

North Bucks Bee Keepers' Association

Newsletter May-June 2018

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Calendar at-a-glance

20th June	Noggin & Natter
Saturdays	Apiary meeing
6th July	BBQ
10th July	Committee meeting
23rd September	NBBKA Honey show

Editorial

Committee News

Next Committee meeting: Tuesday 10th July 2018. Venue tbc.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Your Data is very important to us, and we never give or sell it to a Third Party without your consent. We have had some processes in place for a while making you aware of how we communicate with BDI and BBKA. We are aligning our processes and policies with theirs. Our plan is to propose the new policy at our AGM in October for you to approve.

We have also implemented new privacy options to allow you to opt-in to different communications, such as newsletters, events, etc. If you are not receiving as many emails from us as you used to, ensure you edit your profile on our website to select which messages you want to see. (Please forgive and report any small mistakes we make while this new system is put through its paces.)

Swarm Collection process

Please ensure your entry on in your 'Profile' section of the Members Area on our website is up to date. In particular:

- Contact number.
- Whether you can collect Swarms or not
- Whether you would like to receive Swarms or not.

We have had to change our Swarm Co-ordinator process at short notice due to family illness. We are now asking for volunteers to have the phone for one week, and answer / check they are honeybees / arrange a collection time / get details to pass onto another collector. We have sufficient volunteers for the next few weeks, after that we need more volunteers. Please contact Chairman Nick Hinson on chairman@nbbka.org to volunteer.

It is imperative that if you wish to receive a swarm, you MUST have equipment ready now.

Finance Information

We aim to be transparent with regards to our finances. An update with latest balances, details of transactions and any comments/concerns is prepared for each committee meeting. This, along with the minutes of the meeting, are to be published on our website – and are to be available for any member to inspect at any time.

Beginners Course 2018

Thanks to all the students who attended the beginners course this year – and welcome to the association to those who have joined us. A reminder that theory is great, but the best way to learn is via the practical sessions at the Cosgrove Apiary each Saturday lunchtime. Any member is welcome to turn up, we meet at 12:30. There are roadworks on the A5 and A508 at the moment, be sure to check traffic information before you depart.

Observation Hive

The association has been donated an Observation Hive (Single National Brood Frame). It is available to be used by members at shows and events. Please contact Chairman Nick Hinson if you would like to borrow it.

For Sale:

For Sale

Dartington Long Hive, and associated kit ideal for new beekeeper.

Only used for two seasons, this hive is in excellent condition. Ideal for taller beekeepers, or those with bad backs.

Contact Sue Lang bedfordshirehoney@hotmail.co.uk or 07522 559010.

Summer/Autumn 2018 Talks and Events

'Noggin & Natter'

These nights will be held on the third Wednesday of May, June, August and September. This will be at The Barge Pub, Woolstone, Milton Keynes. MK15 0AE.

If the weather is good we will be in the garden at the rear of the pub.

The dates are:

- 20th June
- 15th August
- 19th September

BBQ

Steve Snook has kindly agreed to host a BBQ during July. The date is Friday 6th July. If you would like to go (partners are welcome), please let Nick Hinson know chairman@nbbka.org – he will confirm the address, start time and cost back to you.

Trip to Thorne's Head Office in Rand (Lincolnshire)

We are planning a trip to Thorne's in early August, it will be on a Saturday. If sufficient numbers are interested, we plan to hire a small coach. If you are interested in joining us please email Sue Lang bedfordshirehoney@hotmail.co.uk to register your interest. We need at least 25 people to make a coach worthwhile. The plan would be to leave MK at 8am, arriving at Thorne's by 10:30. We will be able to have a short tour around the site, have a light lunch and do some shopping before returning about 3pm. There will be space in the coach storage area for bulky/heavy items such as fondant.

Bee Safari

We haven't done this for a few years, but was always popular. The idea is to have 4-5 apiaries in a similar area, and the beekeepers travel between each one together. This is a great way to see and experience other beekeepers bees, hive types and sometimes temperaments! The last visit is generally to a pub for a well earned drink. If you would like to volunteer to host the group at your apiary on one of these safari's, please let Sue Lang know. We would encourage car sharing, but it is worth considering whether you can park 4-5 vehicles safely at your apiary site. We would like to arrange a couple of these in July/August – probably on a Saturday or Sunday. A Friday evening is also possible for a mini event.

North Bucks BKA Honey Show

Sunday 23rd September 2018. Buckingham Nurseries. Please put this date in your diary, and have a think about which classes you would like to enter.

North Bucks Country Show.

Is to be held on June 2nd 2018 at Pilch Farm, Singleborough.

We already have a number of volunteers for the stand, please contact Nick Hinson if you would like to help out.

Winter Talks 2018/2019

Our programme of talks for 2018/2019 is being sorted as we speak, more news in the next newsletter. There are a couple of gaps – please let Sue Lang (bedfordshirehoney@hotmail.co.uk) know if you would like to hear a talk on a particular subject.

Cosgrove Apiary

Regular sessions have now started each Saturday lunchtime. We meet at 12:30. Contact Terry Lock the apiary manager if you have any specific questions about the sessions.

