



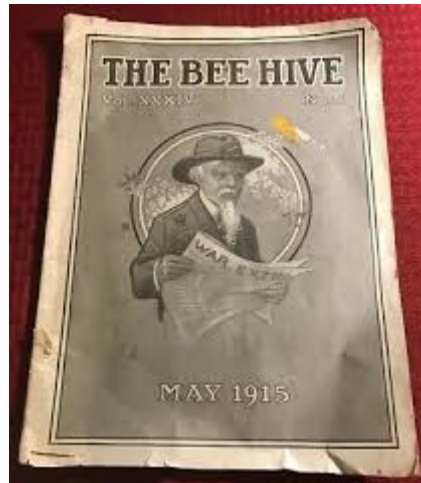
THE TIVVY BUZZETTE

The Newsletter of Tiverton Beekeepers – August 2022

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

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR!



Two cautionary tales to start with this month.

The first was some shock when I heard that my neighbour had recently attended the funeral of a 60 year old friend of his who had been stung in his garden by a wasp. He began to suffer a severe reaction and was taken to hospital where he later died the same day from an anaphylactic reaction. The man had never had any previous sting reaction and had always been in the very best of health.

The second tale concerned a father and son, who locally wanted to retrieve a swarm of bees high up in a tree. The son successfully captured the swarm, but on lowering the aluminium ladder to the ground, shorted it against some high voltage power lines throwing the unconscious boy to the ground. He was rushed to hospital and recovered but was advised to buy a lottery ticket as he had been so lucky to survive.

We do not have any commercial bee keepers as members in our club, which means the craft of beekeeping is a hobby to all of us. Please take care. Is it really worth the chance of harm or worst??

Malcolm



August meetings

Honiton show

Thursday 4th Aug

Taunton Flower Show plus bees and honey at Vivary Park Taunton

Friday and Saturday 5th and 6th August

Autumn dates for your calenders

Thursday 8th September Committee meeting at Uplowman Village Hall 7.30pm
Please note this is a change of date and is **not** via zoom as per website as time of sending this.

" Meet the bees"

Saturday 10th September

Taster day for potential beginners prior to the start of theory courses in the autumn.
Course dates to be confirmed.

Autumn Branch meetings at Uplowman village hall . 7.30pm -9.30pm with a break for refreshments

Wednesday 21st September - Jason Wallis, Urban beekeeping

Wednesday 19th October - Martin Hann and Claire Densley, Pheromone communication

16th November - AGM 7.30 pm Uplowman Village Hall Speaker tbk

Social evening in December tbc



Tiverton Branch at Devon County & Mid Devon Show

The Honey & Bees Marquee at the Devon County Show this year was a big success winning a Gold Award in the Features Category. As you will have read last month we entered the Stevenson's Trophy which had a new format this year with a theme of 'Beekeeping in our area'. I think we were all delighted to find out that it had not only won First Prize but also that the Judges had given it the Blue Ribbon of the British Beekeepers' Association & National Honey Show, the Blackmore Trophy. This is given to the entry that the Judges consider to be the best prize winner in all of the Honey Show competition, it had never been given to a Stevenson's Trophy entry before. A very big well done & thank you to Sue and her team; Hilary, Lesley, Malcolm, Clive, Chris, Katy, Ian & Norm

The Branch success didn't stop there, our experienced beekeeper and honey competition expert, Brahim Meraga had another outstanding year, he achieved 11 First, 11 Second & 7 Third Prizes which gave him the following trophies: The County Trophy for gaining the aggregate total of points, The Brimmacombe Memorial Challenge Bowl, The Basil Salter Testimonial Trophy & the Frank Alston Perpetual Trophy. What a haul - well done Brahim.

To top it all the Branch then won the Divisional Cup for the Branch of the DBKA gaining most points overall.

We should also thank our Chairman, Malcolm, who for the third year in a row has supplied the flying bees to the show even though the weather prevented the public from getting up close to them.

Thanks also to our members who help set up/take down & steward at the Show, without you the Bees & Honey marquee couldn't happen.

We took our prize winning display to Mid Devon Show where we had a very enjoyable & rewarding day despite the weather. We also had displays about the Asian Hornet, Adulterated Honey & Bees for Development. It was good to see many of our members on the stand or popping in to say hello. The Apiary Honey sold well as did Keith's & Ian who sold a few candles.

As always lots of interest from the public in bees & beekeeping resulting in 20 people signing up for our 'Meet the Bees' day on the 10th September".

Our stand doesn't happen by chance so a big thank you to everyone involved including those filling in the forms to book our place, those who planned the display, those who erected the marquee on the Friday evening & took it down on the Saturday, those who store our equipment when not being used, those who stewarded during the day & those who provided honey & wax for sale.

Tony Linsdell

Club extracting equipment

The Club has two extractors that members can borrow which are kept at Tony Linsdell's nr Uffculme.

One is a 4 frame stainless steel extractor which will take either standard 4 super frames or 2 brood frames

The other is a high grade plastic 9 frame Thornes extractor, see photo. I now realise that it doesn't show that fact that it is on a metal stand which is separate with a tap at the base. When we have used it we get some blocks of wood to lift and tilt it a little higher so that we can get every little bit of our, and the bees, precious honey into buckets. After use we pop it in the shower and hose it off with very hot water to clean it.

Contact Tony to put your name on the list

01884 841257



Planting for bees

Borago Officianalis

Borage.

