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17

Spring  
2019

**tauntonbuzz**  
the newsletter of Taunton & District Beekeepers



## Welcome to this first issue of Buzz for 2019!

**As I write this in mid February the sun is shining and the sky is blue. I have recently read weather forecasts that tell me we will have an 'icy blast' in the next couple of weeks, and others that talk about the high temperatures we should expect. I will wait and see what comes. At the moment the bees are busy flying and gathering pollen - hopefully a portent of a good season ahead.**

I was elected Chair of Taunton division in November, and would like to thank your past Chairman Peter Maben for the sterling work that he has done over many years.

Over the winter, your committee has been busy planning a full and interesting programme for the rest of the year. It would be great to see you at some events. Look for details in the Yearbook, on Facebook, and for the email updates that come out regularly.

We started the year with another successful Film Night showing The 'Vanishing of the Bees'. This documented the time when Colony Collapse Disorder was rife, and raised the issue of the effect of pesticides on bees. A lot has changed since then, and some of the Neo nicotinoid pesticides have been banned, but there is still more work to be done on protecting our bees. We plan to have more Film Nights in the future so do come along for an enjoyable evening (we don't do popcorn (yet) but we do make a very good cup of tea!)

As a County we are focusing on European Foul Brood and Asian Hornets this year. Please read the extra information that came with your Year Book, and don't forget to collect your Asian Hornet Monitoring trap from the Apiary

Looking forward to a successful and productive season, and to meeting more of you this year.

With best wishes

**Lynne - Chair**

[lynneci@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lynneci@hotmail.co.uk)

**Items appearing in Taunton Buzz are not necessarily the views of either the editor or Taunton and District Beekeepers' Division.**

**Buzz artwork:**

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The Teaching Apiary, Heatherton Park,  
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[www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk)



## Editor's Letter



**Our first Buzz of the year is packed and we hope you'll find plenty to interest you.**

There are a few changes to our format: there's a list of committee members and useful contact numbers; and there's more information about each of our events to give you a better idea of the treats instore.

There's advice about what to look out for in the apiary, plenty of news about the club and members, and don't forget to pick up your free Asian hornet monitoring trap.

Do you have an idea, story or photographs to share? We'd love to hear from you. The deadline for our next issue is: April 14.

Meanwhile, here's hoping our bees survive the winter and we have a great season.

**Anne Pike**, editor  
[anne@ashford-media.co.uk](mailto:anne@ashford-media.co.uk)



**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.

### Taunton Buzz – editorial committee

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



# Your Committee & useful contacts

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## Bee Inspectors

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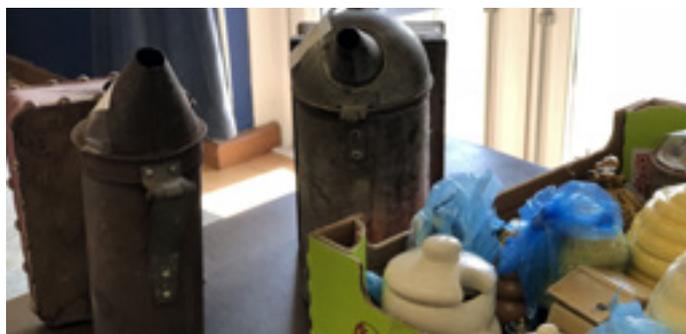
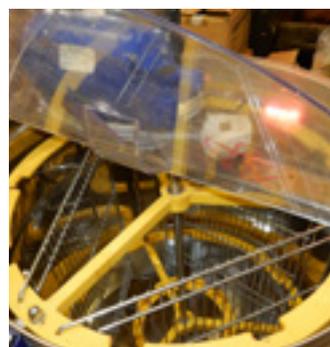
## Taunton Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT)



In response to the growing threat from Asian Hornets, Somerset has set up an Asian Hornet Action Team, part of a national network of AHATs. The Somerset AHAT comprises representatives from each division. The Taunton team includes the following members:

<b>Lynne Ingram</b>	T: 07846165877; 01278 786307
<b>Vanessa Woodford</b>	T: 07983118732; 014600234426
<b>Peter Maben</b>	T: 01823 433708; 07887 853799
<b>Mary Adams</b>	T: 01823 432287
<b>Andrew Perry</b>	T: 01823 660294

If you spot an Asian (yellow legged) hornet, take a photo and report it on the Asian Hornet Watch app or on alert@nss.gov.uk. If you are struggling to get a photo or are unsure if it is an Asian hornet then contact one of the Taunton AHAT team who will do their best to help you.



# Spring equipment auction

**Our well-timed auction on March 24 gives us a chance to prepare for the coming season and buy some new-to-us equipment at bargain prices, as well as to benefit from capitalising on a clear-out of unwanted beekeeping paraphernalia.**

Ruishton Village Hall near Taunton is the venue where lots are likely to include hives, hive parts, tools, extracting equipment, books and magazines and miscellaneous bric-a-brac.

