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15

Summer
2018

tauntonbuzz

the newsletter of Taunton & District Beekeepers



Introduction

In the last few weeks the sun has been beating down and our bees have been working frenetically as they gather the tempting rewards offered up by flowers nearby.

Get recognition for their work, and your ability to harvest, and enter the products from your hive at the honey shows in August. Turn the pages for handy tips and see if you can help your club run one of the most popular features at Taunton Flower Show.

Jenny, our Show entries secretary, would love you to enter wax flowers this year and provides the second part of her step-by-step guide to creating wax flower magic.

New in this issue is a crossword provided by Lynne Ingram. Test yourself – and beekeeping friends – with your knowledge of bee biology and complete the puzzle. In case you need a little help, we've included a word list.

And a sweet taste of summer is provided by Lyndsay Stone with her mouth-watering raspberry and honey ice cream recipe.

All in all this is a sumptuous and scrumptious issue – I hope you enjoy it!



Keep up to date with what we're up to by following us on Facebook

Check out our Facebook page **@TauntonDistrictBeekeepers** for snippets of news from the apiary, events and beekeeping chat.

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Report from the Chair

It's that time of the year again when your committee starts to produce the 2019 programme of events and talks. It might seem a long way off but experience tells us it can take a while to pull everything together.

We are considering which external speakers can give us interesting insights into beekeeping to help our general education whilst providing an enjoyable and fun occasion.

We feel it could be worth setting up drop-in sessions on a regular basis where we can all share our beekeeping experiences be they successes, disasters or just plain knowledge.

If you feel the need for some specific knowledge do get in touch and we will try to include it into the programme.

The forthcoming annual Honey Show next month at Vivary Park is now organised but helpers always needed to set up the marquee - again contact any of us if you are able to help.

I hope your harvest is on course for success.



Peter Maben - Chair
mail@maben.plus.com



Taunton Buzz – editorial committee

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School Visit

Hemyock Primary School was buzzing when Barbara Drakeford and Vanessa Woodford visited to talk to 24 eight and nine year olds about our favourite topic. The children had been studying pollinators, so they already had a little knowledge of the subject.

Barbara talked about the life cycle, bee society and life in the hive to an attentive audience who couldn't help asking questions and telling of their experiences with bees – wasps and all.

Vanessa did the great reveal and talked the children through what they could see in the observation hive which had been kept covered and as cool as possible beforehand.

A great cheer went up when Mrs Mann, the class teacher, was the first to spot the queen!

It was a pleasure to go and talk to some young people who showed a great enthusiasm for the subject. Mrs Mann reported that they had come back into class after lunch with a huge amount of bee knowledge.

Indeed, we may just already have an entry for the Schools class at next year's Honey Show!

Barbara Drakeford



Taster Day!

Have a friend interested in beekeeping? Or know someone who is? Then our taster day on Saturday afternoon, September 8 would be a perfect introduction to the craft.

We've put together an interesting and varied afternoon which includes:

- honey tasting
- a talk about the basics of beekeeping and the beekeeping year
- a hands on experience of opening up a hive and looking inside
- handling and looking at beekeeping tools and equipment including a hive
- tea and cake
- time to ask questions

The cost is £25.

Anyone interested should contact Julie Husband
tauntonbeginners@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk
or call/text on 07867 782435



Hampshire bee farmer says future is bright for beekeeping



Our President Chris Harries shares a joke with fellow bee farmer John Cossman at President's afternoon.

John Cossburn, who has been beekeeping for 64 years (he started as a school boy!), said he is so confident about the future of beekeeping, that he has encouraged his son to join the business.

He was the guest speaker at the popular President's Day when he recounted his route into beekeeping (school), his associations with scientists at Rothamsted researching pesticides and how he played a part in developing the Kenyan top bar hive, which has become popular around the world.

Despite the pressures on honeybees including pesticides, diseases, lack of forage, climate change and invasive species like the Asian hornet and small hive beetle, he still believes there is a good future for beekeepers.

There is a shortage of honey on the world market exacerbated by the big honey producing countries consuming more themselves:

"And who knows what will happen when we come out of Europe. The only countries in Europe that export honey are Spain, Hungary and Romania, the rest are importers of honey, the same with the UK, and we are only producing 15-20 per cent if that. So there's great scope out there."

President's Day provided a relaxed opportunity to talk bees, generally chat and enjoy a delicious tea.

