



YEOVIL BEE NEWS

June 2018

Welcome to the newsletter of the Yeovil & District Division of the, Somerset Beekeepers' Association. See also our website: www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

**Next Meeting – Apiary Meeting
"Bee Health & Breeding Selection"
lead by Roger Patterson
2:30pm Saturday 16th June
at Andrew Cooke's Apiary**

Roger will start by discussing how to recognise healthy brood, then if something looks wrong investigate what that might be. Some beekeepers are paranoid about disease, but Roger believes recognition and knowing what to do are very important. There will be plenty of general beekeeping too!

Roger has been keeping bees since 1963, keeping 130 colonies at one stage. He currently keeps around 25 colonies and is Apiary Manager of his BKA where there are usually in excess of 30 colonies for tuition.

He is a practical beekeeper, not scientific and through observation he can tell beekeepers what bees have told him, not recycled from books or the screen!

So you can expect a hands-on practical demonstration.

As always, there will be the opportunity for novices and beginners to inspect a colony separately if there is a big crowd.

Directions

Andrew's apiary is near Chetnole.

Full detailed directions are on the next page.

Directions to the June Apiary Meeting

From Yeovil take the A37 towards Dorchester after about 5 miles, you will pass the Rest and Welcome pub on your left, drive over the hill and take the next left turn signposted towards Chetnole/Stockwood. If you are driving on a three lane road you have driven too far!! Follow this road all the way along, driving over the railway bridge. Once you reach a T-Junction turn left. Follow the road for half a mile and just before the pub (Chetnole Inn), turn right, leaving the pub to your left hand side and church to the right. You are now in Chetnole! Drive straight on, following the road around two bends, up a slight hill and Park House Farm is on the right hand side. Please use the first entrance (white stone drive) where there should be sufficient room to park. There are sheltered areas where we can shelter and talk if the elements are against us.

Alternatively, you can always use your sat nav – the post code for the property is DT9 6HH and should take you right to the farm!!!!If anyone has any issues finding the Apiary they are welcome to call me on my mobile (07912069001).

May Meeting Report: Stuart Gould at Marvin Collin's Apiary

An absolutely glorious sunny Saturday afternoon at our Vice Chairman's out-apiary (near Montecute) adjacent to several fields of various cider apple blossom, whereby Mr Stewart Gould talked about swarming and their control. Marvin had deliberately not gone through his hives, even though he had been away for the week previously, so 'lets see the bees as they are'.

The bees obviously had a premonition that they were about to be inspected as just before the actual apiary visit, whilst setting up the equipment, one colony swarmed into a nearby tree – and duly returned back to the same colony! Stewart explained what was probably going on with that particular colony and mutually decided, with Marvin, to leave that one alone. Stewart talked about Snelgrove board and its uses in order to merge a swarming colony which was interesting. Stewart suggested that (like many items of bee equipment) alternative homemade apparatus works just as well, and considerably cheaper.

Stewart carefully removed the first roof to discover a brood and a half with the bees perfectly calm. He asked whether everyone had experience of bees and one member was recently on the beginner's course and did not have any bees (so far), consequently Stewart tailored his approach by explaining each frame as he went. Various play cups (removed by Marvin as they were his bees), brood, eggs and stores were all discussed. Eventually the (unmarked) queen was found and clipped and marked. The rather large colony had a lovely queen cell fully charged and put that into a poly Nuc. Along with another two frames of mixed brood, eggs and stores. Another two frames from the original colony were shaken in and the Nuc repositioned (with a grass plug) elsewhere within the apiary. The bees remained beautifully calm throughout. Stewart spoke about marking any frames that had queen cells using a drawing pin utilizing a home-made magnetic copper tube to securely hold, place and retrieve a drawing pin locating the queen cell on the top bar of the frame; very interesting and useful idea.