Our President Chris Harries will be wielding the gavel for the 33rd time, a team of volunteers will be sorting the lots, handing out buyer's numbers, running the payment side of the auction, serving delicious refreshments and running a raffle.

David Pearce will have a stand selling beekeeping supplies.

Items received at the village hall from 10am – 1.30pm; auction starts at 2pm. Donations of raffle prizes will be very gladly received on the day.

Haven't been before? The post code is TA3 5JD, or follow signs to the village hall. Car parking is free.

# News in Brief

## Exploring the demand for microscopy

Are you intrigued about the detail of bees' anatomy?  
Would you like to be able to identify different pollens?  
Perhaps you would like to learn how to use a microscope to help you?

The committee has been deliberating just how much interest there is amongst our members for a microscopy course.

We're putting our toes in the water by running a Taster Session on x date. If it generates interest, we plan to add a microscopy course in the autumn.

We're lucky to have a number of microscopists among our members; our chairman Lynne Ingram will lead the day along with Simon Jones and others.

If you are interested, please contact  
Barbara Drakeford: [email@drakelilles.co.uk](mailto:email@drakelilles.co.uk)



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## Congratulations!

Master Beekeeper Lynne Ingram has been elected to the BBKA's exam committee for a three year term at the ADM of the BBKA in January.

## Bees for Hestercombe

We have been contacted by Chris White from Hestercombe Gardens, Taunton who would like to get bees on the site. To find out more contact him [chriswhite@hestercombe.com](mailto:chriswhite@hestercombe.com) or 01823 410131.

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## Library

We have a library of beekeeping books which you can borrow to further your interest and study of beekeeping.

There are useful guides like the BBKA's Guide to Beekeeping by Ivor Davis and Roger Cullum-Kenyon and Haynes Bee Manual by Claire and Adrian Waring; The Life of the Bee by Maurice Maeterlinck and The Lore of the Honeybee by Tickner Edwards; and fun

books like Bill Turnbull's The Bad Beekeepers Club; and many others.

We would like to develop our library and are looking for someone who would like to manage the books, encourage more members to borrow and suggest a list of new titles to support our beekeeping.

If you are interested, please contact Barbara: [email@drakelilles.co.uk](mailto:email@drakelilles.co.uk)



## Bees and art

One of our members is making a name for himself as an artist inspired by honeybees and beekeepers.

Although Jacob Trood is still at art school, he has published a book (*The World of Beekeeping*) and has created a range of fascinating exhibits which he brought to SBKA's Lecture Day.

Jacob has beekeeping in his blood – both his father and grandfather are beekeepers.



◀ **Bee campaigner and environmentalist Brigit Strawbridge enthused and informed all at the clubhouse with her talk about plants for pollinators.**

Julie Husband posted on Facebook afterwards: "It was truly inspirational. I now have some ideas for my garden which will hopefully benefit not just my honeybees but other pollinators as well."



## Jenny & Sid hang up their veils!

This is the first time in 33 years that Jenny and Sid Gammon won't be eagerly awaiting the coming season.

For the pair who have wowed at honey shows, been individually awarded SBKA's most prestigious award for the county's most outstanding member – the West Country Honey Farms rose bowl – and spent many years supporting Taunton and Somerset beekeepers, have given up keeping bees.

Jenny is a past President of Taunton Division, treasurer, honey show entries secretary and supporter of county events. Sid was secretary, vice chair, apiary manager and SBKA delegate of Taunton Division and has been a great supporter of the honey show.

But their threat on the show benches is far from over. Jenny said: "We're giving up the bees but I have plenty of honey and wax ready to enter the show again this year."

Jenny is the author of *Waxy Corner* published by Northern Bee Books and continues in her role as honey show entries secretary and giving talks to schools with Lesley Garner.



Making a splash in the local papers in 1989

# Flow Hive

**Four years ago a father and son in Australia finally unveiled a device they had spent a decade inventing: a beehive that releases honey via a tap, without needing to handle the bees.**

The pair, Stuart and Cedar Anderson, who live in the hinterland near Byron Bay in eastern Australia, an area popular with hippies, artists and surfers, hoped to raise US \$70,000 (£50,000) for their invention on the crowdfunding website Indiegogo. They reached their target in seven minutes.

Over the next 24 hours, the pair received a record-breaking \$2.2 million, scrambling to find bank accounts that would permit such vast deposits.

By the end of the eight-week campaign, they had received \$12.2 million, amounting to 25,000 orders from 130 countries, in one of the world's most successful crowdfunding projects.