A tale about queens



Our recent talk by Marin Anastasov - Master Beekeeper, Chair of Gloucester BKA, involved with BBKA exams and who has kept bees for over 20 years and currently manages 25 colonies - about queen rearing prompted this memory from David Morris, who has been a BBKA member for a breath-taking 61 years.

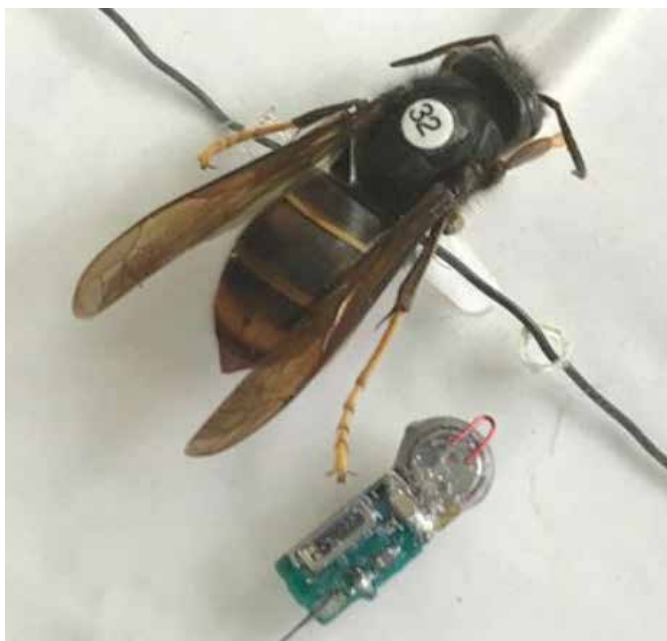
"You may recall the story I tell of being at the Buckfast Mating Apiary on Dartmoor at a county rally and one of the returning mated queens found its way to Heatherton Park in a match box. It was one of the queens used to raise the Miller queen cells. The captured queen would have been from the progeny used by Brother Adam and was completely different from the ones that were sold as Buckfast queens."

Thanks David, memories, snippets and articles are always welcome.



A large, textured, light-brown Asian hornet nest is shown hanging from a tree branch. The nest has a complex, layered structure with many small, circular openings. Several hornets are visible on the nest, some entering and exiting the holes. The nest is surrounded by green leaves and branches, creating a natural, outdoor setting.

Asian hornet nests found by radio-tracking



Any suspected sighting of an Asian hornet should be reported, ideally with a photo, via email to **alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk** or by using the **Asian Hornet Watch App**.

Part of your membership fee has been directed by SBKA to Exeter University's Asian hornet research project which tracked hornets using radio-telemetry. In recent weeks the team published its findings in Communications Biology.

Scientists attached tiny tags to Asian hornets, and then used a tracking device to follow them to their nests; the first time this has been achieved.

They tested the technique in southern France and Jersey – where Asian hornets are well established – and the tags led researchers to five previously undiscovered nests.

“Our new method of tracking offers a really important new tool to tackle the spread of this invader, providing an efficient means of finding hornets’ nests in urban, rural and wooded environments,” said lead researcher Dr Pete Kennedy, of the University’s Environment and Sustainability Institute.

Asian hornets prey on honeybees and other pollinators, and the scientists say the technique demonstrated in their study could help protect Britain’s “beleaguered pollinator populations”.

“It is vital to find the nests early in the season to prevent the hornet spreading, as later in the year hundreds of new queens emerge and disperse from each nest, each with the potential to make new nests,” said Professor Juliet Osborne, a co-author on the study, and Director of the Environment and Sustainability Institute.

Asian hornets are smaller than native European hornets, have a largely dark brown or black body and yellow-tipped legs, a distinctive orange-yellow strip near the end of their abdomen and often a thin orange-yellow line just behind the “waist”. Their face is orange and the back of the head is black, unlike the European hornet in which both face and back of head are yellow.

Any suspected sighting of an Asian hornet should be reported, ideally with a photo, via email to alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk or by using the Asian Hornet Watch App.

Eleanor Burgess, Taunton member and seasonal bee inspector, is behind a planned Asian hornet week provisionally scheduled for September 10-16. More information to follow.

Anne Pike, Taunton member and chairman of SBKA, highlighted our link with Exeter University at the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee as part of the first Evidence Week run by campaigning charity Sense about Science which seeks to promote evidence-based policy making.

The National Bee Unit has added a new feature to BeeBase to help understand UK Asian hornet surveillance. Many of us are monitoring for Asian hornets and BeeBase apiary records have been improved so we can record when killing or monitoring traps are in our apiaries. Just remember to update your records!



