

# The Newsletter



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SBKA website [www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk)



## All the Winners

Well! All bar one of the trophy winners. Dave Reynolds who won the John Lindars memorial trophy for the photography classes was unable to attend.

The possibly unfamiliar face to the right of Catherine Fraser is Rebecca Day who came all the way from Worcester to enter some open classes, and actually won the National Honey Show Blue Ribbon for her light honey entry. It's good to see some new faces from our membership in the line up too.

The complete list of trophy winners is on the following page.

## **TROPHIES AND 2018 WINNERS**

**NOVICE SHIELD** Awarded for most points gained in the Novice classes 1 – 10  
SARAH NORTH

**NOVICE TROPHY** Runner up in classes 1 – 10 – SHARON HUMBY

**CHALLENGE CUP** Awarded for most points gained in classes 11-28  
CATHERINE FRASER

**MORRIS PLAQUE** Awarded to the runner up in classes 11-28 – CLIVE BALL

**ALAN BROMLEY AWARD** Awarded for Best Somerton Member's exhibit in the Show –  
SANDY DAVIES

**E C. H. LANGFORD PERPETUAL CUP** Awarded to best exhibit in the Light Honey class  
11 – LIZZIE REYNOLDS

**BILL HARRIS CUP** Awarded to best exhibit in the Composite Class 20 – CATHERINE  
FRASER

**THE PEARCE COOKERY PLATE** Awarded for most points in the Cookery classes 29-34 -  
PAULINE CLARKE

**THE JOHN LINDARS MEMORIAL TROPHY** Awarded for most points in the photograph-  
ic classes 40-45 – DAVID REYNOLDS

**THE PERKINS GOBLET** Awarded for most points in drinks classes 35-39 –  
JOE KING

**THE SOMERTON DIVISIONAL TROPHY** Awarded for most points gained overall in  
classes 1 – 48 – CATHERINE FRASER

**ALLCOMERS' CLASSES PRIZE GIFT VOUCHER** Awarded for most points in classes 49 –  
59  
KAREN ROSE

**CHILDREN'S AWARD** Awarded for best exhibit in Children's classes 60-63 –  
IRIS LANDRIGAN

**ALL COMERS' HONEY CLASSES** Awarded for most points in classes 64-74 –  
REBECCA DAY

**NATIONAL HONEY SHOW BLUE RIBBON** – REBECCA DAY

**SPECIAL NOVICE AWARD** – SALLY LYE



Sarah North - Winner of the Novice Shield



Sharon Humby - Runner Up in the Novice Classes



Catherine Fraser - accepting the Challenge Cup from Somerset BKA President Ken Tredgett. Catherine also won the Bill Harris cup & The Somerton Divisional trophy.



Clive Ball being presented with the Alan Bromley as runner up in classes 11-28



Sandy Davies receiving the Alan Bromley award for best exhibit in show from a Somerton BKA member



Pauline Clarke receiving the Pearce cookery plate for most points in the cookery classes



Joe King receiving the Perkins goblet for most points in the drinks classes



Karen Rose being awarded a gift voucher for achieving most points in the All comers' class.



Sally Lye being awarded the Special Novice Award



Rebecca Day of Worcester who scored most points in the All comers' Honey Classes, and scooped The National Honey Show Blue Ribbon.



Just a few of the exhibits in the light honey classes

A rare moment caught on camera, 80% of the kitchen crew, Sue Horne, Alison Dykes, her daughter Sarah and grand daughter Maddy, relaxing for just a moment between 'full on' meal preparation. They're probably wondering where the other member, Liz Gould has got to.





Steward Jeff Brewer with Heather Pomeroy who judges the cooking classes. In the background vice chairman Eric McLaughlin and Penny Covington help Malcolm Blackburn in his photographic deliberations

In the background David Charles deliberates over the novice entries, aided by Rosemary Brooks, while Bernard Diaper judges honey with the help of Sandy Davies. In the foreground Catherine Fraser helps Hazel Blackburn who was judging the wax classes. Both have their backs to the camera.



It was a rare old day weather-wise. The normal duration for a period of rain in the UK is 45 minutes. On Saturday September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2018 it started raining at about 8.45am and stopped the next morning. This didn't put exhibitors off as entries were up on last year. The traders took a different stance on the matter. Some didn't turn up, and those who did went away feeling cold, wet and wretched, but definitely not rich. One thing is sure, it can't be much worse next year.

A few entries got misplaced come the end, as the hall management suddenly decided that they wanted us out by 5.30 pm as another booking had been made for 6.00pm. It was a bit of a free for all as members tried to reclaim their prized entries. A few got misplaced, but we managed to sort it all out.

