



Newsletter June 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 June newsletter. Apiary visits are now well under way and Jeremy and I thoroughly enjoyed welcoming you to our apiary in May. As ever, lots to talk about and we ended up making two splits (both now with a sealed queen cell so waiting with fingers crossed for evidence of mated queens when we next look at the nucs in a couple of weeks). Thank you also to all those who provided the delicious cakes - a very important part of any visit!



Guy Clothier has stepped down from the committee after many years and we are all very grateful to him for all his hard work and support. Fortunately, he will continue to be an active member of the branch – thank you Guy!

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 June Bee Notes

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

I had a nasty incident with my bees this month. All my own fault and I don't think it will happen again. I killed a large hive of bees. No excuse but I suppose I have transported dozens of hives in the boot of my car, sometimes over 100 miles all without any problem, but this time they were shut in the night before as usual, loaded and delivered about six and a half miles the next morning and released. When checking the bees three days later, found them all dead! Thinking it may have been poisoning from crop spraying I reported it to the bee inspector who came to look but decided they had just overheated. Further inspection of the new poly hive and I discovered the varroa board was a tight fit to the floor and almost no air could get in to cool the bees. As I mentioned I have never had any trouble like this before and I think I will definitely check this in future. As I have said before there is always something new.

Thank goodness the weather is warming up, the bees are flying in between the storms and starting to bring in nectar and pollen, my bees in the orchard were very lucky that the apple blossom coincided with a spell of good weather and they worked well and brought in some stores and produced some lovely bright wax.

It is important now that the bees are building up their numbers to give them room for A/ the queen to lay and B/ the workers to store their nectar and just as important, to be able to move it around in order to dehydrate it.

Today I noticed some Spanish honey on a market stall for sale for £8.50 for 500 gms. I got into conversation with the stall holder and asked about local honey and she said she would not sell it as it was not pure. She was adamant that English honey was ruined by the way farmers sprayed the crops and anyway beekeepers in this country always feed their bees with sugar water therefore it is not pure honey. I could not convince her that this was not the case.

The facts about imported adulterated honey seems to be misunderstood so how can we get the truth out there?

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 15th June 2024 @ 2.00pm NB START TIME 2.00pm A visit to Brian Magor's Apiary in Lattiford. What 3 Words location- blackmail.pile.value.

Take the A371 from Castle Cary or Wincanton and join the A357, almost immediately turn right, opposite the Shell Garage, after 1/3 mile turn left into the estate. Carparking will be signposted, then walk left from the main drive to the end and Brians house.

Brian, with James' assistance, plans to demonstrate queen rearing /mating /grafting etc as well as a tour of his extensive apiary.

We are invited to have tea/coffee and cake in the garden afterwards, weather permitting.

Cake donations would be appreciated. It is important that you let ME (Tony) know that you are attending/donating please.

Saturday 27th July 2024 From 10.00am. Our Annual Safari.

This year our Safari will be facilitated by Eleanor Burgess a former Bee Inspector. You may remember that last March Eleanor gave us a really interesting presentation on preparing for the new season.

The first visit will be to the apiary of John MacPherson in Buckhorn Weston followed by a visit to Pippa and Kevin Shillington's apiary near Cucklington, where we will be able to enjoy our picnic lunches, and finally to our chairman Ken Jeanes' apiary in Templecombe.

Locations and further details to follow.

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

Once again, we can take our Gazebo and 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.

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

Again, we can 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.

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. Further details nearer the date.

Thursday 21st November. At The Market House Castle Cary.

The SESBKA Annual General Meeting followed by an invited speaker



If you would like to join the SESBKA WhatsApp group then please either email/text/WhatsApp Anne with your mobile number (contact details at top of newsletter). Ideal for asking questions, posting pictures, swarm messaging and general advice.

Don't forget – if you are a 'local' member but now keep bees you are strongly advised to upgrade your membership to 'registered'. This then includes public liability insurance and bee disease insurance. Please contact Mat Phillips, treasurer, for further details mat@neovoca.com

SWARM COLLECTION

If you are asked to collect a swarm, and it is feasible to do so, please try and offer to take a less experienced beekeeper with you to introduce them to the art of swarm collection.



DO NOT attempt to collect a swarm on your own for the first time!!

Please click on the link below for further information and advice

https://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/uploads/1/0/8/1/108127969/collecting_a_swarm_dl_finals_leaflet.pdf

News From the Apiary

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

I always have a bit of heaviness in my heart when The Chelsea Flower Show hits our TV screens. We are now less than a month away from the summer solstice and whilst the balmy days of summer are yet to be enjoyed, I know that the days will slowly start getting shorter. I am very much a spring person and, possibly why I love keeping bees, I thrive on seeing winter slowly receding.

To the bees, well after a slow old start, the girls as usual had been solidly building up and upon my first quick inspection in early April, I thought that they would get ahead of us again. Whilst we had a sudden and heavy nectar flow at beginning of May, it has soon turned off again and the June gap is upon us early. Luckily, the bees at the apiary hadn't made any plans for a holiday when we finally had a proper sort out a few weeks ago. However, with the help of the brave Wednesday crew of recent, we managed to make an additional 5 nuc boxes up, all of which have had virgin or mated queens introduced to them by Brian and James just yesterday. Fingers crossed, in a month or so's time, some of our newcomers will be taking receipt of their first bees.

Looking ahead, Wednesday evenings look a better bet for Apiary visits. Sadly, I am a bit time poor this year with the opening of Sherborne House and James and Brian work their own 'vast' apiaries on a Tuesday. Keep an eye on the WhatsApp group for updates and if the weather is fine, we will always attempt to get some hives open.



Fruit Punch

Recipe
Corner

This month's recipe is taken from 'Honey and Your Health' by Beck and Smedley, first published in 1938

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|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 cup honey | 1 ½ cups freshly made strong tea |
| 1 cup orange juice | ⅛ teaspoon salt |
| ½ cup lemon juice | 1 pint ginger ale |
| 1 cup crushed fresh fruit | |

Mix all the ingredients except the ginger ale. Just before serving add chopped ice and the ginger ale. If the punch is too strong, add ice water in small quantities until the punch is the flavour desired