



Newsletter August 2023

Committee members:

Tina Harley (President), Lionel Horler (Chair), Ken Jeanes (Vice Chair), Mat Phillips (Treasurer), Anne Collyer (Secretary), Jane Jeanes (SBKA Delegate), Tony Johnstone (Events Secretary), Jeremy Lee (Apiary Manager), Guy Clothier, Dennis White and John Wood

Welcome to our August Newsletter. We were very lucky with the weather for the Annual Bee



Safari and all who came along thoroughly enjoyed the day.

Thank you to Tony for the organisation, Geoff Blay for leading the day, Simon for his excellent talk about planting for wildlife and Jeremy, James, John and Brian for hosting.

A special thank you also goes out to Brenda for the

magnificent spread at teatime. Goeff has kindly

summarised the main points discussed later in the newsletter,

This month's issue contains details regarding Asian Hornets, some exciting news regarding apiary sites available as well as our regular features. I will send the schedule and entry form



for our **Honey Show** in October separately. There are classes for everyone so please come along and have a go. As well as an additional novice class, we have reintroduced the homemade fudge class and amended the rules so that the wax used in the handicraft section can be from any source which should open this section up to more people. There will again be the opportunity for members who enter the show to sell their honey and wax products to the public with a 10% commission going to Division funds.

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, Divisional Secretary SESBKA

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

Apiary Sites

Are you looking for somewhere to site your hives? We are very fortunate to have been offered some sites for any of our members to keep their bees.

Wincanton Racecourse are offering a site with unlimited vehicle access (other than racedays) free of charge. We have one member who plans to move there early next year but there is plenty of space or one or two more to join them. Maybe a beginner looking to start but doesn't have a suitable space at home? Or someone looking to expand their beekeeping enterprise? The area is away from public and surrounded by mature trees and hedges with a water point nearby. The apiary site will also be fenced. For further details please contact Anne at amcollyer838@gmail.com

Sites have also been offered by:

Dianne Pitman dianebspitman@yahoo.co.uk 07968988297 Templecombe. Sheltered area by stream on small holding with sheep.

Ed White, Clanville Manor Farm, Castle Cary 07729 811236. 160 acre farm so plenty of space!

Dan from Galhampton - please contact Lionel Horler for details



The SESBKA WhatsApp Group is an ideal tool for members to get answers to questions quickly, pass on information etc.

There are lots of ways to join the group – you can either: -

email amcollyer838@gmail.com

or text/WhatsApp 07803 243643 with your permission to use your mobile number.

or follow this link - <https://chat.whatsapp.com/EbXWeR1giKw9ourCKJR8t5>

or scan the QR code

Lionel's August Bee Notes

For further information please contact Lionel: email lhorler934@talktalk.net

Unfortunately, Tony had to make the difficult decision to postpone the bee safari on the 15/7, a correct choice as it turned out with the strong winds and rain. Let's hope for better conditions on the new date of 29/7. Of course, by the time you read this we will know the answer.

We have two dates to remember in August, first the apiary visit to Pippa & Kevin Shillington's Apiary and then the 'Fun in the Field Day' event where we will have our usual stand promoting bees to the public.

I am still getting reports of young queens having been in lay a short time, just stopping laying and being replaced. I do think this is connected to the extreme weather conditions for the past two years. I have heard the same problem of low fertility in horses and dogs this year. Is there a connection?

Apart from the problem with queens, my bees are producing a good amount of honey which is pleasing. With conversations around the division several people are reporting bad tempered bees. This is a problem which needs to be sorted out as beekeeping should be a relaxing hobby which it is if the bees are calm and do not get excited when you open the hive. There are things you can do to solve the problem, re-queening etc, but the first question to ask is, are you being calm, not rushing, and not rolling the bees against one another as you remove the frames inspect them and then replace them? Here endeth the lesson!

I note that an Asian Hornet has been identified in Plymouth and today a suspected sighting reported near Frome. This second one is a bit close to us so we must heed the warning and set our traps and keep a look out around our hives. Don't forget, use the AH app on your phone to report any sighting to the NBU. Please see the BBKA update later in this newsletter for further information.

If you have not got a trap or bait then please contact Lionel who will be able to help you.

