



THE TIVVY BUZZETTE

The Newsletter of Tiverton Beekeepers – October 2021

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

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Note from the Editor.

Having only just returned from a long awaited, and unexpectedly extended trip to Barcelona to visit my Son, I had to hurriedly put this together. I therefore apologise in advance for any mistakes made and for it getting you a little later than I would have liked. There could be worst places to be stranded!

Best wishes Hilary



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



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It was a great shock to hear of the news of Malcolm Jenkins who peacefully died on Monday 6th September. Malcolm as many of you will know was our past Club Chairman, from 2014 to 2017, and was always larger than life and full of enthusiasm for club events. One of his main projects was to create the Club Apiary at Knightshayes, Tiverton. Our thoughts are with Sue and his family.

The bulk buying sessions have been a great success and my thanks goes to Cath for all her hard work on ensuring that the items finally arrived. I understand that the syrup took 5+ weeks to arrive from the order date! The reason for the delay was purely transport problems bringing the load in from Belgium to Carlisle, then down to Birmingham and finally to you. Thank you Cath.

The Bee Diseases and Pests Control (England) (Amendment) Order 2021 came into effect in April 2021 and made Varroa reportable. If you are registered with Beebase then this is automatically reported for

you. If you are not registered on Beebase, a new online form has been added to their website to allow you to fulfil your duty to report. Any problems please contact me.

As the first paragraph suggest, we don't know what lies for us next, so lets enjoy our hobby and help each other when ever we can please. Malcolm.



Tiverton Beekeepers' Branch Members Meeting Programme .

Autumn 2021

Branch Programme.

Having listened to our members who attended our outdoor get together in September, we have decided to stay with meetings via Zoom for the next few months. You will be sent the link prior to meetings.

Wednesday 20th October 7.30pm

Drone Congregation Areas - Richard Simpson , East Devon Beekeepers.

It's a complete mystery to most of us as to what goes on in the Drone Congregation Area., just as long as our new queens are properly mated. Richard and a couple of his fellow beekeepers have been doing some local research so join us to find out how it may help your bees when mating.

Wednesday November 17th 7.30 pm.

Branch Annual General Meeting

It has been a difficult couple of years for us all, for our new beekeepers and those organising the branch. Please join us at this meeting and offer your support.

Additionally our Treasurer, Ian Duncan, has kindly offered to tell us about his experiences (no, not about beekeeping) of rowing across the Atlantic Ocean. It was a huge challenge & amazing experience for him join our meeting to hear all about it.

Asian Hornet September 2021 Monitoring

The monitoring week (6th to 12th September) thankfully did not record any positive Asian hornet sightings. The week was publicised by emailing a press release to every parish council clerk to be included in their newsletter or website as well as the local newspapers.

Only one member required a Suterra sample for setting up their monitoring station. We did not receive any reports from members regarding their monitoring experience. Two members of the public got in touch via the branch website automatic reporting system. Verbal evidence collection and image verification allowed us to put their fears to rest as the observed insects were the European hornet (*Vespa crabro*).

A new version of the monitoring station was trialled. It is based on the Veeta Pharma device sold by Thornes but instead of having the bottom 4 to 5 cm awash with attractant, and so drowning any insect, a small version of the wick station was placed inside the trap. The beauty of this is that the chemical signal of the attractant is amplified by the trap chamber, the attracted insects cannot escape but they do not drown so greatly reducing the problem of by catch.



Hanging the modified trap from a tree branch approximately 1.5 to 2 metres above the ground mid afternoon on a sunny day was productive. The saucer and normal wick station had eventually managed to attract 5 European hornets at the bottom of my garden. Inspection of the Veeta Pharma trap early next morning revealed 8 alive but sluggish hornets. The effect of the cooler night temperature with the soporific nature of the high sugar content of Suterra meant that the hornets were alive and seemingly docile. The main drawback to the Veeta Pharm trap is that the cover has to be carefully dismantled before the main container cap can be accessed. The cap has to be 'popped' off like a tube of Pringles which agitates the contents and also puts your fingers perilously close to the hornets which are now climbing up the sides of the trap. Placing the trap on the ground with the open top pointing away from me and retreating a distance of 3 metres allowed me to safely observe their departure.

The modified trap proved its efficacy yet there still needs to be improvements in allowing smaller insects such as hoverflies to escape from the trap. If the trap is not visited frequently then the supply of attractant will reduce and the trapped hornets will then turn on the other trapped insects as a source of food. The cap release also needs to be investigated to make it safer for the operator. Yet this is a welcome addition to our monitoring toolbox as it is quick and easy to set up and transport.

News from the Asian Hornet front line

Jersey has now eradicated its 43rd nest of the season. The 42nd nest was discovered in a steep earth bank underneath scrub that was being cleared away by gardeners who made a hasty retreat! The recent nest was a track and trace conundrum in that the primary nest was located in an earth bank, but the secondary nest was eventually found 16m up in a lone poplar tree. Finding the nests are vital in the eradication programme as the presence of drone hornets means that the emergence of virgin queens is only 14 days away.

The geographic location is still focused on the NE of the island due to the prevailing NE winds from the Cherbourg peninsular 17 miles away. Hence the normal flying range of the hornets has been boosted by this particular weather pattern. It will be interesting to see what the autumnal weather pattern has in store for the continued hornet immigration.

Notes from the biological research community

Hidden poisons in rhododendron nectar Philip Stevenson (Plant chemist) and Alison Scott-Brown (Plant/insect ecologist) Kew Garden Natural Capital and Plant Health Department.

