20

Autumn 2019

tauntonbuzz

the newsletter of Taunton & District Beekeepers

Inside this issue...

- A look at the 2019 season
- Advice to get your bees through the winter
- A global perspective on beekeeping from Apimondia
- Dates for the diary

Letter from the Chairman

Well, we have made it through another beekeeping season with the bees surviving a typical English summer that included severe storms as well as glorious sunshine. Some beekeepers have reported a record year for honey, with others struggling to get any sort of harvest. It would be great to hear how members have done.

The division has had a successful season with a record-breaking Honey Show as well as good turnouts at all our talks and practical sessions. Big thanks to everyone who gives so much of their time to helping others discover the wonderful world of beekeeping.

I have to mention the Flow Hive as I am now a total convert, especially as we have a Flow Hive in the apiary – although not so far furnished with bees. After the early disappointment of seeing honey in the frames, followed by it all disappearing as they ate it, I eventually had a crop of over 100lbs from the Flow Super. We had a great bramble flow in July and August, and I first harvested three frames that I could see were full and capped. It was so easy! I set up a small table behind the hive, and prepared jars to receive the honey. I removed the caps from each frame and inserted a tube in each. I then turned the Flow key which opened the cells, and almost instantly the honey flowed out of the tube into the jars. The bees took no notice of what I was doing, and within a short time the frames were empty and the honey jarred. I replaced the caps and closed the cells. The bees then twice filled all six frames with honey which I emptied each time. Interestingly I noticed that although there was a bramble flow on at the time, three of the frames contained a very pale honey which proved to be from Himalayan Balsam – something that I may not have noticed has I been extracting in the 'normal' way. I was very impressed with the Flow Hive. It is off the hive now as I have a lot of ivy in the apiary, which is likely to set in the frames, but I will be putting it on again in the Spring. Ease of harvest is a great advantage, but the main disadvantage is the weight of the super, making inspections more difficult. Flow is however about to launch some new invention that will overcome this problem. Watch this space!

Wishing you a great autumn

With best wishes

Lynne
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:
Very kindly sponsored by
Josh Beadon of Toco Creative www.tococreative.co.uk

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Editor's Letter

I'm sure I'm not the only beekeeper to be glad that the 2019 beekeeping year is drawing to a close after a phenomenally busy and challenging six months – at last there's time to reflect on what a year it's been! Inside Buzz, our President and bee farmer Chris Harries picks out this season's most notable features – the highs and the lows.

However, the bees still need care and attention during the coming months and Chairman Lynne Ingram has plenty of advice about how to help our colonies survive and thrive in the regular feature In the Apiary.

Lynne has been on a beekeeping extravaganza in Canada – touring bee farms and attending Apimondia, the biannual get-together of beekeepers from around the world. Her beautifully illustrated feature takes in many of the highlights of the trip and looks at one of the biggest issues facing honey consumers and retailers – widespread honey fraud.

If you have time on your hands, take a look back at our regular feature Waxy Corner and make the most of all those sparkling cappings. This issue, wax supremo Jenny Gammon, who scooped two trophies at this summer's honey show, gives some easy-to-follow tips to refresh wax flowers.

Don't miss the last few meetings of the year and get the county's annual lecture day on February 15 in your 2020 diary – there's a great line-up of speakers.

And, finally, a plea to tell us your stories and share your photos and most recommended bee book, or best bee present etc - do get in touch! The deadline for our next issue is mid-February.

Anne Pike, editor
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.

Our cover shot is of a honeybee on Echinacea and was taken at the end of September by Anne Pike using an iPhone X.