The invention – which they called the Flow Hive – has been credited with revolutionising beekeeping. It has also encouraged a new wave of beekeepers who want to stop the recent global decline in the bee population.

The hive, which costs upwards of £380, consists of artificial honeycomb cells in which the bees leave honey before sealing the cells with wax. A lever then splits the wax and rotates the cells to create channels for the honey to flow out via a tap into a drum or jar below.

The pair has sold more than 50,000 flow hives, setting up workshops and factories in Australia and the United States and distribution warehouses in the United States, Canada, the Netherlands and Hong Kong, as well as hiring lawyers, marketers, shipping and logistics staff, and customer support teams.

Not content to rest on their laurels, the company is keen to encourage even more beekeepers to try the greatest innovation in hive design since Lorenzo Langstroth discovered the bee space in 1851.

Our chairman Lynne Ingram asked them for a hive to use in the teaching apiary and, after a rigorous interview, they said yes!

Find out how we get on with the Flow Hive in future issues of Buzz.



Chairman Lynne Ingram (right), Julie Husband and Dave Parry take a look at the new Flow Hive given to us by the company.



Stuart (left) and Cedar Anderson, inventors of the Flow Hive



Close-up of bees at work

# Pick up your free Asian hornet monitoring trap!

**SBKA has purchased Veto Pharma monitoring traps for all members in readiness for the arrival of the non-native insects which threaten honeybees and other pollinators.**

**Collect your free trap from Division meetings or contact Lynne Ingram, Taunton Chair and AHAT county and division coordinator.**

Anne Pike, chairman of SBKA, said: "We consider the arrival of Asian hornets to be so serious that we are spending thousands of pounds to make beekeepers and the public aware of these highly destructive and potentially devastating hornets.

"We are one of just a few county associations to provide monitoring traps for our membership. Vigilance is a cornerstone of our defence strategy and we want to mobilise the county to be on guard."

Concerns about the potential for Asian hornets to appear in Somerset come after two nests were found and destroyed last year in Fowey, Cornwall, and two in Hampshire. An over-wintering queen, that can found a huge nest of hornets, was spotted in Jersey in February.

In parts of France, Spain and Portugal, Asian hornets have stripped the environment bare of honeybees and insects.

"If they get a hold here, they could be as devastating to pollinators as foot and mouth disease was to livestock," added Anne Pike.

SBKA has set up an Asian hornet action team to respond to sightings and support the National Bee Unit to find nests.

The co-ordinator is Master Beekeeper Lynne Ingram: "As Spring approaches we need to start monitoring for the presence of Asian hornets, as mated queens will be on the wing from now onwards.

"We don't know if there are any Asian hornet queens overwintering in the UK this year, or whether any mated queens will make their way into the UK post-hibernation, but we need to be prepared.

"When the queens start to come out of hibernation they search for nectar rich flowers in order to build up their energy. In France and Jersey they are often seen on early single Camellia flowers, so if you have any, it is worth keeping an eye out."

The difficulty of destroying Asian hornets has been highlighted by Jersey's experience. The first Asian hornet was spotted on the island in 2016 and despite the efforts of local beekeepers and volunteers from the South West, last summer there were more than 50 nests.

SBKA's efforts to save honeybees and other pollinators are being supported by organic dairy Yeo Valley which donated £3,600 to the campaign and has pledged to raise awareness among their customers and staff.

The association has printed thousands of fliers and identification cards distributed with the Year Books.

**Asian hornets look like large black wasps with an orange head. Any sightings should be reported immediately, preferably with a photo, to the Non-Native Species Secretariat (NNSS): [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk)**



# Saving the Bees

Removing a colony of 50,000 bees from a hard-to-reach wall cavity requires more than a steady hand and a good line in bee-whispering.



Pete Higgs, of Beegone Honey Bee Removal and speaker at our AGM in the autumn, says building know-how is a must.

His company specialises in the safe, environmentally friendly, live removal and rehoming of honeybee swarms and colonies, from structures or naturally occurring cavities.

They pride themselves on never using any insecticide and the quality of their bee-proofing remedial works.

Based in Cranleigh, Surrey, Pete and his team cover the whole country; they removed two colonies from historic buildings in Taunton last year.

He told us: "Our aim is to educate people and businesses on honeybee identification and how to deal with them. We remove feral honeybees from structures, relocate them and prevent them from returning."

Pete's enthusiasm and passion for his work is evident and it is easy to see why he was appointed an ambassador for the Prince's Trust which helped him to set up the business in 2009.

He had a difficult and traumatic childhood moving around foster care and secure units, leaving education at just 12.

"I felt lost. I had a passion for wildlife management and wanted to set up my own pest control company, but I had no effective support or guidance. Then The Prince's Trust stepped forward to help me make it all happen. Without them I wouldn't be where I am today."

