



# THE TIVVY BUZZETTE

The Newsletter of Tiverton Beekeepers – June 2020

Tiverton Beekeepers are a branch of the Devon Beekeepers Association Registered Charity No 270675



## AROUND THE APIARY – JUNE

As predicted the end of April saw me dealing with my first swarm on one of my apiary sites; the first half of May has also seen our bees wanting to swarm in spite of having plenty of room in the supers and in the brood box. It is the case of all the conditions being right for our bees to procreate with both the old queen and the new queens having a good chance of being successful.

Weather conditions are still good, and from the forecasts it looks as if it may stay the same until the end of the month. If you do not want your bees to swarm, then you must keep looking through them into the beginning of June.

June should be a quiet month with not too much hassle, bearing in mind you want to keep your hives up to full strength ready for the all-important month of July. Some years we have a June gap in flowering when there is very little nectar and pollen coming in for the young brood and for the wax builders.

If you suspect this may be the case then feed sugar syrup, if possible direct on top of the brood box. This will lessen the risk of sugar syrup getting into the honey supers. If we do not get a good rain in early June we could be in for a June gap this year as the land is very dry.

If you are a new bee-keeper you will find it is easier to create new hives than produce honey. To have hives up to full strength for the end of June you may consider uniting two hives especially if you have split a colony as a result of swarm control. By uniting the two colonies back together with the aid of newspaper and removing the older queen you can have a really strong colony for the main honey harvest in July.

For bee-keepers to have a good harvest in July from Clover and Blackberry we do need to have a good wet spell in June, so fingers crossed. I am sorry if this months “Around the apiary” is more like a met office report, but bee-keeping is as much about the weather as it is about what we get up to.

Keith Owers



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## EUROPEAN FOUL BROOD ALERT

It has been brought to our attention that there are cases of EFB in Devon so please be extra vigilant and check your bees. If you are concerned that you may have it then please contact the regional bee inspector (details on DBKA website). If you are a member of beebase you should be notified if it is nearby. It may be that now is the time to join if you are not already a member - <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/>

Fault Warning for Emerade 500 Adrenaline Pens People carrying Emerade 500 microgram adrenaline auto-injector pens should return them and get hold of a prescription for a different brand. A fault has been detected in the pens, meaning the dose of adrenaline may not be delivered when needed for people with severe allergies.

The official advice comes from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Alternative brands - EpiPen and Jext - are available up to 300 micrograms. "Action has been taken to protect patients, following detection of a fault in one component of the Emerade adrenaline auto-injector pens," an MHRA spokesperson said. "Patients should return all Emerade 500 microgram pens to their local pharmacy once they have a new prescription and have been supplied with pens of an alternative brand." If an Emerade pen does need to be used before a patient can get hold an alternative pen, the advice is that it should be pressed very firmly against the thigh. If this does not work, the patient should immediately use their second pen. The MHRA said it was vital patients contacted their doctor when a replacement pen was due - and always carried two pens at all times. They should also make sure they are familiar with how to use the pen when switching to a different brand.

Their call of the Emerade 500microgramauto-injectors follows the previous recalls of Emerade 150 and 300 microgram auto-injectors. The pens were recalled in three phases to ensure there would enough supplies of the alternative pens - EpiPen or Jext - for patients. Data shows that that a single EpiPen (300 microgram) or Jext (300 microgram) pen is a suitable replacement for an Emerade 500 microgram pen, the advice says. Patients who need to return auto-injector pens should follow advice on social distancing: - a patient or carer should make a telephone appointment with their doctor to request a prescription for replacement pens of a different brand. Unless their doctor advises otherwise, they should not visit the GP surgery in person. - request the prescription is sent to a pharmacy to avoid collecting personally from the surgery - if a patient and/or their household is self-isolating, ask a friend or relative to collect the replacement pens from the pharmacy. Some pharmacies offer a home delivery service. -once the patient has the replacement auto-injector pens, return Emerade 500mcg pens to the pharmacy. Some pharmacies have drop-off boxes to facilitate distancing.





## Asian Hornet Update

Unfortunately, at the time of writing there have been no volunteers to help Gavin develop the Asian Hornet base for our branch which is disappointing.

Hopefully some of you may take pity on him and take this opportunity to come forward and help as it is a momentous task to undertake alone!

There is now an opportunity to undertake training online which may be just what you need to stimulate you in our current lock-down situation!

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/asian-hornet-action-team-map>

If you complete the training it would be great if you could let us know and it may inspire you to come on board with our aim to try and keep Tiverton branch up to speed with the other branches within DBKA. If you do decide to come forward this doesn't mean you will have to join the committee as Gavin would report back any developments at these meetings! Any questions or concerns which are holding you back then get in touch with Gavin [ahat@tivertonbeekeepers.uk](mailto:ahat@tivertonbeekeepers.uk)

Thank you in anticipation .....

## STILL OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Don't forget if you need any supplies David Pearce is still happy to take your orders for bee equipment despite self-isolating.

