



# Newsletter September 2023

Committee members:

Tina Harley (President), Lionel Horler (Chair), Ken Jeanes (Vice Chair), Mat Phillips (Treasurer), Anne Collyer (Secretary), Jane Jeanes (SBKA Delegate), Tony Johnstone (Events Secretary), Jeremy Lee (Apiary Manager), Guy Clothier, Dennis White and John Wood

Welcome to our September Newsletter. The summer seems to have gone in a flash and we are now rapidly approaching our Honey Show! This is designed to be a fun event with classes for all so come and have a go. Entry is free and everyone is welcome. This is an ideal opportunity to showcase beekeeping in the area as well as enjoy a cup of tea and slice of cake whilst having a chat. The schedule and entry form are posted on our website <https://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/south-east.html> and I will email it to you all. If you would prefer to receive a printed copy just let me know and I can send one to you. As ever, if anyone needs more information or has a question to ask, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will put you in touch with someone who can help.

Anne Collyer, Divisional Secretary SESBKA

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## Lionel's September Bee Notes

For further information please contact Lionel: email [lhorler934@talktalk.net](mailto:lhorler934@talktalk.net)

Lots of trouble with queens failing, not much can be done this late except combine with another colony if possible. I don't usually have to feed this early but I have this year due I suppose to the strange weather which has upset the programme for the plants and therefore their nectar production, plus the lack of days bees can fly because of the weather they have eaten most of their stores.

The other problem at this time of year is wasps, once they get the upper hand over the bees the best solution is to move the hive, of course this may not be possible so at least close the entrance down to one bee space and put plenty of wasp traps around. There are some different gadgets you can put at the entrance to try to fool them but a bit late when they have decided to target your hive.



Mention of traps reminds me, I hope you have all put out your traps to monitor for any Asian Hornets. There have been 26 nests found this year already mostly in the Kent and Sussex area but they could appear anywhere so please be aware and report any sightings, with a photo, if possible, by email to [alertnonnative.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative.ac.uk)

### Apiary Visit to the Shillington's Apiary 12<sup>th</sup> August a thoroughly enjoyable and fascinating afternoon



# 2023 Programme Update

Tony Johnstone, Events Secretary [tmj67@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tmj67@hotmail.co.uk) Tel: 07973341557

We are only a month away from our Divisions Premier Event our **Honey Show** where we can display the efforts of our hard work and frustrations over the past year. But, as I said last month, it can only be a successful Show if we all enter something. It's the taking part that counts and so much knowledge can be gained from entering not just the honey classes but also the Cakes & Preserves and the various Beeswax classes- Flowers, candles, cosmetics and polishes etc. **This year we are providing Free Beeswax** to everybody who wants some, plus a refresher evening on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm at the Market House with Bridget Knutson, a real expert. Please join in and make this year's show the best yet and give the judges a hard time.

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September @ 7.00pm "Our Honey Show" Refresher Day at The Market House Castle Cary**  
**A practical Beeswax Session with Bridget Knutson.**

For beginners and less experience beekeepers entering the honey show may be intimidating, so our aim is to offer support to everybody. We want as many entries as possible and fill up the market House. The Division will provide Beeswax and demonstrate how you can make your own cosmetics, polishes and flowers & candles. We all had fun making these during the two sessions with Bridget before, so now, let's do the real thing.

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October 8.00am to 1.30pm At The Market House Castle Cary**

**The SESBKA Honey Show With set-up on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> 5.00pm to 7.30pm**

I already have a number of people who have volunteered on both days, as per the spreadsheet below, so please let me know how you can help, where indicated, on Friday evening and Saturday- all day or half day. In order to make registration and set-up more streamlined I need a small team to help entrants label and set out their entries please, so please stay behind to help after you have set out your entries. And of course, please make and donate your homemade cakes.

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November @ 7.00pm At The Market House Castle Cary The SESBKA Annual General Meeting**

Entries Stewards	<b>Volunteers Please</b>	<b>To assist labelling &amp; placing</b>	18.00hrs - 19.30hrs
<b>SATURDAY 14TH OCTOBER</b>			
<u>Task</u>	<u>Lead Person</u>	<u>Helpers</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Judges	Bridget Knutson Tina Harley Mary D'Arcy	Honey & Beecraft Classes Childrens Classes Baking & Preserves	
Judges Runner	Pat Coleman		
Results Compilation	Carol Seymour		
Coffee Bar/Cake Stall	Brenda Wood	<b>Volunteers for Rota Please</b>	09.00hrs - 14.00hrs
Honey Sales	Jane & Ken Jeanes	<b>Volunteers for Rota Please</b>	09.00hrs - 14.00hrs
Skep Making	Guy Clothier		
Beekeeping/Membership Information	Lional Horler		
Stewards	<b>Volunteers Please to Answer Questions</b>		09.30hrs - 13.30hrs
Clear-up	Everybody		13.30hrs - 14.30hrs

# News from the Apiary

Jeremy Lee, Apiary Manager

*If you can offer any help at the apiary at any time then please contact Jeremy at [jgwlee@me.com](mailto:jgwlee@me.com) or via the WhatsApp group*