Pest control may not sound the most glamorous of careers but by making such a success of the company he has met and shared his passion for honeybees with Prince Charles and the Queen.

[www.beegone.co.uk](http://www.beegone.co.uk)



# Taunton Honey Show

writes Barbara Drakeford

**It's only six months away! The Bees & Honey feature at Taunton Flower Show has been a pivotal part of our calendar for years and years because we get the chance to show the public just what we beekeepers do to look after our vital pollinators as well as what they give us in return.**

The prime part is the competition, with classes for Taunton members only as well as classes for members of SBKA and BBKA. Then there are all sorts of roles, duties and tasks which have to be done to get the Show on the road.

Neil Trood and Jenny Gammon have been the stars of the occasion for many years, but they really can't do it alone. The role of the Honey Show Secretary has been undertaken by Dave Parry recently but, due to family commitments, he isn't able to carry on. So we really need someone to step into his shoes just to cover the honey competitions! Jenny deals with the competition entries and knows all there is to know about it.

But we need other volunteers to step forward to make up a Working Group to share out some of the other responsibilities. For example, Neil has spent hours in the marquee in previous years, setting out the tables, covering them and draping the hessian 'curtains',

allocating the spaces for each class, as well as the school entries. It's time Neil had a deputy!

Organising who does what and when on the two days of the Show – Friday, August 2 and Saturday, August 3, then overseeing the clearing of the marquee at 6 pm on the Saturday, and the return of all our 'stuff' back to Heatherton Park - these are all responsibilities which would be great if some people would step forward and get involved.

PLEASE consider if you could help.

We are planning to hold a Working Group meeting sometime in April to discuss all this and hopefully to introduce all our volunteers to what goes on.

**We really do need YOUR help – please!**

**Contact Barbara:**

**email@drakelilles.co.uk; 01823 490811**

# Getting to grips with the new online membership software

**Bee Diseases Insurance (BDI) was asked by the BBKA to co-ordinate the implementation of a new membership system on their behalf which built upon the existing eReturn system used by most associations. This new system "ereturn2" was launched at the Spring Convention 2018 and since last summer has been tested out thoroughly by Somerset who, as one of the pilot associations, agreed to trial it.**

There have been a number of hitches during the implementation stage of which some of you will have been aware of, with blank receipts being sent out just one of the problems!

However, I'm glad to say that, after almost four months of late nights, frustration and occasional bouts of despair, our new membership administration system is finally up and running!

The advantages of this new system include a secure GDPR compliant membership system and a built-in email application allowing Barbara and me to use the system for routine mailings without having to maintain separate mailing lists; it should also speed up the registration of new members with the BBKA.

One other potential advantage is the possible introduction of on-line renewal of membership whereby members can be invited to follow a unique web link to allow them to amend their membership details and choose their renewal options. This is an exciting development, but with just under 50 per cent of you preferring to post your memberships forms with a cheque, you will still be able to do this if you wish.

Finally, at the time of writing there are still around 15 or so members who have not renewed their membership; having to chase late payers is time consuming for me and for the Treasurer and delays the completion of accounts and capitation payments. Those of you who don't pay on time also risk being uninsured once the season starts as BDI taken out after March 31 is not valid for 40 days after payment.

So, a big thank you to the vast majority of you who have renewed their membership promptly!

**Lyndsay Stone, Membership Secretary**

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## Beginners' course sells out!

**All 25 places on this year's Beekeeping Beginners' Course were booked up well before Christmas. This is great news but it did mean we had to disappoint quite a few people. I think this reflects the enthusiasm for beekeeping and the quality of the course, which is tried and tested over many years.**

A Beekeeping Taster Event will be organised for June 22nd 2019 and already there are eight people who are keen to take part. So, if you know anyone who is thinking of undertaking either the Taster or Beginners Courses, then let them know that they need to book early to avoid disappointment.

My thanks, as always, go to those members who have offered their time to tutor on the Beginners Course.

**Julie Husband, Beginners Training Coordinator**

## News from our training apiary

**We have been monitoring our colonies throughout the winter by hefting the hives and adding fondant to any that are too easy to lift. We don't open the hives during the cold weather, the fondant is placed over a feed hole in the crown board, we still have the "once over" by some guard bees though.**

The two nucs that we are over-wintering were the earliest to receive this help through the winter and there are now three hives with fondant. It is interesting how much the hives now vary in weight (they were all fed to the maximum in the autumn and were all very heavy), there is one particularly heavy one which I suspect has few bees to eat the stores, we will find out the problem when we first open the hives for their first inspection.

