



THE TIVVY BUZZETTE

The Newsletter of Tiverton Beekeepers – September 2020

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



AROUND THE APIARY SEPTEMBER

By Keith Owers

I must start first with a big thank you to club members who helped me take my honey crop of my hives.

August is always a very busy month with honey to take off and then the sticky business. This year's crop seems to be down on last years but not a lot, that comment is based on my own bees. July was a strange month as the usual honey flow seemed to come to an end around mid July and not run on into August. My clearer boards seemed to work well and the bees were well behaved except for my last apiary sight. My helper had already arrived and started as the weather was thundery. The bees saw me coming and laid into me with a vengeance before I could put my jacket and veil on.

Having completed the extraction what to do with the sticky supers? My own preference is to return the supers to the hives and let the bees lick them out; if possible to the hive they came from, but it does make a lot of work. Wet supers can be stored as they are but it makes for a very messy start in the new year. The bees do not mind the fermented honey but I do not recommend the practice. A frequent question is; what about wax moth? Wax moth is not normally a problem with honey supers unless they have had brood in them, another reason why I do not like working on a brood and a half.

You should have any Varroa treatment in hand so the next move in September is to start feeding. Mixing your own sugar is the cheapest method but it does need to be completed by the end of the month. If you are likely to run into October before you are finished I would recommend finishing on Ambrosia it is good stuff and will not ferment if the bees have not sealed it. Mixing you own sugar is about half the price of Ambrosia. (Don't forget the club has plenty of sugar if you need some!)

The entrance to the hives should be restricted, this will give the bees a better chance to defend the hive from robber bees or wasps of which there seem to be a lot about at the moment. Keep up with the good work and you can put your feet up in November.

CHAIRMAN'S



I read with interest that the October Bee Craft publication of 1939 declares “Our peaceful craft has to adjust itself to changing conditions”. How very true in many aspects.

The committee has been trying to organise a members’ “Get together” for an evening in September at Uplowman Village Hall, but this has had to be postponed due to advice given by the BBKA.

Their advice is that the current guidelines do not support large gatherings.

The numbers of individuals are restricted to 6 unless they are from 2 households and social distancing must be adhered to for both inside and outside meetings. Committees will have to assess whether the event falls within the guidelines and if it does how they can be safely implemented. It is not easy!

The guidelines would suggest small groups could meet at an apiary but great care would need to be taken around the hives to maintain the social distancing, for example the excitement of seeing the Queen especially when teaching beginners could be difficult and numbers around the hive and their relative positions are an issue.

Large meetings and those intended to be held inside would take a lot of organising simply entering the building and exiting is not straight forward.

We will continue to monitor the situation and get members together as soon as it appears safe to do so.

In the meantime, we are members of a strong team of individuals and if help is needed, then please make contact.

Malcolm



June 2020 - New Presentations Online

The National Bee Unit is pleased to share a range of presentations created by Fera Science Ltd. presented by Kirsty Stainton on;

[Asian Hornet Biology](#)

[Asian Hornet Genetics](#)

[European foulbrood](#)

The presentations can be found on BeeBases' pages on [Asian hornet](#) and [Foulbrood](#).

Asian Hornet UK Watch Week

7 to 13 September 2020



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The BBKA have earmarked this first week in September for a UK wide monitoring event. Devon AHAT have been busy putting press releases together and supporting branches in their response to this initiative.

The threat to all our native pollinators still requires us to be on the alert as September is one of the prime times for worker Asian Hornets to be out foraging. The hornets are on the lookout for protein to feed their larvae and bee wing muscles are at the top of the menu.

Instead of spending lots of time fruitlessly searching and using up vital energy supplies

what could be better than a supermarket of bee protein all conveniently housed together in one place – the bee hive.

The monitoring event has two audiences, beekeepers and the general public.

The public will be our extra eyes and by education and communication will provide a valuable service. To help mobilise people a press release has been sent out from TBKA to the local newspapers including accurate pictures of the Asian Hornet. To further spread the message all 50 of the parish councils in Mid Devon have been sent the same press release with the request that they publish it on their website or online newsletter. A copy of the newsletter will be published on our TBKA website. So once people in your parish council area have the information it would be good, Covid-19 restrictions permitting, to speak to them about the threat of this non-native insect and the potential devastation it can bring to our native pollinators, fruit industry, viticulture and forestry. A recent piece of research from the Galicia region of NE Spain has concluded that the Asian Hornet is responsible for a loss of 65% of bee colonies and a resultant 4.5 million Euros loss of associated income.

