



Newsletter May 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), Guy Clothier, Brian Magor,
Dennis White and John Wood

Welcome to our May newsletter. Thank you to all who have contributed to this month's issue and we welcome any ideas for future issues. Please let me have articles, notices etc by the 25th of the month for inclusion in the next issue.

Thank you to Tony for organising another interesting talk last month. Stephen Fleming, co-editor of Bee Craft magazine, told us about his research work regarding Drone Congregation Areas. He does not record his talks as the information is constantly changing but there are several articles available on the internet if you would like to investigate further. Don't forget that BeeCraft are offering a discounted subscription for SESBKA members – just follow the link on the information sheet sent with this newsletter on the covering email.



The organisers of Shepton Montague Plant Sale have kindly invited the SE Somerset branch to the Plant Sale on Saturday 25th May. More details in the Programme of Events but please add the date to your diary and come along to help and support the branch. Contact Tony directly with offers of help to set up and run the stall.

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

amcollyer838@gmail.com 07803 243643 Presscombe, Shepton Montague, Wincanton, BA9 8JG

Lionel's May Bee Notes

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

Somerset Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT) have asked us to record where all of our monitoring traps are located so that they can be plotted on a map and then we can try to fill any spaces that occur. So please can I ask you all to let me know the post code or the three-word location where your traps are placed. This information will be kept within the AHAT community.

I think the beginners enjoyed the time at the divisional apiary. We looked inside all of the hives and discussed what we found. The bees behaved themselves very well and we must thank Jeremy and his team for the successful day.

The weather seems to be slowly improving but it's still a cold wind which could chill the brood if you open the hive at the wrong time, so please be patient and pick a warm sunny time to inspect the bees.

The talk given by Stephen Fleming about his experiences seeking Drone Congregation Areas was extremely interesting, even if lots of this mating ritual is still a mystery. It's a good job the bees know what to do! I would love to be able to say that I had discovered a Drone Congregation Area, so if you see me running around Castle Cary with a fishing rod, I may not be going fishing!

Today (the 20th April) I have checked most of my bees for the second time this year. The temperature is up to shirt sleeve weather, the sun is shining and there is no wind, perfect for opening the hives. In the last week I can see that the queens have been laying well so the numbers will be exploding in a couple of weeks and the foragers have been bringing in lots a nectar so things are looking good. I have fed some small colonies but I think they will pick up in time. This is how beekeeping should feel. Wonderful.



2024 Programme of Events

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

NB Adrenalin Pen Users If you use an adrenalin pen you MUST bring it with you to any apiary visits and it MUST be in date. Please inform Jane Jeanes or the designated first aider that you have it when you arrive. Thank you

As usual I would appreciate any members who are willing to host an apiary visit to let me know please. We really do need some new faces.

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 insurance company we will be asking members to sign in before apiary visits, as a health and safety matter together with an emergency contact number.

Hook Valley Apiary.

Thanks to the hard work by Jeremy Lee supported by Brian Magor, James Butt and many others we now have a fully functioning facility. This not only needs our support to develop it but it is also there for us to get hands-on beekeeping experience thus preventing swarming, disease and colony loss at our domestic apiaries.

During May, June & July Jeremy plans to hold Members Evenings every Tuesday evening, weather permitting. Details will be posted on WhatsApp.

Saturday 11th May 2024 @ 2.30pm A visit to Anne & Jeremy Collyer's Apiary in Shepton Montague

Presscombe, Shepton Montague, Wincanton, Somerset, BA9 8JG What3words ///searched.butchers.widely

Directions: From Castle Cary

Turn left off the A371 at Grove Cross. Take second turning right signed Shepton Montague. At crossroads continue straight. After approximately 3/4 mile go past church on left and Presscombe is on the left just past machinery barns.

From Wincanton

Take 2nd right off the A371 past Holbrook House signed Shepton Montague. Go through village to crossroads with pub on your right. Turn right, past church and Presscombe on left. Additional parking is available at the Village Hall next to church. Please see note above regarding Apiary Hygiene and signing in.

Saturday 25th May Shepton Montague Plant Sale held at church and village hall

Volunteers needed please to man our Gazebo, promote beekeeping and sell honey. Set up at 1.00pm, gates open at 2.30pm pack up at 5.00pm. Please contact me directly- tmj67@hotmail.co.uk

Directions- What3words///threading.phantom.haircuts and as to Presscombe above.

Bath & West Show Thursday 30th May – Saturday 1st June

Please contact Bernie Perkins to volunteer- berniepm@gmail.com

Saturday 15th June 2024 @ 2.00pm A visit to Brian Magor's Apiary in Lattiford.

Location and further details to follow. Brian has so much to see that we ran out of time during the Safari last July.

Brian would like to include Queen Rearing in the afternoon's programme.

Saturday 27th July 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.

On a Date in August. An Apiary Visit. Location to be announced.

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

An ideal opportunity to 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.

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.



Goat's Cheese with Honey and Walnuts on Sourdough

We came across this tasty starter whilst on holiday in Portugal. It is very simple to make and can easily be adapted to use what you have in your cupboard. It is ideal for a midday snack or can be 'zhuzhed up' for an elegant starter.

