



YEOVIL BEE NEWS

February 2019

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

Next Meeting – Indoor Meeting
Clare Densley talks about
"Pheromone Communication"
7:30pm Tuesday 19th February 2019
at The Ilchester Pavilion

You will all know that the most of the communication in a hive is by pheremones. Whether it is queen communication determining the destiny and mood of the colony, the swarm prompt or the defensive or attack warning. Bees use these pheremones to guide most of their actions and their moods.

Clare will be talking about how these pheremones are produced and distributed as well as the effects they have on the colony. As well as, no doubt, other interesting beekeeping gems!

See the next page for some information on Clare's background (she is one of the speakers at County Lecture Day - though on a differet subject!) and directions to the venue.

Clare Densley

Clare has kept bees since 1992. When in 2008 I got the chance to become an assistant bee keeper at Buckfast Abbey I thought that I had died and gone to heaven. I also worked as a seasonal bee inspector for 2 years alongside looking after the Abbey bees.

In 2010 we cut down the number of hives from 400 to around 30 or so. The honey they produce goes to the monks. We run courses, host visits, run a community apiary, and engage in some modest research. Our philosophy is that of gentle and intelligent beekeeping; understanding the colony as a superorganism and working with them as much as possible.

We don't breed the "Buckfast bee" here anymore. I am happy working with mongrels although we do rear our own queens and run queen rearing courses annually. My ideal bee is more modest than Br Adam's archetypal model. I prefer a more self-sufficient colony which is easy enough to handle but less refined than many of the commercially bred sub species.



Directions

The Ilchester Sports Pavilion is on Roman Road, Ilchester:

Post code BA22 8NW.

To find the Pavilion from the A303; turn onto the A37 at the Ilchester turn off and take the first turning on the right (before Ilchester roundabout). This is Roman Road and the Pavilion is the first building on the left.

From Yeovil; take the A37 North towards Ilchester. Take the first exit at the Ilchester roundabout towards the A303. Take the next left turning left onto Roman Road. The Pavilion is the first building on the left.

January Meeting: Tuesday 15th January

If you have ever visited the Quice Honey Farm, you will have seen the well presented displays about beekeeping and the live colonies you can open up behind the glass windows. Paddy Wallace was one of the founders of the Honey Farm. He is a beekeeper and his talk showed how the farm developed from simple beekeeping, to a simple display and on to the lovely displays they now have including a very popular childrens activity area. They have demonstrated the "Beard of Bees" and he explained how they accomplished it without too much drama; nose plugs are definitely a must and earplugs are useful.... the bee can easily crawl into the ear canal but cannot easily crawl out again so she will spend plenty of time buzzing there. Fortunately, the ear canal is so narrow, she cannot curl-up to sting, so you just need to put up with a lot of buzzing!

Paddy explained how they kept their bees and how their beekeeping principles have changed over the years, especially as his son now does most of the beekeeping and has some new fresh ideas.

They are moving to new premises this spring so a whole new set of displays to view. Well worth a visit and even a return visit to their new shop.

Nic Bard

Yeovil Division Honey Show 2019

The last few years we have been holding our honey show at the Yeovil Show. Unfortunately, the Yeovil Show is taking a year off in 2019 but hopes to return in 2020. The reason for this is that they use the Aldon fields for most of their parking. This year, the ownership of these fields has changed hands so the parking there is unsure and they unwilling to go ahead with this uncertainty. More information about this is at the following link: [Yeovil SHow News](#)

However, we wish to continue with our honey show so your committee will discuss the best way of doing this. It will probably be included with one of our other meetings or AGM, but watch this space and make sure that you keep some products back for the show!

Nic

Winter Beekeeping Reading

The Winter months are very quiet for the beekeeper once all the equipment has been cleaned and stored. So with nothing better to do, it is the best time to increase your knowledge and confidence in beekeeping by reading a little on the subject. You can gain different opinions as well as increasing your knowledge.

The Division has an extensive library of books covering all aspects of beekeeping, suitable for beginners, general beekeeping, microscopy, dissection and many more topics. A full list of books is on the Yeovil Page of the SBKA web-site. Just click the link at the foot of the link-page (below) to see the full list:

[Yeovil Division page](#)

Jacqui looks after the library and will bring a selection of books to all meetings (she can get to!) and can bring any requested book to the meeting or otherwise arrange to get it to you.

You can contact Jacqui on : 01963 220329.

Lecture Day

The SBKA Lecture day is on Saturday 16th February, from 9:00 until 5:00. It is a full day of informative and interesting lectures. Tickets are only £5 which includes refreshments during the day, but bring your own lunch.