On consensus, Stewart went through another large colony (another brood and a half) plus a rather heavy super to find various queen cells, play cups and plenty of bees. The queen was eventually found on the bottom brood box, on the last frame (typically!); she too was unmarked and so was clipped and marked by Marvin using a small pot of red paint and a blade of grass. Some comments were raised regarding beekeepers re-using, recycling and generally making do with cheap alternatives. Once again another prime (sealed) queen cell in the middle of the frame was placed into a second Nuc and artificially swarmed and relocated within the apiary; job done.

The day concluded with sumptuous cakes and light bites care of Mrs Susan Collins and non-alcoholic drinks. We all agreed that despite other minor events (Royal weddings and some sporting activities), it

was a useful and interesting afternoon. Our thanks goes to Stewart Gould for providing a very informative apiary meeting and for Marvin for utilising his out-apiary.

Steve & Marie (Sec)

VICE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS ON THE MEETING

(And Indoor Winter Meetings)

Firstly, I would like to thank Steve and Marie Attrill (our Secretaries), for their assistance at my Apiary Meeting on 19th May, which took place on our 'out apiary'. Steve also assisted our guest, Stuart Gould, with lifting and carrying heavy honey supers etc. which I now find difficult, for which I am grateful.

We were competing on that day with a number of 'events', so I was pleased to have the number of Yeovil Division members who did attend. Nevertheless, there were only two from the Beginners Course, which worried me. The main reason I am commenting is to emphasise to **ALL** our members, in particular new members, that you are most welcome, in fact you have the right to attend all our events, both at a local level, or indeed County events, such as Lecture Days. These are all advertised in advance in our monthly Newsletters. Any Beginners not yet having protective clothing, can borrow items from the Yeovil Division, as we certainly have gloves and veils. You would need to bring a pair of wellies (any colour) and thick trousers, plus a T-shirt, or jumper. 'Hands on experience' is the best way to learn how to handle the bees. As Steve Attrill says 'You will see what goes on inside the hive and whether you can bear to be surrounded by thousands of bees'. Reading books is useful, but please remember that bees cannot read and, to my knowledge, not one bee has read a book. I really don't know how they have survived for millions of years! I'm not being facetious, but we really need your input and to know whether you need bees, or how members can assist in many different ways. We never stop learning about these fascinating insects and we all try to help each other.

Marvin Collins

Vice-Chairman

Coming soon ...

Event	When	Where	Details
Yeovil Honey Show Co-ordination Meeting	Thursday 14th July	The Airfield Tavern, Yeovil	A meeting to organise the tasks for the Show
Divisional Apiary Meeting	Saturday 16th June	Andrew Cooke's Apiary	Roger Patterson leads the apiary meeting
The Yeovil Show & Divisional Honey Show	Sat & Sun 14th/15th July	The Honey Tent in the Yeovil Show Ground	Our divisional honey show and display & demonstration of honey bees
Divisional Apiary Meeting	Saturday 21st July	Nic Bard's apiary at Forde Abbey	Ivor Davis leads the apiary meeting
Divisional Apiary Meeting	Saturday 18th August	Quantock Divisional Apiary	Introduction to the Quantock apiary and some of their bees

From Your Chairman

I got called to my first swarm and on my landline even though the details on the website only give my mobile number! It was at the Fairfield Special School sitting on some play equipment. The children were utterly fascinated and one little lad called Toby was beside himself with ecstasy and apparently he can't go into the classroom he is so disturbed, unless it's got something to do with bugs of some sort.

Derek Richards came with all the Hoovering kit but it wasn't entirely necessary as a box fitted nicely underneath, and giving the seat a smart clobber they dutifully went into the box and we spent the next little while chatting to the children.

The science teacher there is desperate to keep bees with the children and might well come on to the Beginner's course next year.

They have a perfect area for keeping bees but there are all the shenanigans with looking after the bees in the holidays. But we are Yeovil beekeepers and they are in Yeovil and they are special children so I think we probably ought to make the effort but that's in the future.