Simply lightly toast one side of a slice of sourdough or other 'rustic' loaf. Put a slice of goat's cheese on the untoasted side and either bake for about 5-10 minutes in a preheated oven

160°C/middle shelf AGA or grill until cheese starts to bubble. Drizzle approximately 2 teaspoons of honey over the cheese and liberally sprinkle with chopped walnuts. Serve warm with a salad leaf garnish. Quantity of cheese, honey etc and types of nuts and bread can be varied to suit your taste.

Recipe
Corner



WhatsApp

messaging and general advice.

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

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 jglee@me.com

I always thrive on deadlines and once again the long-suffering Anne has had to badger me again. I am currently sitting in Starbucks at Willoughby Edge having dropped one child at his Duke of Edinburgh Award practice and was hoping to 'crack' a few hives up at the branch apiary on the way home. However, with the temperature in the car reading 5 degrees Celsius at 10am with the month of May around the corner, that isn't going to happen. I fear, much like last year, that with the first sign of warm muggy weather, every colony in the district that wants to swarm will jump ship!! When Ted Hooper first penned "Bees and Honey" did he have such a volatile climate to deal with?

Luckily, in amongst the cold and grey we have managed a few inspections and had a brilliant turnout of newcomers at our first apiary visit a fortnight ago. It is wonderful to see that so many of the faces that I first saw back in the classroom in February listening to 'pests and diseases' hadn't hung up their bee suits for good and 'taken to drink'. Must be Lionel's kind and nurturing manner that sweetened that particular pill. Talking of bee suits, we have discovered their whereabouts and visits to the apiary for those without are now under control! It was also wonderful to be able to stand in close proximity to the hives without the being driven away by grotty bees like the past few seasons.

Of the colonies that we 'took into the winter', seven I would say are in rude health. One is superseding the old girl who has been a trooper over the last two seasons. One is a little wobbly/slow to start but Lionel reminds me to be patient and give her time, and we only had one with a failed queen which we managed to reunite with the next-door hive. As soon as we have some prolonged warm weather, we will start to make up some nucs for newcomers from the strongest colonies.

Brian came to the rescue and fixed the old lean-to roof with some shiny tin. I think James had a nail appointment that day but no doubt he will give pass judgement on it when the tea urn is next hot! Warm, settled Tuesday late afternoons, early evenings are still the plan and watch for updates on the WhatsApp group.



Don't forget you can log in and look at the apiary yourself via your smart phone.

The camera is once again live at Hook Valley. If you are interested try the below instructions. It even works at night which is useful?? You can either download the Reolink app to your smart phone or install the same client browser on your laptop/pc/mac. The link below is for MAC/IOS - click the Windows link at the bottom of the webpage below for PC/Windows.

https://reolink.com/my/software-and-manual/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw7KqZBhCBARIsAl-ftKIFBPYilj3v9jJstyUwuYSJSruXNa86TcnuXkN4CQIRMORTVdM7jKkaArLWEALw_wcB

To add the camera to the client/desk top app press the plus sign where it says add camera

Device UID is 952700025317MWCT
username - Apiary
Password – Solaruk2024!

On the app scan the attached QR code and same login details.

(Editor's note: I found that I had to delete the Reolink App that I already had on my phone and reinstall it. Now working!)



BBKA News

Leigh Sidaway, BBKA General Manager



The BBKA has taken a very active role in promoting bees and beekeeping to young people and one of the highlights of these efforts is the annual International Meeting of Young Beekeepers (IMYB).

The BBKA has supported this event since 2012 sending a team of three young beekeepers to this event held in a different country every year on an expenses paid basis making it available to any eligible young beekeeper.

The IMYB is an amazing life-changing opportunity, but it's not for the shy or faint hearted! On arrival, attendees are split into multi-nation teams where English is unlikely to be the dominant language. They will compete as a team and also as individuals with their points being added up towards a national score. The event includes a mixture of marked beekeeping exercises, team presentations, cultural events and trips to local sites of interest.

This year, for the first time, the IMYB is due to be held outside Europe in Dubai, UAE between the **17th and 21-22nd December 2024** and we are looking to select three keen, young beekeepers aged between 13 and under 18 on the 1st December 2024. They must be residents living within England, hold a British passport with an expiry date greater than June 2025 and be members of a BBKA association or group. They must have at least two years of beekeeping experience and those with a formal BBKA qualification (Junior or Basic certificate) will be favoured. Those chosen will need to display a strong level of self-reliance and confidence.

Led by Team Manager Simon Cavill, the selection day for the BBKA team going to the IMYB in December will be held at the **BBKA HQ, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG** on **Saturday the 29th June 2024 starting at 10:30am** and will last most of the day. We will make our selection of the three successful candidates by the end of the session.

For more information and to register to attend the selection day please email IMYB@bbka.org.uk or contact the BBKA office.

And Finally.....

from Pat Coleman President SESBKA

This is by Virgil (70-19 BCE) as translated by L.P. Wilkinson. An old friend gave me the book and he had a lot to say about bees!

*A site must first be chosen for your bees,
Fixed quarters, unexposed to winds (for wind
Prohibits them from bringing home their food),
Where there are neither sheep nor frisky kids
To trample down the flowers, nor blundering heifer
To dash the dew and bruise the springing grass.*

Some things don't change.