Looking forward we have been given a complete Langstroth flow hive thanks to Lynne Ingram, so we will have a more varied selection of hives for our members to experience. We have run exclusively with National cedar hives for the last few years and the frames are not compatible with the Langstroth brood box, so when we have a nice strong colony we plan to populate the flow hive by performing a shook swarm, this is assuming a swarm doesn't happen to visit! We were given a standard Langstroth hive with two supers some years ago and the plan is to bring this into use this season so that we will then have a pair of Langstroth hives as support for each other in case of queen loss in the future.

**Dave Parry, Apiary Manager**



The photos show how different the two Langstroth hives are, also the Flow Hive is canted back slightly, presumably to help drain all that honey out of the super!

# The apiary in March and April

by Master Beekeeper  
Lynne Ingram



Photo credit: Little Silver Photography

## **By the time you read this in early March, Spring may have sprung, or we may be knee deep in snow!**

If there is snow like last year in March, then the bees may still be in their winter cluster, although sometimes the brightness of the sun on snow will tempt a few bees outside. Once any snow has gone, the bees, like us, will respond to the longer days and higher temperatures, by venturing out on warmer days to forage. If you see your bees collecting pollen, then you can be pretty sure that the queen is laying and they have brood to feed. The queen will now be increasing her laying day by day, and the winter bees will be dying off. Until the new workers emerge, there will be a period when the amount of brood exceeds the number of workers to care for it. This can be a tricky time for the colonies, so make sure that they have enough stores. It will probably still be too cold to open your colonies, but you could check by hefting the hive or having a quick look at any fondant that you put in over winter, adding more if they are light.

As a beekeeper we can really help our bees this time of year by providing plants in our garden that will provide the early pollen that they need. Snowdrops, crocuses, hazel, willow, heathers and winter aconite will all be readily accessed.

### **Prepare and Plan**

This is a good time to get fully prepared for the season, if not already done. Prepare your folder of record cards for this season, and clean or mend any equipment. Prepare your washing soda bucket of for your hive tools.

Decide what your beekeeping goals are this year. Maybe you'd like to learn a new swarm prevention method, a way of changing comb or how to pick up and mark a queen. Perhaps you'd like to increase the number of colonies you have, or work towards one of the practical assessments or a module. All of these will help you get a lot more out of your beekeeping and improve your practice as a beekeeper. If you are interested in some studying then contact us so we can set up a study group. Studying with others is always more fun.

### **Inspections**

As we move through March into April you may find that there are some days where it is warm enough to do a Spring Inspection. For your first one, you may just want to check that the queen is present and laying, that there are enough stores, and perhaps change the floor for a clean one. If you have overwintered on double brood boxes, the bees will probably have moved up into the top box, and the bottom one will be empty. This is your opportunity to remove the bottom box, melt down and clean those frames, and scorch the box. The top box can

be placed onto a new floor, with a new crown board. This way you have easily changed a full brood box of comb, reducing the amount of pathogens or chemicals (including varroa treatment residues) that may be in the old wax comb. As the colony builds up add a new brood box with foundation.

### **Health Inspections**

Choose a warm day. Firstly observe the outside of the hive. Are the bees flying normally compared with other colonies? Are they behaving normally? Are there lots of dead bees outside the hive?

Open your hive and carefully go through the colony frame by frame. Observe the adult bees on the frame. Do they look healthy or are they shaking, or black and shiny? If they look healthy, then shake the bees back into the hive, so that you are able to look carefully at the comb itself. Hold the frame at an angle of 45° away from you, ideally with the light behind you. Scan each cell carefully looking for any abnormalities.

Look at any sealed cells first – you should see dry looking digestive biscuit coloured cells. If you see any that are greasy, sunken or perforated, then ask someone more experienced to check for you, or call your Bee Inspector.

Once you have checked the sealed cells, move onto the unsealed cells. Here you should see segmented pearly white larvae, lying in a C shape position in the cell. If you see any that are discoloured, looking slumped or in an unusual position then again ask someone more experienced to check or call the Bee Inspector. A photo is always helpful. Note any findings in your records. Do not move any bees or equipment until you have had the all clear.