It starts at 9:00 and full details are on the SBKA web-site:

<https://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/lectures--workshops.html>

Tickets are now only available on-line at: [eventbrite link](#).

Honey Jars

You will have all seen John's missive about purchasing of discounted honey jars last year. John made the order up to a full pallet with a personal purchase. So he has plenty of extra jars! If you need some jars but missed the original offer, just get in touch with John and see what he has left.

John can be contacted on 01935 851234 or email to killercarnegie@yahoo.co.uk .

Coming soon ...

Event	When	Where	Details
County Lecture Day	Saturday 16th February	Edgar Hall, Somerton	A full day of interesting Bee-themed lectures
Divisional Indoor Meeting	Tuesday 19th February	Ilchester Pavilion	Clare Densley talks about Pheromone Communication
Asian Hornet Action Team Meeting	10:30 Sunday 3rd March	To be decided	To discuss and arrange a Yeovil Action Team
SBKA AGM	Saturday 16th March	Quantock Div, Enmore Park Golf Club	County AGM with guest speaker Chris Park; The Skep Beekeeper
Divisional Indoor Meeting	Tuesday 19th March	Ilchester Pavilion	Pam Hunter gives a talk
Apiary Meeting	Saturday 20th April	Sarah & Mark Hamnett's Apiary	Apiary Meeting
SBKA Special Lecture	Wednesday 24th April	Edgar Hall, Somerton	Graham Royle will be speaking on the subject of Disease Recognition and his experience of dealing with EFB

From Your Chairman

Hi Busy Bee People,

I hope you have had a very good Christmas and are now leaping into gear ready for your bees to flourish. Personally, I am absolutely besieged by rape fields so I need to get our bees up to speed in short order. If the rape is the right type it is ideal for the bees to pull out foundation if they are strong enough. I hope you have all read the BBKA news where there is a very good article on how to build up your colonies ready for Spring.

You should also be in your shed making up your smoker cartridges, repairing your frames and whatever else it is you need to do so you don't have to scabble in early Spring.

We are extremely worried down at Bindwell where we have wasps still going in and out of our hives and they are not Queens so the suggestion is one of these wasps nests has survived the winter. At my age I am extremely sceptical and so was my friend Bill until he went down and saw for himself.

I was very heartened to go on YouTube and see a wonderful way of destroying a nest of Asian hornets. If you have dogs like me you have the perfect insecticide and this is what we are going to do to Asian hornets and probably to wasps if necessary. Mix up egg yolk with the potent insecticide that you put on the back of a dog's neck. Capture a few of the offending insects and subdue them down in your pot or whatever you have got with something like carbon dioxide or in my case a mild dose of killing fluid or a dose of acetone. In the olden days we used to use crushed laurel leaves so that might work. Anyway, what you do is capture the offending insects and subdue them, then press them down one at a time with a gloved finger and with the other hand paint the egg mixture on their abdomen. Put them somewhere where they will recover and let them fly home where they will be welcomed by the others who will lick off the egg and spread it all through the hive as excellent protein and that deals with them. I'm terribly excited at the thought and before people join the flood of complainants about insecticide just think of the farmers killing every insect in their fields, the Asian hornets eating every insect not just honeybees, and what do you think the people who destroy Asian hornet nests use?

I am not dismayed at the thought of Asian hornets or even wasps anymore because I have the way to destroy them. I have always been a maverick and I love the idea of doing this!

In addition to the above I am planning to break a monster hive up into the clock formation with a queen cell in each nucleus. It is my intention to populate all my colonies with lovely new queens and then I will hardly have to look at them for the rest of the year and just super them up! Well, Confucius said, 'Personal plans make good soup.'

I have determined that I need a focus in life and I'm going to devote myself to the erection of two plastic sheds but we have bought from the profit of selling honey this year.

Lastly, may I wish you a really good 2019. I have a very lively bunch of prospective new beekeepers in my classes which is very exciting and I'm sending them little snippets of information once a week just to bolster their knowledge. I have already been in contact with Bill Paterson who is going to coordinate mentors for those that live in Yeovil. At some time, I will be showing them the two videos which show Steven's apiary and also slides of the one that Mike Stafford has. There is a perception amongst the beginners that bees might be a pest in a garden and of course that is far from the truth if they are happy, because after all there are lots of feral colonies around even if the BBKA says there are not!

