



## Inside this issue...

a bee's eye view of a flower  
equipment auction – March 20  
how farm spraying killed an apiary  
our bee farmer's take on this winter  
skep beekeeping  
what's on



MAR  
2016

5

# tauntonbuzz

the newsletter of Taunton & District Beekeepers





Anne Pike - Editor

## Welcome to issue 5 of tauntonbuzz

We have a smorgasbord of bee-related articles on the following pages which we hope will get the first of this year's four editions off to a sweet start!

Commercial beekeeper Chris Harries gives us his take on the winter and its impact on the apiary; there are extraordinary pictures which show the nectar guides which entice bees into flowers; Taunton President Jenny Gammon gives us the latest in her popular series about candle making and there's a tempting cake to bake.

Master Beekeeper Lynne Ingram, who has recently joined the committee, has written a blow by blow account of how pesticide spraying killed her bees and the subsequent investigation undertaken by the 'responsible' agencies. It makes chilling reading.

And, finally, if you'd like to print your newsletters as an A5 booklet and need some help...

- Open the pdf
- Select the print option
- In print, select 'booklet'
- Then 'print'
- Success?!

**Anne Pike** - Editor

**Cover pic:** These bees were spotted at the home of the karma sutra – Khajuraho Temples in India. If you can identify the species of bee please email the editor: [anne@ashford-media.co.uk](mailto:anne@ashford-media.co.uk)

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## Word from the Chair

With a new year following on from the AGM, we have a new committee which is up and running and looking forward to meeting you all at Heatherton Park.

During the winter we have not been idle having made various improvements to the clubhouse as follows:-

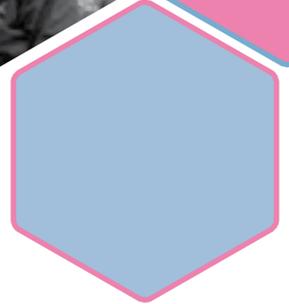
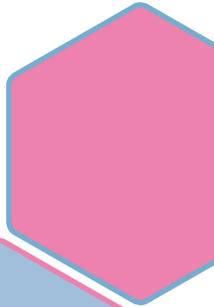
1. Hearing loop installed in the meeting room.
2. Level path access from the workshop to the beehives.
3. Floodlighting to the car park.
4. New coat racks for the bee suits.
5. Additional storage racking to the workshop.

I hope you will visit us this year and make use of these continually improving facilities.

We also hope the 2016 programme is to your liking and would be happy to receive ideas for the 2017 programme which, maybe surprisingly, we will have to start putting together very soon.

We have a healthy number of beginners who have signed up to their new programme which bodes well for the future success of the division. When their practical training begins in April we always need helpers to assist in the apiary so please let Mike Dillon know if you are able to help if only for one afternoon. Contact: [mikedillonbees@gmail.com](mailto:mikedillonbees@gmail.com)

Our regular annual auction is coming up in March so don't forget to submit anything surplus to your current needs and in the meantime I hope your bees are happy and have successfully come through the winter.



**Peter Maben - Chair**



**Taunton Buzz – editorial committee**

Barbara Drakeford  
Chris Harries  
Simon Jones  
Peter Maben  
Dave Parry  
Anne Pike



**Join the conversation with TBK on:**





Marsh marigold (Kingcup/*Caltha palustris*) show very strong bee-guides (a dark central region) in the ultraviolet which is visible to bees but not to us. These are seen as a dark central region in this image taken with ultraviolet illumination. Copyright: Bob Fosbury

## Honey guides

Dr Bob Fosbury is an astronomer who has worked on the Hubble Space Telescope amongst many other projects.

But in his spare time he takes remarkable photos including these which show some of the tricks flowers use to entice honeybees and pollinators.

Nectar guides, alternatively called pollen guides and honey guides, are markings or patterns that guide pollinators to their rewards.

These patterns are often invisible to the human eye but all is revealed under ultraviolet light.

Bob told me: "I remember many years ago trying to take UV images of flowers to look for the "bee-guides". I had to use film (actually Polaroid) because of its good UV sensitivity. The most spectacular example of bee-guides that are invisible to us is in the Marsh Marigold.