Top Hive Adventure part 2

Richard Brain



I looked at the bees last week and the photo shows one of several frames which are full of sealed honey. I have now put a crown board on half the hive to discourage them from building on the roof. The second one will be constructed in due course.

I have put more empty frames in so they now have the maximum that the hive will take.

There is definitely a problem with overcrowding but I trust the bees will sort that out for themselves!

2023 Programme Update

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

After all the trials and tribulations of getting our colonies to this point in the year we can now look forward to harvesting and extracting the fruits of our hard work and proudly show them off at our Honey Show. But it can only be a successful Show if we all enter something. Therefore, we are organising two preparation sessions so we can use the experience of experts to prepare our entries, one for Wax Products will be on 7th. September, the other for Honey will be on a date to be announced. Please join in and make this year's show the best yet and give the judges a hard time.

Saturday 12th August @ 2.30pm An Apiary Visit to Pippa & Kevin Shillington's Apiary, Quarr Farm, Quarr, Gillingham, Dorset, SP8 5PA.

Directions: Located south of the A303, off the B3081 Wincanton – Gillingham road. From Wincanton, go up the High Street, through Bayford, past the Hunters' Inn on the left where you join the B3081 then right under the A303 towards Gillingham. Half a mile from the A303 with 'SLOW' on the road, fork right up a narrow lane (sign: not suitable for HGVs). After 2 miles, 'SLOW' on road, & 'Road Narrows' sign part hidden in hedge, and small 'Dorset' sign on right, **Quarr Farm** is second house on right, on a narrow right-hand bend, with entrance just past the house on the right.

If coming on the A371 from Castle Cary, join the A303 eastbound and go off onto the B3081 at next junction, then left and left under the A303 towards Gillingham, and as above.

Pippa and Kevin are long standing beekeepers who have a selection of different hives- Top Bar, Warres, & Skep as well as Nationals. Their theme will be "Alternative Ways of Beekeeping" which will be really interesting and informative. **Please let me know that you are attending please**

Sunday 27th August. 12.00pm to 6.00pm (Set-up 10.45am) Fun-In-The-Field, Fairfield's, Castle Cary

A fun day for all the family, organised by local organisations and charities, to raise funds for the benefit of local charities, including ourselves.

This is the third very successful event where again we can take our gazebo, and fulfil our obligation to promote beekeeping, and also, sell our honey.

Two teams of volunteers needed please. One to set up and one to pack-up. Please make the effort to help and let me know you will be there, if only for a few hours- thank you.

Thursday 7th September @ 7.00pm "Our Honey Show" Refresher Day

At The Market House Castle Cary, A practical Beeswax Session with Bridget Knutson.

For beginners and less experience beekeepers entering the honey show may be intimidating, so our aim is to offer support to everybody. We want as many entries as possible and fill up the market House. The Division will provide Beeswax so that you can make your own cosmetics, polishes and flowers. We all had fun making these during the two sessions with Bridget so now let's do the real thing.

Saturday 14th October

At The Market House Castle Cary, The SESBKA Honey Show With set-up on Friday 13th

Thursday 16th November @ 7.00pm At The Market House Castle Cary The SESBKA Annual General Meeting