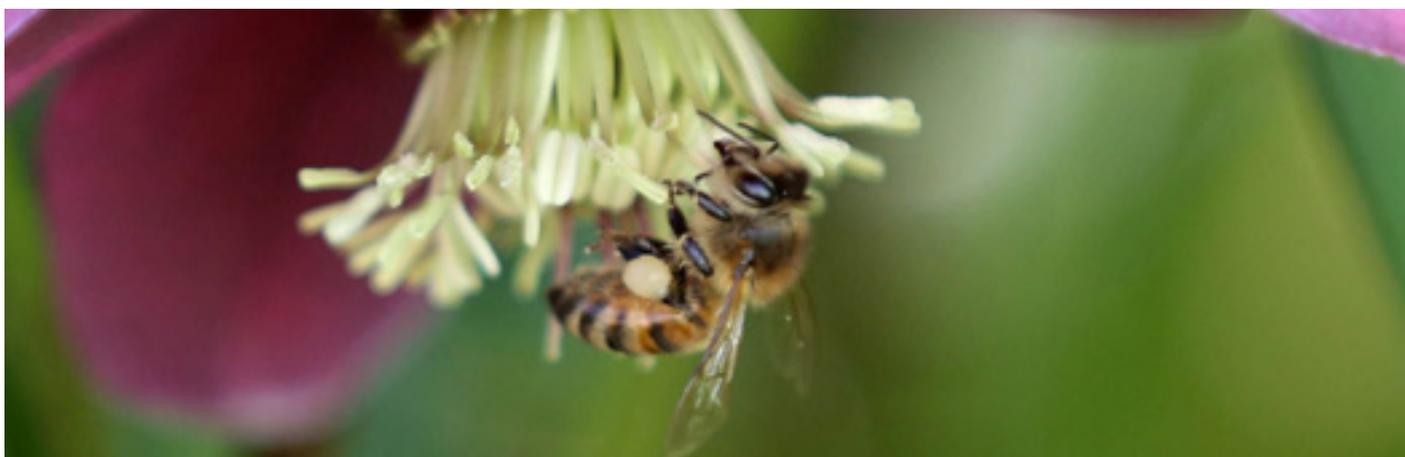
If you are not sure whether you would be able to recognise European Foul Brood or other diseases, or if you would like a reminder, then go along to the Read the Comb Day on June 15th at Castle Cary. It will be hosted by the Bee Inspectors, costs only £5 and will be both an enjoyable and informative day to attend.

### **Asian Hornets**

The only Asian (Yellow legged) Hornets around this time of year are mated queens that are coming out of hibernation. We don't know if there are any in the UK this year. You could put out a Monitoring Trap, somewhere that you can check it daily. I have hung mine by the kitchen window, as traps do not need to be in the apiary at this time of year. Use a sweet bait (but not honey) Check daily and release any beneficial insects such as European Hornets. Check on any single open flowers such as camellias.

Good luck for the start of the season. By the time the next issue is out, the sun should be shining, and the season will be well underway.

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A honeybee filling her pollen baskets in a hellebore in the editor's garden in February. Photo credit: Richard Austin

## Annual report from our South West Regional Bee Inspector

**Regional Bee Inspector and Taunton member Simon Jones writes about last season in his annual report - the good, the bad and the ugly! It provides a fascinating snap-shot of what has been going on in Somerset and the region.**

There is some good news for our county beekeepers - the number of colonies affected by EFB fell last year to 26, but that is still more than Devon, Cornwall and Avon put together. However AFB was not reported in Somerset but it is just over the county border in Devon.

He writes: "The 2018 season started late after a cold winter and spring. However colonies that were healthy and strong coming out of the winter were able to take advantage of the good weather that followed and gathered a good crop of honey. From my own experience the honey has been of a good quality with most of the combs fully capped with the extracted honey having a low moisture content.

The Bee Inspectors have had another busy season. They have been carrying out their usual programme of risk based inspections for European Foulbrood (EFB) and American Foulbrood (AFB). There has been an increase in the levels of disease in Cornwall but the other counties which make up the South West Region (SW) have showed a significant decrease with Avon having no disease at all (see graphs further in the report)....

We have again been carrying out Exotic Pest Surveillance (EPS) inspections around risk points such as ports and airports to check for incursions of Small Hive Beetle (SHB), Tropilaelaps and Asian Hornet. With local beekeepers help we set up four Enhanced Sentinel Apiaries, two are situated near Avonmouth Docks and two near Plymouth Docks, both are

considered to be very high risk points. These apiaries are inspected three times a year by the local Bee Inspector and floor samples are sent into the FERA laboratory for analysis.

In addition to these inspections there are 18 Sentinel Apiaries around the region (including our Teaching Apiary, Ed). This is where beekeepers that have an apiary near a risk point assist the National Bee Unit (NBU) by regularly monitoring their colonies for Exotic Pests and twice a year they send in floor debris samples to be tested. I am very grateful to the South West Sentinel Apiary Beekeepers for all of their help this season, they are an important part of the NBU's surveillance programme.

Part of our work each season is to monitor imports of queens and package bees from the European Union (EU) and Third Countries (Argentina, Australia and New Zealand). Again this year we saw a large number of packages imported from Italy, some of which were bought by beekeepers in the South West (SW) region. These were inspected for SHB (Small Hive Beetle, Ed) as they were decanted into hives and fortunately nothing was found (SHB was found in Southern Italy in 2014).

Throughout the season the SW Inspectors carried out enhanced surveillance for Asian Hornet in the Woolacombe area of North Devon to ensure nothing had been overlooked from the nest that we found and destroyed in 2017.