"It is more difficult now to use digital cameras to carry out this type of experiment because the CCD detectors are coated with a filter that rejects UV light and one has to have access to an adapted camera with this filter removed.

"It is actually possible to show that bee eyes are optimised for UV light by making relatively simple measurements of the diameter of the individual ommatidia [one of the optical units that make up the compound eye of an insect] and comparing this with the radius of curvature of the whole eye."



Marsh marigolds are one of the first signs of spring. The flower is remarkable in showing very powerful bee guide-marks in ultraviolet light. Copyright: Bob Fosbury

# Waxy Corner

## Making rolled Candles

By Jenny Gammon –  
Taunton Division President

Please remember that foundation is brittle when cold. Store the foundation at room temperature before using or have a hair dryer to blow on the wax/bottle of warm water to roll over the wax.

### You will need:

- Scissors to cut the wick
- A Stanley knife to cut the foundation if you are dividing it
- Hair dryer or a bottle of warm water
- Also a board to roll the candle on

If you are making candles to use at a show for children to “candle roll” I suggest that you cut the sheet of foundation in 4 pieces. Use a waxed length of ½” wick.

If you are making full length rolled candles (1 complete sheet) you will need 1” wick.

Remember that if you add extra foundation to make the candle thicker you will have to judge the width and use a thicker wick.

### Making the candle:

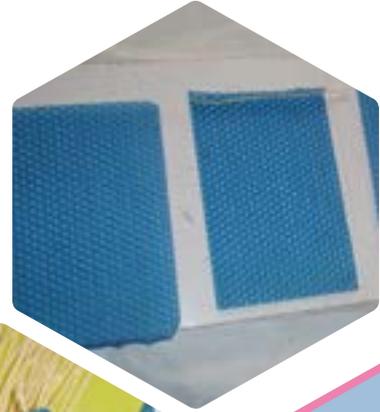
1. Fold the edge of the foundation over the edge of the board
2. Turn over the foundation and lay the wick in the groove you have made
3. Make the foundation secure around the wick
4. Start rolling the foundation to make your candle - watch one side so that you get the candle straight
5. Press the end of the foundation to the rolled candle. You will see that the wax will adhere to itself. Finish off (maybe) with a plastic bee to improve presentation.

### Care of Rubber Moulds

After using a rubber mould wash with warm water, dry carefully, leave for a short while to allow the inside to dry. Powder the inside with talcum powder. Make sure you do not pile one on top of each other and therefore lose the original shape.

If you find disaster has fallen and you have not done the above – hot water – not boiling – and wash the mould inside and out. When flexible dry carefully and immediately stuff with kitchen paper. You will find that the mould will regain shape – unless you have left it so long it has started to perish.

Leave for a while to set its shape – remove the stuffing and powder the inside. If necessary re-stuff the mould with a dry kitchen paper till you want to use it again.



# A Beekeeping Tale of Woe

## by Lynne Ingram, Master Beekeeper

It was a beautiful day in mid-June with perfect foraging weather - the sun was shining and 14 of my colonies were next to a field of beans in full flower. I had inspected them a couple of days before – and they were working hard. I expected a great crop coming in from these big production colonies.

So I was surprised as I drove up to the hives, to see hardly any bees in the air. I suited up and approached the hives, noticing a terrible smell that got worse as I got closer to them. As I went round to the front of the hives I saw mounds of dead (and rotting) bees in front of every hive – each one with their tongue out. Inside some hives I found trembling and paralysed bees – a result of damage to the nervous system caused by contact with pesticide spray.

I knew that the farmer had sprayed the beans in the previous two days as he had phoned to tell me a few hours beforehand. He had assured me however that he would not be spraying before 9pm – something we had discussed before I put the bees on the farm that year, due to a ‘near-miss’ incident the year before.

### Collecting evidence

Pesticide poisoning was the likely cause of these bee deaths, so I contacted Eleanor Burgess (SBI), Simon Jones (RBI), and the NBU, as well as texting photos to the farmer, sprayer and agronomist.

I also took photos of the dead bees, hives, location, crop, and the next day came back to collect samples of bees from each hive. As beekeepers we are advised to collect 3 x samples of 200 bees (about a large matchbox full) from each colony in the case of poisoning incidents. These need to be labeled and put into the freezer.