Where has the summer gone/did it even start? August at the apiary has been a month of consolidation. With no surplus honey to remove (any excess has been shared amongst those who were in need) we have fed those who were light and treated every hive with Apivar. I know the jury is out over prophylactically treating as a matter of course but the colonies we inherited from Carymoor were suffering badly from varroosis that we can't afford to take any risks. Gladly we have nursed those colonies back into rude health (treated and re-queened) but sadly the two colonies that remained on Carymoor died out. Bees have been around for millions of years and I can't see how they can evolve to deal with this parasite in a matter of tens of years. I treated my own hives last week (which are big and healthy) and counted over 40 mites on my yellow boards just six hours after the strips went in. Surely that is not the best start in life for the winter bees who will need to survive for 6 months?

So after a very late start to the season, where we had 11 queen right colonies, we close the season with 11 queen right colonies. Of those, 10 have brand new queens laying like the clappers and we have lost the nasty colonies which weren't making life easy. Despite the many wasps, all are strong enough to fight them off. Gone are most of the mish mash frames and all the brood boxes are the same Hoffman frames, nicely spaced and the hives are clean and tidy. We supplied 5 nucs to newcomers with mixed success and are ready to hit the ground running for more nucs next spring. We intend to follow Geoff Blay's advice and go to double brood boxes next year and rationalise



the supers to 10 frames with castellated spacers. We have the facility to make tea with a massive mug for James Butt and an electrical inverter to run the motorised spinner for spring honey removal on site. Anyone with a death wish is welcome to try and extract late summer honey on site!! We have supplied (sold) 100 jars of honey to our landlords Wise Energy and Lionel has even fixed the deep hole by the gate.

Now we are established, The Apiary needs to become part of the day to day of the association for everyone to get hands on experience handling bees. We would like to start mid-week evening sessions in the summer as it is a joy to be up there on a sunny evening. I have learnt a huge amount from this season and I can't thank James Butt and Brian Magor for their contribution - sometimes dropping everything at short notice when all hands-on deck has been required. If you ever want to see a confident and competent bee keeper in action, you can't go far wrong with those two.

## A timely reminder from Geoff Blay, Master Beekeeper

It might be worth reminding members (or drawing their attention to) the dangers of starvation for colonies at this time of year.....and especially for this year!

Bees tend to consume the stores surrounding them before gravitating to honey stores further afield within the hive.....a lot of which, of course, may just have been removed by the beekeeper as part of the summer harvest.

Normally, the summer nectar flow leaves the brood boxes stuffed with honey together with somewhat depleted colony populations (bees soon die as a result of the effort of foraging etc.) In contrast, there was a pretty feeble summer flow this year (v little from second half of June) meaning that many colonies had large populations to maintain for a long period and not a lot coming in to help out....i.e., honey stores were used and especially those near the brood nest. I am finding brood nests very depleted in honey stores and will selectively feed (or add or leave stores) where necessary to ensure colony survival at least until the main round of winter feeding takes place.

## Bees For Sale -

Geoff has too many colonies and some are in the wrong place ....if anybody wants bees then please contact Geoff direct ....they are mainly full colonies with local queens although there are some strong nucs too.

he will charge £275 per colony which does not include the hive itself (Geoff will transfer to purchasers hive) but he will provide some assistance and advice to help beginners succeed.

Geoff 07785767718

## BBKA Update Asian Hornet

*Diane Drinkwater, BBKA Chair*

Please find attached a copy of a leaflet called 'How to Track Yellow-Legged Asian Hornets (Vespa Velutina)' This has been produced by Sarah Bunker for the BBKA.

BBKA trustees hope you find this leaflet useful. It can also be downloaded from: <https://www.bbka.org.uk/asian-hornet-resources>

The principal will work with European hornets, if you want to practice.

Asian Hornet Week is 4th - 10th September 2023. We have two live talks during the week with Andrew Durham and some pre-recorded talks that are available on the BBKA's YouTube Channel from Monday 4th. Andrew's talks will also be recorded and made available at a later date.

We hope you have all downloaded the Asian hornet watch app and are sharing information about identification and reporting of Asian hornets across all your social media including any local Facebook groups. AH team members in Kent have found this productive.

### Bramley Apple and Yoghurt Syllabub Crumble with Honey and Cider – serves 4



Ingredients:  
500gm Greek yogurt  
500gm Bramley apples – peeled, cored and diced  
75gm castor sugar  
50gm honey  
50ml cider  
8 digestive biscuits – crushed

#### Method:

In a medium-sized pan, cook apples, sugar, honey and cider until it resembles a thick puree and allow to cool.

Once cool mix half the apple puree with the yoghurt in a large bowl.

Spoon half the remaining apple puree into 4 small wine glasses. Fill to half full with the yoghurt mix and then add another layer of apple followed by the remaining yoghurt mix,

Top with biscuit crumbs and chill for at least 1 hour.

Garnish with a sprig of mint before serving.