His contact details are:- 01984 623851

Any orders will be packaged and can be collected from outside his front door!

# APIARY NEWS – THE THREE SUPER HIVE CONT:-

As you will recall from last month, Round Two was on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April, and we had a plan ... “ Let’s find her, mark her, job done”

Keith and I start the job of going through the frames. We took two supers each and with the help of placing the queen excluders in first it was easier to find the frames with eggs in so she must be in either of those two supers. Progress.

Back through the frames again, and the wonderful moment when Keith says “there she is!!

Brilliant! Let’s mark her – quick!”

The score surely now has got to be Queen – one, beekeepers – one?

NO, as Keith is getting her into position to mark her she escapes and drops back into the super, never to be seen again that day.

Round Three was on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April and the plan was the same “ Let’s find her, mark her, job done, have you got a pen Keith?” “Of course I have, here in my pocket”

Once again Keith and I took two supers each allowing for social distancing, and only after about 30mins of searching, again words of pleasure from Keith, “there she is in the corner of that frame”. Within a millisecond I had thrown the crown of thorns over her, TRAPPED. “Let’s get the job done, mark her please Keith”

After a long silence, Keith murmured the word “AAH” The pen much needed as never before turned out to be an anti-histamine pen and not a queen marking pen!!!

Final score queen – three, two so called beekeepers embarrassed NIL

Enjoy your bees, we do.

Malcolm Crook



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## IF YOU HAVE THE TIME!!

We have been contacted by a gentleman called Peter Botterill who was wondering whether you could fill out a short survey for him? He is conducting some research about local beekeepers and their honey - [Survey Link](#)

He completed a beginner’s beekeeping course back in 2014 through Leeds BKA, and is a huge fan of local honey. “There is such a variety and richness in the flavours of local honey that just cannot be found in a lot of the generic honey often found in the larger grocery shops. It is because of this that I am trying to develop an

idea I have had for more and more people to be able to access local honey and for local beekeepers to be able to sell their honey more easily and to a much wider market than they currently are able to.”

“To be able to see if my idea is viable and one that is worth pursuing I need to find out what beekeepers think about their operation and the reasons behind whether they sell their honey or not. The survey is completely anonymous but I would be very grateful if as many beekeepers as possible were able to spend about 10 minutes going through the survey.



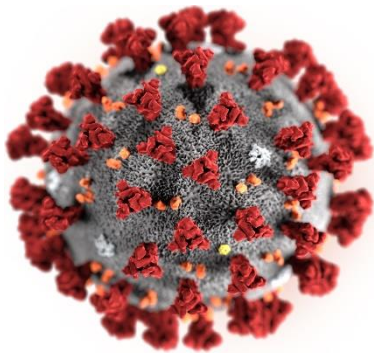
# WHERE HAS MY HIVE GONE !!



Recently I have been looking after other members colonies during the current lockdown period, and I had a request to visit a barn in Somerset because a colony of bees had fallen over.

Sure enough a National brood with a super had fallen over due to the wooden stand failing. On trying to gather up all the frames and bees (who did appear to be pleased to see me), the WBC also fell over backwards scattering bees, frames and lifts to add to the commotion. The nucleus box was the only colony behaving itself.

With hopefully more supers having to be placed on your hives this summer, just a timely hint to check the condition of you stands as well as your queen cells.



## **BBKA - Positive Thinking May 2020**

### **– By Chair, Margaret Wilson**

We are still all in the grip of this dreadful disease but hopefully on the way out of the worst of it, God willing. Our next committee meetings will be held using IT technology. I have already been involved in such meetings within branches and businesses, it is an option, but not as good as sitting face to face with discussions flowing freely, however, it keeps the wheels turning. One item I have been asked to

highlight is about swarming. A member wrote to the office asking for us to make people aware that in the current situation, it is very important that we keep swarming under control. Weekly inspections must be maintained and we must all keep our eyes open for the early signs that the bees are getting ready; this means more drones in the hive and perhaps more than a couple of play cups, over-crowding, where the pheromones are not getting into all corners and where there is no room for the queen to lay her eggs. Even a failing queen, where there are not as many eggs being laid as you would expect at this time of year. As a beekeeper we should all be able to identify these signs and then act upon them by any of the methods available for swarm control, (we have a special issue on this subject if needed, orders are

still being dispatched from the office staff). It means taking that extra time during your inspection, making sure that the bees are not hiding a queen cell in a corner, or on the edge of the frame.

The lock-down came at a really bad time as far as we beekeepers are concerned. My own branch had quite a few people signed up for its Beginners Course which should have been held in April. We did not want to let them down, as I am sure no other branch does, so I thought I would share our solution with you. Thankfully, we have a member on our committee who is well versed in anything which involves computers. He organised a 'Hang Out meeting' for our beginners and we provided a full days learning for those able to take it. We had 18 new beekeepers and 5 committee members on the session, so we were able to answer questions in the breaks from any of the new beekeepers. Our education manager had provided a fully comprehensive power point presentation, offered in four units with breaks in between and it worked very well. The questionnaire at the end of the session was very complimentary. We cannot of course, currently offer practical sessions but will do so as soon as possible and each new beekeeper is provided with a mentor so they always have someone to contact and to help setting up their hives when they do get bees. It was very successful, and the system used was free, so no reason for others not to take advantage.