News from the Apiary

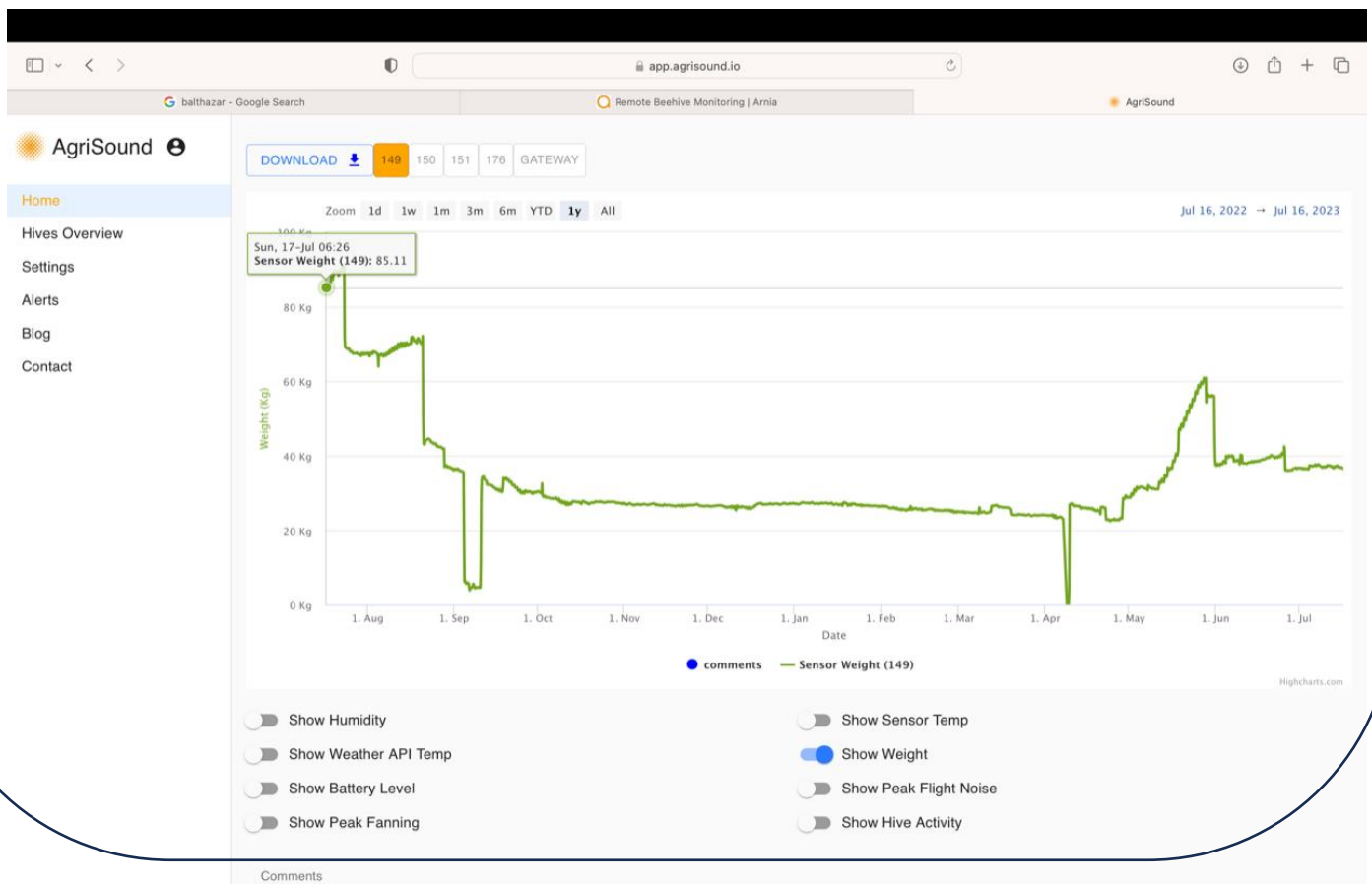
Jeremy Lee, Apiary Manager

If you can offer any help at the apiary at any time then please contact Jeremy at jgwlee@me.com or via the WhatsApp group

I was chatting with Geoff on Saturday prior to everyone's arrival at the apiary and commented on what a funny year it had been. His reply was "when is not a funny year beekeeping wise". This time last year we had seen the hottest July day on record and indeed the whole month had been roasting. I looked back at the weights of my hives for the same period last year and on the 17th of July they registered 85 kilos and were still rising. This year, after one of the wettest July's on record, they are some 50 kilos lighter and not going anywhere. The blackberry flowers are mostly passed and with that I fear the chance of any surplus honey. Indeed, whilst inspecting a couple of hives on Saturday, it was plain to see that the stores are rather thin and they will need feeding to get them through the winter.

I popped down last evening to feed some of the hives once the rain had stopped and was delighted to find a pair of hares grazing on the lovely green grass behind the apiary wire, watched enviously by the sheep who have only the rough, chewy stuff under the panels.

It was nice to be able to show other members what has been happening down at the apiary and good to pick Geoff's brains. The idea of running double brood boxes on all the colonies makes perfect sense and should buy us some extra time should they build up at the same speed as this year. It should also make sharing resources (frames of eggs/queen cells) with other members easier. Colonies suddenly becoming queenless for no reason seems to be a common trait amongst many of us and this is when a divisional apiary should come into its own.