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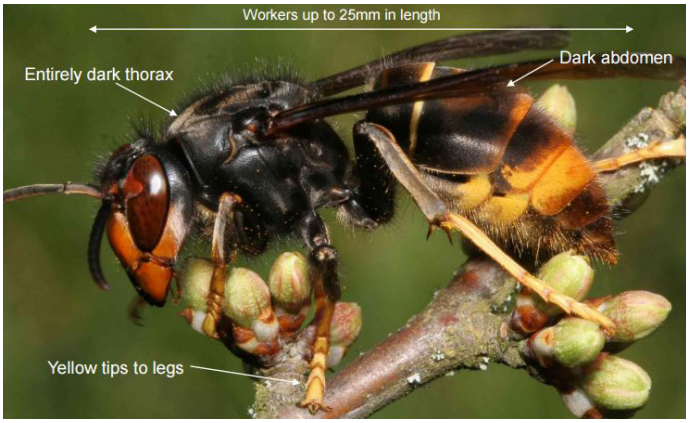
Taunton Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT)



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:

Lynne Ingram	T: 07846165877; 01278 786307
Vanessa Woodford	T: 07983118732; 014600234426
Peter Maben	T: 01823 433708; 07887 853799
Mary Adams	T: 01823 432287
Andrew Perry	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@nnss.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.

News in Brief

What's up? Whatsapp!

We have set up a WhatsApp group so beginners and experienced beekeepers (and those in-between) can communicate with other. The aim is for the new beekeepers to post questions or ask for advice as and when and for those people who think that may be able to provide an answer/advice to respond.

These groups have been set up in other parts of the country and people can take part and interact as much as they want to. The 2019 beginners are very pleased and excited about the group and are looking forward to other members of TDBK joining in. If you already have WhatsApp on your phone then click on this link: https://chat.whatsapp.com/DoqPBUJaXOZJvX54yzbF3n and join. It will help if you say who you are so that people can add your name to their list of contacts.

Julie Husband, Beginners' Secretary

Club apiary honey harvest

In numbers:

16 buckets of honey = approx. 480lbs

100 sections of cut comb

26 unripe combs

And this year the honey is medium coloured.

New on-line subscription renewal system for 2020

You will notice a few changes when you come to renew your membership later this year. Instead of an email with a subscription form attached as in previous years, you will be sent a link which you will simply need to click on in order to renew your membership. The link will take you to a form already populated with your details so that all you have to do is choose your class of subscription. You can also sign up for Gift Aid, subscribe to BeeCraft or add your name to the swarm collectors list, as well as updating any changes to your contact details if necessary! It couldn't be simpler!

Once you electronically submit your completed form, you will see a message confirming the payment amount due with an accompanying explanation of how to pay. Whilst electronic payment is simpler for most people, there is still the option to post a cheque if you prefer.

This is an exciting new development and promises to simplify the whole renewal process - and greatly reduce the workload of the membership secretaries! We would like to encourage you all to use the new system, but don't worry if you are one of the small number who usually receive your subscription form by post - you will continue to do so.

Watch out for your renewal email in mid-November!

Lyndsay Stone, Membership Secretary

Taunton beekeepers – out & about

Vanessa Woodford and I took a small stand at the Castle Food and Drink Festival on Castle Green in the middle of Taunton.

Vanessa brought some of her bees in an observation hive, I took some Apiary honey to sell, and we had lots of leaflets about the Asian hornet.

From the start of the day at 10am, we were kept busy with visitors - to the extent that my husband, Malcolm, who had only come to help set up, just never went home and was talking to people all day!

During the day Marcia and Julian Hill came to see us. Marcia was deputy Mayor of Taunton Deane and came to the opening of our Apiary in 2014, and Julian is involved in historical buildings.

We have had conversations in the past about possible 'bee boles' at Taunton Castle, so it was the perfect opportunity to borrow Vanessa's skep, and go and find out.

The photo shows Marcia holding Vanessa's skep up to the position in the right hand side of the wall alongside the walkway into the Castle as we know it.

Allowing for a slightly different shape, and width, it certainly seems possible that the Bishop of Winchester's household made good use of the south facing wall.

At the end of the day, we had two more names for next year's beginner's course, Vanessa had an address to check out for a possible Asian hornet sighting, we had sold just over £200 worth of honey and talked to hundreds about Asian hornets and bees and beekeeping, so all in all a very successful day!