Lots of honey? Enter your honey show!



The bees have been literally working round the clock in the hot weather gathering nectar and pollen to fill our supers.

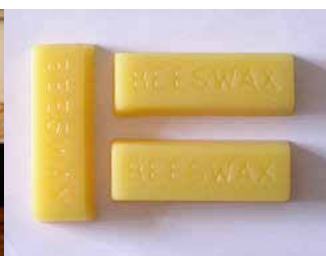
Hopefully your colonies are stacked three or four high to take advantage of all available forage including white clover, lime, bramble, willow herb, water balsam and meadow sweet.

Many beekeepers have had to extract at the beginning of the month to free up equipment to return to their colonies. And, of course, a good summer means plenty of honey and that means lots to enter the Honey Show on August 3 and 4 at Vivary Park, Taunton.

Take a look at the schedule, which is available online, and choose your classes. For the first time, Taunton Flower Show will offer you a free one-day ticket if you spend £10 or more on entries (you can combine honey show entries with other classes). Total prize money exceeds £100.

Staging of entries takes place on Thursday evening from 6 – 8pm and entry to the Show is much reduced after 4pm on Saturday so you can have a look around before picking up your exhibits after 6pm.

Entries close on Wednesday, July 25.



New to showing?

If you sell honey, it should be of show quality, so you're already nearly there! But there are one or two things which honey judges look for which is of little importance to the consumer. For instance, when judging cut comb honey, the judge will require the piece of comb to fit snugly in the container, whilst the consumer's principal interest is a piece of comb of the right size and price to suit his or her pocket, and if it correctly fits the container or not is of minor interest.

So let us deal with these finer points which will influence the judge to decide in our favour. Remember, the judge's task is a difficult one, and the larger the number of show entries, the harder it becomes. So he is looking for the slightest indiscretion, which will allow him to reject an entry, in order to concentrate his attention on a smaller number. Needless to say therefore, it is usually the exhibitor who can show that he has tried a little bit harder, who tends to win the prizes.

Study the honey show rules carefully and strictly adhere to them as this is often an area where indiscretions occur, allowing the judge the opportunity to discount entries. Many classes call for a matching pair of entries,

which means that the containers must match as well as the honey. Some honey jars for instance, have differing shoulder designs. Some have a serrated rim on the bottom, while on others it is plain. All minor points, but points which will allow the judge to rule out entries as contravening the regulations. On the face of it, these rules would appear to be petty and hair splitting, but it is important that every entry is standard, to ensure anonymity. Without this, the judge could be exposed to possible allegations of favouritism.

It is worth mentioning here that although major honey shows, such as the National, are treated with a great deal of respect, and attract serious competition, honey shows at local level are viewed in a lighter atmosphere. That is not to say that you shouldn't do your best, but the emphasis is on an enjoyable occasion with friends. As with all things in beekeeping, showing should be fun and approached with a jovial outlook.

This is an extract taken from the website which gives new beeks in particular a good breakdown of what's required for most classes. <http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk/>

Your club needs you!

Our Bees and Honey marquee is one of the most popular at Taunton Flower Show and it's where we stage the Somerset Honey Show in addition to our own Honey Show. Literally thousands of people visit our feature to find out more about honeybees and the products of the hives.

Magnificent displays of different honeys, wax and other products from, or inspired by, the hive are on display. Particularly popular is the observation hive and live beekeeping.

But to do all this we need help! Can you lend a hand at Heatherton Park on Saturday July 29 at 1pm to pack up all the show kit? And then again at Taunton Flower Show on Saturday, August 4 at 6pm to dismantle the displays?

Also, we are short of people to man the feature on Saturday, August 4.

Please contact our secretary Barbara Drakeford: email@drakelilles.co.uk 01823 490811

Top Somerset Exhibitor

Our very own David Pearce has done it again! He scored the highest number of points of any Somerset exhibitor at the recent Royal Bath & West Show and was presented with the aptly named Somerset Cup. Congratulations!



Read on for a bowl of summer temptation!

A perfect dish for a hot summer day – give into temptation and try this recipe...