Eleanor came to inspect the hives in order to rule out disease as a cause of death, and wrote a detailed report. She advised me to send off my samples to the Wildlife Investigation Unit (WIU) for laboratory analysis. These should be sent in a cardboard box (eg matchbox) and not wrapped in plastic. You will need to keep the rest of the samples in the freezer in case further investigation is needed following WIU analysis. With hindsight it would also have been useful to gather and freeze samples of the crop that had been sprayed, and also to send in an apiary plan to guide laboratory analysis.

Both Eleanor and I were contacted by Natural England (NE), who advised us that they were going to fully investigate the case. A NE wildlife advisor came down and we spent time visiting the site, and going through the details of the incident. I had by then gathered details of the chemicals sprayed on the crops, and gave details to the advisor, along with photos etc.

The beans had been sprayed with a tank mix of two pesticides (Lambda-cyhalothrin, Aphox,) a



**“I have been shocked and disappointed by what has happened to my bees, but especially by the lack of investigation done by Natural England”**

fungicide (Boscalid) plus trace elements. In addition the neighbouring fields had been sprayed with another fungicide (Prothiacanazole) six times in the week before. Recent research has found that ‘azole’ fungicides can have a synergistic effect on pesticides increasing their toxicity up to 550 fold.

After this flurry of activity there was a gap of four months before I heard anything about the analysis, but meanwhile I was busy trying to save the remaining bees.

### The bees

The flying bees had died– but the house bees and brood were at that stage still alive. I decided to ‘shook swarm’ each colony onto fresh foundation and feed heavily with 1:1 syrup. This was because both the wax and pollen were likely to have been contaminated by the pesticides, causing lethal or sub lethal problems for the remaining bees

I made up hundreds of new frames with foundation, prepared clean hives and gallons of syrup. I also moved the colonies back home, and spent time trying to nurse them back to health, but gradually they dwindled away, going from from double brood boxes to single, then to nuc boxes. The queens went off lay and died. My honey crop was non-existent, as I did not have the bees to take advantage of any honey flows. The farmer accepted responsibility for the incident and suggested I claim against his insurance, but as yet I have not received any compensation.

### The Investigation

**The Wildlife Incident Investigation Service (WIIS) is held up nationally and internationally as a flagship organization protecting our wildlife. It involves the collaborative work of four separate organisations. It is led by the [Chemicals Regulation Directorate \(CRD\)](#), formerly the [Pesticides Safety Directorate](#). They are the ‘Competent Authority’ for the approval and regulation of pesticides and some other chemicals. Natural England (NE) manage the Scheme on the behalf of CRD and undertake site enquiries into pesticide exposure and, Fera Science Ltd (FERA) carry out pesticide analysis and, if appropriate, the [Animal and Plant Health Agency \(APHA\)](#) carry out post mortems on wildlife. At FERA**



**the Wildlife Incident Unit (WIU) will analyse samples for pesticides, and give an interpretation of the result based on information from the agencies involved. In the case of bee poisoning, the bee inspectors inspect the bees to rule out disease as a cause of death, and issue an incident number. Following a recent re-organisation within FERA the NBU play no other role in the investigation. This now means that suspected bee poisonings are investigated by people with scant knowledge of bees or beekeeping practice.**

In my case the NE investigation was minimal - the 'investigator' rang the farmer, found that he was unavailable, and never tried again. That was all that was done. I had supplied names, addresses and spray sheets, but there was still a lot more to find out

In time, results came though from the laboratory, which revealed that the majority of bees analysed had been in contact with the tank mix sprayed, in addition to other pesticides and fungicides. The investigator seemed unable to interpret or explain the results accurately or realistically – unable to tell me how many samples were analysed, whether they were analysed separately, and what the results meant. However, undeterred by this lack of understanding, he simply decided to close the case. I contacted the lab myself, and they were able to provide me with full details of what had been found on each colony. I have continued to liaise directly with the lab to try and get a full understanding of what killed the bees.

