

The Newsletter



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SBKA website www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk



What a success?

Above is just one of the photos from the photographic entries at the revitalised Somerton Honey Show. The quality of entries was superb, and this wasn't even a first prize winner.

All the winners are on the following pages along with more photos, but this time, of the winners.

It's not all about the show though, there is plenty of other news,

TROPHIES AND 2021 WINNERS

THE NOVICE SHIELD Awarded for the most points gained in the Novice classes 1 – 10
Rob Kingsnorth

THE NOVICE TROPHY Runner up in classes 1 – 10 –
James Dawson

THE CHALLENGE CUP Awarded for the most points gained in classes 11-28
David Rose

THE MORRIS PLAQUE Awarded to the runner up in classes 11-28
Catherine Fraser

THE ALAN BROMLEY AWARD Awarded for the Best Somerton Member's exhibit in the Show -
Sandy Davies

E C. H. LANGFORD PERPETUAL CUP Awarded to the best exhibit in the Light Honey class 11
Steve Horne

THE BILL HARRIS CUP Awarded to the best exhibit in the Composite Class 20 – **Catherine Fraser**

THE PEARCE COOKERY PLATE Awarded for the most points in the Cookery classes 29-34
Karen Rose

THE JOHN LINDARS MEMORIAL TROPHY Awarded for the most points in the photographic classes 41-46 **David Reynolds**

THE PERKINS GOBLET Awarded for the most points in the drinks classes 35-39
Catherine Fraser

THE SOMERTON DIVISIONAL TROPHY Awarded for the most points gained overall in classes 1 – 48
David Rose

ALLCOMERS' CLASSES PRIZE GIFT VOUCHER Awarded for the most points in classes 49 – 59
Eric McLaughlin

CHILDRENS AWARD Awarded for the best exhibit in Children's classes 60-63 –
Finn Butterworth

ALLCOMERS' HONEY CLASSES Awarded for the most points in classes 64-74 –
Rebecca Day

NATIONAL HONEY SHOW BLUE RIBBON - **Sandy Davies**

SPECIAL NOVICE AWARD (awarded by Novice judge) - **Rob Kingsnorth**



Rob Kingsnorth Stewart Gould



Dave Reynolds



Jim Dawson



David Rose



Sandy Davies



Catherine Fraser



Steve Horne



Eric McLaughlin



Karen Rose



Rebecca Day



Finn Butterworth



Jeff Brewer Suzy Perkins Sandy Davies

The judging begins for Suzy Perkins and her 2 stewards, Jeff Brewer and Sandy Davies

The novice section is open to all members who have never won a prize in a Honey Show and, unusually, they are allowed to watch the judging, so that they can learn from the experience.



Back with a Bang! Honey Show didn't disappoint.

We weren't sure what to expect on Saturday September 18th, having had to cancel the show the previous year, due to you know what. Was there still an appetite for it and would anyone turn up? Only two weeks before the show we were wondering whether to cancel with just a handful of entries.



But, WOW, you came up trumps and didn't disappoint, in the end we had over 270 entries which wasn't far off our usual numbers. And boy did they come! The stall holders said business was brisk and we sold out of honey in the Bee Tent, with nearly 200 jars sold from ten different beekeepers. And although some of the usual suspects walked away with the trophies it was great to see some new names on prize cards. We hope that you'll come back next year and maybe take a trophy home with you as well.

A tremendous amount of effort goes into organising our Honey Show, but it is all so worth it when we have a day like Saturday. Perhaps it was extra special this year, and it was just nice to see some smiling faces in the sunshine again!

There are too many people to thank by name, you know who you are: Friday set-up, Saturday set-up and clear-up, catering team, bee tent team, refreshment team, raffle ticket sellers, stewards, judges, sign-putter-uppers, parking stewards, market traders and anyone else that we have missed. A massive thank you!



Start getting those entries for next year ready now! Start making your mead and dipping your candles and we'll see you all on Saturday 17th September 2022, back in Keinton Mandeville. Put it in your electronic iCal's now! Or do it the old fashion way and write it on the calendar!