We are also using a similar system to have the BBKA meetings. We have successfully managed the Standing Orders and Governance, Communication, Education and Husbandry committees, before the EC next week, with of course, others to follow. I will give you an update on anything new in the next letter.

I have been asked to remind everyone about the BBKA Forum as a useful place for discussing beekeeping <https://bbkaforum.co.uk/>

The popularity of this medium for information is very popular among beekeepers.

Meanwhile, the sun is shining, my own bees are loving it and it is a pleasure to see them so active. Hopefully, they have done a good job on my orchard and I will have a bumper harvest, yet again.

Please take care of yourselves, I know that quite a large proportion of 'us beekeepers' are in the vulnerable bracket, so stay safe and look after yourself, as well as your bees of course.

Margaret Wilson



### **SWEET THINGS, AND NOT HONEY**

For those of you that maybe hiving swarms, making new colonies or just wanting to draw out foundation, don't forget that both are local Tesco and Morrisons donate damaged sugar packets to our club for use on our bees, FREE.

The sugar is collected from the stores by committee members and stored, so please make contact with me for further details.

[chairman@tivertonbeekeepers.uk](mailto:chairman@tivertonbeekeepers.uk)

## Second homeowners spotted in the village Post Box!

5pm last Sunday, we had a call from a lady in Chettiscombe, 'The Post Box has been invaded by a swarm of honey bees' she said.

Unfortunately for the bees, the local people did not appreciate the buzzing mass of insects taking over their village Post Box.

The bees had arrived just before lunch and had little intention of moving. It was dry, roomy, easily defendable, safe, a perfect choice.

We taped a warning sign on the Post Box – 'Beware Bees' and contact details, then went home and had a cup of tea!

We telephoned the number on the box, only to be told that the Post Office was closed as it was Sunday. Next move was to call a local sub-postmistress, who we know, to see if she could help. On Monday she rang the local Sorting Office only to be told that there was no one available to come and unlock the box. So, we were left to wait for the post collection at 3.45pm.



At about 3.30pm we went to wait for the postman. Along he came - first problem, it was not his usual route, he was doing it for a friend, second problem, he had no time to waste, the post must be collected! Gradually the situation dawned on our postie that shorts and shirt were not the best protection against 20,000 bees defending their newly found home! On realisation of his situation he quickly gave me the key to the box and a bar-code reader to zap the code inside the box. As it turned out there were no letters, only snails!

The interesting work was now to begin! I scooped the main swarm out of the box with a jug and into my nuc box. A post box door is very restrictive. So now my Bee-Vac V3 came into its own! I could just about get my arm and hose into the box. I sucked up most of the bees, hoping I had the Queen, and added them to those in the nuc. The remaining bees had to find their own way into the nuc box. Later in the evening we returned to collect the nuc and all the bees.



The bees made sure everyone observed the self-distancing rule and our bee suits were our B-PPE!



Successful result to a very interesting post box collection with the help of the Royal Mail.

The 'Royal Mail Bees' now live in Halberton and are in the care of one of our new beekeepers.

Derek and Jenny Evans





### THANK YOU TO ALL KEY WORKERS

We had 9 jars of club extracted honey given back to us by Baruch at the end of last year.

As a gesture, our Chair took the decision to donate it to Sarah Lines for the staff at the local NHS Hospital in view of their wonderful work in the current climate.

I hope all the members are okay with this decision.

Personally I think this is a lovely gesture from our club!

### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR!

Finally it falls to me to say a big thank you to all the members who each month contribute to making this newsletter because without them my work would be so much harder. We have a regular group of contributors who without fail provide an article or two of interest for you to read each month.

It would be lovely to see more articles from our wider members too – all bee-keeping stories are of interest because that way we can all learn from each other and our differing experiences. I bet we all have a story or a recipe or a bee-related tale to tell. Have you had a go at making candles or polish – take some photos and send them to me!

Have you caught your first swarm? Have you lost your first swarm? Have you tried a new type of hive? Have you got a vicious hive that you are having problems with – how are you dealing with it? Perhaps you are experimenting with a wild meadow or other bee-friendly gardening ideas? Have you read an interesting article recently that would be good to share with the rest of us.

Here is one that a member sent me that may well be of interest which he heard on a podcast so thank you Steve - <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/08/podcasts/the-daily/murder-giant-hornets-bees.html>

Til next month then .... Hope to hear from you either by email [secretary@tivertonbeekeepers.uk](mailto:secretary@tivertonbeekeepers.uk) or by snail mail – Court Vale, Upham, Cheriton Fitzpaine, Crediton, EX17 4HH

In the meantime stay safe and don't forget that your bees will need a water source if this hot weather continues!!

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