## **Honey Show success**

Why success? Because the number of entries was 318, more than we have had for many years. The number of entrants (46) was also our highest yet.

However, the real success of our show is due to all those volunteers who help assemble it and run it, plus of course those who take time to prepare and enter exhibits. I feel I did not praise you enough for all your efforts. Those outside in the rain were heroes.

Our show, without doubt, would not be the success it is if it were not for these people. I thank you for giving up your time and working extremely hard to make it the "best in the west".

***A very grateful Chairman,***

## **A chat with a judge**

During a lull in proceedings at our Honey Show I had a chat with one of the judges. I asked him how our show compared to others he had seen in his role as a judge. This is what he said; obviously it's not verbatim.

"Our Show is very well presented making a good visual impression. The standard of entries is generally average to good, but could be very good or even excellent!" I asked him how we could improve and he answered "the difference between a good exhibit and a very good or excellent one is simply being more patient in preparing exhibits and paying attention to detail."

He cited one or two examples that had been found:

- a. Rust spots on lids
- b. Bubbles on internal rim of jar
- c. Labels attached incorrectly
- d. Not following the rules

All these things could be avoided by taking more time and care in preparation of exhibits.

I thought these were very simple but constructive comments and I for one am making a note of them. Hope you do the same so that our show remains the "Best in the West".

***Fred Clarke, Chairman.***

## Chris Park – Skep Beekeeping

Depending on where you look for your source material, Chris Park is either a cricketer who has played for minor county Dorset but also England, or a former member of the 'boy band' Phixx. If you dig a little further however, you will come across Acorn Education at [www.acorneducation.com](http://www.acorneducation.com), a



site dedicated to ancient arts & crafts. Chris Park, who is a druid, features heavily in their events, but he is also involved in skep beekeeping.

See Chris's views on skep beekeeping at:-

[www.dave-cushman.net/bee/Chris%20Park%20Article%202.pdf](http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/Chris%20Park%20Article%202.pdf), plus another article on the same site. Just click on either of the links to go to the sites mentioned.

Chris is our speaker for the October evening talk. Those who are entrenched in removable frame beekeeping and those inclined toward 'natural' beekeeping, will find plenty to ask questions about. This will most certainly be a very interesting evening.

***Somerton Parish Rooms, TA11 7NB at 7.30pm on Thursday October 11th***

**Apiinvert.** Syrup ready to feed bees. Unlike sugar solution it requires no mixing, more readily accepted and less work required for the bees to invert (not wasting energy), more close to a natural food.

1 - 4 boxes @ 16 Kg £23 each, 5 + boxes £22 each

**Apifonda.** If you are venturing on a Queen rearing project this fondant is what you need. Very similar to Apiinvert, it is a paste not a liquid. If a colony becomes light through the course of the winter a dollop of fondant could well be the difference between life and death of the bees.

The Apiinvert can be fed as a 'gee up' in the spring, emergency feeding during the 'June gap' and of course at the end of the season when preparing for winter. 1 x 2.5 Kg bag £4.75, 1 box 5 x 2.5 Kg £22, 2 + boxes £21 each

**Foundation.** National brood and super, 14 x 12 brood, 16 x 10 brood

**Eddie Howe.** email:- [redrascal@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:redrascal@tiscali.co.uk) Mobile 07812 738793 Telephone 01458 2721144

## It's been a good year for insects

It really has. Beekeepers all over Somerset are singing the praises of this particular British summer, and honey crops are way up on last year. Diana Robertson, Catherine Fraser and I didn't fare too well on the Quantocks in our endeavours to get a heather crop, but talking to Chris Harries of Sedgemoor Honey, at our Honey Show last Saturday, he did very well for heather at the top of Porlock Hill.

Other critters had a good summer too, with wasps being reported as a serious pest from July onwards. This year also produced a bumper crop of European hornets, with one over zealous beekeeper removing a large nest, burning it and posting 20 pictures of the event on facebook. European hornets have been reported taking the odd bee or two in front of hives this year, but they are not, in any way, major predators of bees.



They are a little bit stupid though, and having removed five from an Asian hornet monitoring trap, I was amazed that as soon as they had regained their composure, three tried to go back in. I'm almost convinced that I was removing the same ones each day.



the feed hole of the crown-board beginning.

The other hive invader, which seems to have been present in, almost, plague proportions this year, is the wax moth. This is what greeted me on removing the roof of a hive that had died out, after becoming queen-less. The view through said it all. Those pupae were just the

What follows is the result of just one month of a dead hive being left with all the frames in, and the entrance open. It's not a pretty sight.