Honey and Raspberry Ice Cream



You will need:

450g (1lb) raspberries
150mls (1/4 pint) double cream
150mls (1/4 pint) plain yoghurt
3 egg whites
2 tablespoons lemon juice
10 level tablespoons honey
Pinch of salt

Method:

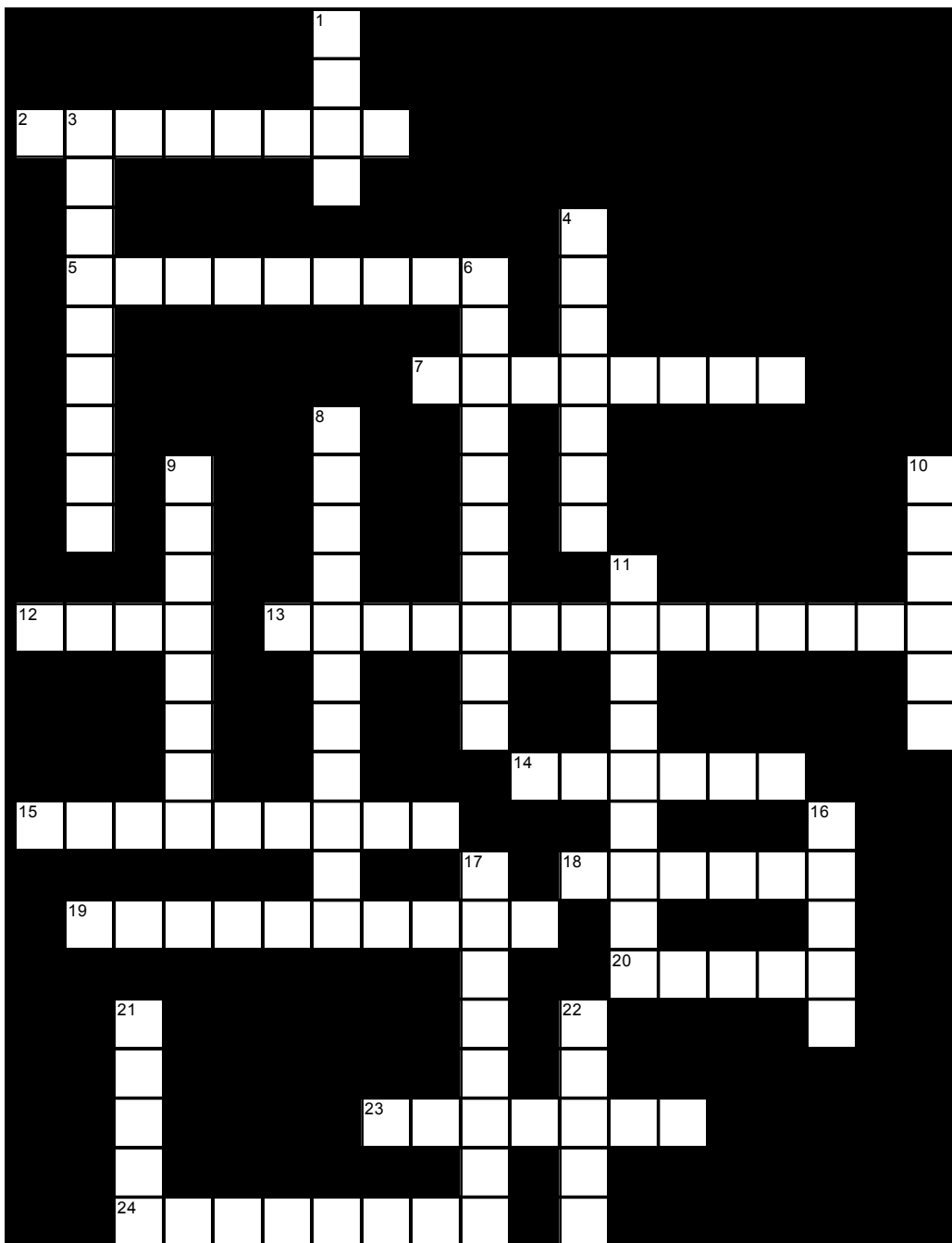
1. Sieve the raspberries to give a puree and blend with the cream, yoghurt, lemon juice, honey and salt. Put this mix in a shallow plastic container and freeze until firm, but not completely frozen.
2. Return to a bowl and beat until smooth. Whisk the egg whites until stiff and fold into ice cream. Return to the container and freeze.

Recipe tried and tested by Lyndsay Stone.

Beehive in summer art show!

Item 682 at this year's Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy is a life-size architectural model of a beehive created by Louisa Hutton RA and Matthias Sauerbruch of the international architecture firm, Sauerbruch Hutton. This colourful creation is constructed of 'stackable spruce frames with an aluminium sheet top', all hand painted and can be yours for £6,350!