We were also in the thick of it again when Asian Hornet was found to be preying on bees in an apiary in Cornwall."

**To read the full report visit [www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk)**



# Making flowers: Lilies

by Jenny Gammon

## You will need:

**A length of 5 mm dowel** (*B & Q supply*) to use as stem

**Wax** – depending on the colour of the lilies you wish to make you will need to buy block of white wax or using your own wax use some wax colouring to make sheet of wax as described in the last Waxy corner. (You can get the white blocks of wax and colouring from Thornes). White wax is specially manufactured and you cannot get the dye to do this yourself.

## Florist tape

**A length of 1" wick**

Start by cutting a 25cm length of dowel and covering it with florist tape. You can also cover this by pouring already prepared green wax over the florist tape if you wish. If you are not making lilies that need a thicker stem, you can use florist wire and cover with florist tape.

Make up sheets of wax for your flowers –you will need quite a few and as lily petals are fairly long, make sure that the sheets you make up will allow you to cut the size of the petal you want. Other flowers –petals can be adjusted to the size of sheet you have made. If you can get some lilies –real or silk –it helps to give you some idea of pattern.

Take your wick and dip it into the white wax. Then cut to lengths ( 6) – I used wax paint to cover the ends to make them look like stamens. I use Decormatt Acrylic paint – Amazon. Using the warmth of your hands attach the stamen to the top of the prepared dowel. Shape the top of the stamens.

Cut your petals out of the sheets of wax –already

prepared. Fold the petal slightly up the middle and then shape them. You will need 6 petals. Using the warmth of your hands attach the petals, one by one, around the top of the dowel, covering where you have already put the stamens. If you look at plants, the petals do not stick straight up from the stem-give them some shape. I also, sometimes get a real flower and dust the wax petals with a little pollen or just touch up a little with paint. Also you will see that I have used a little paint (green) to give the flower a sense of colour –especially on the underside of the fold.

You can also make some unopened flowers –do not make stamens, but roll some wax and twist shape to make it look like unopened petals and fix to the top of the dowel.

You will need to make some leaves to attach to the sides of the stem (dowel).

Make five / six flowers including a couple of unopened flowers.

# Calendar dates

## Saturday, March 16 SBKA Annual General Meeting



Time: 12:00pm - 4:30pm

Locations: Enmore Park Golf Club  
and Enmore Village Hall, Bridgwater,  
TA5 2AN



Quantock Division will host the 2019 AGM with a lunch at Enmore Golf Club followed by a talk at nearby Enmore Village Hall. The speaker will be Chris Park, the Skep Beekeeper.

In an article published on Dave Cushman's site [www.dave-cushman.net](http://www.dave-cushman.net), he says: "Natural beekeeping groups, trusts and societies are proliferating as one of the many responses to recent and current problems with beekeeping practices, pests and diseases. Hence, keeping honey bees in skeps is recently receiving interest from those seeking new solutions, old ways or natural inspirations. It has always been of interest to those with an interest in the history and the heritage of honey, and now it is fascinating folk with an interest in the resilience of ancient technologies, the simplicity of natural and locally sourced materials and from those looking for a more bee centered approach."

For more information and to book lunch take a look at the SBKA website: [www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.somersetbeekeepers.org.uk)

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## Thursday, March 28 The Accidental Expert, a talk with pictures by Bob Hogge

Time: 7.30pm

Location: The Apiary



As the developer of the Jersey Method, Bob has a lot to answer for. His talk will look at how it is that being inquisitive and "bloody minded," has given him the opportunity to get up close and personal with Europe's latest serious threat to pollinators, AS IF THEY NEEDED ANYMORE.

Having kept live Asian hornets nests in his living room and been involved with all the nests dissected in Jersey he hopes he can encourage others to study this fearsome insect, although, he would be the first to say they are not quite as fearsome as they are made out to be.

As a beekeeper he will, of course, offer his opinion and recommends that everyone that comes brings a pinch of salt. Bob Hogge: Is a former President of the Jersey Beekeepers' Association and while he has done many things in his life he is happy to admit to having few talents. He is, he says, like a duck: always dabbling with his bum in the air and is a little quackers!

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## Thursday April 11 Time saving inventions for the practical beekeeper

Time: 7.30pm

Location: The Apiary

Will Steynor is an entertaining and informative speaker and is sure to give us some great tips to help us make our weekly hive inspections more efficient.



**Wednesday, April 24**  
**SBKA Special Lecture**



Time: 7:00pm  
Location: Edgar Hall, 8 Cary Court,  
Somerton Business Park, TA11 6SB  
Raffle Prizes. Entry is free!