Bees making honey from rhododendron nectar inadvertently lock in a toxin now identified as grayanotoxins. The effect of this chemical substance is that people eating the honey become stupefied and in Turkey, where rhododendrons naturally grow, there are tales of it being called 'mad' honey as long ago as 630BC.

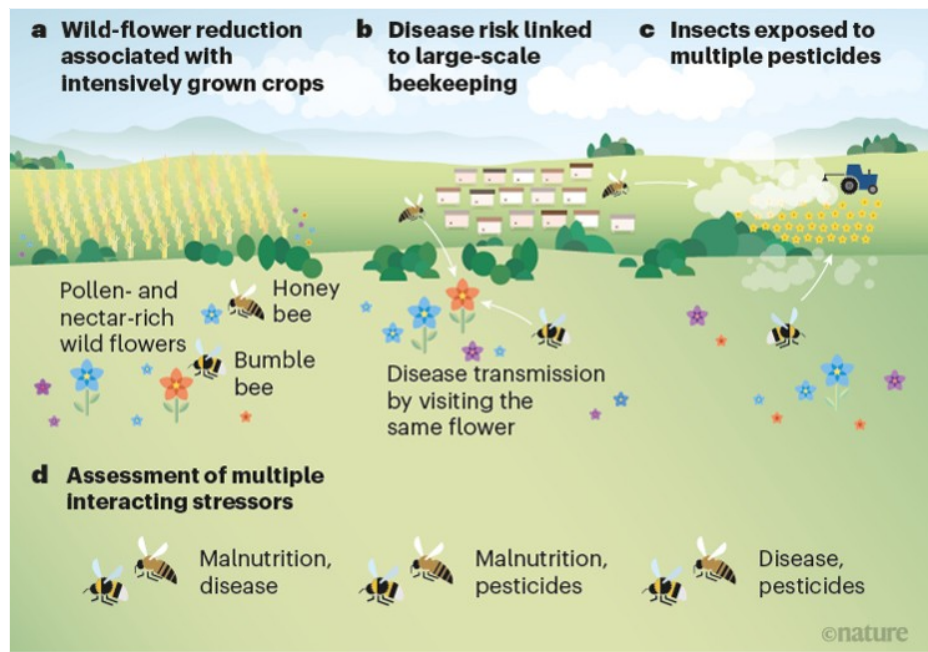
The downside for honeybees is that if the plant produces a high concentration of the toxin in the apical leaves then it causes the bees to die after several hours of exposure. The toxin does not seem to affect bumble bees who spend more time than any other bee in pollinating the plant. Hence increase the invasiveness of the rhododendron by selective planting and the biodiversity suffers by poisoning all other bees except bumble bees.

The full report is to be found at kew.org kew science

A cocktail of pesticides, parasites and hunger, leaves bees down and out Adam J Vanbergen (20 August 2021)

Pollinators are under threat. A meta-analysis reveals that the combination of agrochemicals, parasites and malnutrition has a cumulative negative effect on bees, and that pesticide–pesticide interactions increase bee mortality.

The full paper can be read at <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-02079-4>



Want to know more about wasps (and the Asian Hornet)? This podcast discusses all 9 resident social wasp species, their habits, feeding, nest building, predators and parasites, along with their sting and what exactly is the point of wasps?

Podcast link: <http://www.uk-wildlife.co.uk/ep-27-the-social-wasps/>

Electric bees (21 Sept 2021)

Bristol University, Cardiff University and Rothamsted researchers found some flowers release their scent in response to electrical charges emitted from a bee's touch. A bee's tiny electrical charge is around 6 million electrons compared with a million billion electrons in a 60W light bulb. This is the first time a plant has been shown to use the presence of pollinators as a cue to emit more of its attractive perfume so increasing its chances of being visited.

Full report: ow.ly/UeN150GeBwv

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Around the apiary in October

By Keith Owers

Apis Mellifera on Michaelmas Daisy?? 01/10/21 Hilary Sanders (see note below)

September has almost passed and most of the beekeeping jobs are up to date. The last of my feeding will have been completed by the first of October. If you have not completed your feeding as long as the temperature stays around the 15 - 16c you will be ok. As the temperature drops the bees will not be able to process liquid feed so well. Providing your hives are all weather proof and fed it is almost time to relax with a good beekeeping magazine or book. Should we start to have frosts at night I will be putting mouse guards on. They could go on earlier but the narrow space for the bees to get through tends to knock the pollen off their back legs and that is not what we want. We still have a mix of flowers producing pollen and Ivy is still to come, a little later than last year. The pollen is all good stuff but the nectar that ivy produces is not so good, it sets very hard and is often unusable for the bees winter time. If your frames are well filled from feeding the bees will consume the honey and not store it.

Assuming you have cut the grass and trimmed the hedges around your apiary, made sure your hive roofs are not going to blow off, it is time to look back on the past beekeeping year, what went right and what could have gone better. How did your record keeping go? Can I help my bees and the planet by planting a tree or two, if not some flowering plants that are good for bees and bumblebees?

I dashed outside into the garden yesterday afternoon, to take a photograph of some bees working to add to the Keith's article above. I knew there would be plenty on the Michaelmas daisies, however as I looked more closely there were in fact very few honey bees, if any. In fact I am not entirely sure that the one in the photograph above is *Apis Millefera* as it wasn't easy to see it up close. There were though, masses of bumblebees and other pollinating insects, which was lovely to see. Hilary (Editor)