

- | | |
|----|---|
| aa | Drawing or painting pertaining to beekeeping. Mounted. Maximum size A4 |
| bb | Craft Item pertaining to beekeeping |
| cc | Photograph of a bee. Maximum size A4 |
| dd | 4 small cakes to recipe of own choice and decorated with a 'bee theme'. Copy of recipe to be displayed with cakes |

SESBKA HONEY SHOW RULES 2024

1. Entry for classes A-I is open to all beekeepers. Entry for classes J – ZZ is open to all Beekeepers Association members. Entry for classes aa – dd is open to all children up to the age of 12 on the day of the show. Exhibitors may enter a maximum of two items in any one class. These exhibits will be identified as such and judged against each other and the best one will be included in the final judging. No single item may be included in two classes.
2. Classes A-I: Joint owners of an apiary may not make separate entries in the same class
3. **A Novice is anyone who has not won a prize in a previous honey show.**
4. All wax and honey entries in Classes A-L and Class T (Mead) must be the produce of the exhibitors' own bees.
5. Entries in Classes K-ZZ must have been made by the named exhibitor, but the honey used for Classes M - S and wax used for Class V - Y need NOT be from the exhibitors' own bees.
6. Entries will only be accepted in person between **6pm and 7.30pm** on the evening before the Show, (Friday 11th October), accompanied by a completed entry form. Those unable to attend in person may delegate to another SBKA member. All entry forms must clearly state contact telephone number, age if 12 or under and whether entering in Open/SESBKA Member/Novice. **No entries will be accepted on the day of the show**
7. **Staging will close at 8pm** on Friday 11th October. Judging will take place before the Show opens to the public at 10.30am on Saturday 14th October and the show will close at 1.30pm. Exhibits may not be removed before 1.30pm
8. Extracted honey must be exhibited in clear 454g(1lb) squat glass jars with gold lacquered screw or twist off lids with flowed-in plastic seals. To ensure that the jar contains the correct weight of honey there should be no air gap visible between the surface of the honey and the lower edge of the lid. Frames of honey must be in a closed, glazed case which the judge must be able to open.



9. **MEAD** should be exhibited in punted clear glass wine bottles, without decoration or fluting, and closed with a cork stopper. The surface of the liquid in the bottle should be no more than half an inch below the base of the cork stopper.
10. **Labelling** Exhibitors will be supplied with identifying labels which must be affixed as explained below.
Honey in jars Fasten the label so that there is about ½ inch (1cm) near the bottom of the jar.
Class H: Frames of honey Put one label on the top right-hand corner of the glazing and one on the top bar of the comb
Class L: Labels should be fixed near the bottom of candles in holders otherwise underneath the candle
Classes M, N, O, P, S and dd to be presented on a doily and plain white paper plate in a clear polythene bag with label fixed to top edge of bag carrying the exhibit.
Classes P and dd: The recipe should be written clearly and placed with the exhibit.
Classes Q and R: To be labelled with list of ingredients
Classes Q-Y: Labels should be fixed near bottom of bottles and jars or on the underneath of small jars, tins etc. Exhibits in Class U may carry labels in any style which should state the name of the exhibit e.g., 'Hand Cream', 'Furniture Polish'. Such labels **MUST NOT** show the exhibitors name or address. Labels to include list of ingredients
Classes Z, aa and cc: Labels to be placed at the bottom right-hand corner of the mount.
11. Every reasonable care will be taken of exhibits but the SESBKA will not be responsible for any loss or damage that may in anyway occur.

SESBKA members who enter the Honey Show are entitled to sell their honey at the Show at £8.00 per 1lb jar, £6.00 per 12oz jar and cut comb at £7 per pack. A donation of 10% of overall sales to be made to the SESBKA Division

Any situation arising which is not covered by the rules shall be decided by the judges.

The judge's decision will be final.



Honey Tea Bread

550ml strong tea 400gm sultanas
2 eggs, beaten 150gm honey plus 2 tablespoons honey for the glaze
450gm wholemeal flour 1.5teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

Soak fruit overnight in the tea.

Preheat oven to 190°C (170°C Fan)/370°F/Gas Mark 5 and line a 2lb loaf tin. In a large bowl, stir the honey and eggs into the soaked fruit. Sift together the flour and bicarbonate of soda and add to the fruit. Fold ingredients together and put into tin. Bake for between 75 and 80 minutes in total or until a skewer comes out clean. After 45 minutes cover the top of the loaf with foil to prevent burning. When the loaf is almost cooked, brush the top generously with 2 tablespoons of runny honey, returning to the oven uncovered for the final 5-10 minutes of cooking. Leave to cool in the tin.

Present on a doily and plain white paper plate in a clear polythene bag

Honey Sponge

150g Butter 175gm Self Raising Flour
75g Castor Sugar ½ Teaspoon Baking Powder
175g Clear Honey Pinch of Salt
3 Eggs

Preheat oven to 190°C (170°C Fan)/370°F/Gas Mark 5.

Sieve together flour, baking powder and salt. Cream butter, sugar and honey. Beat in eggs then fold in the flour until all is incorporated. Divide the mixture equally between two 18cm (7") sandwich tins and bake for approximately 25 to 30 minutes.

Filling:

100g Icing Sugar 50gm Butter 1 tablespoon honey

Beat ingredients together until creamy and use to sandwich the two cake halves together.

Present on a doily and plain white paper plate in a clear polythene bag

Honey and Cardamom Biscuits

200gm unsalted butter 150gm caster sugar
3 tablespoons of honey 250gm plain flour
80gm ground almonds 1 teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoons ground cardamom icing sugar for dusting
makes 24 biscuits

Preheat oven to 170°C (150°C Fan) /325°F/Gas mark 3

in a small pan melt the butter, sugar and honey over a medium heat until the sugar dissolves. In a large bowl sift the flour and baking powder, stir in the ground almonds and cardamom. Make a well in the centre and add the butter/honey mixture. Stir until just combined. Place tablespoons of the mixture onto baking trays lined with baking paper. Flatten slightly with the base of a glass and bake for 15-18 minutes or until lightly golden. Rest on trays for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely. Dust lightly with icing sugar.

Present 6 biscuits on a doily and plain white paper plate in a clear polythene bag

Honey and Vanilla Fudge

Ingredients:

125gm butter 1 can condensed milk (397gm)
300gm sugar 150gm honey
50ml milk Vanilla Essence

Method:

Heat butter, sugar, condensed milk, milk and honey slowly in a pan until sugar is dissolved.

Once sugar has dissolved increase the heat gradually stirring occasionally to prevent burning on bottom of the pan.

Heat to 116°F/46.7°C Then cool and stir. Add vanilla essence and when crystals form, pour the mixture into a clean tin (7" x 11") and spread, When the fudge is firm, score and cut into squares.