Barbara Drakeford, Secretary

A busy year for our beginners

It's been a busy year for the 2019 beginners with the course starting at the end of February through to the end of September with the clean-up afternoon. I have to say they've been a lovely bunch of people who have really embraced the course and got stuck in and never being afraid to ask the stupid question. We've had lots of fun, especially at the extraction day (fun and hard work). Many of the beginners now have bees with some waiting until next year so I'm expecting continued involvement with Taunton Beekeepers. Some of the beginners have already volunteered at the flower show and helped with signage at the club house. I hope this year's beginners feel that they are very much part of club and I thank them for making my job enjoyable and easy.

We are in the process of finalising the programme for next year and have nearly 50 people who have expressed an interest in taking part.

Julie Husband

Beginners Training Coordinator

Asian hornet week

Somerset beekeepers brought their Asian hornet roadshow to Taunton Farmers' Market in High Street during Asian hornet awareness week. Vanessa Woodford and Anne Pike chatted with shoppers and gave them ID materials. The orange glow in the photo was caused by a bright orange canopy!

Business speaker

Beekeeper, entrepreneur and natural skincare range creator, Claire Barker, regaled the club with talk about the trials and tribulations of setting up a new company based on keeping bees.

Claire uses beeswax from her hives in Devizes, Wiltshire in her small batch and handmade products sold under her Hive Originals brand. Since the company was set up seven years ago, demand has grown so much that she tops us with high quality UK beeswax and has taken her business from her kitchen to a commercial unit.

Honey Show round-up

'Trophy winner Jenny Gammon'

The County Honey Show held at Taunton Flower Show attracted a record number of entries and hosted the Asian hornet roadshow for the first time.

Beekeepers from as far afield as Cornwall submitted more than 400 entries to compete for the best honeys, wax and other products from or inspired by beekeeping.

Somerset Beekeepers' Association Chairman Anne Pike said it was a standout show: "Entries were the highest they've been for years and visitors to the Bees and Honey feature were treated with the sight of many hundreds of jars of honey, honeycombs straight from the hive and beautiful artwork.

"It is wonderful to see more people get involved in these competitions which showcase the beauty of local honey and wax and their skills as beekeepers."

The Blue Ribbon for the best exhibit in the show went to John Roberts from Falmouth for a magnificent cake of beeswax.

Local trophy winners included Jenny and Sid Gammon from Taunton; Maggie North, Buckland St Mary; David Pearce, Bathealton near Wiveliscombe; Mary Adams, Bishops Lydeard; Alan Nelson, Bilbrook; and Rob Fox, Minehead.

Results – Taunton Awards:

The Taunton Perpetual Challenge Trophy: SJ & JA Gammon

The Priscott Perpetual Skep: M. North

The Stoker Perpetual Silver Trophy: SJ & JA Gammon

The Pat Barter Silver Trophy: J. Roberts

The W .Elmsall Perpetual Observation Hive Trophy: Taunton and District Beekeepers

The Andy Coles Memorial Trophy for Mead: M. Adams

The Tom Tucker Trophy for Cookery: R. Fox

The Downes Perpetual Cup: R.Fox

The Gammon Perpetual Trophy: B. Muckett

The Taunton Honey Show plate: D. Pearce

The Taunton Honey Show Perpetual Trophy: D. Pearce

The Sally Bennett Trophy: M. North

The John Spiller Mascot: D. Pearce

County Cups:

Jubilee Cup: J. Roberts

Miss M.D Bindley Cup: A. Nelson

Terry Arnold Perpetual Challenge Trophy: R. Fox

The Duffin Challenge Trophy: J. Roberts

The Clifford Langford Award for Mead: M. Adams

The Blue Ribbon for the best exhibit in Show in the judges' opinion: J. Roberts

What a season!

I dropped in to see our President and bee farmer Chris Harries to chat over what's been happening, writes Anne Pike. Chris knows a lot about keeping bees – he's been a beekeeper for the past 42 years and he sells exceptional local honey and cut comb under his Sedgemoor Honey brand.

So when he says something is extraordinary, it is! In fact, he has a whole list of season stand-outs:

Best spring harvest – ever!

Spring - off and on

Harvest - stop and start

Weather - too hot and too dry

Heather crop practically non-existent

Huge numbers of swarms

EFB outbreaks

Voracious wasps

Abundance of wax moths

Poor queen mating

Drone laying queens

Bees absconding

Let's start with the good news: The Spring honey crop was fantastic! In Chris's case he harvested a record six tonnes or so, much of which had to be melted down.