I have been shocked and disappointed by what has happened to my bees, but especially by the lack of investigation done by NE. This year there were record numbers of suspected bee poisoning incidents – and as in previous years, most cases were closed – not surprising of course if the level of investigation in my case is typical. It is essential that Beekeeping Inspectors are involved in these

investigations – they know bees and beekeeping practice.

The BBKA are planning a new online 'Bee Connected' project – a sort of online spray liaison scheme. But if there are no appropriate resources to investigate incidents properly or to act on incorrect usage of chemical sprays, then our bees will continue to be poisoned, and we will never know the real level of this in the UK. In the absence of proper evidence, the use of toxic chemicals on flowering crops will continue to kill our bees.

### Be Prepared

- Let your Spray Liaison Officer (Chris Harries [01823 442734](tel:01823442734)) know where your hives are situated.
- Let the landowner know where your hives are and give them your full contact details. Discuss with them when best to spray their crops in order to protect your bees, and ask them to give you notice of this.
- BBKA have a useful leaflet to give to the landowner – Honeybees and Pesticides: [Click here](http://www.bbka.org.uk/files/library/bees_and_pesticides-I019_1342859149.pdf)  
[http://www.bbka.org.uk/files/library/bees\\_and\\_pesticides-I019\\_1342859149.pdf](http://www.bbka.org.uk/files/library/bees_and_pesticides-I019_1342859149.pdf)
- The Crop Protection Association produce a useful booklet for you to give to landowners – Bee Safe, Bee Careful. [Click here](http://www.cropprotection.org.uk/media/1948/bee_safe_bee_careful.pdf)  
[www.cropprotection.org.uk/media/1948/bee\\_safe\\_bee\\_careful.pdf](http://www.cropprotection.org.uk/media/1948/bee_safe_bee_careful.pdf)
- Eleanor Burgess (Seasonal Bee Inspector) [0777 511 9465](tel:07775119465)

# News In Brief

## Exam success

Four of our members – who happen to be committee members! – have all passed their Basic Assessment.

The test is for beekeepers who have kept bees for at least a year and includes a colony inspection with an oral test at the end.

Our President Jenny Gammon presented certificates to, from left to right, Mike Dillon, Dave Parry, Lyndsay Stone and Andrew Perry.



## BBKA in better heart

The last year has been a turbulent one for the BBKA but reports from the Annual Delegates Meeting held in January are encouraging.

Somerset's BBKA delegate is Richard Bache who said "overall, I thought, a positive meeting and certainly the most encouraging meeting of the last three years".

- John Hendrie, a Master Beekeeper from Kent, was elected President
- BBKA's request to increase annual capitation per member from £19 to £21 for 2016-17 was rejected
- The new head of finance is Howard Pool who "certainly filled me with confidence"
- The executive presented an exciting new take on the spray liaison scheme, Bee Connected, using online registration and email notification.
- The majority of the propositions regarding standing orders, including Somerset's, were referred to the executive as it appeared that the standing orders in use are unconstitutional
- Richard's report is available from the members' only area of the SBKA website.

## Winner of the caption competition

Entries flooded in for the caption competition in the last issue of Buzz for Tony Buckland's photo of Chris Harries in action on Exmoor.

Phil Moss, Editor of The Scottish Beekeeper, just pipped the competition with 'Who put queen pheromone in my hive paint?' Welcome to our Taunton newsletter, Phil!



## Update into research looking at the diet of honeybees

Through our membership subscriptions we have been helping to fund Ben Jones to undertake a PhD to examine the effect of dietary pollen on the health and behaviour of honey bees.

Ben (National Bee Unit, The Food and Environment Research Agency, University of Exeter) is examining the effect of dietary pollen on the health and behaviour of honey bees and recently gave the county an update.

He said: "My research will help inform beekeepers how the diet of honey bees affects the health of their colonies. I have been able to share my results with you at the SWCJCC [South West Counties Joint Consultative Committee] meetings and would be happy to do so again.

"I would like to thank the South West beekeeping associations as my research has only been made possible by the generous funding received from your beekeepers."

### 2012

During the first year of my PhD, my work focused on the development and optimisation of the research tools and methods I would need to complete my PhD. The bulk of experimental work was focused on investigating the dynamics of the immune system of honey bees in order to establish a framework to work within.

