



# THE TIVVY BUZZETTE

The Newsletter of Tiverton Beekeepers – October 2023

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

## The Chairman's Brood Box



I think we can safely say that the season has now come to an end and true to form it's been very different from any other. I also expect there will quite a range of different experiences from the beekeepers in our branch. For my bees it started slowly with a cold and damp start to the year meaning spring was very late. Although the bees were building up in the hive there was little food available for them. Swarming which can often happen in April and May was delayed until eventually the weather changed, and the sun started to shine. Flowers started to bloom, releasing their nectar & pollen resulting in the bees swarming. The bees started to work incredibly hard and soon the honey crop was building rapidly. In fact, like many others, I needed to take an early crop of honey from my bees as I was running out of supers. At the stage I was anticipating a handsome crop of honey. However, as often happens, the weather changed, August was a damp & cold month but, still with large colonies of bees, the honey started to disappear. I have been relatively lucky this year as I have been able to leave some honey on my hives for the bees to use. Unfortunately, it seems to me that it has been a good season for wasps & European hornets. I'm usually used to wasps being around but I'm normally able to shut my hives down with small entrances and stop the wasps from harming my colonies. However, this year the crafty wasps have found that two of my hives weren't strong and they have decimated them, it is a very sad sight to see such devastation. Fortunately, the remainder of my hives go into winter relatively strong and I'm hoping they will get through to the spring. Tony Lindsell

## The Winter Programme.

Last month we started our programme with a very interesting talk from Daniel Basterfield who many of you will know. His talk on the Honeybee Dance was fascinating and informative. After our tea & cake interlude, he came back to answer various questions on beekeeping; with his expert knowledge as a Master Beekeeper, he didn't disappoint.

As I write this, we are looking forward to our 2023/24 'Introduction to Beekeeping' course which will include many prospective new beekeepers. We have about 33 people enrolled which is a record for us but probably reflects the successful show season we have had at Devon, Mid Devon, Plymtree & Uffculme.

On the 8th of October we will have a stand at the Uplowman Creation Day to be held in the Village Hall, if you are interested in protecting the environment it will be well worth going along. On Wednesday October 18th our next speaker is Will Steynor telling us about 'Inventions for the Practical Beekeeper'. Will has visited us before and it promises to be an educational & practical evening.

I have some good news for you as well. Our annual membership year starts from 1st January until 31st December each year and we will soon start sending our reminders so you can renew your membership. With inflation having recently been in double figures I hope you will be pleased to know that the cost of your registered membership will fall from £37 to £31 and other types of membership will fall proportionally. The main reason for this is that the Beekeeping Magazine has gone from a paper copy through the post to being a digital format through your email. A hard copy will still be available but at an extra cost of £18.

Finally, you will all have heard that this year there have been considerably more sightings of the Asian Hornet and subsequent discovery of their nests than in any other year. As beekeepers, we need to be vigilant by doing all we can to identify their threat early. At the Branch meeting on the 25th of November our Asian Hornet Action Team coordinator, Tracy Frankpitt, will be showing us how to make and properly use an Asian Hornet trap. If you are concerned about your bees, please do try to get there.

Happy beekeeping

Tony Linsdell



## Vacancy for Buzzette Editor

Apologies for repeating this advert and droning on, sorry I do love a pun, but Tony has mentioned in previous issues of the Buzzette that I intend to stand down from being Editor of The Buzzette at the next AGM in November but as, yet no one has come forward.

A number of different people have had this role in the years that I have been a member of the branch, and everyone has made it their own so don't be put off by whatever skills you think you may lack because when I started doing it I could basically type on a keyboard, copy and paste things and send emails etc. The rest I learnt by trial and mostly error with a teeny bit of imagination and creativity thrown in which is quite fun but not essential. In the end it is whatever you want it to be.

I proofread articles that I am send and make minor alterations as I see fit, I contact people if there are things that need more clarity on and cross-referencing dates etc. Sometimes I write articles myself. Sometimes I have made mistakes or get stuck on an IT issue and get around it somehow or other.

William Lines kindly talked me through using ER2 for the first three or four months before I finally grasped it. ("Thank you again for your patience William. You were and continue to be very kind and patient.")

The decision regarding what is printed as with any other magazine rests with the editor. In the event of any debate regarding an article then this would be brought to the committee for a vote.

Hilary Sanders 01884 266297/ 07763347311



**Branch Committee meeting.**

**The Autumn programme of Branch Club meetings at Uplowman Village Hall .**

Wednesday October 18<sup>th</sup> 7.30 pm Will Steynor –  
Time Saving Inventions for the practical Beekeeper.



Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 7.30pm Tracy Frankpitt  
How to make and use an Asian Hornet trap.

