



Bath BEEkeepers NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 8
AUGUST 2024



HELLO AND WELCOME



August and summer is finally here, I think. At least we do have 2 Bank Holidays to enjoy. But during this month many of you may be away enjoying yourselves on those long awaited summer holidays but please remember that your hives will still need to be looked after, make sure you do a hive inspection before you go and as soon as you return or maybe buddy up with someone if you're away for a longer period. *Alison*

ACTIVITIES – ANAPHYLAXIS TALK - 8TH SEPTEMBER

On Sunday 8th September 2024 at 14.00 the club is lucky to have a retired GP John Beaven, coming up to the TA to give a talk explaining the nature of allergy and anaphylaxis to bees. Below John has provided some background information on how he became involved with bees and his understanding of anaphylaxis.



Please come along and sup-

port this excellent opportunity because you never know when anaphylaxis could impact you or someone you know. It is really important that we know as much as we can and what to do as this could save a life!

"I was first introduced to beekeeping as an A level student at Beechen Cliff School, when a beekeeper in the St Catherine's valley kindly agreed to let me experiment on colour perception in bees, building on the 1914 work of Karl von Frisch. After that my interest lay dormant for many years, until swarms started appearing regularly in our garden for the last few years.

I took up beekeeping after retiring as a GP partner last year, after 26 years at Beckington Family Practice. My leaving present from the partners, staff and patients was a full hive kit, bee suit and smoker

and a swarm obligingly appeared on one of our apple trees just a few weeks later! Since then I have continued to do some locum GP work, alongside learning beekeeping – I enjoy woodwork and where I can, I build hive components from cedar offcuts left over from our house extension. I am a member of the Frome Beekeepers' Association and attended their 'New to Beekeeping' course last winter, which is when I got roped in to talk about anaphylaxis.

I cannot claim to specialise in anaphylaxis but I do have a working knowledge of it from my work as a GP and previous training posts in A&E and general medicine. Many years ago, I was involved as an ENT doctor in the administration of the courses of injections used to desensitise those affected by a severe allergy

to bees – these are always administered in hospital, due to the risk of anaphylaxis!

The talk briefly explains the nature of allergy and anaphylaxis to bees and concentrates on what to do if someone has an anaphylactic attack at an apiary, when medical assistance is unlikely to be immediately available. It is intended to be very practical and help beekeepers to be more confident of what to do in the unlikely event that this life-threatening emergency occurs.

I hope to be able to bring a couple of Epi-pen demonstrators, so that people can handle and practice administering these (anyone with known anaphylaxis should be carrying two at all times, and so have them with them if they visited an apiary or were walking nearby)."

ACTIVITIES – 7TH AUGUST HONEY EXTRACTION & DEMO

The club is pleased to be holding a honey extraction talk and demonstration evening.

When: Wed 7th August

Where: TA club house

Time: 18.30 (6.30pm) .

What the talk and demonstration will cover:

- clearing of bees from the supers,
- ways of uncapping frames,

- use of extraction machines,
- jarring honey,
- labelling appropriately (to meet the legal requirements) and what to do with those extracted frames ...

This evening event will be aimed at new beekeepers who have not done this before but is open to any member who would like to come along for a refresher.

Please e-mail Alison Holman on Holmae57@gmail.com to confirm you are attending. This

will enable us to manage numbers and refreshments.

(Whatsapp support group members who have already said they are coming, do not need to respond).



Dates for Diaries:

4 Aug	TA Open 2.30
7 Aug	Honey Extraction talk at TA
17 Aug	Bird of Prey Show
20 Aug	Preparing for winter
26 Aug	Newton Farm Open Day
7 Sept	Claverton Down Show
8 Sept	Anaphylaxis Talk (2pm)
14 Sept	Bathampton village Show



NOTICE BOARD

BBKA Talks:

BBKA are offering useful talks on preparing your colonies for winter:

When: Tuesday 20th August

Time: 19.00 (7pm)

How: Join the zoom meeting using this link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83824579560?pwd=kjhdRbTQzITHpUcmwAHUkn6LZxaq37.1>

Meeting ID: 838 2457 9560

Passcode: 753891

ACTIVITIES—CLUB

What's in a Jar?