### 2013

A large chunk of experimental work was completed in 2013 where I investigated how honey bees alter their feeding behaviour in response to stress. In addition, I ran preliminary trials to investigate any benefits to the bees immune system gained from pollen feeding.

## 2014

My trials in 2014 were guided by the information learned from 2013. I aimed to 'drill into' the detail of why honey bees alter their diet when compromised. I spent the entire 2014 season undertaking numerous laboratory trials to investigate how honey bees regulate their uptake of essential amino acids and the health benefits incurred from altering their nutrient intake under different conditions of stress. I was able to share some of these latest results at the National Honey Show in November.

## 2015

I'm now entering the fourth year of my part-time PhD. 2015 had been very eventful, starting with an upgrade meeting at the University of Exeter, reviewing all results so far. The meeting went well and I was approved to carry on with my PhD. Throughout 2015 I have been planning and running experiments to investigate whether my findings of behavioural changes in diet choice translate into field colonies and I am now currently collecting this field data.

I intend to submit my results for publication in the scientific and beekeeping journals and continue to enjoy researching this fascinating field. I hope to inform beekeepers with practical advice at the end of the PhD by publishing in the beekeeping journals."

## Membership update

Thank you to all those who renewed their membership for 2016 as requested by the end of January; we currently have 160 members including around 40 associate members! You will all have received your BDI certificate of insurance from me which includes a receipt for your payment; please remember to check your certificate to make sure that you have been correctly insured and keep it in a safe place. If you do mislay it, I can send you a copy at any time during the year.

There are still a number of you who have not yet renewed; your membership lapses at the beginning of March!

Some of you occasionally have questions about your Bee Disease Insurance and what exactly is covered in the event of needing to make a claim. Do take a look at the BDI website if you want to find out more. It's very informative, explains exactly what is and what isn't covered by your insurance, and what to do in the event of making a claim. It also gives the contact details for people who are much more knowledgeable than I am and who can help with specific queries.

<http://www.beediseasesinsurance.co.uk/home>

Lyndsay Stone

## Date and Walnut Honey Cake

A lot of our newsletter is devoted, quite rightly, to the work of the Division and to becoming better beekeepers. What better reward than a tasty treat using the fruits of our labours ...

I'm grateful to Rosemary Burgess for this delicious cake recipe.

### Method:

1. Line a 2lb loaf pan or 19cm square pan
2. Pre heat oven to 170 C / Moderate oven
3. Combine honey, water, golden syrup and butter in a saucepan and heat until butter melts.
4. Remove from heat and cool.
5. Add chopped nuts and dates to this mix.
6. Combine dry sifted ingredients with honey, mix and add the beaten egg gradually.
7. Pour into prepared pan bake in a moderate oven 170 C for 35 to 45 minutes.
8. When taken from oven and still hot brush top with the mixture of honey and butter.

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of honey
- ¾ cup of water
- 1 tbsp golden syrup
- 30g of butter
- 1 ½ cups of chopped dates
- 1 cup of chopped walnuts
- 2 ¼ cups of self raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp mixed spice
- 2 eggs For the glaze
- 1 tbsp honey
- Knob of butter (melted)



## Taunton Division's AGM

You'll be glad to know that our Division is in good heart!

At our AGM we thanked retiring treasurer Raymond Smart for all his hard work and welcomed some new blood to the committee's ranks.

### The new line up looks like this:

**President** – Jenny Gammon

**Chairman** – Peter Maben

**Vice Chairman** – Neil Trood

**Secretary** – Barbara Drakeford

**Treasurer** – Julie Whitmarsh

**Membership Secretary** – Lyndsay Stone

**Apiary Managers** – Andrew Perry and Dave Parry

**Equipment Manager** – David Pearce

**Beginner's secretary** – Mike Dillon

**Health & Safety** – David Sanderson

Lynne Ingram

Simon Jones

Diane Troake

Raymond Smart

**Publicity** – Anne Pike

And that's not to mention all those who lend a hand as course lecturers and with apiary maintenance etc



## The County Honey Show

Would you like to become part of a new committee to plan and run this year's Honey Show?

The first meeting will be held at 7pm on Monday, April 11 at Heatherton Teaching Apiary.