BBKA Basic Exam

Fiona Eelbeck is planning a day for BBKA Basic Exams on Saturday 7th July. If you are interested in taking this practical exam, please let Fiona know. eelbeckbees@gmail.com
A coaching session will be set up to take you through the syllabus.

Features

Asian Hornet

Whilst we have not had any reported sightings of the Asian Hornet in Buckinghamshire or surrounding counties, we do need to be vigilant. Please take some time to understand the differences in their markings. Devon Beekeepers Association has an excellent spin off website with information, pictures and guidance. <http://ahat.org.uk/>

Our recommendations are:

Take a photo of the hornet, please try and get the abdomen and legs in the shot as they are the best areas to differentiate the hornet from the European variety.

Follow the hornet to its nest site and make sure it is identified (coloured ribbon/tape/string is ideal)

Get expert help. Contact one of the committee members to get your suspicions confirmed.

Log the sighting with the National Bee Unit on the Beebase website, or phone the local regional/seasonal bee inspector to report the sighting.

Different Abdomens



Helpers on BBKA Stands

The BBKA Shows Committee have this year been asked to exhibit again at two prestigious National Shows. The success of previous events has been due to the enthusiasm and support from BBKA members who have helped to Steward the shows. Therefore, we are looking for volunteers to take on this role.

The shows are:

The RHS Chatsworth Flower show (In conjunction with the Derbyshire Beekeepers). 6th to 10th June 2018. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chatsworth-flower-show>
And

The BBC Countryfile Live Event at Blenheim Palace. 2nd to 5th August 2018 <https://countryfilelive.com/>

If you have Stewarded before, you will know that there are either morning or afternoon sessions, thus giving you the rest of the day to enjoy the show. Also, if you do volunteer to be a Steward, we will provide access to the event/s for a chosen partner.

If you would like to help at either or both of the above events please fill in the form at the following link: <https://goo.gl/forms/IVLKTkCec4DkQ7up1>

Gordon Robbins 07900852236

Apiary Notes/Tasks

This spring has been very cold and wet, and a lot of beekeepers have lost a lot of colonies. Do not despair though, the remaining colonies will quickly build up with warmer weather and a good nectar flow, and you will soon be able to split them into nucs or do an artificial swarm. There are lots of books about with details how to do these successfully.

The Oil Seed Rape crop is just finishing flowering, so if your bees have access to it, you will need to get the honey off as soon as possible before it granulates in the comb. Nick Hinson has the association extractor if you need to borrow it.

The following article was written by Wally Thrale (Befordshire Beekeepers) and is reproduced here with his kind permission.

“Some colonies that have died out still have significant stores. The following is how I deal with colonies that did not survive the winter.

- a) If a brood frame is mostly empty I cut out the comb and burn it. The frames are washed later in a Burco boiler with soda crystals. This removes old wax and sterilises the comb and it is then easy to add a new sheet of foundation. Changing brood comb every two to three years is good practice.
- b) If a brood frame has a lot of stores I will keep it to feed to artificial swarms later on. But only if I can see no sign of disease. If the bees have soiled the comb I burn the whole comb along with the stores. Soiled comb is a sign of dysentery and possibly Nosema.
- c) Do not place old brood comb in the general waste bin or garden waste. If the comb is exposed later in the season local bees can rob stores from it. If a colony had died out from EFB or AFB this approach spreads the disease to the robbing bees. Personally, I do not try to recover wax from brood comb. Most of the melted wax is absorbed by the old skins produced by pupating bees. However, do keep wax from top bars, cappings and damaged super frames. This collection of wax melts down well and can be traded in via the Association wax exchange scheme
- d) Floors, brood boxes and cover boards should be scraped and then sterilised, either with a blow torch or boiling water and washing soda, before using again.

Notes:

1. Try to locate hives out of westerly and northerly winds – so shelter is vital for colonies especially in a hard winter.
2. If a dead colony is discovered, the hive entrance should be blocked and bee tight (to prevent robbing and spread of disease) until it can be dealt with.
3. Try to establish the cause of death. If foulbrood is suspected, you must call the NBU.
4. AFB spores can survive 35 years on old comb or equipment.
5. Burning old brood combs: Choose a safe place out of doors, away from hives, sheds, vehicles etc. Scrape out a dip for the fire (this will contain the frame nails and wires, any molten wax and honey). Light a fire with dry wood. Add combs one at a time and some more wood in between. Remember wax is extremely flammable and will produce large flames! Leave the ashes to cool overnight, then scoop

ashes, nails and wires into a bag and dispose of in the dustbin. DO NOT attempt to burn combs on a domestic fire or in a log burner”.

A very useful checklist was created by Ted Hooper (Guide to Bees and Honey). If you are newish (or not so new and need a reminder!) to beekeeping this is worth printing and laminating, and having with you in the apiary:

- Has the colony sufficient room?
- For the Queen to Lay [Swarm Control]
- To store Honey [Add Supers]
- For the Bees to rest in the hive overnight [Add Supers]
- Is the queen present and laying the expected quantity of eggs? [Disease, Space]
- Is the colony building up in size as fast as other colonies in the apiary? [Disease, Space]
- From April until end July, are queen cells present? [Swarm Control]
- Are there signs of disease or abnormality? [Disease]
- Has the colony sufficient stores until the next inspection? [Food Stores/Feeding]