David Rose, Alison Dykes, Fred Clarke

Mikes Bee Supplies

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Foundation

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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.

13kg 1 - 4 boxes £24 each, 5 + boxes £23 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.

1 x 2.5 Kg bag £5.00, 1 box 12.5 Kg £25, 2 + boxes £24 each

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.

Foundation. National brood and super, 14 x 12 brood available

Eddie Howe email:- redrascal444@gmail.com Mobile 07812 738793

Tel. 01458 272114

Thoughts from the Chair

Well! the Honey Show and Craft Fair has been and gone. It was a splendid day and the weather was kind. There had been some doubt and discussion beforehand but the decision to go ahead was inspired.



Understandably entries were a little down on previous years but we put on a good show in the hall. Outside, there was our honey tent and catering - both well supported by the public. As were the dozen stallholders who came. I spoke to them all and they were happy with the footfall at our event and the profit they had made.

Yeovil Classic Car club made an appearance with their vintage vehicles. The members of the public I spoke to appeared to enjoy the event (especially those who won prizes in the raffle) as did our own volunteers. The demand for honey was so great that the honey tent sold out. Rumour has it that one exhibitor was selling their exhibits.

Prize Giving at the end of the show was ably conducted by our County Chair Stewart Gould. The winner of the novice class spent the rest of the day with a grin from ear to ear and the runner up was pretty chuffed too.

The Show could not go on without considerable work from the Honey Show Committee, so a big vote of thanks to David Rose, Fred Clarke and Alison Dykes and their band of volunteers - you all know who you are and your input is appreciated and valued. I must make a special mention of Alison, who has run the catering at our events for the past eleven years keeping public and volunteers fed and watered. She has even been known to pass your Chair the odd cup of welcome tea!

I hope most of us managed to get some honey crop this season despite the sometimes unseasonal weather. As I write the sun is shining, the sky is blue and the bees are bringing in nectar and pollen. If you have already taken off your crop it will go to their winter stores.

We now need to make sure that our bees have sufficient stores for the winter and consider oxalic acid treatment when the colony is brood-less or nearly so.

Eric McLaughlin

Chair

Mystery Deepens About Evolution of Bees' Social Behaviour

The largest-ever analysis of bees' morphological diversity paints a complicated picture as to whether complex social behaviour developed once or multiple times in separate evolutionary branches.

A new study has mounted perhaps the most intricate, detailed look ever at the diversity in structure and form of bees, offering new insights in a long-standing debate over how complex social behaviors arose in certain branches of bees' evolutionary tree.

Published May 26, 2021 in *Insect Systematics and Diversity*, the report is built on an analysis of nearly 300 morphological traits in bees, how those traits vary across numerous species, and what the variations suggest about the evolutionary relations between bee species. The result offers strong evidence that complex social behaviour developed just once in pollen-carrying bees, rather than twice or more, separately, in different evolutionary branches — but researchers say the case is far from closed.

Diego Sasso Porto, Ph.D., has been studying the structure and form, or morphology, of bees for more than a decade, and his latest effort ventures into a long-standing conundrum about bee evolution. Corbiculate bees — those that possess corbiculae, or pollen baskets, on their hind legs — encompass honey bees, stingless bees, bumble bees, and orchid bees. Among them, honey bees and stingless bees are the only groups with highly complex social behaviours, such as forming large colonies with queens, workers, and drones. Bumble bees display less complex sociality, and orchid bees are mostly solitary.

Traditional morphological analyses have long indicated that honey bees and stingless bees are most closely related and that complex social behaviour developed in their common ancestor before the groups diverged. However, in the 1990s, emergent techniques in molecular genetic analysis began to show that stingless bees and bumble bees were the more closely related “sister” groups, which would mean that honey bees and stingless bees each developed their complex social behaviour independently, after their ancestral paths diverged.

Entomological Society of America may 26, 2021



Auction of Second-Hand Equipment

The normal Spring Auction, organised by Taunton Division of Somerset BKA, was cancelled because of COVID, but will be going ahead on Sunday October 10th at 2.00pm in Ruishton Village Hall, TA3v 5JD, near Taunton. If you have anything you want to sell, you can drop it off from 10.30 onwards.