Successes:

- There I was pottering in the apiary when the hive next door swarmed right up into the highest tree possible. I looked down at the entrance and there was my white clipped Queen sitting on the slab. I could then do artificial swarm and it was intensely satisfying.
- Toby Hawkey, one of my beginners, bought himself two 14 x 12 beehives from David Pearce and a lovely piece of work they are too. Toby is extremely competitive and is an expert fisherman and is rarely beaten in any event. I told him that he should put his 14 x 12 hives 5 foot off the ground and then await a swarm
- I was hoping a wandering swarm might march in if there was some old frame inside. He was extremely sceptical and that's why there is a picture of me jumping up and down with hysterical glee!

(Toby has since attracted another swarm with the other bait hive. Double success! Obviously worthwhile employing some bait hives! Ed)

This Queen clipping device is so simple. Put Queen inside, align with the bars and her wings poke up. Clip one wing. No need to handle her. You can mark her too. Let her run around inside the tube to dry off.





Teams of people led by my sister-in-law have been creeping about at night to sow this on unused council land. Not only is this a panoply of flowers but insects have poured into this haven. Thankfully the Council has discovered that, if they do this all over the city, they save a fortune in roadside maintenance!

Happy Beekeeping!

John Carnegie, Chairman

EFB in the Division

Unfortunately, Malcolm and Sharon have EFB in their Over Stratton Apiary again. Our commiserations go to them and hope that they can keep their Tintinhull Apiary clear.

Also, EFB has been found near two of my apiaries near North Perrott. I do not believe that my apiaries are infected but time will tell. Finger's crossed!

The Over Stratton infection means that the July meeting cannot be held at Malcolm and Sharon's apiary so I have offered my Forde Abbey Apiary for this meeting. (The EFB in the vicinity of my other apiaries should not affect this). Full details will be in the next newsletter so make sure the date of 21st July is in your calendar. It is a good opportunity to have a browse through Forde Abbey and maybe a snack in their cafe before the meeting. Well worth it!

If you are concerned about EFB, please consult with one of our committee members who will be pleased to help. The SBKA web-site has some useful links for EFB. Just paste this into your browser: <https://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/reporting-foulbrood.html>

Divisional Honey Extraction Equipment

The Yeovil Division has some equipment which all members may borrow free of charge:

- Honey extractor; a 9-frame radial extractor. This is looked after by Bill Patterson who can be reached on 07789 693 203.
- A settling tank; usually accompanies the extractor. Also looked after by Bill as above.
- A heated uncapping tray; useful for melting down your cappings and separating the honey or for melting down super comb with set honey which is not removable with the extractor. This is looked after by Nic Bard who can be reached on 07877 284545.

Swarms

I have generated a swarm collectors and requesters table to assist swarm collectors to find an alternative collector and also a home for the swarms.

To assist with this process, we are trialling the BEEWATCH application, funded by Somerset BKA. See below for information on this.

BeeWatch Application to Assist with Swarm Catching

At the recent SBKA Council meeting, budget was approved to trial an exciting new development - using a smartphone app to manage swarm collection. Developed by Bee.Watch, based in Oxford, (www.bee.watch) the app allows members of the public or beekeepers to report a swarm using the SBKA Website. Members with the app who are registered as swarm collectors then receive a notification on their smartphone if they live within 10 miles of the swarm. The app allows swarm collectors to coordinate who is going to collect the swarm, and whether or not collection was successful.

Yeovil Division volunteered to trial this app, and so now all the swarm collectors in Yeovil are equipped. We will use the experience gained to decide whether this is something that we might want to adopt as a county next year, as well as give valuable feedback to the app developers on how to improve the app.

The app doesn't necessarily replace the good old fashioned phone call (at least for now), but it does give us another tool to help coordinate our swarm collection activities at the busiest time of the year for beekeepers.

The Yeovil Show: 14th & 15th July

As I wrote in last month's newsletter, we are again planning to have a "honey" tent in the Yeovil Show where we will show off everything bees as well as some live bee displays. The Show is on Saturday 14th July and Sunday 15th. If you can help :

- On the days before the show to assist with staging the tents and displays
- On the days after the show to assist with taking the displays down and tidying the site
- on one or both of the days by talking to our interested visitors about bees
- or help with selling honey bee products
- or assist with stewarding,

please get in touch with John or Nic as we will be co-ordinating the efforts.

