



THE TIVVY BUZZETTE

The Newsletter of Tiverton Beekeepers – January 2022

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

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

LETTER FROM THE (stand-in, or sit down) CHAIR



by Unknown Author is licensed under

Happy New Year to all Tiverton Branch Beekeepers & members.

I hope you have all had a peaceful Christmas, spent with family &/or friends, most importantly I'm hoping you are healthy & Covid free. Maybe some lucky ones will have been given Christmas Presents of new beekeeping equipment or books on how to improve our beekeeping. Bet you can't wait for spring!

It's impossible to predict what 2022 will bring, just look back at the last 2 years. One thing is certain that our bees will require our attention & care and they will give us hope for the future.

It will be a challenge to plan a programme of speakers in the current situation but our new committee will ensure we have a members' meeting on the 3rd Wednesday evening of each month until May.

I am pleased to announce that Lesley Ayre has gallantly volunteered to take on the role of programme secretary but I would imagine for several months the meetings will have to be via Zoom which is a frustration for all of us but it is the safest way. It was originally our intention to have a social gathering in January but Covid put paid to that.

Hopefully over the Christmas period you will have had the chance to renew your subscription- it is very easy to do, just follow the link Ian Duncan has sent you. If you are having problems please contact him. The weather has been amazingly mild for midwinter, large numbers of my bees were flying on Boxing Day which was a great sight to see but also worrying as to how much of their stores they are using up. Now would be a good time to heft your bees which will give you an idea of how much food they have in their hives - if they are getting light then it would be sensible to give them access to a block of fondant. If you need any sugar Tony has a ready supply .Tel 01884 841257 (There is a recipe on the page 8, taken from last years February Buzzette and another on David Cushman's site <http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee> (Hilary)

Take care & start planning your beekeeping year for 2022.

Tony Lindsell



Thursday 6th January 7.30pm Committee members meeting via zoom

Wednesday 19th January 7. 30 pm Members meeting via zoom

***A Shopping Day for a Worker Bee
with Graham Kingham***

Tracing the journey of nectar, water, propolis and pollen from their collection and their uses, ending with the final contents, the poo!

Have you every looked into a bee's mouth? Seen what's in their poo? What about the brood food and how it's made. Find out how a bee collects, digests and uses its food from without and within its specialised body

The talk is varied with all images from photographs taken on the microscope by Graham Kingham

Graham Kingham is an experienced beekeeper and has written several books about bees & beekeeping. He lives in Devon & is a member of our Exeter Branch. Please join us all for what will be an extremely enlightening presentation.

BeeTradex 2022 @ NAEC Stoneleigh Saturday 12th March 2022.

Save the date, further details are on page 7

Qs and As



You may recall that last month I put a few questions to Keith (Owers) and he has kindly come back with some answers.

So here we go!

“ Keith, what lead you to take up beekeeping?”

“My interest started in 1944 or 45, I was on holiday staying with a relative in Royston near Cambridge. In their large garden they had three WBC hives, I was fascinated watching the bees coming and going bringing in different coloured pollen. I was keen to know more. I wanted to know what was going on inside the hive. I was told I would have to wait till my uncle came home from the war. A year later I was back asking my uncle could I see inside the hive. That is when my interest really started. Back home in London my father was not interested. 1954 I started training at farm collage in Kent, my favourite study was entomology. I had to wait till 1977 before family and work allowed me to make a start.”

“How long have you kept bees?”

“In 1973 I moved to Devon as nursery managers. By 1977 I was forty and time to start. I signed on to a beginners course (10 weeks evenings at Bicton collage), the tutor was Ken Stevens NDB a full time Devon county lecturer. In 1978 at the county show I joined DBKA I was asked for my address and said Cullompton, I was told I could join Tiverton or Exeter, but was told that Tiverton didn't do much so I joined Exeter.”

Worker bees needed ...

The committee still has vacancies for the position of Chair and Vice Chair.

If you wish to discuss this please contact:

Tony Lindsell
01884 841257

Malcolm Crook
01884 821927

Hilary Sanders
01884 266297

A red square graphic with a white crown at the top. Below the crown, the text "Your Club Needs You" is written in a white, sans-serif font, with "Your" and "You" on separate lines and "Club Needs" in the middle.

Your
Club
Needs
You

A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME

I recently had to endure three days of total home confinement due to an injury to my dog.

Not wanting to just sit around, what little job could I do to pass the time?

I know, I have a small hole in the sleeve of my Bee suit, I will repair that.

Now about 100 years ago, I can remember my mother darning socks and she used to use a wooden mushroom shaped aid to put inside the sock.

Okay time to check the sewing box. Nothing. What else could I use?

HA HA ,the answer, a tennis ball.

I now thought to make a "Great sewing Bee " job out of this, I will turn the sleeve inside out and feed the tennis ball inside to support the cloth while I sew up the hole.

Still concentrating on the health of my dog, but more so on my repair, off we went. Eventually threaded the very white cotton through the needle eye, and gently but very surely repaired the hole.

Hours later, I tied the final knot in my masterpiece and stood back to admire the job. No bee will be able to penetrate that masterpiece of work. RESULT.

Time to look at the finished job!!!

OOPS



" HAHA, that's brilliant Malcolm!"