About 3 years ago I bought some borage seed, knowing that it would be good for bees, I also wanted to fill a gap in the garden. I scattered them in a flower border in late spring and they took really well. They did however get pretty tall and flopped all over the place.

Next year they reseeded so I transplanted them into a sunnier spot and bingo they took very well (although the RHS says it won't transplant) and are staying very upright, I am guessing because they are not searching for sunlight. They get bashed about by my washing as they are next to the line. I still have lots of seed left so they appear to germinate and grow very easily even in with little attention.

They attract both honey bees in abundance and bumblebees. I love the grey foliage and tiny star-like flowers so here are a few photos that I have taken of them.



The leaves and flowers are edible and can be used in salads for garnishes or in drinks.

It is also known, for obvious reasons as

Star Flower

Can grow to 2 feet in height and is a herb

Can be used as a companion plant to repel other pests

It is native to the Mediterranean/far East

I have seed if anyone wants a pinch to try next year.

Hilary (Editor)





Around the Apiary in August with Keith Owers

Apis mellifera on Borage taken 30/07/2022

Hilary Sanders

Hopefully we will all have plenty to do this month. No need for me comment on July weather but what have our bees got to say about it; same as us, it was hot!

Bees are well equipped to deal with hot weather in the hive -they fetch more water and fan a bit quicker or stay outside. The down side of the heat wave is that the ground has dried from lack of rain and our flower nectaries have dried up. Our supers may be lighter than at the end of June.

With extracting honey, bees to treat for varroa and all to be fitted in before we start feeding in September for the winter, we have plenty to do, so don't delay in taking off your honey crop.

Removing supers.- Clearer boards need to be on for 24 hours. If you have 2 or 3 supers to take off, place the top super on the queen excluder then the clearer board followed by the full supers. The remaining super can be removed when you are ready for it. A few extra days may give you a little extra honey or a bit more capped, ready to extract.

Once extracted I put the supers back on the same hives that they came from for the bees to lick out. I put mine over the brood box and remember to have the queen excluder in place. Leave them about 3 days before removing and storing for next year. It is much nicer to store dry supers.

If you are going to treat your bees for Varroa, there are plenty of treatments you can use. Depending on which treatment you choose it will probably take 14 to 28 days. For more advice look up The National Bee Unit - Managing Varroa. The importance of treating at this time of year is that the amount of brood is decreasing but the number of varroa is at maximum numbers. The young bees we raise in August will be our winter bees that will take us around to next March, not just for six weeks like our summer bees. When varroa first arrived in 1992 it was the poor winter bees that caused hives to collapse the following spring.

Hopefully your honey harvest will have gone well and will repay you for your hard work. Remember next year will be better. Do you have feeders ready for feeding in September?

Keith Owers

Asian Hornet News

The first week of September will see the launch of the UK wide Asian hornet monitoring advocated by the BBKA and NBU. This initiative has taken place for the past 5 years in response to the first incursion on the UK. The response was based on the precautionary approach to the limited data and incursion projections from mainland Europe. The experience of Jersey to incursion was seen as an inevitable consequence for the UK. Hence the instigation of spring and autumn monitoring (actually generalised mass trapping) and the production of the “green bottle” traps (ref BBKA and NBU websites) by many branches and beekeepers.

Since 2016 there have been a total of 22 confirmed sightings. This number includes a total of 12 nests all of which the NBU have destroyed. The only recorded sighting for 2022 is presently one which was at Felixstowe, Suffolk on 29 April. This average of 3.6 per year illustrates that the UK mainland is firmly entrenched in the containment phase of the incursion. Jersey has found and destroyed nest number 68 to date which is 10 fewer than this time last year.

The developing ecological data and changes to the environment over the past 6 years ought to allow for a more nuanced approach than currently being pursued. The expected elevated level of incursion has not transpired. The reasons are complex and still need to be rigorously evaluated yet academic opinion suggests that cessation /reduction of travel due to the pandemic and the import / export regime change caused by Brexit are significant factors. The role of AHAT teams coupled with a greater public awareness from media sources regarding climate change have also played a part. Thus, a wholesale trapping scheme, even though correctly based on the lifecycle of hornets, is no longer valid in terms of objective, time, or economic value.

The value of monitoring or trapping in terms of insect biodiversity cannot be biologically justified due to the high percentage of by-catch of other beneficial insects. Dave Goulson in his book (2022) Silent Earth makes an eloquent case regarding insect decline and the tipping point for ecological catastrophe. Generalised unfocused trapping, even at a local level, will have a significant impact. Taking 100 from a population of 400 localised wasps is a massive hit when compared with a past population of 4000.

Therefore, the approach to be adopted by the branch in the current containment phase of Asian hornet monitoring, is that there will be no blanket trapping in September 2022.

A nuanced approach will be to respond to sightings from beekeepers and the public with reporting via our web presence. Ideally an image is to be sent, insect ID verified and if an Asian hornet is suspected then a mobile monitoring station will be deployed by our branch AHAT team. This will be under active observation for a defined time period. Should an Asian hornet be confirmed only then will the NBU strategy be enacted.

The case for Asian hornets ought to be viewed as a matter of informed concern for beekeepers and the maintenance of hive health rather than an all stations “war footing” epidemic reaction.

G Nuttall-Owen

AHAT Coordinator

ahat@tivertonbeekeepers.uk

And Finally
Your club needs some volunteers

A Trainee Chair



A Treasurer



A Vice Chair



More workers or drones to be on the committee



Please contact Malcolm for more details regarding the role of Chairman and Vice Chair .