We will be holding regular co-ordination meetings leading up to the show so please come along and see what we are planning and see how you can help (the next one is Thursday 14th June). I will be sending out meeting invitations regularly so come along to any that you can make, but if you cannot make the meetings, do let us know if you can help over the Show weekend as this will assist with the planning.

There will be lots of information in next month's newsletter to help you prepare your show exhibits. I have attached a copy of the Show Schedule and the Rules to this email. Please look through the schedule and select your preferred entries. If you will have difficulty getting your exhibits to the show on the day, just get in touch with me and we will find a way! Your exhibits are important to us!!

2018 Divisional Honey Show

We are planning to stage another Grand Honey Show at the Yeovil Show again this year. Plans are underway and the Bernard Diaper has been invited to perform the judging. See just above for details of the show itself and attached is a preliminary copy of the show entry schedule and rules. Have a look through it and decide what you would like to enter. I am sure there are several classes that you all can enter. So you can start preparing your entries nice and early. We are a fairly "informal" show so no entries will be criticised! You are all encouraged to enter something and start some discussions!

If you have a problem with getting your entry to the show or collecting it afterwards, have a word with one of the committee members and they will provide what assistance they can. ALL your entries are needed to make the show a success.

Asian Hornet Information

Rather than repeat all the information about the Asian Hornet - the pest which we are desperately trying to prevent from getting a foothold in the UK - the SBKA website home page has lots of details to help identify and report sightings. You can access the information here:

<https://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/>

DO keep your eyes open for this pest and if possible, put out a lure to capture any that come your way!

You will also notice that the home page of the SBKA site also has links to all the latest BBKA and NBU news as well as a twitter feed. An excellent place to keep yourself up-to-date with all the latest beekeeping news! Access the link and try it now!

Divisional officers

President	Nic Bard	01460 221698	Treasurer & membership secretary	Sharon Blake	01460 242124
Chairman	John Carnegie	01935 851234	Librarian	Jacqui Taylor	01963 220329
Vice-Chairman	Marvin Collins	01935 426153	Newsletter editor	Nic Bard Nic_bard@hotmail.com	07877 284545
Secretary	Steve & Marie Attrill	01935 475964	Mentor Liaison Officer	Vacant	
Divisional Web-Master	Neil Cook	neil.cook@noware.co.uk	County Delegates	Malcolm Blake Steve Attrill Andy Dobson	

The Yeovil division secretary email address is : yeovilbee@gmail.com.

Please contact any officer with your beekeeping or organisation comments and suggestions.

Please send any suggestions, articles or comments or ideas to share with our other members in the newsletter directly to the editor at nic_bard@hotmail.com.

Full details of our calendar, meetings, news and past newsletters are in the SBKA web-site and can be reached here:

<https://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/yeovil.html>

Yeovil 2017/18 Programme

2018

- 14th June - Yeovil Show Co-ordination Meeting 7:30 at the Airfield Tavern
- 16th June - Roger Patterson leads apiary visit at Andrew Cooke's
- 14th/15th July - The Yeovil Show and our Honey Show!
- 21st July - Ivor Davis leads apiary visit at Nic Bard's Forde Abbey apiary
- 18th August - Visit to Quantock Divisional Apiary
- 18th September - Richard Ball talks about Beekeeping in Malta
- 16th October - Jim Vivian-Griffiths talks about "Dancing Bees"
- 29th October - Joint meeting with SW Division
- 20th November - Divisional AGM
- 1st December - Division Christmas Social skittles evening

2019

- 15th January - Paddy Wallace from Quince Honey farm gives a talk
- 18th or 19th Feb - Lecture Day speaker
- 19th March - Pam Hunter gives a talk

April to August outside apiary meetings start at 2.30pm

Winter indoor meetings start at 7:30pm unless otherwise stated

All indoor meetings next season will be in the Ilchester Pavilion

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