"The honey flow was in two parts: Early in April when the oil seed rape was in flower which was followed by a cold spell and then another honey flow in May."

"Some combs had solid honey on one side and runny honey on the other, all capped."

And, thanks to a good honey flow in early summer, there was lots of cut comb, up by approximately a third on an average year.

"Interestingly, the honey from this early July flow was very light; in the past two years the honey has been very dark."

But it has not been a good year for the summer harvest, which was down by about one third compared to the average. "We need moisture in the ground far more than we need a heatwave." And the heather harvest hasn't fared any better. "It's been too dry and the crop is even worse than last year."

Swarming has been a key characteristic of the season – I caught my first in April and heard that one Somerset beekeeper was dealing with one at the tail-end of September. "It was as though the bees that had stayed put last year decided to swarm repeatedly this year."

Add into the season's mix:

The impact of EFB – Somerset is affected by the ST2 strain of the bacterial disease – which has kept the bee inspectors busy

Wasp losses – Chris lost a whole apiary when wasps killed seven colonies and stripped 25 supers; only two supers, which were solid, were left intact. "There haven't been as many wasp losses for years –the last time was around 30 years ago."

Wax moths have thrived in the hot temperatures, some colonies have absconded and others became queenless for no apparent reason. But, fortuntately, we have had no confirmed sightings of the yellow-legged Asian hornet at the time of writing.

Somerset Beekeepers Association will be emailing members a short survey to get a picture of what's been going on across the county and to see if it can help support you more in future.

Photo credit: Little Silver Photography

The apiary in October and November

by Master Beekeeper
Lynne Ingram

By the time you read this, the Autumn equinox will have passed, the days will be getting noticeably shorter, and the weather cooler. In the hive the bees are preparing for winter, feeding well to build up their fat bodies. The queen will still be laying although not at the same rate. By now your varroa treatments should be finished ensuring that your winter bees are varroa free.

To get through the winter safely, a colony will need around 40 lbs of stores so check that they have enough, and if not feed with syrup.

Now is the time to clean your equipment – melting down old wax, cleaning your frames, and scorching your boxes ready for next year. It is also the time to review this year, evaluate how it went and make your plans for next season. Do you want to increase or decrease your number of colonies; try a new technique; rear your own queens or maybe study for a module or one of the practical assessments? If you haven't done the Basic, then sign up for the practice day at the Apiary, if you have got it then maybe try the new Bee Health certificate. Although it may seem daunting, studying for the assessments really helps improve your practice and enjoyment of beekeeping. If you want to discuss any of these then get in touch and I can talk you through what they entail.

Keep an eye out still for Asian Hornets. So far, we have had fewer sightings this year, and only one confirmed nest in Tamworth, Staffordshire (at the time of writing). But it is not too late to see one. The hornet colonies are at peak numbers now and are also producing males and new queens. Like your bees, the new queens will feed themselves up so that they can get through the winter. Once mated they will go into hibernation – in a warm safe location – maybe in a wood pile, in a crack in a tree or under a pile of wood chips. So, keep your eyes peeled once you start bringing logs into the house. Meanwhile there are still of a lot of mouths to feed in the hornet colonies, although by the end of the year all the hornets will have died except the hibernating queens.

Hornets may still be seen in apiaries, on fallen fruit and hawking pollinators on any ivy in flower. Spend some time observing the ivy and fallen fruit. We cannot be too careful now as the Hornets are very close on the north coast of France, and could easily have been accidentally brought or blown over to the UK. We have the advantage of being a little more prepared than our European colleagues, and hope that we can slow the possible invasion.

Finally, although I don't like to mention the 'C' word too early, don't forget to add an inspiring bee book to your Christmas list!

