

# North Bucks Bee Keepers' Association

## Newsletter October 2015

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### Calendar at-a-glance

13 <sup>th</sup> October	NBBKA AGM
10 <sup>th</sup> October	<i>County-level Autumn Gathering, Wendover</i>
27 <sup>th</sup> October	<i>Chalfonts <a href="#">lecture</a> from Dr Juliana Rangel</i>
10 <sup>th</sup> November	Lecture: “DIY Beekeeping”
17 <sup>th</sup> November	Committee Meeting
24 <sup>th</sup> November	Lecture: “Flower Power”
5 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas dinner
2 <sup>nd</sup> February	Lecture: “Raising Nucs”
19 <sup>th</sup> February	Bucks County Spring Convention
8 <sup>th</sup> March	Lecture: “Unusual Ways of Keeping Bees”

### Annual General Meeting

You are hereby invited to attend the AGM of the North Buckinghamshire Beekeepers' Association. It will be held at 19:30 on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October at Rectory Cottage, Church Green Road, Bletchley. Please note the new date.

### Honey Show Results

Andrew's editorial (below) will talk in detail about the honey show last weekend. Full results are on our website. Well done to Tania Thorne for a huge haul of silverware.

### For Sale

Gunter has 16 Honey Squeeze Bears (12oz) for sale. Catalogue Price: £8.10 for 10. Selling at £8.00 for 16. Contact [gunterandmaggie@btopenworld.com](mailto:gunterandmaggie@btopenworld.com) or 01908 582757

## New Varroa Product – Api-Bioxal

A new veterinary medicine based on oxalic acid, *Api-Bioxal* by Chemicals Laif, has been approved by the UK's VMD. This is the first fully-registered oxalic acid product for beekeeping, produced by the manufacturers of *Api-Life-Var*. See: <http://www.bee-craft.com/api-bioxal-approved-by-the-vmd/>

## Shoulder of Mutton events

Apiary manager Terry Lock reminds members of the standing invitation to our monthly social event at the Shoulder of Mutton pub in Calverton on the second Tuesday of the month. Please join us for chat about bees and about life.

## Seasonal Notes

I want to start this note with thank-you's. Thanks to Sue Lang for organising a tremendous **Honey Show** for North Bucks and Buckingham; Buckingham Nurseries (could there ever be kinder and more generous hosts?) for having us; the exhibitors who took part; the judge coming over from Cambridge - and his delightful assistant, our own Sandra Knox - to judge what was on offer; and you good and stalwart supporters who came to view and participate in what was a highly enjoyable event.

**What else?** I think the time has come to sit down and constructively get ideas about what you want out of NBBKA. The sad fact is that despite much publicity, only some fifteen beekeepers (whether from Buckingham and District BKA and/or NBBKA) entered for the show, and about the same number of regulars who we always see and who are so welcome- as spectators. I am sure you will appreciate that this is vastly disappointing, especially to the folk from the two associations who lugged, set up and returned to base the various show and beekeeping equipment - and bees! - and to Sue Lang in particular who was a real brick in running the show for us. She doesn't even live in Bucks, but Beds, so the position must have been particularly galling for her. May I emphasise again that I think we need a constructive discussion? We don't have to put on a Honey Show: many associations don't; but we need to know not only what you think, but also to hear if in future you intend to attend! The same goes for the Winter/Spring Lectures programme and the Bucks Spring Convention - as you will see from the accompanying programme we have some top-class events for you, but will you come? Again, we don't have to do these talks, and I would much prefer to cancel them NOW rather than have speakers turning up, often from a great distance, for a pittance of a fee, to an audience of "one man and a dog".

It may be, of course, that we as a committee are so to speak barking up the wrong tree, and that what you really want is escorted trips to exotic places abroad, and the like! If you do, please tell us. WE WANT YOUR VIEWS. WE WILL ONLY KNOW YOUR VIEWS IF YOU COME TO THE AGM ON 13TH OCTOBER at 7.30 pm at Rectory Cottages and tell us about them (please note again the new date). I have asked Daniel Clarke to lead the discussions. Please come along and say whatever you want, but may I ask that you bear

this in mind: events don't take place without volunteers, both to run and to support them. The committee this year has been pretty stretched, and the workload has fallen largely on the shoulders of a few, often stressfully so. Please, if you are able to do so, come on to the committee or perhaps offer to run an event, or there are countless other important jobs to do like making the tea at meetings, helping at the apiary or renewing equipment. Just please put yourself forward. Without suitable support this Association will die, which apart from anything else would be a bad day for our bees as well as ourselves.

### **Christmas Dinner – 5<sup>th</sup> December**

In September's Newsletter I asked for bookings by 30th September. Current bookings received from you: zero! I now have to pay personally a deposit which I will do because I'm confident it is a case of you being slow, rather than not wanting to come. The downside is that the pub, having held forty places for us until 30th September, will now be selling places on a "first-come" basis, so we may not necessarily be able to fit everyone in after all, which would be a great shame. If you are coming, please email me soonest at [ae@thebeers.org](mailto:ae@thebeers.org) with number of tickets required, and follow this up with a letter to me at 1 Kings Street, Stewkley, Beds. LU7 0YA with your cheque payable to me, Andrew Beer, in the required sum(see Sept. Newsletter). Your cheque will not be presented for payment before 15th November.

### **In the Apiary**

This Newsletter has so far concentrated on matters human, and it is easy to forget we are drawn together by bees! Some thoughts:-

1. The bees should now be settling down for winter, but the recent summery weather has seen much hive activity. This may mean light stores and more winter feeding. October is too late really to feed, but if you have to, do it and complete it in the first few days of the month. Thymol can be added to the feed; call me if you need proportions.
2. Keep narrow entrances in place: robbing of one kind or another can take place until heavy frosts set in. Providing the entrances are no more than 1 inch wide and not more than 3/8 inch high, and hives are on stands at least 1 feet from the ground, I have never been troubled by mice or rats.
3. In late October/early November, put into effect your measures against woodpeckers in woodpecker-damage areas. At the same time I remove the coverboard and place an eke above the broodchamber and replace the coverboard over that. This improves ventilation and assists movement of bees over combs towards stores. Strip hives of surplus equipment, e.g. feeders.
4. If you have combs with unextractable crystallised honey, decap and put them in a box above floor and below broodchamber. This will enhance the stores in the hive, and with luck you will have clean combs for use for the crop from spring onwards. There are variations of this practice which I can discuss if you contact me.

See you please at Rectory Cottages on 13th October at 7.30 pm. THE ASSOCIATION NEEDS YOU!

Best wishes,  
Andrew