John Carnegie,

Chairman

Subscriptions for 2019 are now overdue

Subscriptions for 2019 are now overdue. The cost remains the same as last year, £32 for a full member, to include BDI cover for three colonies. This is £19 for BBKA, £5.50 for SBKA, £2 for BDI, £2 to the research fund and £3.50 for Yeovil Division. If you have more than three colonies you will need to add the following amount for BDI cover:

Total number of colonies:	up to 3	nil
	up to 5	£2.00
	up to 10	£5.25
	up to 15	£7.75
	up to 20	£9.50
	up to 25	£11.10
	up to 30	£13.60
	up to 35	£16.10
	up to 39	£18.10

The cost for Partner members is £23.50 and Associate members £6.

Any queries about this please phone Sharon Blake on 01460 242124

The membership form for 2019 is attached to this email. Please complete and send your subscription by post please, making your cheque payable to:

"SBKA Yeovil Division"

and send it to:

Mrs Sharon Blake, Stratton Court, Over Stratton, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5LQ

Sharon Blake

Membership Secretary and Treasurer

Asian Hornet Action Team

Our thoughts are now beginning to turn towards the season to come, and that includes thinking about our bees and of course hornets. As the days get longer and the temperature rises to a consistent 10-12°C, any Asian hornet queens that have overwintered in the UK will start to emerge. So we need to be ready and armed with traps. Queens will be seeking nectar and sweet substances to rebuild their strength, so traps can be positioned where queens might emerge - near trees, wood piles etc, and along hedge lines. The advice is to encourage members to start making traps. You can use the NBU instructions or these French designs that look easier to make, and which try to overcome the problems of trapping too many other insects.



I am still looking for a few people to join me to make an Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT) for Yeovil . Details from the last news letter are here:

"I recently represented Yeovil Beekeepers at a meeting to discuss Asian Hornet Action Teams (AHAT). You will be aware that there have been a number of sightings this year in the UK and Asian hornet nests have been destroyed. Next year there will certainly be more, but what can we do?

As there are more confirmed sightings, it will become increasingly difficult for the Bee Inspectors to attend all these sightings. AHAT can work to help them by triangulating where the nest is located, but this needs a team if it is to be achievable. I emphasise that this is to locate a nest, professional pest controllers will be called in by NBU to deal with the destruction of the nest.

So if you think you would be interested in helping with this task in the Yeovil area, the next meeting is on Sunday 3 March 2019 at 10.30. Venue to be confirmed but it will be somewhere central for all of the Somerset BKA divisions.

Please do let me know if you can give some time to this. sbeditor@yahoo.co.uk .

(continued overleaf)

And now a few interesting facts about Asian hornets:

- Early in the year they like to feed on camellias.
- They migrate in spring and can travel up to 40 km each day.
- The nests start as embryo nests in a loft, shed or similar. They then relocate to a secondary nest which is usually high up.
- The life cycle from the egg being laid to emerging is between 30 and 40 days.
- The population of the average nest is about 6,000 but nests with 15,000 have been found.
- In the autumn the mature nest will contain up to 350 new queens (compared to the one queen in a honey bee colony) and 900 drones. Not all of these new queens will survive the forthcoming winter.
- The nests are extremely well insulated so difficult to find with heat seeking equipment.

So a few facts to give you something to think about. Please let me know if you can come to the meeting on 3 March 2019 to learn more about tracking Asian hornets to locate their nest."

Sharon Blake

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	Neil Cook	07747 012545	Newsletter editor	Nic Bard	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 2019/20 Programme

2019

- 19th Feb** - Lecture Day speaker; Clare Densley talks about Pheromone Communication
- 19th March** - Pam Hunter gives a talk
- 20th April** - Apiary Meeting at Sara & Mark Hamnett's Apiary
- 18th May** - Apiary Meeting at John Carnegie's Bindwell Lane Apiary; Kevin Pope demonstrating
- 15th June** - Apiary Meeting; Somerset Cider Brandy Company and Burrow Hill Cider
- 13th July** - Apiary Meeting at Toffer Beaty's Apiary; Stuart Gould demonstrating
- 17 August** - Apiary Meeting at Marvin Collin's Apiary; Simon Jones demonstrating
- 17th September** - Andy Willis talks about "The Bee's Eye View of Beekeeping"
- 15th October** - Michael Keith Lucas gives a talk
- 29th August** - Joint meeting with SW division at Over Stratton
- 19th November** - Divisional AGM
- 3rd December** - Christmas social evening

April to August outside apiary meetings start at 2.30pm

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

Unless otherwise stated, all indoor meetings next season will be in the Ilchester Pavilion.

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