



YEOVIL BEE NEWS

June 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 – Apiary Meeting

"The Cider Brandy Story"

2:30pm Saturday 15th June

at Somerset Cider Brandy Co., Kingsbury Episcopi

Our June meeting takes us away from the apiary for a nice change of scene. We have been invited to The Cider Brandy Company for a talk (with samples) by Julian Temperley. It is on 15th June at 2:30. There is an entry fee of £5 per head, payable on the day.

Julian Temperley worked at a farm in Africa before he was 20, a nice, fun, romantic time. He wanted to be a farmer and came back to England. He had a great aunt who died, and in the process, he ended up with the first 5 acres and gradually came here [Pass Vale Farm], which is 20 acres. Now there are 250 acres, mostly of orchard.

Julian is an outspoken character and an entertaining speaker (especially after a little cider tasting ...). The meeting is an interesting alternative to beekeeping and a relaxing afternoon!

You will find the venue at:

The Somerset Cider Brandy Company and Burrow Hill Cider, 1 Burrow Way,
Pass Vale Farm, Kingsbury Episcopi, Martock, Somerset. TA12 6BU

The Post Code only takes you to the right area. Try entering "Somerset Cider Brandy" into Google maps to find the entrance to the farm.

May Apiary Meeting Report

There was an excellent turnout at John Carnegie's apiary with a good mixture of beginners and old hands, all of who were treated to an incredibly interesting demonstration by Kevin Pope.

Kevin, a Seasonal Bee Inspector for Dorset, started with a statement to John that he may not like him after the demonstration as he was about to tell us everything that was wrong with John's bees.

Kevin went through one of John's hives, a 14 x 12 with a national on top, that had more or less been left to its own devices for a couple of years (a good one for a bee inspector to pull apart!).

Kevin started by demonstrating how to look for the small hive beetle. He opened the hive up and after giving a smoke removed the brood box from the floor checking the floor for small hive beetle which would have moved to the floor since they like the dark.

Kevin then checked both brood boxes and found various issues. He was able to show that there was some chalk brood, a fungal infection. He also found some sac brood, a viral infection which has the appearance of a turned up slipper.

John stated that he had not given this hive any Varroa treatment for 3 years, and although Kevin saw evidence of drones that had died in pupation due to stress from Varroa (proboscis sticking out) he found very few Varroa mites in the hive.

Kevin also checked for evidence of foul brood but thankfully found none.

Kevin passed all the examples of what he found around the audience along with a frame of nice healthy brood so that everyone had a good look at what they should be looking for when carrying out their inspections.

Kevin's overall opinion of the hive was that they were incredibly gentle bees with lots of honey in the supers and in reasonable health, but could do with a Varroa treatment.



After the meeting, for those who could, it was back to the village hall for a cup of tea and a slice of cake. A totally enjoyable afternoon.

Kevin has also said that he would be happy to give a talk at one of our winter meetings, so watch this space as if he does it would definitely be one for the diary.

(Ed: note the clock pattern in the apiary picture.)

Bill Patterson

Swarms

Swarming is definitely underway! Swarming started early this year with the first reported swarm on the 1st April and still going strong even now! The swarm lists appear to be working within the Division. Let me know if it is not working for you and let me know how the system can be improved next time.

Don't forget to notify me if you are prepared to gather any swarms or if you want some swarms and can assist.

Nic

Coming soon ...

Event	When	Where	Details
Read the Comb Day	Saturday 15th June	Ansford Academy, Castle Cary	A day covering identification and treatment of pests and diseases in the hive. Full details at: https://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/lectures--workshops.html
Social meeting	Saturday 15th June	Somerset Cider Brandy Co. Burrow Hill Cider	Julian Temperley talks about his exploits at the cider company.
Apiary meeting	Saturday 13th July	Toffer Beattie's Apiary	Stuart Gould demonstrates
Apiary meeting	Saturday 17th August	Marvin Collin's Apiary	Simon Jones demonstrating

Honey Labelling

Some of our new members will be extracting their first honey crop and wondering how it should be bottled and labelled. Here is a simple guide (which is not intended to be a legal definition of the requirements - editors disclaimer!)

If you are selling or giving away your honey to members of the public (someone not known to you), it must be labelled correctly. Labelling has some well defined requirements that are met by the commercially available labels. As a guide the following should be included:

- Description of the contents: HONEY!
- Country of origin: ENGLAND
- Ideally, any characteristics; e.g. County, area or source of the honey (e.g. OSR)

- Weight in grams (and optionally in ounces but in smaller letters)
- Identification of the producer; Name and address/postcode/telephone number
- Batch number: unique identifier of batches
- Best before date: a bit academic for honey but nevertheless mandatory

The labels should be reasonably damp-proof; inkjet labels are easily smudged to unreadable by moisture, unlike laser printed labels.