Word List:

ABDOMEN
 ANTENNAE
 COMPOUND
 CROP
 DORSAL
 HEAD
 HEART
 HEMOLYPH
 MANDIBLES
 NASSANOFF
 OCELLI
 OVIPOSITER
 PROBOSCIS
 PROVENTRICULUS
 SEGMENTS
 SPERMATHECA
 SPIRACLES
 STING
 THORAX
 THREE
 TRACHEAS
 VENTRAL
 VENTRICULUS
 WINGS

Basic Bee Biology

Across

- 2 Two of these segmented sensory organs are on the head of a bee.
 5 Tiny holes along the sides of a bee through which they breathe.
 7 The proper name bee blood.
 12 The gland often thought of as a 2nd stomach in a bee.
 13 This is between the the "honey stomach" and the digestive stomach.
 14 The primary motor functions are on a bee.
 15 Bees use these to groom and eat with.
 18 Bees have three of these simple eyes.
 19 The original purpose and name of the female bees sting.
 20 Primary defensive weapon on a bee.
 23 The underside of a bee.
 24 Threadlike tubes through which oxygen is carried inside of bees.

Down

- 1 Where the main sensory input is located on a bee.
 3 Exterior dorsal gland on a honey bee from which they excrete the "marker" pheromone.
 4 The digestive, reproductive and defensive functions are in this part of a bee.
 6 The reproductive, "container" in the abdomen that can store and keep alive the sperm of the drones a Queen bee mates with.
 8 Another way to refer to the digestive stomach
 9 Bees have two of these primary types of eye.
 10 The top side of a bee.
 11 The sucking "tube" used by bees to intake nectar and other liquids.
 16 Bees have 4 of these.
 17 Bees antennae are made up of multiple_____.
 21 The blood pumping organ in bees containing 5 chambers.
 22# of main parts of a bees body.



Beeswax Flower Making

Materials for flowers:

Clean beeswax
Wires for stems and leaves
Florists binding tape
Candle dyes
Cotton wool
Cotton thread for stems

You will also need:

A piece of buffed smooth plywood
Small plastic or metal ladle
Bowl for melting the wax
Large bowl of cold water
Scissors or craft knife

To make flowers you will need thin sheets of wax which can be cut into petal or leaf shapes.

The wax must be clean and free from Propolis etc. but not necessarily pale.

Use a shallow bowl standing in an old frying pan of water. Remember to keep the water topped up. Soak the piece of plywood in the bowl of cold water. The water will stop the wax sticking to the wood.

Melt the wax in the water bath and add dye to get the colour you require. Remember wax is yellow so will need some blue as well as green to get a good green colour.

Shake the excess water off the plywood. Hold the plywood at an angle above the wax bowl. With the ladle pour the wax onto the top of the plywood letting the excess run back into the bowl. Dunk the plywood into the bowl of cold water and the sheet of wax will float off. To make a thicker sheet pour another layer of wax before dunking. Make as many sheets of the wax as you require, at the same time, to get the same colour.

Roses

Make templates from thin card by drawing round the petals, leaves etc. and cut out the shapes. For a small rose you will need 8 - 10 petals, 1 x 3" diameter circle for centre and a calyx.

Cut out the shapes in wax with a pair of scissors onto a sheet of glass. Take a wisp of cotton wool and twist it around the end of a piece of florists wire for about an inch, then fold the top half inch of wire over to anchor the cotton wool in place.

Bind the wire with florists binding tape starting at the cotton wool end and covering part of the cotton wool. The cotton wool is then dipped into melted beeswax. This knob on the end of the wire will stop the flower head from falling off. For the centre of the rose push the wire through the centre of the wax circle, right up to the cotton wool. Fold the circle in half and then into half again pressing firmly on the folds.

Roll the centre so the curved edges give the effect of petals unfurling. Squeeze the wax onto the wire just below the cotton wool. In a warm room the warmth of your fingers will be sufficient to soften the wax. Using a real rose or photograph as a guide you are now ready to attach the petals. These should be shaped by pressing the centre of the petal with the ball and then curving back the edges of the petals to give good shape. Attach them one at a time to the centre, squeezing the wax at the base down onto the wire each time so that the petals adhere firmly. When the rose is the size you want, slide the calyx up to the base of the rose, pushing it up close to the petals and squeezing it into place. Press scraps of wax below the calyx to form a "hip".

Leaves are cut from two sheets of wax together.

Bind a piece of florists wire with tape and sandwich this between the two layers of the top leaf. Twist a piece of thin wire (fuse wire) round the stem three-quarters of an inch below the top leaf and sandwich the side leaves on to this.