The Honey Show is part of the two-day Taunton Flower Show which takes place on August 5 and 6.

The bees and honey marquee is one of the most popular features attracting thousands of visitors.

In addition to competitions for honey, wax, cookery etc, there is an opportunity to stage entertaining and informative displays and exhibits.

The new committee will look at how to refresh the show with a view to reflecting the county's 12 Divisions.

SBKA agreed to incorporate the county show into Taunton's honey show for the next five years.

If you would like to get involved, please email Peter Maben, Chairman of Taunton Division: [mail@maben.plus.com](mailto:mail@maben.plus.com)

## Apiary Report - February

As it stands at the moment we currently have 10 hives and one Nuc, all of which have had flying bees in the last few days. All except one hive have had to be fed fondant as an insurance, due to some being light when hefted. The Varroa treatment had to be delayed until January because of weather conditions encouraging the Queens to lay.

Since the last edition of Buzz a new path between the storeroom and the hives has been laid giving easier access to the tarmac area. Plans are in place for a tree surgeon to remove dead and diseased branches from the trees surrounding the apiary. We aim to carry this out by the end of February, weather permitting.

During the coming season it is planned to keep the number of hives at the current level. No doubt nucs will be made from the hives during the swarming months but until the hives are assessed after the winter all plans could change. Our main aim is to provide hives fit for training purposes.

**Andrew Perry, Apiary Manager**





## Skep Beekeeping

Skep beekeeper and Druid Chris Park gave us an entertaining insight into his ancient style of beekeeping at our AGM.

He told us about his experience living and keeping bees on an organic farm in Oxfordshire where he finds skeps are not only good for healthy bees but also produce a decent harvest.

He said his bees' own behaviour kept varroa within acceptable levels - they are allowed to swarm freely (as he doesn't have neighbours close by!) which reduces disease and re-queens naturally.

And his bees come from hygienic beekeeper Ron Hoskins (who is speaking to us on Saturday, March 12 at Heatherton Park).

Chris has developed his own style of straw skep which he rests on a wooden stand fitted with a varroa mesh floor and legs.

He demonstrated how to make one – roughly they're 16" in diameter and 14" deep with slender willow stakes inserted through the walls help to stabilise the comb.

He mentioned that the bees will always choose to build their comb in the 'cold' way.

Surplus stores are collected in smaller straw skeps placed over the hole in the top of the skep housing the colony. The hole also allows supplementary feeding.

To harvest surplus honey and create fresh comb he inverts the skep containing the honey/colony and puts an empty one above. By drumming on the sides of the bottom skep he gradually drives the bees into their new home. Honey- filled combs can be either cut from the sides, or a whole skep can be cleared, the comb crushed and the honey extracted.

[www.acorneducation.com](http://www.acorneducation.com)



## Spring Equipment Auction

Get ready for Spring at our annual equipment auction.

If you're sorting out your beekeeping equipment and either have too much stuff or not enough, come along!

There will be hives and plenty of frames etc, if past years are anything to go by, along with extracting equipment, books and magazines and miscellaneous bric-a-brac. In fact something for all beekeepers!

It takes place on Sunday, March 20 at Ruishton Village Hall near Taunton.

**Items received at the village hall from 8am, viewing from 10am to 1.30pm; auction starts at 2pm**



Skittling fun! We teamed up with Tiverton beekeepers for a good-fun evening at the Blue Ball Inn, Sampford Moor.

## Sixty years a beekeeper

David Morris, who is one of our members and is prominent in Somerset Beekeepers Association, has been reflecting on his beekeeping life.

Here's an extract from his reminiscences when he looks at kitting up – then and now.

“In those days, protection as far as I was concerned, was an old jacket that zipped up at the front, wellingtons and a veil that was a cross between a boy scouts hat with a veil similar to those on hats that adorned high class millenary. They were supposed to be large enough to be tucked inside the jacket but often allowed access for the bees as soon as one bent over. Very few beekeepers wore gloves and then only when the bees got aggressive. In those days beekeepers were real beekeepers!

Very often the veil was just that with no hat. These were slipped over the top of a trilby or if you were really with it, over a ‘Pith Helmet’. This often indicated that the wearer had served in India and there were quite a few of those about in the 1950s. A popular innovation was the square metal mesh veil. These were slipped over a hat as before but proved to be heavy to wear after a time.

