



# ***YEOVIL BEE NEWS***

## ***September 2019***

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

**Next Meeting – Indoor Meeting**  
**At Ilchester Pavilion**  
**7:30pm, Tuesday 17th September**  
**Andy Willis talks about**  
**"A Bee's-eye view of Beekeeping"**

Andy is a very experienced beekeeper (see the following page) as well as an experienced speaker. He has given many talks around the Country, at the Somerset Lecture Day as well as to our Division in the past. So you can expect a well researched and presented talk to start our Winter Season of meetings

The meeting will be in the Ilchester Pavilion

Directions:

The Ilchester Sports Pavilion is on Roman Road, Ilchester:  
Post code BA22 8NW.

To find the Pavillion 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.

## Andy Willis Beekeeping Experience

Andy started bee keeping 25 years ago this last April, when he took a new job looking after a 5 acre garden and Manor House in South Lincolnshire. In the garden was a small orchard and in the orchard were 8 national beehives, all surrounded by fields of oilseed rape and field beans.

“The learning curve that first year was vertical, but you do learn by your mistakes. I was essentially self taught with the help of a book written by Ron Brown and a beekeeper in the next village who had retired from beekeeping after 60 years.”

In his fourth year of bee keeping Andy started with 11 queen right colonies (with a summer high of 23 hives ) and harvested 2,500 lb of honey, all oilseed rape or rape contaminated.

He relocated back to Southampton 21 years ago and took one colony with him. He multiplied this just as varroa struck that first summer back in Southampton. Two of the three colonies survived when 75% of all honey bees that summer were killed by varroa, his were saved only by prompt treatment in mid summer.

Andy continued working full time as a gardener with beekeeping as a hobby until he was hospitalised with a severe illness at the end of 2003. He had to stop work due to poor health in 2004 after the severe illness, which has left him with lung damage, and 20 years of gardening resulted in a bad back.

This gave Andy more time for bee keeping and allowed him to exhibit honey and wax at shows. He currently holds 12 blue ribbon awards (the first was awarded in 2007) and has won trophies every year at the National Honey Show since 2010.

Andy currently has 24 hives of bees on 3 sites.

## August Visit to John Carnegie's Apiary

As Marvin's apiary was waterlogged due to the torrential rain we had before the meeting, we were kindly invited to visit to John's apiary instead. We didn't have quite the talk about preparing for winter but we learned how to prepare a hive for moving to another site. John had kept a hive in his apiary for Mary Banks which was ready to go to its more permanent home. It was interesting to see this preparation which means making sure that the bees are unable to escape during the move! John put a cover in place of the crown board, blocked the entrance and strapped the whole hive with a ratchet strap. Apparently, if possible, it is best to use a strap which has a different closure as the bees don't like the ratchet noise!

We then looked at a couple of hives to see if they would last the winter. There was a discussion about the type of sugar used to make the sugar water feed. Ordinary granulated sugar goes mouldy after a while and John recommended the use of inverted sugar. Malcolm Blake said that he had heard using thymol would reduce the problem. We will have to experiment, or run a trial to see which is best!

The well attended meeting included two young people: Emily Flint who is working towards her silver Duke of Edinburgh award and Stanley Pretty who is only eight. Emily and her mum, Cherie are going to start beekeeping with John's help; whilst Stan is the son of my friend Emma, who was also there. Stan went on a school trip and has become interested in bees. John, ever the teacher, got him to help inspect the hive.

We all adjourned to Queen Camel village hall for tea.

**Jo Dawson**

## Coming soon ...

Event	When	Where	Details
Indoor Meeting	Tuesday 17th September	Ilchester Pavilion	Andy Willis talks about "The Bee's Eye View of Beekeeping"
Indoor Meeting	Tuesday 15th October	Ilchester Pavilion	TBD
Indoor Joint Meeting	Tuesday 29th October	Over Stratton Village Hall	Joint SW Division meeting. Andrew Durham talks about "The French Experience" with the Asian Hornet.
Divisional AGM and Honey Show	Tuesday 19th November	Ilchester Pavilion	Our Divisional AGM combined with a cut-down Honey Show

## October Joint Meeting

Our joint meeting between SW and Yeovil divisions will be on Tuesday 29th October at Over Stratton Village Hall.

The subject will be "The Asian Hornet - The French Experience"

The speaker is Cambridgeshire beekeeper Andrew Durham who has made a special study of the Asian Hornet, drawing on French research, information from French beekeepers, and visits to France to investigate the problem posed by the Asian Hornet.

The Hornet is poised on our borders so be forewarned!

## Divisional Honey Extractor

Yeovil Beekeepers Members may borrow the Division's Honey Extractor, settling tank or Heated Uncapping Tray free of charge. To borrow the 9-frame radial extractor or the settling tank, please contact Bill Paterson on 07789 693 203 or [patterson\\_32@sky.com](mailto:patterson_32@sky.com) in good time to arrange a loan. It comes with comprehensive instructions as well as advice!

The heated uncapping tray can similarly be borrowed from Nic Bard on 07877 284545 (or just reply to this email). The uncapping tray can be used for melting down honey which is set in the comb.

## Do You Need an Apiary Site?

Chris Simpson has sent this message to our web-site. If you are looking for an apiary site near Crewkerne, please contact him:

"I live just outside Crewkerne and have a small orchard 5 apple trees 2 plum and 2 pear trees I try to garden organically use no sprays grow veg and keep a few chickens. Would any of your members like to place a hive at the end of the orchard to our mutual benefit."