Around the apiary in January

By Keith Owers

Around the apiary in January, did I hear you say not a lot!

As I write this just before Christmas, the weather this month has been quite mild, and not much frost. My bees when I looked were milling around in front of the hives not doing much, clearly not going out shopping just out for a little exercise or more likely out for a comfort break. Although I have some shrubs flowering in the garden, with temperatures around 6-10c it is too cold for the bees to fly far. If they do they are more likely to use more fuel (nectar) than they will collect.

Providing roofs are in place and mouse guards ok it is best to leave our hives in peace. If in doubt about feeding just heft the hive, and check again in a months time. With the bees not flying far and the weather not too cold our bees will be saving their honey for when the weather does turn cold.

Planting for bees and other insects and wildlife *Photinia serratifolia*. Chinese Hawthorne.

You might recall that I did a little write up in the September issue of The Buzzette with a photograph of this little beauty of an evergreen shrub/small tree, that I was lucky to inherit with our garden. I had taken the photograph in midsummer 22nd June this year when it was buzzing with honey and bumble bees alike.

This is a photograph taken today 29th December as I put the Buzzette together, to demonstrate the little red berries of which there are now few, as I suspect the birds have eaten them. Hence it being a type of Hawthorne berries but few if any thorns.

I mention this because it is a fabulous shrub to have in the garden as it ticks so many boxes. It is evergreen, good if you need privacy, great for insects and birds, with a pretty blossom in June and berries in the autumn. I believe it can be purchased as a shrub or a larger tree but I think mine is a shrub as it certainly fits in a fairly small compact boarder and can be heavily pruned to keep in check, although I find that this only needs doing every few years.
Hilary. (Editor)



The Queen's Green Canopy

Next year 2022 the country will be celebrating Our Queen's platinum jubilee.

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the United Kingdom to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee".

You can find out more on the website.

<https://queensgreencanopy.org/>

I for one will be planting a smallish tree which was on my Christmas present list which Hubcap aka Norm ordered. I chose a bare rooted crab apple tree, *Malus sylvestris*, to replace a dead cherry tree that we have had to take down at the top of the garden as it had died. I love crab apples. I have one already (sorry to sound greedy or boast) It's a Golden Hornet which has lovely golden autumn fruit. The bees love the blossom in spring and the birds feast on the fruits in winter. It seems to attract Fieldfares which I have seen in colder winters and is additional joy.

However, I fancied one with had different coloured fruit. So I went for John Downie, a fairly well known, common variety with, I am hoping, has red/ orange fruit that I think I had in the garden of a previous house alongside a very cute photo of my eldest daughter who was then about 4yrs old and is now 36yrs of age. She held a bowl of the fruit in a matching red bowl, which I turned into crab apple jelly. The fruit, not the bowl!

It should be arriving soon from a UK grower. Unfortunately there was little choice from our local nurseries so I had to search on line and found an excellent site called Roots.

I think the idea of The QGC is that, having purchased a tree, ideally a native species and UK grown. You then add it to a map. It seems like a lovely idea to me.

Hilary Sanders (Editor)



FANCY A GREAT DAY OUT?



BeeTradex 2022 @ NAEC Stoneleigh Saturday 12th March 2022.

BeeTradex brings together the best beekeeping suppliers large and small, associations covering both commercial and hobbyist beekeepers alike, and they are happy to welcome established beekeepers or those who are starting their beekeeping adventure.

There will be stands from a multitude of traders, so you will be able to stock up on your bee keeping equipment, buy fresh honey and equipment from some of the best suppliers and manufacturers from across the UK and Europe and most importantly you will also find out so much more about pollinators and how we can all do our bit to help.

There will be lectures from leaders in the fields of beekeeping, candle making and pollination to name a few, some with hands on workshops. Learn something new in our fascinating seminars with options for beginner and experienced beekeepers, meet like minded people and for the first time in BeeTradex history, you can pre-order UK bred NUCs and Queens from local bee farmers.

I have made a tentative cost of transport to and from Stoneleigh, using a 52 seater coach. Including a £6 entrance fee the cost at present excluding your meals etc would be £21.

Anyone interested can email me with numbers, at mcrook505@yahoo.co.uk. I think that there is a 30 odd seater coach but I haven't costed that yet.

Fondant recipe - suitable for bee feed

What you'll need:

1X Large saucepan

1 X Hand or electric Mixer

1 X Cooking thermometer

Shallow disposable setting pans (pizza type)

Ingredients (scalable):

4 parts granulated sugar

1 part water

1 Teaspoon White vinegar

Method

- Pour sugar, water and vinegar into saucepan and bring to the boil stirring constantly.
- Cover and gently boil up for about 5 minutes.
- Remove lid and check temperature with cooking thermometer, continue to boil with lid off until temperature reaches 234F.
- Remove from heat and cool to 200F.
- Whip with mixer (preferably electric) until mixture begins to turn white and creamy with air bubbles.
- Pour into shallow setting pans.
- Allow to cool undisturbed.

How to apply this

- To feed to the bees, place inverted pan on top of frames. Place an empty super on top and insulate dead space.

Note: Remember, if you intend to store your fondant keep it in a suitably cool and dry place.

I think this was passed to me last year by either Ian or Duncan. Many thanks.

Hilary. (Editor)