And your jars should contain the minimum weight shown on the label!

Tamper-proof stickers from the lid to under the label prevent your honey being tampered with or contaminated.

This is only a general unofficial guide. There is a more comprehensive guide available from the BBKA web-site. It should be attached to your newsletter email.

Nic

Chairman's Message

Oilseed rape has been out of this world in our area and we have had a huge crop. Taylor Caldwell wrote a very good book on this subject. Several things stick in my mind and the most important one is that commercial beekeepers don't bother to extract it and wait until the end of the season whereupon they mash it up, because the cost of beeswax is much more valuable than the honey - about five times as much. It certainly has been proved that if you have brand-new foundation and the bees pull it out and store rape therein, it will last for about a month before solidifying. Nonetheless, we have had useless comb in the past and we even threw a swarm into a National that was full of last year's solidified crop and it's been very interesting to see them throwing out crystallised honey because they need room for the Queen to lay in. Lastly on the subject, he says that it is useless for honeybees to use in the winter months as they need a lot of water to deal with it.

Yet again we've had a June gap of sorts but it is very brief this time but it has been very interesting to watch honeybees on laurels and getting honey from the extra floral nectaries.

I must say that I'm very pleased the oilseed rape is over we can now settle down to the rest of the year without having to worry. Do remember that we will be having a show later in the year so get planning. My soft set honey should sweep the board!

A funny thing happened while they were checking my colon and pumping, carbon dioxide you know where. Having discussed the tree that was above in the lighting scheme the conversation drifted into beekeeping whereupon the operator said that his wife was most keen on beekeeping and indeed she has been down to a number of our meetings! Small world!

**John Carnegie,
Chairman**

Paul Edwards

It is with sadness that I have to report that Paul Edwards, one of our past members, passed away on 13th April. Both he and his wife, Paula, were active members of Yeovil Beekeepers as well as West Dorset Beekeepers.

Nic

Asian Hornets

Lynne Ingram has sent the following Asian Hornet update:

These pictures are embryonic Asian Hornet nests - they do get (a lot) bigger throughout the season!

Well, hornet spotting season is upon us and in Jersey over 60 queens and embryo nests have been found already.

It is well worth encouraging people to search out these tiny nests as it is much easier to deal with one of those than a huge nest later on. These photos taken in Jersey show the size that they can be. They can also be in random places - one being found attached to a bundle of garden canes in an allotment shed. As they are so similar to a wasp nest it is worth spending some time observing the nest to see which insect returns to it. You may need to be patient and sit there for a while - maybe with a cup of tea!

Reports have started coming in about various hornet like insects. One photo that was sent in a few weeks ago was a very dark European hornet, and another dark hornet is about to be checked out. I had wondered whether there was a melanistic European hornet, and have managed to find a photo tonight. Although the melanistic V Crabro is very dark, it does not have the distinctive yellow legs or yellow abdominal band of *V. velutina*, and has a yellow 'headband' and dark legs. It is well worth being aware of these as members of the public may be convinced that it is an Asian hornet - as this tweet confirms.

<https://twitter.com/apiculturalldn/status/781838643090558976>

If in doubt however check it out! Put out a bait station with some Suterra. Leave for a while so the hornet finds the bait, then sit and observe - and take photos!

Do take the opportunity of having a presence at any flower shows or fairs in your vicinity - and give out plenty of posters and fliers. Local primary schools are good to engage with too. Children are just so observant.

Lynne Ingram



Bees Need Water

Our bees do need water in all seasons, from Winter through to Summer and back to Winter. You should make sure that there is a source of water close to your colonies so that the bees do not need to fly far to drink, especially on a cold Winter day.



I was reminded of their thirst by seeing them visit our bird-bath a dozen at a time. They do disperse when the birds bathe and they get showered. But if the birds are just drinking, they will join in!

Nic

Cheques

The bank have advised me that they are changing the rules about acceptance of cheques; this will be introduced later this year. Going forward can all cheques for Yeovil division be made payable to Somerset Beekeepers' Association, Yeovil Division. A bit of a mouthful, but the bank will stop accepting cheques where the payee does not match the name on the account, so SBKA Yeovil Division will cease to be acceptable to them.

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	Claire Puckett	07887 856680
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

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| 15th June | - Social Meeting; Somerset Cider Brandy Company and Burrow Hill Cider |
| 13th July | - Apiary Meeting at Toffer Beattie'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 October | - Joint meeting with SW division at Over Stratton - Andrew Durham talks about "The French Experience" with the Asian Hornet |
| 19th November | - Divisional AGM and Honey Show |
| 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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