Apimondia 2019 Montreal, Canada

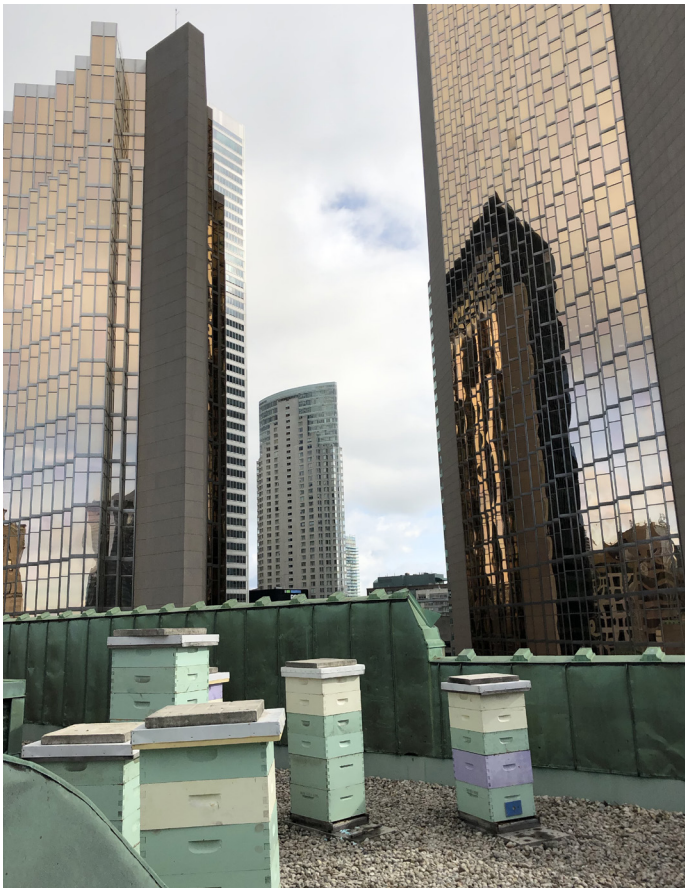
Apimondia is the World Beekeeping Congress which is held every two years. This year it was in Montreal, and I was lucky enough to be able to attend, writes Lynne Ingram, Master Beekeeper.

It was a fantastic experience on many levels. Initially I flew into Toronto, and met up with a group of beekeepers who were to be my travelling companions for the next week, as we made our way from Toronto to Montreal. Five of my companions hailed from Australia, with two coming from Tasmania, two from north west Australia, and one from Sydney. There was also a beekeeper from New Zealand. Their beekeeping set ups varied enormously, with four of them managing around 8,000 hives each, one managing 800, and the other one managing 100 rooftop hives in Sydney. All of them were involved in education work, developing new products, and marketing their honey, with one being an international honey judge as well.

With introductions over we set off on Day One to the Fairmont Royal York Hotel (below) mwhere we saw beautiful rooftop beekeeping set against gleaming skyscrapers Here a former employee had set up the hives to provide honey for the hotel kitchen, although with many others having the same idea, the beekeeper reported falling honey crops.

We moved on to Rosewood Vinery where we had a very enjoyable afternoon viewing and sampling many uniquely produced wines and meads. Bees were on site and form part of their educational programme as well as providing honey for the mead.

Finally, we arrived at Charlie Bee Honey where they were extracting honey from their 15,000 hives. This was a massive set up with huge extracting machines in action, and bees everywhere! Most of the colonies had been pollinating blueberries in New Brunswick, but were now being prepared for winter in local apiaries. What a start to our Canada experience!



Day 2 saw us head to Niagara Falls, where we boarded a boat to sail right up to the Falls themselves. We had a lot of fun but got totally soaked!

We then travelled on to Niagara College, which is a College of Environmental and Horticultural Studies where we met with the Professor of their internationally important Commercial Beekeeping programme. We visited one of the training apiaries, and here I saw my first Small Hive Beetle running across a Varroa floor insert. Everyone was astonished at seeing me so excited to see a Small Hive Beetle!

Finally, we went to Dutchman's Gold apiary (photo on right). This is a family set up with 1,500 hives, producing honey, as well as producing 4,000 queens per year. They use the Cloake board method of queen rearing which seemed to be commonly used in the area. I was totally impressed by the beautifully carved tree hive, where they had hollowed out the tree so that it could take full frames. Here we also sampled pumpkin spice honey – the first of many delicious flavoured or infused honeys that we tasted.