Notes from Bee Safari – Geoff Blay

It might be useful to just be reminded of a few key points from the Safari...

1. Hive handling and the importance of preparation for inspections allied with gentleness and smoothness.
2. The reasons for inspecting at this time of year - stores to sustain until winter feeding, queen and colony status for overwintering, available brood space/frames, use of clearer boards and so on....
3. Safe lifting - lengthen, strengthen, use your legs, weight close to your body, use of stands to keep working at safe height etc
4. Clipping and marking - a good insurance policy that provides flexibility to accommodate poor weather conditions
5. Queen mating problems
6. The problem of wasps.

.....that's a lot of info. However, members can refer to Geoff's recent articles in beecraft to remind themselves on a lot of these subjects.



Baked Pear and Honey Tart

A James Martin Recipe



400 gm shortcrust pastry
8 pears
Caster sugar to taste
20gm butter plus extra for greasing
4 medium egg yolks
1 medium whole egg
1 tbsp clear honey
600ml double cream

Pre-heat oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas mark 4. Lightly grease a 24cm loose-bottomed tart tin.

Roll out the pastry into a circle 3mm thick and slightly wider than the tin. Line the tin leaving 2.5cm pastry overhanging the edge. Chill for 10 minutes.

Bake blind for about 10 minutes, then remove the greaseproof paper and bake for a further 5 minutes. Trim off the overhanging pastry edge level with the top of the tin.

Reduce the oven temperature to 170°C/325°F/Gas mark 3

Peel, core and slice 6 of the pears and place in a pan with 1 tbsp of water. Cook gently over a medium heat for about 5-10 minutes until soft. Sweeten with sugar to taste and drain through a sieve to remove any excess liquid and beat to a pulp.

Peel and core the remaining two pears and cut into neat 6mm slices. Fry gently in the butter until softened and lightly coloured.

Place the pear puree in the bottom of the case and overlap the pear slices on top.

In a bowl, beat together the egg yolks, whole egg and honey then whisk the double cream into the mix. Pour over the pears and bake for 30 minutes until the mixture has set and is golden brown.

BBKA Update Asian Hornet

As you may be aware there have been several sightings of Asian Hornets around the country and already two nests have been destroyed.

You can see the map of reported sightings here:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1BGAdYHalszxPKWrjX8dASHpU8mN-2HV&usp=sharing>

Instructions for the NBU monitoring trap are available

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/faqs/how-to-make-an-asian-hornet-trap>

and it might be useful if every beekeeper makes and observes a monitoring trap and observes what gets caught.

Kind regards

Diane Drinkwater, BBKA Chair

Join the BBKA Asian Hornet WhatsApp Community



Get the latest Asian hornet news stories, sent straight to your WhatsApp on your computer or smart phone - all you need to do is click the link below

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/KtHEKzoayn46VwwK0isFco>



Dear Beekeeper,

BIBBA Conference Early Bird rate extended by two weeks

bibba.com/conference-2023

We have been requested by a number of divisions to extend the early-bird rate as they had not had a chance to get the message out to all their members, due to holidays. We have therefore extended the rate until 31st July.

The BIBBA conference, Supporting Practical Beekeeping, is not to be missed with:

- Two Amazing Streams with leading speakers on practical topics:
“Early Years” and “Later Years”
- Real interactive format with panels and Q&A sessions, so you get a chance to ask your questions and drill down into the issues
- Two full days of key presentations on how BIBBA can support your practical beekeeping
 - o All the latest, key issues and lots of new ideas covered including:
 - o Varroa resistance
 - o Getting the best from locally adapted bees
 - o Small-scale commercial beekeeping (for all beekeepers with outlets)
 - o Beekeeping on a budget
 - o Beekeeping with a full-time job
- Arrive early on the Friday for city tour and evening presentation and fun quiz

Great value accommodation and dinners taking place on 2nd and 3rd September 2023 in Carmarthen, Wales.

Click the link above to book yourself a weekend away in lovely Wales, and enjoy great speakers and a conference with a real difference, where you get to ask the questions you always wanted to ask the experts.

Best regards

Roger Patterson, education@bibba.com. 14th July 2023