If interested, please contact Chris by email:

[chris.simpson180@btinternet.com](mailto:chris.simpson180@btinternet.com)

## Chairman's Message

This is an email from a child I taught in the 70's. He now has a hive in Bath. He has a degree in Entomology.

*"Hi John, Out of interest I have seen quite a lot of Volucella zonaria (hornet mimic hover fly) around my hive. Supposedly rare and migratory (Mediterranean) they lay eggs in wasp and hornet nests. Appears to me that they are looking to do the same in bee hives.*

*I have not looked into the biology deeply yet, but all hoverfly larvae that I know of are predatory - you often see the maggot like larvae eating aphids for example. I suspect that they do eat prepupated bees, although the only thing I read was that they were commensal - there was a benefit to the hoverfly and none to the bees - which tends to suggest they don't predate the bees. However I am sceptical. As for it being rare I saw three of these large adult hoverfly around my hive at the same time. I'll look to find out some more information and get back to you.*

*I have looked into them a bit more and obviously spent too long studying aphids because some hoverfly larvae are not predatory including this one – it eats the detritus from a bee hive or wasp nest etc. so harmless really. It is quite the biggest hoverfly I have ever seen and pretty impressive – the bees ignore it when it nears the hive entrance – some kind of semi chemical (pheromone) it produces I imagine. I now have an example in my dipteran collection! Fraser"*

This is a Caryoperis and mine was covered with honeybees when the sun was shining. It is a huge family of plants, blue and perfect for honeybees; and almost impossible to kill!

Honey? What a year I have had with a super crop. Now my winter goal is to over winter those green Queens so next year will be even better.

Best news of all is the normal amount of wasps rather than being besieged and next year I shall be on their case-over wintering Queens once again. And yes I do know wasps do some good!

Emily (15) and doing her silver D of E, and mother Cherie are setting up an apiary near Bridgehampton and I will put 2 hives there and teach them until they find their feet.

**John Carnegie,  
Chairman**





## Thirsty Honeybees?



A funny thing happened when I was collecting blackberries. Many hundreds of honeybees were piercing and sucking up blackberry juice. I have never seen this before.

***John***

## Can You Help us?

Jill Purdie has sent you all a questionnaire to see how we can serve our beekeepers better and also to see if you can afford some time to help do this?

Please spend some time to answer her, even if you are a bit late, any feedback will help. And if you can spare some time to help the Division organise this as part of the committee, please offer some help through any committee member.

**Nic**

## Honey Show Help

Can you help to organise our scaled down Honey Show at our AGM in November?

I will be away during November but will set things up before the end of October. But I need a Show Steward to help organise closer to the date and to assist the Honey Judge on the day.

It is a fairly simple task to organise and very interesting to listen to the Honey Judge, Suzie Perkins, as she comments on the characteristics of the entries she is judging. So you will know what is good and what to avoid in future!

The Steward can also have entries in the Show as they are all anonymous.

If you would be able to help, please do get in touch with me to discuss how you can help. No help, no Honey Show!

**Nic**

## Asian Hornets

There has been another sighting of an Asian Hornet in Tamworth, Staffordshire. The nest was quickly found and destroyed. The sighting was by a member of the public, demonstrating how important it is to make sure that the public are aware of this interloper.

September is the most likely time that we might see Asian hornets taking an interest in our hives. So do keep a close eye on your hives and any insects "hawking" near the entrances.

And 'Asian Hornet Week' is 9th to 15th September. More details in the Somerset BKA web-site:

<https://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/members-blog/asian-hornet-action-week-sept-9-15>

I am away for part of September, so any possible sightings, please contact Nick Fairweather on 01935 882620 for help and advice

Don't forget to maintain and monitor your Hornet trap and report any suspicious sightings via the Asian Hornet Watch App.

This is the web-site to monitor for reported sightings:.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/news/asian-hornet-uk-sightings-in-2018?utm\\_source=6d813b76-8e9a-4e9f-a096-0aab6ccb1392&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/asian-hornet-uk-sightings-in-2018?utm_source=6d813b76-8e9a-4e9f-a096-0aab6ccb1392&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

**Sharon Blake**

## Divisional officers

<b>President</b>	<b>Nic Bard</b>	<b>01460 221698</b>	<b>Treasurer &amp; membership secretary</b>	<b>Sharon Blake</b>	<b>01460 242124</b>
<b>Chairman</b>	<b>John Carnegie</b>	<b>01935 851234</b>	<b>Librarian</b>	<b>Jacqui Taylor</b>	<b>01963 220329</b>
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	<b>Neil Cook</b>	<b>07747 012545</b>	<b>Newsletter editor</b>	<b>Nic Bard</b>	<b>07877 284545</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Steve &amp; Marie Attrill</b>	<b>01935 475964</b>	<b>Mentor Liaison Officer</b>	<b>Claire Puckett</b>	<b>07887 856680</b>
<b>Divisional Web-Master</b>	<b>Neil Cook</b>	<b>neil.cook@noware.co.uk</b>	<b>County Delegates</b>	<b>Malcolm Blake Steve Attrill Andy Dobson</b>	

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

- 17th September** - Andy Willis talks about "The Bee's Eye View of Beekeeping"
- 15th October** - TBD
- 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

### 2020

- 21st January** - Michael Keith Lucas gives a talk

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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