Day 3 saw us visit Meadow Lily Farm where we first met Bruce and Joanne, who describe themselves as guardians of nature, homesteaders and beekeepers with 25 colonies in woodland.

Images – Left: An interesting hive at Dutchman's Gold apiary. Right: A loo with plenty to see at Clovermead Honey Farm

We then headed to Clovermead Adventure Farm:

BEE HAPPY. BEE HEALTHY. BEE FAMILY.

Clovermead is a place for families to become happier and healthier, together.

This is run by a fourth -generation beekeeping family. The family run about 500 colonies for honey production, but also have a bee themed visitors' centre. The bees are not kept at the visitor centre but there are plenty of observation hives – some in unusual places! There was a huge shop with ample opportunities to taste many honeys and spend money. This was a great example of creating a business that combines beekeeping with education, by creating an edutainment facility that shows people and children the importance of the honey bee to our society.

Later that day we headed to the University of Guelph Honey Bee Research Centre and met Paul Kelly - research and apiary manager. This was a fantastic set up – soon to move to a purpose-built facility. Unusually they feed their bees through open feeding in the Autumn – a practice which we would generally discourage in the UK. Aside from the work that they were doing there into varroa, Paul had also developed a very easily worn and practical beekeepers' belt.

Another useful tip for an extraction room was to install a mini nuc, with some queen pheromone in, at the top of a window. Any bees escaping into the room will head into the mini nuc, and can be removed at the end of an extracting day.

Day 4 saw a visit to a government Tech Transfer programme which aimed to educate and support beekeepers, and we then headed to Nith Valley Apiaries. This was run by a young couple who were running around 500 colonies and a busy shop. They had developed a range of infused honey products including garlic infused honey – which was quite pleasant but definitely 'interesting'! They also offered a 'fill your own honey jar' service which seemed to be very popular.

Above images from clockwise: The University of Guelph honey extraction room with a min nuc box in the window. Nith Valley invite customers to refill their jars. Paul Kelly, from Guelph Honey Bee Research Centre, wearing the beekeeper's belt he designed.

Right positioned images from top to bottom: Intermiel - Fridge freezer for 8,000 colonies. Intermiel - Redlight in freezer so humans can see but not bees. Intermiel - Ready for a days beekeeping. Intermiel - Sampling the meads. Intermiel - Gleaming extraction facilities.

We visited a farmers' market to meet the owner of Bee Happy Honey at her stall, before going to the family owned Intermiel Winery, apiary and maple syrup production. We toured the Intermiel facilities and sampled their delicious meads, liqueurs and wines, before ending up in the shop. Intermiel was a wonderful place – interesting, impressive in its scale and also for the quality of the set up and the products. The apiary side of the operation boasted some 8000 colonies, all of which were overwintered in a newly built fridge/freezer. When we were there, it was in freezer mode (-15 deg C), and the supers were placed inside to kill off wax moth. Once this was done the temperature was turned up to 5 deg C and all 8,000 colonies were placed inside for the winter. In order to allow humans to work in the freezer, a red light was used that the bees couldn't see. In the winter the temperature outside can reach – 40 deg C with two metres of snow, so indoor storage is necessary for colony survival. Small scale beekeepers without such facilities tend to group their hives together and use insulating wrap them to protect them from the harsh winter conditions. Intermiel have worked hard on developing gourmet honey products, meads and liqueurs, and justly deserve their many awards.

From Intermiel we headed to Montreal and to the main Apimondia congress. The congress has a number of facets:-

- The Scientific Programme which consists of daily lectures, presentations, posters and workshops on a number of beekeeping themes: Economy; Bee Health; Biology; Pollination; Technology; Apitherapy; Development: Cross Cutting.
- The World Beekeeping Awards – a honey show
- Api Expo – a world trade show
- Technical tours – pre and post congress.

Over 5,000 delegates attended Apimondia 2019, and the whole thing took a huge amount of organisation. Having registered I took some time to explore Montreal itself – a beautiful city, and one that I would like to return to. There was a formal opening ceremony in the evening, which included bag pipers and the Apimondia song.