If you are thinking of buying equipment, it is possible to pick up some absolute bargains, but equally possible that there won't be any 'steals'. Having said that, as it's been nearly two years since the last one, there could be more equipment than normal.

If you're not sure about an item, and it's probable value, there will be experienced beekeepers on hand to help you make a buying decision.



Penguins killed by bees

A swarm of bees killed dozens of endangered African penguins by targeting their eyes. The birds were part of a famous colony of penguins who live near Cape Town, South Africa. Rangers were shocked to find 63 dead penguins close to Simon's Town last week,

home to a famous colony of about 3,000 African penguins known as Boulders Penguin Colony. The discovery has puzzled experts, who have described it as a "very rare occurrence," The Guardian reported.

"After tests, we found bee stings around the penguins' eyes," the foundation's clinical veterinarian, David Roberts, said according to The Guardian. "There were also dead bees on the scene." Roberts also said that the stings were so small that they could "easily have been missed" and that it took them several attempts to find them, The Times reported. "We checked the other bodies again and found stings still embedded around the eyes in almost all of the birds. We found more than 20 stings in some individuals," he said.

The area is a national park and the honeybees are part of the ecosystem. Scientists are now looking into the possibility that a nearby beehive was disturbed, causing a mass of bees to swarm and become defensive. Incidents like this are very rare, according to Sanccob. In the past 20 years, there have only been two occurrences in which penguins suffered from bee stings.

African penguins are on the red list of threatened species, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The penguin population has declined by 73% in the past 30 years.

From Katie Tobin - our Australian correspondent

'Dead' queen bee

'A neighbour of mine was given a hive for Christmas, and while she was on holiday, her son kindly dropped a swarm into it', said Susan. She had been perplexed, and not knowing what to do, called her neighbour who she knew kept bees. The neighbour wasn't too certain whether her experience would be enough to sort things out, and so called me in.



When I got there, there was the beautiful new hive and bees going out to forage, so I was asked to give an opinion, and if possible, mark the queen. 'I went through them' and soon found a nice queen. 'Can you mark her for me please?'. 'No problem'. Out came the crown of thorns and my white marking pen. Simple! I marked her and removed the crown of thorns. As soon as I did so, the queen seemed to leap sideways at break-neck speed. 'Did you see where she went?' I asked. 'She's on the floor of the hive'. And she was - motionless. Just lying there. I picked her up and she didn't move. 'I'll go and make a cup of tea' said the new beekeeper. I placed the queen back in the hive, fearing the very worst.

I felt totally embarrassed and used the time while the kettle boiled to make a call - and, amazingly, found a replacement. What luck. I'll be back tomorrow

Having picked up the new queen in an apidea mating hive, I returned and placed the small polystyrene box, complete with three small frames, and the new queen, in a an empty super, on a sheet of newspaper with slits, above the original brood box. I removed the lid, base and entrance of the apidea so that the queen and attendants would venture into the main brood box, and the colony would sense her and move up to greet her.

I went back a week later dreading another fatality when I marked the new queen, but on looking through the brood area, I couldn't find the new queen anywhere, but I did find the queen marked white that I was sure I had killed 8 days earlier.

I swear that bee gave me a wry smile before I removed the apidea and closed the hive up - then I gave the good news to the new bee-keeper.



I'd heard about 'fainting queens' but never actually witnessed it before.

Thank you so much Susan.

I was forgiven however, and the lady actually let me go back to her garden and take the photo on the front cover of this newsletter - and a few more. Maybe for next year's honey show.

Stewart Gould

Dates for your diary

Auction of second hand Equipment
Ruishton Village Hall, TA3 5JD
Sunday October 10th
Viewing from 12 noon.
Sale starts at 2.00pm

Dr Sam Ramsey
Zoom Lecture

Thursday November 4th - 7.00pm

Somerton BKA AGM
Somerton Parish Rooms
Thursday November 18th - 7.00pm
Somerton Parish Rooms, TA11 7NB

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