Monitoring our hives for potential raids or observing hornets hawking at the hive entrance becomes another part of our beekeeping care. To help track the hornet members can use the wick or saucer method utilised in the spring watch or turn to the NBU 'green bottle' style of trap for a less time intensive method. (Construction information can be found on the BBKA and AHAT websites). Place your trap near your hives ideally 1.5 to 2metres above the ground and inspect daily or at least every 2 days. Remember to release other insects ensnared by the trap to help in the fight against insect decline.

Although the home recipes used in the Spring watch as an attractant are useful Suterra is much better.

If members wish to have a 50ml sample of Suterra then this can be collected from me at Uplowman Village Hall car park on Wednesday 2 September 2020 – Session A 10:00 to 12:00 mid-day or Session B 17:00 to 19:00. Exact details on how this will be conducted to be Covid-19 compliant will be sent out to all members in a separate email.

If you think you have caught an Asian Hornet or just not sure exactly what you have caught then take a close-up image and send to me by email. I will endeavour to get the identification and verification information back to you as promptly as possible. If it is a positive ID then the team will help and guide you in how to proceed with the NBU.

Please remember it is illegal to release a trapped Non-Native Invasive animal. If you think you've got an Asian Hornet place the entire trap in a freezer for 24 hours, this will humanely kill it.

The slogan for the Watch Week is “ **See it, Snap it, Send it**”.

Please spread this message so that our bees and other pollinating insects are safe this year.

Gavin Nuttall-Owen

AHAT Coordinator

ahat@tivertonbeekeepers.uk



EXAM BOARD SECRETARY VACANCY

Val Francis, who many of you will have corresponded with over the years, is stepping down as Exam Board Secretary in spring 2021. We will be very sorry to see Val go but we would like to appoint her successor during September so that there is a period of handover training.

This is a part-time, annual hours service contract, based at home with some evening and weekend working. Travel to Stoneleigh Headquarters for meetings and assessment examination days will be necessary but travel expenses and the cost of any essential overnight accommodation will be reimbursed.

If you are a highly accurate administrator and are interested in learning more please email me, Leigh Sidaway: gen.manager@bbka.org.uk

Closing date: 4 September 2020 Interviews w/c 14 September 2020



Bees Abroad

Relieving Poverty through Beekeeping

Tiverton Beekeepers supports this organisation each year with a small donation and this is their latest newsletter

<https://mailchi.mp/b93dd4bc00e7/joining-the-rspbs-gola-forest-project?e=9b2fe88cdd>



BDI AGM - 10th September 2020 - 2.00pm via Zoom

<https://www.beediseasesinsurance.co.uk/>

This is a reminder of the above event - if you have already registered there is no need to do anything further - I look forward to seeing you on the day.

We have had a good response to this event and as a result have upgraded our Zoom capability for the meeting. It will now be held in a 'Webinar' format which means that we can accept more people who wish to hear the talk by Professor Stephen Martin.

This is your chance to question the Directors of BDI about the direction of the company - which is owned by all the member associations.

Delegate & Attendee Arrangements

The link below will take you to a Google form to register for the AGM. This can either be as a voting delegate (one per member association) or as an observer.

[BDI AGM & Varroa Talk Registration Link](#)

Registration will assist in our register of attendance as well as giving us a guide as to number of people attending the event. This is important in case we need to upgrade our Zoom provision again. Once you submit the form you will be automatically given a link for the Zoom meeting.

Natural Varroa Tolerance – Professor Stephen Martin

Immediately after the formal business, Professor Martin will be giving a presentation about his (BDI funded) work on naturally Varroa resistant honey bees. This research could have immediate practical benefits for beekeeping and follows on from the ReVive project that a number of our member associations helped to fund. This talk is open to none delegates who are asked to register as observers for the formal AGM.