We soon settled into a daily routine starting with the keynote speeches at 8.30am, and lectures and presentations until 5.30pm. Presentations were from world-wide scientists and researchers and luckily were all in English. After the lectures, there was time to explore Api Expo, a huge trade show with exhibitors from all over the world, showing the latest beekeeping innovations, or to wander round the Honey Show.

Apimondia has taken a strong stand against honey fraud, and for the first time all the honey entered into the show was laboratory tested before being judged. Unfortunately, 47 per cent of the entries failed the tests, due to evidence of various residues, antibiotics and problems with country of origin. A full report has not so far been issued, but it was shocking to see so many gaps in the show benches and signs saying the exhibits had failed laboratory examination.

Honey fraud is a massive problem worldwide and it is likely that in time the National Honey show will also lab test entries. We know already that there have been some examples of honey fraud in the UK, but I was surprised to see this poster outlining research done on ‘own brand’ honeys bought from UK supermarkets plus one from a well-known honey packer. These samples were subjected to laboratory testing, and worryingly all of them failed the fraud tests, including one sample with caramel colouring added. The results were sent to the Food Standards Agency and the Public Analyst has repeated the analyses, with the same results. Further investigations will now be done, but it seems that there is a reluctance for UK packers to subject their honeys to these tests. In Canada many of the big beekeeping set-ups voluntarily send their honey for testing so that they have proof of authenticity. This all reinforces the message of knowing your beekeeper and buying local!

The week sped by and soon it was the Closing Ceremony, and the announcement of the hosts for 2023. A number of countries had put bids in, and they had been whittled down to Chile and Ethiopia. Finally, Chile were announced as the winners, so it will be held in Santiago in 2023, and in Ufa, Russia in 2021.

Taking the air via tubes from beehives at Happy Culture.

The Friday of Apimondia is devoted to technical tours, and I visited Happy Culture and Miel Fontaine. Happy Culture is a young beekeeping enterprise based on permaculture and environmental principles. It includes beehives, and a beehive air therapy hut. Seven colonies of bees were in the hut but flying outside. Inside the hut, tubes came from four beehives, and met in a small box with a fan. A single tube came out of the box, from which you inhaled warm beehive air. It was a strange and intense experience to breathe in the concentrated air. It appears to have a number of health-giving properties. We also had the opportunity to taste various honeys, and to visit a ‘sugar shack’ in the woods, where the production of maple syrup was explained.

Later we visited Miel Fontaine, a family business, who used their honey to make apitherapy products and infused honeys, and who also stored their 800 colonies inside for the winter. Driving there we saw acres of wild golden rod in flower- something that produced a golden and popular honey.

Apimondia was a wonderful experience. I met beekeepers from all over the world and learnt about and saw very different beekeeping methods. I heard many learned presentations (much information has still to be absorbed), and got to see some of Canada – and now want to see a lot more.

I am already planning to go to Ufa in 2021, and Santiago in 2023, and would highly recommend it to everyone.

Lynne Ingram, Master Beekeeper

Happy Culture's beehive air therapy hut

Waxy Corner

Change the colour of your wax flowers if you are fed up with the colour!

Melt some wax – clean the wax. You do not want foreign bits in the wax. Add colouring and make sure it is the colour you want to change to. Pour a sheet of wax to make sure. This sheet can always be melted down again.

If you have made the flowers with stamens you will need to remove all the petals and remake the flower afterwards. Making sure the wax is not boiling, but hot enough to start cooling, dip the petals one by one into the wax. I found holding the bottom end of the petal with tweezers or even a clothes peg makes life easier. You can then hold the top end of the petal and dip what has not been covered.

If you just have a flower you can dip the whole lot as above without taking off the petals.

Whichever way you do it – do not leave the petal in the wax too long or you will find you are melting the petal rather than adding to it.

Remember that you are adding a layer of wax to the flower/petal you are dipping.

