



# ***YEOVIL BEE NEWS***

## ***November 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 19th November**  
**Divisional A.G.M.**  
**And Honey Show**

### **A.G.M. AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the 2017 AGM and Matters Arising
3. Reports from: Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman
4. Election of Auditor and Officers
6. Any Other Business

The Divisional A.G.M. is the annual meeting to discuss the operation of your beekeeping group. Is it providing the information and support you need for your beekeeping? Can it do more or is it missing something?

The Division does not run itself; can you spare a little time to help? Or some enthusiasm to move it forwards? We are always looking for fresh faces on the committee to provide different opinions.

So come along and add your voice.

## Honey Show with AGM

We will be holding our Honey Show at the same time as the AGM. So bring a sample of your produce to the AGM and show it off!

Jo has produced a simplified range of classes for the night. An entry form is attached to the newsletter, as well as a schedule and rules which all give information on the type of entries. Please email your completed entry form to Jo before the event if you can. This will help her to get the entries displayed on the night. Jo has a set of "Grading Glasses" so you can determine if your honey is "light", "medium" or "dark".

Bring your entries in as soon after 6:30pm as you can so that Jo has time to label and stage the entries before the start of the AGM. The judging will be performed by Suzie Perkins during the AGM. She should be finished by the conclusion of the AGM and the prizes will then be presented. Suzie can then let you know how to improve your produce and the typical mistakes that are made.

## Honey Show

All that lovely honey!

Why don't you show what you and your bees have achieved this year?

The Yeovil Honey Show is being held at the AGM on November 19 at Ilchester Pavilion.

There are plenty of classes even if you are new to beekeeping. See the show schedule and rules attached to this newsletter.

And if you don't have any honey to show, what about baking a honey fruit cake (they are delicious to devour after the show anyway!).

And if you have any wax, why not show it as well?

Drop me a line if you are unsure or have any queries:

Jo Dawson, 0146076797/07434941312 or email [joano.dawson@gmail.com](mailto:joano.dawson@gmail.com)

**Good Luck!**

***Jo Dawson***



## October Indoor Meeting: Lynne Ingram

Lynne is our AHAT leader for Somerset (Asian Hornet Action Team for those who have not been following the looming pest) but is also a Master Beekeeper and an enthusiastic supporter of Moroccan beekeeping.

There are three different types of honey bee in Morocco, all with different characters. The bees kept in the valleys in the South of the Country nestled in the Atlas Mountains, are the ones that are most productive and least defensive. Due to the mountains, they can be kept a breed apart from the other Moroccan bees; until other beekeepers bring their bees into these valleys for the forage, producing hybrid varieties of bees which share the worst of the bees' characteristics!

Lynne became interested in the bees during a visit to Morocco and has become a mentor to some of the more adventurous beekeepers there. She now returns every year to advise and help the beekeepers.

She also runs a beekeeping and cultural holiday tour of Morocco in May next year. It sounds like a really interesting opportunity to get away from our wet climate.....

<https://cecu.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Beekeeping-Holiday-Brochure-2020.pdf>

**Nic**

## October Joint Meeting: Andrew Durham

Our joint meeting with the SW Division was held in the Over Stratton Village Hall. Andrew talked about how the French are dealing with the menace which has now totally invaded France and soon to be in England, yes, the Asian Hornet (Frelon Asiatique).

Andrew started the talk with a description of the life-cycle of the hornet. It is important to understand the life-cycle to find the most effective ways to combat them. They have a similar cycle to the wasps (who are also food for the hornets). They produce queens in the autumn which hibernate through the winter and start a new nest in the spring. The queens can effectively be trapped and their initial nests easily destroyed at this time. They then move to larger nests sites and start producing a lot of foragers before turning to produce males and queens in late summer. This is when the hornets may really concentrate on raiding bee colonies so entrance shields are important to help the colonies defend themselves.

He has been analysing and trying out the various techniques that the French Beekeepers have been using to combat the invader. These include queen trapping in the spring and placing protective screens and guards around the hive entrances in the late summer.

Each French Department take independent action for these pests and more are now taking no action as the hornets are endemic and no action will get rid of them. It is up to the beekeepers to protect their bees and to destroy the hornet nests.

Andrew has visited many apiaries and beekeepers in France to learn how they cope with the hornet. The defenses are still being improved and developed, so maybe we will know what to do when the hornet is established in Somerset.

If you want to know what happens when they focus on a beehive, take a look at this:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/345541099280201/permalink/731746413992999/?sfnsn=mo&d=n&vh=e>

**Nic**

## Coming soon ...

Event	When	Where	Details
Divisional AGM and Honey Show	Tuesday 19th November	Ilchester Pavilion	Our Divisional AGM combined with a cut-down Honey Show
Divisional Christmas Social evening	6:30pm Tuesday 3rd December	The Royal Oak, Hardington Mandeville	Our annual Christmas skittles & buffet
Indoor meeting	7:30 pm Tuesday 21st January	Ilchester Pavilion	Michael Keith-Lucas talks on "The Use of Pollen in Forensic Science"
Indoor Meeting	7:30pm Tuesday 18th February	Ilchester Pavilion	Marin Anastosov talks on "The Discovery of the Queen Substance"

## Christmas Skittles & Buffet

We have arranged our annual Christmas Sociable meeting for Tuesday 3rd December. It is a Skittles & Buffet at the Royal Oak, Hardington Mandeville at 6.30pm. The cost is £12.00. Please contact Jill on [jillpurdie@gmail.com](mailto:jillpurdie@gmail.com) if you'd like to come along. It will be great to see you there and partners are very welcome, if they would like to join us.