The speaker is Graham Royle NDB who will talk about disease recognition. Graham, who is a seasonal bee inspector for Cheshire, was involved in the discovery and tracking of the first sighting of the Asian Hornet in the UK in 2016. He started beekeeping in 1968 and currently manages 20 colonies in three apiaries. He is the author of *Apis through the Looking Glass*. Entry is FREE!



**Saturday, April 27**  
**Tutorial about the BBKA**  
**Basic Assessment**  
**Tutor: Suzy Perkins**

Time: 2:30pm - 4:00pm  
Location: The Apiary



The 'Basic' is a great goal for newish beekeepers and gives them a measure of their achievement in the basic skills and knowledge of the craft. And it's a springboard from which to launch into the more demanding assessments (a pass in the Basic Assessment is a prerequisite for entry into all other assessments).

The Basic Assessment syllabus can appear daunting at first glance but closer inspection will show that it merely lists the basic things which all beekeepers should know (especially if they've been paying attention on the beginners' course!).

The assessment is completely practical/oral and takes place mainly at the hive in a local apiary. Suzy is a highly experienced beekeeper who is extremely approachable and supportive. The Basic is suitable for all applicants but they must have managed at least one colony of bees for a minimum of 12 months.

Pre-booking essential with Barbara Drakeford:  
[email@drakelilles.co.uk](mailto:email@drakelilles.co.uk)

**Saturday, May 18**  
**Doolittle Method for making**  
**up a nucleus**

Time: 2:30pm - 4:30pm  
Location: The Apiary

Taunton member (and SW Regional Bee Inspector) Simon Jones will be talking about the method he uses for making up a nuc.

(This photo doesn't show how to do it - but it is of Simon in action!)



**Sunday, May 12**  
**A visit to one of Chris Harries' apiaries**

Time: 2:30pm - 4:30pm  
Location: tba (Barbara will send an email nearer the date)

Chris Harries is President of Taunton Beekeepers and is a bee farmer (Sedgemoor Honey) with hundreds of colonies around the county. He will invite you to take a look at some of his bees and talk about the trials, tribulations and (we hope!) triumphs of the season to date.



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**Thursday, June 13**  
**Bumblebee Conservation Trust**

Time: 7:30pm  
Location: The Apiary

Daisy Headley will talk about the plight of the bumblebee and what can be done to halt their decline.

In the last 80 years our bumblebee populations have crashed.

Two species have become nationally extinct and several others have declined dramatically.

Bumblebees are familiar and much-loved insects that pollinate our crops and wildflowers, so people are rightly worried.

The Trust has a vision for a different future in which our communities and countryside are rich in bumblebees and colourful flowers, supporting a diversity of wildlife and habitats for everyone to enjoy.



**Saturday, June 15**  
**Read the Comb Day**



Time: 9am

Location: Ansford Academy,  
Maggs Ln, Castle Cary BA7,  
UK map



Run by South East Division, this hands-on training event is designed to help us know what to look for when we inspect our colonies - to know when all is well and, conversely, when it is not. As you may be aware, there is a particular strain of EFB in Somerset which is virulent and difficult to eradicate. SBKA is committed to helping members identify disease and to support them in eliminating the incidences of EFB in the county. As part of this commitment we have arranged a practical day course, kindly organised by South East Division.

The programme will be delivered by SW Regional Bee Inspector Simon Jones with the seasonal bee inspectors and former National Bee Inspector Richard Ball.

There will be an opportunity to safely handle diseased combs so beekeepers can see for themselves what to look for. Topics will include:

- BeeBase
- Notifiable pests and diseases-recognition
- Control and management of minor pests and diseases
- Asian Hornet (national policy requires the Bee Inspectorate to deliver a workshop on this subject at every Bee Health Day this season)
- Varroa- lifecycle, IPM and approved treatments
- Apiary hygiene and barrier management

The cost is £5 per person with tea and coffee provided; bring your own lunch. To purchase tickets send a cheque with SAE or contact for online payment details

Christina Kennedy, SBKA Treasurer

Allways, West Shepton, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 5UH

Treasurer@somersetbeekeepers.org.uk

Or buy your ticket online:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/read-the-comb-disease-recognition-day-tickets-54800973186?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

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**Saturday, July 13**  
**President's Day**

Time: 2:30pm

Location: The Apiary

This is a very special day in our annual calendar held in honour of this year's President Chris Harries.

Enjoy a relaxed afternoon and a scrumptious tea!

Speaker: Beekeeper, honey show exhibitor and keen gardener, Andy Willis will talk about '12 months of forage'.



## Classified adverts



### For sale

Stainless steel settling tank with detachable deep coarse strainer and lid. All welded seams Convex base ensures honey runs into valve. Takes 50kg honey. **£120**

Two National supers with starter strips. **£25**

Tel: 01823 270465

### Repairs

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



## 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.