Jenny Gammon

Calendar dates

Wednesday, October 16
Swarm Control
Time: 7.30pm – 9pm
Location: The Apiary

Maggie North will lead this session describing and demonstrating some of the methods to control the swarming instinct of bees.These sessions are suitable for all members, however experienced. **Tea and biscuits.**

Wednesday, October 30
The Beekeeping Year
Time: 7.30pm – 9pm
Location: The Apiary
Speaker: Simon Jones, NDB and our Regional Bee Inspector

Simon will talk about getting ready for the start of the new beekeeping season and is happy to answer questions. These sessions are suitable for all members, however experienced. **Tea and biscuits.**

Saturday, November 16
AGM
Time: 2.30pm – 4.30pm
Location: The Apiary

Come and have your say in the way the club is run, enjoy an interesting speaker, enjoy tea and cake and lots of beekeeping chat.

Twelve months of forage
Beekeeper, honey show exhibitor and keen gardener, Andy Willis, is this year's speaker.

Sunday, November 17
Somerset Beekeepers' Annual Lunch
Time: 12 noon – 2pm
Location: Long Sutton Golf Club

The cost is £14 for the main carvery lunch with a choice of puddings. Please advise when booking if you would like the vegetarian or gluten-free options.

Please send cheques made payable to Somerset Beekeepers Association for the full amount to: Suzy Perkins, Tengore House, Tengore Lane, Langport, Somerset TA10 9JL.

Saturday, February 15, 2020
SBKA Lecture Day
Time: 9 am – 5 pm
Location: Edgar Hall, 8 Cary Court,
Somerton Business Park, TA11 6SB
Speakers:

Clive de Bruyn – *'Through winter into Spring' and 'What I have learned from beekeeping in the past 50 years'*

Professor Lars Chitka – *'Honeybee mind/navigation'*

Dr Niko Tsiougkos – *'Bee stings'*

Dinah Sweet – *'How to make mead and melomels'*

Tickets are £5 and include tea and coffee. Book online at Eventbrite or send a cheque for £5 per ticket made payable to SBKA together with a S.A.E., to The Treasurer, Allways, West Shepton, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 5UH

Saturday, March 28, 2020
SBKA Annual General Meeting
Time: 12 noon – 4pm
Location: Frogmary Green Farm, West St,
South Petherton TA13 5DJ
Speaker: Lynfa Davies, Master Beekeeper, NDB

'Nucleus Colonies: Their Many Uses. What are nuclei and how do they contribute to our beekeeping?'
Lynfa was the only candidate to pass the National Diploma in Beekeeping this year. She lives in mid Wales and has 20 colonies in Nationals with most of them on double brood.

She says: "*We have had two exceptionally good seasons; we thought last year was amazing but this year has almost equalled it despite the weather being more unstable.*"

"I rear my own queens and sell a few nuclei locally. I really enjoy teaching new beekeepers and sharing what I have learned with others and hopefully help make a difference to their beekeeping. When I am not with my bees I can usually be found on my bike cycling up all the hills near my home or going for a dip in the sea."

Details about a two-course lunch are available online and in the latest issue of the SBKA Newsletter.

Need somewhere to keep your bees?

An out apiary is available in a new orchard at Lydeard St Lawrence. Interested? Call Guy Sturgess on **07769 645291.**

Another out apiary is available in a large well-stocked garden backing onto a meadow in Cotford St Luke.If interested, contact Christine Daniels on **01823 430832** or at **Christine-daniels@sky.com**

If any beekeeper is looking for an out apiary then there is an opportunity near Sampford Moor (Devon/Somerset border). The site is a rough, bee-friendly field which has been chemical free for 40 years. Please get in touch with Ian or Sue on **01823 662685** for more information.

For sale

National nuc
floor, brood box with frames plus extra brood box, crown board, feeder, roof **£45**

Travel box
National adaptable swarm/travelling **£25**

Trolley
Trolley to transport national hives and with platform for general use. It can be dismantled quickly to fit in car etc. **£30**

Swarm box
National swarm box **£25**

Stainless steel buckets
12 litres **£20 each**

National
Snelgrove board **£10**

Tel: 01823 270465

Easy Bee half size stainless steel uncapping tray with stand and separating bucket- **£350 ono**

Thornes 12 frame stainless steel electric extractor - **£250 ono**

Thornes nearly new 110 lb stainless steel settling tank, strainer and lid - **£90**

Contact Simon Jones on **01823 443737**

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.