The first overall that I had I purchased from Gerald Fisher. It had a zip up the front and held the veil in place. The trouble was he only had them in blue! No wonder he had them on special offer! I wore it for years, and can honestly say that the colour appeared to have no effect on the bees.

Eventually we all purchased a ‘Sheriff’ suit or one of his hood veils. These were a vast improvement and with the help of gauntlets, and wellingtons we were better protected. Today manipulating bees without wearing gloves is discouraged. However, I didn't get EFB in the first 45 years of beekeeping and it was very rare for many beekeepers including myself, to wear gloves at all. Is this a change for the worse I ask myself?”



A bee demonstration in the 1960s. Note the variety of veils and not a pair of wellingtons in sight!

## Spring is knocking at the door



With queens laying throughout the warmest winter ever recorded [it's official!], and drones and wasps around until the new year, I had to take out some mouse guards in January so the bees could clear dead drones from the hives.

The consequences of all this mild weather will probably be stronger colonies in early spring, higher varroa levels and more failing queens in early summer, just when they should be coming up to peak egg-laying.

Bigger colonies now means much more attention must be given to food levels. Give them some baker's fondant if in any doubt as to whether they need it or not. Actually, err on the side of caution and give them some anyway – better safe than sorry, especially as the forecast for March is two weeks of cold weather, followed by two weeks of even colder temperatures!

I always like to keep an eye on the hive entrance to check the pollen going in, and debris coming out!

During this chilly spell you have a last chance to get supers, brood boxes, floors etc. ready to go when things warm up. Don't forget to give your smoker a good cleanout. And don't forget the forthcoming auction for moving on surplus kit, or picking up items you need!

### Chris Harries

Taunton member & commercial honey farmer  
(Sedgemoor Honey Farm)

## Dates for the diary

**SATURDAY, MARCH 12**  
**2.30pm**

### **Varroa resistant bees**

Speaker: Ron Hoskins  
The Apiary

**SATURDAY, MARCH 12**  
**2pm**

### **Somerset Beekeepers Association Annual General Meeting**

Speaker: Dr Michael Keith-Lucas who  
will give a talk about pollen  
Orchardleigh Golf Club  
Frome BA11 2PB

**SUNDAY , MARCH 20**

Items received at the village hall from  
8am, viewing from 10am to 1.30pm;  
auction starts at 2pm

### **Our Annual Spring Equipment Auction**

Refreshments, Raffle,  
Free car parking  
Ruishton Village Hall,  
near Taunton, TA3 5JD

**APRIL 8-10**

### **The BBKA Spring Convention**

Harper Adams University

**THURSDAY, APRIL 14,**  
**7:30pm**

### **Beekeeping at Buckfast Abbey**

Tutor: Clare Densley  
The Apiary

**SATURDAY, APRIL 30,**  
**2:30pm**

### **Tutorial about the BBKA Basic Assessment**

Suitable for all applicants (must have  
managed at least one colony of bees  
for a minimum of 12 months)

Tutor: Suzy Perkins  
The Apiary

**SATURDAY, MAY 7**  
**2:30pm**

### **Swarm control and splitting colonies**

Tutor: Tony Richards  
The Apiary

### **WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY, JUNE 1-4** **SBKA at the Royal Bath & West Show**

To get involved contact:  
Ken Tredgett  
T: 01373 464736  
tredg@talktalk.net

The Royal Bath & West Showground  
near Shepton Mallet





**Beekeeping veil and suit repairs:  
Ring Jenny on 07788407497  
or 01823 270465**

**If you want to buy or sell  
beekeeping equipment, you can  
do it here! We're offering free  
classified ads for Members and  
their families.**

## **Classified adverts**

If you want to buy or sell beekeeping equipment, you can do it here! We're offering free classified ads for Members and their families.

Email your advert to:  
[anne@ashford-media.co.uk](mailto:anne@ashford-media.co.uk)

Remember caveat emptor – it's your responsibility to check out the goods/buyer! Plus, clean any beekeeping equipment thoroughly if you're selling or buying to prevent the spread of disease.