I look forward to see as many of you as possible - albeit virtually

Best regards

Martin Smith President

martin.smith@beediseasesinsurance.co.uk

**A sustainable future for our
beekeepers, our honey bees
and our environment.**

**A National Bee Improvement Programme
(NatBIP) is being launched.**

BIBBA aims to support associations, groups and beekeepers of all levels to sustainably select and produce hardy, docile and productive bees that are best suited to their local environment.



The National Bee Improvement Programme (NatBIP)

BIBBA is launching NatBIP to encourage all beekeepers to produce hardy, docile and productive bees suited to their local environment.

For over 100 years there have been significant importations of honey bees and queens into the U.K. The reasons have varied from the “Isle of Wight Disease” and hard winters, such as 1962/63, to management reasons to suit beekeepers.

There is increasing concern by beekeepers, both new and experienced, to continual importations, which is backed by scientific evidence. These concerns include, but are not limited to:-

- Bee health. Possible introduction of pests, diseases and pathogens.
- Unsuitability to the locality. Possibly contributing to increased colony losses.
- Drones interbreeding with existing queens. Weakening the quality of local stock.

A series of webinars have been planned in a logical progression to explain NatBIP, experience of importations, scientific evidence, teaching beekeepers and how beekeeping associations can help improve our population of bees for the benefit of everyone.

The provisional programme of webinars for NatBIP, all Tuesdays at 7.30pm is:-

1. 22nd Sept “The National Bee Improvement Programme Outline”
Jo Widdicombe
2. 29th Sept “More details of the National Bee Improvement Programme and Participation” Jo Widdicombe
3. 6th Oct “Global pandemics, bee imports and native bees”
Norman Carreck

4. 13th Oct “My 50 years experiences of imported bees affecting local stock”
Peter Jenkins
5. 20th Oct “Resilient Honeybees”
Grace McCormack
6. 27th Oct “Where we are, how we got here and how we can move on...”
Roger Patterson
7. 3rd Nov “Some Fresh Ideas for Teaching and Learning”
Roger Patterson
8. 10th Nov “Bees and queens for everyone”
Roger Patterson
9. 17th Nov “Answering your Questions”
All speakers

NatBIP provides us with the first ever chance to choose to be self-sufficient with our beekeeping, reducing the need for increasing importations that many beekeepers feel are harming our own honey bees. It is hoped that as many beekeepers, groups and associations as possible will attend these webinars.

The webinars are free and attract a large number of attendees. Recordings of recent webinars are also available for viewing. More information is available at www.bibba.com.



DEFRA consultation- Help us protect the future of England's trees

At the ADM, delegates passed a resolution to raise the awareness of the importance of trees for pollinators and support education of planners etc so more appropriate trees could be planted and maintained in the future.

We have become aware of the DEFRA consultation on the England tree strategy.

A BBKA response has been drafted and is attached for your information and assistance.

The consultation closes on the 12th of September. I am encouraging you as Associations or individuals to complete this consultation if you can, so Tree planting and management in the future has an input from those with a care for bees and pollinators in general.

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/forestry/england-tree-strategy/>



My Bees Last Stand

Earlier in the year I got a small swarm – initially they seemed to be fine and I left them to expand in their new home which they seemed to approve of and fed them with sugar syrup to encourage them to draw out the foundation.

They seemed to be doing well with a beautiful flight pattern so I left them alone but then something changed.

The bees seemed to have stopped flying much and seemed distracted so I decided it was time to look inside. There was no brood and no sign of a queen and although they had drawn out six frames beautifully they were in distress.

I tried to introduce some freshly laid comb from another hive in the hope they may be able to produce a new queen and left them to it but it was not to be.

I noticed a few wasps floating about the hive so I narrowed the entrance to allow them to defend themselves better and they then produced this army like formation of battle ready troops and I watched them pounce and roll over any wasps that dared approach.

Unfortunately on another inspection numbers were dwindling and there was still no queen to be seen.

More and more wasps were arriving so it was time to try and amalgamate them with another hive.

Although it was sad to think that something went wrong and they couldn't survive in their own right it was fascinating to watch their behaviour even if it was a losing battle against the sheer volume of wasp invasion.

I haven't had this experience before as my other bees live in woodland a few miles away so I'm not fortunate enough to be able to monitor them daily so I thought I would share my story with you all!

"Opinions expressed in articles in this publication are those of the author(s), and do not necessarily reflect either the opinions or the policies of the Devon Beekeepers' Association"