More information closer to the date.

*Jill*

## Beginners Course

John will be running his popular Beekeeping Course again in 2020. The course will again be held in the Queen Camel Memorial Hall; 10 talks starting on 16th January. The course still has some places so if you know anyone who might be interested, please give them the information on the course. It only costs £50 for the full 10 talks.

Full details of the course and application form are on the web-site:

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



## French Bees and Honey Production Damaged by Heatwave



If coping with the Asian Hornet was not enough, the French bees and hives suffered in the hot temperatures in the south of France over the summer

Thousands of bees and beehives suffered due to the unprecedented heat wave conditions in the south of France this summer, beekeepers have reported.

High temperatures of 46°C were seen in late June in the Hérault and the Gard, leaving bees unable to control the temperature of their hives, causing honey to melt and bees to perish, experts have said.

Christian Pons, who has been a beekeeper for 15 years near Montpellier (Hérault), told news network 20 Minutes that the end of June had been “catastrophic” for his hives.

He said: “We lost 80 hives due to the due to melted wax that overcame the colony and the queen.”

A hive contains 40,000 to 60,000 bees, and the temperature must be maintained around 34-35°C, Mr Pons said. Bees regulate the conditions by gathering or dispersing, he explained, but when outside temperatures rise, they cannot do so.

Mr Pons said: “It was so hot outside that the bees couldn’t ventilate the hives. At this point, the honey is positioned on top, and the wax melted, crushing the larvae and moving down to the bees and the queen. The wax blocked the exits so well that bees and queens died trapped inside.”

The beekeeper said that the issues had been particularly bad in the Hérault and the Gard, but had affected dozens of beekeepers and hundreds of thousands of bees.

The extreme heat also damaged flowers and vegetation, damaging the amount of honey that could be collected.

Mr Pons said: "In a normal year, we normally do almost two tonnes of wild honey. This year we did 150kg."

Beekeepers can take certain measures to help, including putting the hives in the shade and painting the roofs white, but depending on the temperatures, the efficiency can be limited.

Some have claimed compensation.

Muriel Pascal, a beekeeper in Lozère (Gard), said: "In 11 years, the speeding up of the effects of climate change has been enormous. We have been left with a 50-80% drop in production."

## Coloured French Honey

And another French Beekeeping story:

In the summer of 2012, French beekeepers were alarmed to discover their hives filled with startlingly coloured honey. Comb after comb was discovered to be filled with brilliant blue, green, red, and yellow honey; all shades far too removed from the simple amber sunshine-like hue one would expect from freshly gathered honey.

An investigation into the matter revealed that the honey was entirely unadulterated, except for the presence of food-grade dyes. Specifically, the type of food-grade dyes used to colour candies and soda. Further investigation revealed that the source of the dyes was a nearby factory processing the waste from an M&M chocolate factory in the region. The clever bees had somehow found their way into the waste stream produced by the factory and were happily (albeit lazily) scooping up as much of the brightly coloured leftovers as possible.

## Free Asian Hornet Traps

One way we can both detect and inhibit the spread of the Asian Hornet (plenty of articles on this earlier in the newsletter!) is by using a trap. This will both detect the hornet's presence (so we can be on our guard for them) and can be used to kill queens to prevent further spreading of the pest.

Somerset Beekeepers have purchased one trap for each of last year's member so you all should have a trap to be used initially to detect the presence of the hornet. Most of our members have collected their free trap but there are several who have not. This is a free trap, it costs you nothing, but may help us all by allowing early detection of the hornets and enabling early destruction of the bests to reduce the chances of an invasion.

If you have not yet collected your free trap, please contact Andy Dobson to arrange collection. His contact details are:

[Dobsons.bees@gmail.com](mailto:Dobsons.bees@gmail.com) or phone 07825 912 274

## Asian Hornets

There is plenty in this newsletter already about the Asian Hornet. Here, I will just re-iterate the reminder 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**

## RIP Phil Hocking

I sadly have to report the passing of one of our beekeepers, Phil Hocking.

He kept a few colonies in his back garden and was a willing helper at our Yeovil Show Honey Tent, loaning us the Bar and display boards for our show and displays.

Our condolences have been sent to his wife, Susan.

**Nic**

## RIP Kenneth Nicolson

I sadly have also to report the recent passing of one of our beekeeper's partner, Kenneth Nicolson.

Liz Nicolson is one of our longest serving members and a regular attendee at our meetings. Her husband, Kenneth, was a retired doctor and always welcoming and helpful to me and to the Division.

Our condolences have been sent to Liz.

**Nic**

## Yeovil Division Host the SBKA AGM

2020 is the Yeovil Division's turn to host the Somerset County AGM. (It rotates each year around the Somerset Divisions). We will host a lunch at Frogmary Green Farm, South Petherton, followed by an interesting talk by Lynfa Davies and then the AGM.

You are all encouraged to attend as I am sure you will find all of these activities interesting and one of them delicious!

So put the event in your 2020 diaries for Saturday 28th March.

More details to follow.....

## 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

**19th November - Divisional AGM and Honey Show**

**3rd December - Christmas skittles & buffet at the Royal Oak, Hardington Mandeville**

### 2020

**21st January - Michael Keith Lucas talks on "The Use of Pollen in Forensic Science"**

**18th February - Marin Anastosov talks on "The Discovery of Queen Substance"**

**17th March - Simon Mills talks on TBD**

**28th March - We host the County AGM at Frogmary Green Farm**

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.

More 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>