They have devoured about half the wax in this frame and left a horrible mess too. It's a mass of webbing, pupae cases and larvae excrement. The frames are all bound together by the silk traces left behind by larvae & pupae cocoons. The wax from the next frame had been totally destroyed, and the crownboard was just

a blanket of white pupae cases. Beneath those cases the larvae have gnawed a depression into the wood prior to sealing themselves in.

Boxes affected by wax moth can be treated with high strength ethanoic (acetic) acid, but it will corrode metal parts, and the fumes are horrific, so be very careful handling it, as it will also corrode you. Wear waterproof gloves and goggles. Most importantly, do not leave the acid in your stack of boxes for too long, or you will have rust everywhere, including in your foundation wax.



Certain B401 is product made by Vita Europe to fight wax moth, but, as they state in their blurb '*B401 is used after the honey harvest, when the frames are stored and kills young wax moth larvae. It must therefore be used before a wax moth infestation*'.

You can blow torch boxes which should kill eggs, larvae pupae and adult moths, but there are small crevices where all stages can hide and avoid the heat. The only sure way to rid your kit of wax moths in all stages, is to freeze for at least 48 hours. If you have a couple of spare freezers and an array of outbuildings, this is easy, but most of us have neither, and will have to rely on a cold blast which stays below freezing continuously, for more than two days.

You could always harvest the larvae and freeze them until the blue tits come visiting in the winter. Then remove them from your one and only freezer and feed them to the birds, while feeling a warm glow of satisfaction. You could sell them on Ebay, where they are currently £24.60 per 1000. That's 2.46p each. There is a note underneath the advert. asking '*Have one to sell?*'

## Unusual Visitor

Jeff White had an unusual visitor the other day. His son was cleaning out their wood burner and discovered this bedraggled creature. He identified it as a hornet moth, but quite how he did that I am not sure, but looking at pictures of the cleaned up version, I can see that it is.



These clear-wing moths aren't very common and are pretty much restricted to the southern half of the UK, and it is very obvious where they got their name from.

Please call before you visit  
T: 01278 445158

E: [mikes-bees@windytor.myzen.co.uk](mailto:mikes-bees@windytor.myzen.co.uk)  
[www.mikes-beesupplies.co.uk](http://www.mikes-beesupplies.co.uk)

National  
BS Deep wired foundation £1.25 each  
BS Super wired foundation 80p each

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## Special thanks!

Each year, despite our concerns, the Honey Show is a huge success with many of our members coming forward to take part or help out in some way. But I would like to single out one member for special thanks, who every year on Honey Show day, come rain or shine, turns up to help set up the hall and put up tents for the market and that is Rodney White. Sadly for us this year's show could well have been his last as Rodney and his partner are moving to Devon, and there's a beekeeping division just round the corner from them. Our loss is their gain. I'd like to wish them all the very best for the future and hope to see them return as visitors next year.

***David Rose***

Honey Show Committee

## Asian Hornet Action Teams (AHATs)

You have probably read in the latest BBKA News about the rapid spread of Asian hornets on Jersey and that English beekeepers have gone to help out. Lynne Ingram of Taunton Beekeepers was one of those volunteers, and she gained valuable knowledge in the process. Since the BBKA News was published, another nest has been found in Alresford, Hampshire, another individual hornet on the South Coast and further nests in Hull, Liskeard and the two discovered in Fowey, that makes a total of five nests this year, plus the single hornet traced to Boston in Lincolnshire.

We have been banging on about the pending danger for several years, but **it is happening now**. Somerset Beekeepers' Association in conjunction with many other associations, the National Bee Unit and the Non Native Secretariat, are forming AHATs which will act as rapid response teams. Somerton will be appointing its own Division lead, and we will keep you informed of developments. The person charged with this task will have to be taught as much as possible about Asian hornets and be reasonably fit, in order to locate nests in inaccessible situations.

## **Bees and Neo-nicotinoids**

Recent research has indicated that bumblebees actually prefer sugar syrup tainted with neo-nicotinoids, to unadulterated pure sugar syrup. This ‘taste choice’ is lethal to those making it.