**Tiverton Branch AGM open to all members**

Wednesday November 15<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Uplowman Village Hall

Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup> Club Christmas Social Evening

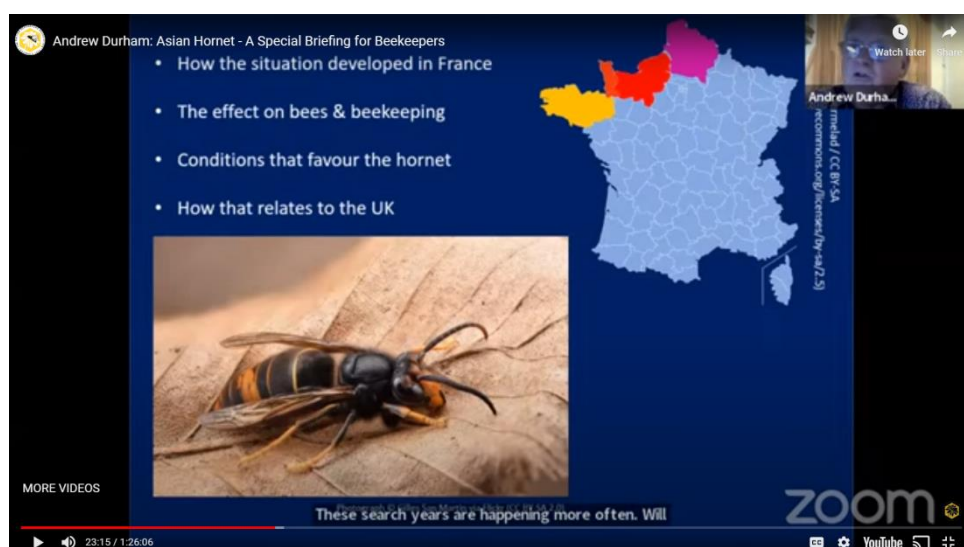
## Asian Hornet Report

The latest update from the BBKA Asian Hornet Team was on 26<sup>th</sup> September and it reported that 58 nests have been found in 48 locations. This figure is bound to rise as the leaves fall off trees and Hornet nests become easier to spot.



Asian Hornets have built nests near many ports and some further inland so do keep alert and make sure you have the Asian Hornet Watch app loaded onto your phone. The BBKA and beekeepers are leading the UK's defence.

If you are interested in the Asian hornets and their incursion into France, Andrew Durham gave us an excellent briefing, which is still available on You Tube.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mx3LhC2fnoc>

Tray Frankpitt AHAT Co Ordinator



## Bringing a Buzz to the Classroom



It's never too young to learn about the importance of honeybees to the environment.

Three of us have been introducing the world of honeybees to a new generation of future beekeepers in our Primary Schools.

Malcolm, Jen and I have been into Castle and Bolham Primary Schools, in Tiverton in the last month. The ages varied between 5 and 10 years old.

The children loved meeting our honeybees (in our observation hive), seeing inside a beehive, handling the equipment, dressing up as beekeepers

and finding out through games, the life of the honeybee. We explained the importance of bees and other insects to our environment and our food supplies.



Jenny and Derek Evans



## A beautiful photograph of bees feasting on a fig

This was taken on 3rd September by Vicki who is one of our AHAT co-ordinators. The bees were feasting on her fig tree. The tree was apparently full of bees, wasps, butterfly, birds and the occasional hornet feasting on all the over ripe figs Amazing and thank you Vicki for sharing it



## Around the Apiary in October with Keith Owers



*Apis Mellifera on Ivy 26/09/23*

*Hilary Sanders*

Hopefully with honey harvested and Varroa treatment under way all that is left to do is clean frames and equipment. Once the supers have been scraped clean, they can be inspected and stored. Frames need a gentle scrape with the hive tool to remove surplus wax and propolis off the ends of the frames. Any really dark brown foundation is best removed. Brood frames need the same treatment but any frames that are 3 years old or more are best replaced. Do not replace the foundation until next year as the bees prefer new wax rather than old wax that has dried over winter. Frames that have had wax removed are best washed in hot soda water, boiling, if possible, they will come up almost as good as new, ready for new wax next spring.

Most beekeepers will be feeding their bees Ambrosia or sugar syrup. Syrup is easy to make up and cheaper. Half fill a bucket with white granulated sugar, mark the sugar level then fill with water to just above the sugar level, then stir for 10 minutes till dissolved. A plasterer's paddle on an electric drill is easier. White granulated sugar from Tate and Lyle {cane sugar} or white granulated from British Sugar corporation {beet sugar} is all the same product and ideal for your bees, but do not use brown sugars.