The rose stem can then be bound with tape again and the leaf attached at the same time. The stem can then be covered with a thin layer of wax to finish - if required.

FLORAL PERFECTION IN WAX



THIS IS WHAT YOU'LL NEED



THE VARIOUS STAGES OF MAKING A ROSE IN WAX

Calendar dates



Saturday July 28

Time 1pm

TAUNTON FLOWER SHOW - GETTING READY!

Help needed!
Come to the Apiary

Friday & Saturday, August 3 & 4

TAUNTON FLOWER SHOW

Our "Bees and Honey" marquee is one of the most popular at Taunton Flower Show. We stage the Somerset Honey Show in addition to our own Honey Show. Help is required!
Vivary Park, Taunton

Friday, August 3

Time 3.15pm

TAUNTON FLOWER SHOW

Knowledge Marquee
Speaker: Dr Anne Halpin
"Pollinators in your garden"

How bees and other pollinators can improve your flowers and fruit crop. Pollinators are a vital part of the garden ecosystem and Anne will highlight the plight of garden pollinators and give simple tips on how we can encourage them back into our gardens.

Wednesday, August 8

Time: 6pm

CLEARING & FEEDING

Everyone welcome and help required!
The Apiary

Friday, August 10

Time: 6pm

REMOVING SUPERS

Everyone welcome!
The Apiary

Saturday, August 11

Time: 2.30pm

FIRST VARROA TREATMENT

Everyone welcome!
The Apiary

Saturday, August 25

Time: 2.30pm

SECOND VARROA TREATMENT

Everyone welcome!
The Apiary

Wednesday, August 29

Time: 7.30pm

EXTRACTION DAY – BRIEF THEORY SESSION

Tutor: David Pearce
The Apiary

Saturday, September 1

Time: from 10am

EXTRACTION DAY

Hosted by David Pearce in his well-equipped extracting room at his home
T 01984 623851 Haddeo, Bathealton, TA4 2AG

Saturday, September 1

Wiltshire BKA is sponsoring a

HONEY BEE HEALTH DAY

Venue: Bromham Social Centre, New Road,
Bromham, near Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 2 JB
(ample parking)

All Taunton members are welcome to attend
The provisional programme includes talks by Nigel
Semence, the NBU's lead on non-native species,
on Asian Hornet and Small Hive Beetle plus an
opportunity to observe frames with AFB and EFB.

Details will be posted on the Wiltshire BKA website.
There will be no entrance fee but it would be helpful
nearer the time if we can advise WBKA how many
of us they might expect.

Please email: chairman@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk
Those attending should bring a packed lunch. Tea,
coffee and squash will be available for a small
charge. Attached to the Centre is The Owl should
anyone require something more substantial though
only 45 minutes has been set aside for lunch.

Saturday, September 15

Time: 2.30pm

ARNIA'S REMOTE HIVE MONITORING SYSTEM

The Apiary

Saturday, September 15

Time: 6pm

FIRST FEED

Everyone welcome!
The Apiary

Saturday, September 22

Time: 6pm

SECOND FEED

Everyone welcome!
The Apiary

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 29

TIME: 2PM

CLEAN UP THE EQUIPMENT & PUT IT AWAY

Everyone welcome and help required!
The Apiary

Wednesday, October 3

Time: 7.30pm

AUTUMN IMPROVERS SESSIONS

These sessions are suitable for all members, however
experienced! The topics will be published nearer this
time. Come for one session or come for them all!

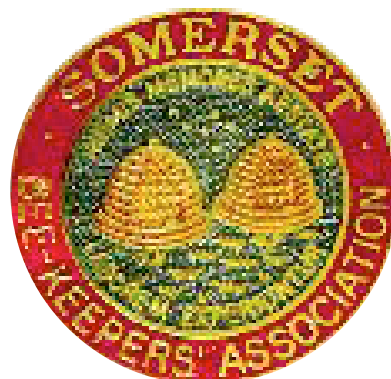
Sessions run on Wednesdays
October 10, 17, 24, 31 and November 7.

Saturday, October 20

Time: 2.30pm

THE FLOW HIVE EXPERIENCE

Tutor: Lynne Ingram & Anne Pike
The Apiary



A close-up photograph of two bees on a honeycomb. One bee is in the foreground, facing the viewer, while the other is slightly behind and to the left, facing away. The honeycomb cells are a vibrant yellow.

Classified adverts



Two second hand National supers with frames, spacers and starter strips - £25

Tel: 07788 407497

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

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.