### **Abstract**

The impact of neonicotinoid insecticides on insect pollinators is highly controversial. Sub lethal concentrations alter the behaviour of social bees and reduce survival of entire colonies<sup>1,2,3</sup>. However, critics argue that the reported negative effects only arise from neonicotinoid concentrations that are greater than those found in the nectar and pollen of pesticide-treated plants<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, it has been suggested that bees could choose to forage on other available flowers and hence avoid or dilute exposure<sup>4,5</sup>. Here, using a two-choice feeding assay, we show that the honeybee, *Apis mellifera*, and the buff-tailed bumblebee, *Bombus terrestris*, do not avoid nectar-relevant concentrations of three of the most commonly used neonicotinoids, imidacloprid (IMD), thiamethoxam (TMX), and clothianidin (CLO), in food. Moreover, bees of both species prefer to eat more of sucrose solutions laced with IMD or TMX than sucrose alone. Stimulation with IMD, TMX and CLO neither elicited spiking responses from gustatory neurons in the bees’ mouthparts, nor inhibited the responses of sucrose-sensitive neurons. Our data indicate that bees cannot taste neonicotinoids and are not repelled by them. Instead, bees preferred solutions containing IMD or TMX, even though the consumption of these pesticides caused them to eat less food overall. This work shows that bees cannot control their exposure to neonicotinoids in food and implies that treating flowering crops with IMD and TMX presents a sizeable hazard to foraging bees.

#### **1. Institute of Neuroscience, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4HH, UK**

- Sébastien C. Kessler
- , Kerry L. Simcock
- , Samantha Softley
- & Geraldine A. Wright

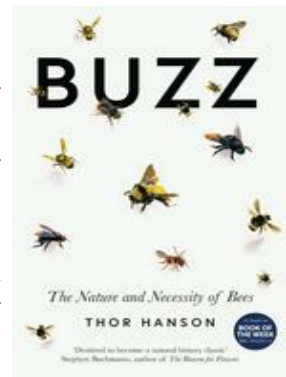
#### **2. Botany Department, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin 2, Ireland**

- Erin Jo Tiedeken
- & Jane C. Stout
- 3. **School of Biology, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU, UK**
  - Sophie Derveau
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  - Jessica Mitchell
- 5. **Institute of Neuroscience, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4HH, UK**
  - Amy Radcliffe

**The new neo-nicotinoid substitute sulfoxaflor has suffered as major setback. "Our results show that sulfoxaflor can have a negative impact on the reproductive output of bumblebee colonies under certain conditions," said study researcher Harry Siviter of Royal Holloway, University of London.**

## **Buzz - Thor Hanson**

What are we going to buy him or her for their for birthday? A common problem. Once you've read Ted Hooper's book and the Haynes Bee Manual from cover to cover, books about bees can be 'the same old, same old'. Occasionally one will crop up which makes you think, like *The Buzz* about bees - Jurgen Tautz, or *A sting in the tail* - Dave Goulson. Well, here's another one to get you thinking. Thor Hanson turns science and scientific history into something a lot more interesting than a text book, and far more readable too. He is an American, and most of his consideration relate to American species, but historical facts are drawn from all over the World. Did you know that the ancient Egyptians transported colonies up and down the Nile, between crops?



RRP is £14.99, but it is available online for £10.00

## Bee of the Month

Not the most spectacular of bees, but the Shrill Carder Bee (*bombus sylvarum*) is one of our rarest bees. In mainland Britain it is restricted almost entirely to the Thames Estuary, Salisbury Plain, The Gower in South Wales and more pertinently, the Somerset Levels.



This is a late peaking bee with queens emerging in May, with new workers making their appearance in June. Males will be seen during August and September. Its nesting habits are unusual too, as it prefers to nest above ground in dense vegetation. Colonies are small with less than 50 bees in total.

New queens have a taste for white dead nettles, although the workers have a more catholic diet. It is their slow hovering flight between flowers, accompanied by a high pitched (shrill) buzz, which gives them their common name.

## Ten years in the making

Looking for new ideas for the cookery classes, Stuart Dennes, who was then show secretary, asked all committee members if they had any recipes up their sleeves, and I suggested a Honey Cob Loaf, and submitted my recipe. I have entered that class every year since, but the best I ever managed was a second prize.



You can't imagine the ignominy of telling your loved ones, yet again, that you failed to win. When talking to Fred Clarke before the show, he asked, with a smile 'Entering the bread class?' and I have to confess that it has become a ritual humiliation for me, which I just have to submit myself to. Well! this year I baked the night before, then got up early, set the oven to 210°C, waited 10 minutes, and blasted the loaf to give it a firm crust, then headed for Long Sutton. Finally I did it. I won.

**Stewart Gould**

**Dates for your diary**

**Skep Beekeeping  
With Druid & Skep Beekeeper  
Chris Park**

**Thursday October 11<sup>th</sup> - 7.30 pm**  
Somerton Parish Rooms  
TA11 7NB

**Somerton BKA AGM**  
**Thursday November 15<sup>th</sup> - 7.00 pm**  
Somerton Parish Rooms  
TA11 7NB

**Beginners' Beekeeping Course**  
Wednesdays Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>, then  
Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>.  
All sessions start at 7.30 pm  
**Tor Rugby Club,**  
**Lowerside Lane, Glastonbury**  
**BA6 9BH**

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