Glenys and George Lunt recently had a very pleasant afternoon with 12 members

of Bath's "Women in Fellowship" group. The ladies there were all interested in bees and beekeeping with several of the ladies remarking on how few insects, including bees, they were seeing this year.

George gave a talk and slide show on bees, pollination,

swarms and honey production. Glenys followed with a short presentation on honey labeling, explaining how misleading labels can be. For demonstration Glenys took a few jars of honey from various known supermarkets, all looking very similar but ranging in prices, the cheapest honey @ 99p to a genuinely locally produced honey clearly showing the origin of the honey with the name and contact details of the producer. The guests seemed genuinely quite shocked at what they were told about adulteration by the addition of

syrops to bulk out genuine honey and the terminology used e.g. how local is local? Saying harvested locally that might not be local enough for those wanting honey collected within a 3-mile radius of their home.

After the talk they were served with delicious cake and tea and the group have offered up a donation of £30 to Bath Beekeepers which they will send via the clubs website.

ACTIVITIES— WHY ARE MY BEES NOT THRIVING?

On the 13 July at Saltford Village Hall the Bath and Bristol Beekeeping Associations jointly organised two workshops, in conjunction with our local Bee Inspectors Annabel Lewis, Donald Mudie and Liz Gardner of the National Bee Unit, on 'Why are my bees not thriving?' each workshop attracted maximum numbers including some junior members.



Annabel Lewis gave an insightful and valuable talk stressing the importance of undertaking a focussed Spring and Autumn colony disease inspection of every hive, emphasizing the importance of "Not getting distracted by anything else during that examination".

The key to good disease management is the importance on being able to recognise what is healthy brood, healthy comb and healthy adult bee and any-

thing not fitting those healthy criteria warrants a further inspection.

To inspect your hives for disease you should closely inspect the honeybee to identify if they show any signs of disease and then importantly shake the bees off each frame to inspect the sealed and unsealed brood. Holding the frames at a 40 (degree) angle over the brood box, look down the frame towards the box to observe for any larval changes and dried scales at the bottom of comb cells (seen in Foulbrood diseases below). During the talk photo slides had members best guessing what problems or diseases they could see along with some 'joker frames' of bee bread, pollen and crystallised honey. Following this Annabel gave an explanation of and how to manage: CBPV, DLQ, Chalkbrood, Sacbrood, Baldbrood, Waxmoth.

Then came the heavyweights: Foulbroods.

EFB: Currently in some apiaries in our local area, as some attendees testified. EFB is a bacterial disease spread by infected adult nurse bees feeding larvae, it enters their gut,

multiplies, larval shape changes to bloated, slumped, melted appearance.

AFB: Currently in Cornwall, Scotland and North of England. It is a bacterial spore forming disease affecting sealed brood. Capping's may be darker, sunken looking, greasy and larval content becomes brown mucus that 'ropes' when lifted with a matchstick.

Advise: If concerned, take a photo and send to Bee Inspector, in the interim reduce the entrance of the hive to one beespace. The Bee Inspector should then contact you.

After quick refreshment, members went upstairs to don gloves, aprons and overshoes, to enter the 'Secure Room' with the Bee Inspector's and tables laden with diseased frames. This was a fantastic opportunity to hold and examine frames of chalkbrood, sacbrood and baldbrood before moving on to spot the swollen larvae of EFB. Then actually putting it on a gloved hand to draw out the yellow infected gut - likened to clotted cream! AFB provided more practical learning,

encouragement to do the matchstick test to draw ropery infected material from the cell - the infected frame had a noticeable 'foul', sour, bitter odour.

The Bee Inspectors were on hand to answer questions, test knowledge and ensure all members saw everything on offer. PPE was removed, hands cleansed followed by a chance to regroup and chat, network which along with the complete evaluations provided powerful evidence of how much members valued the opportunity of the workshop and meeting the local Bee Inspectors. The BBKA Healthy Hive guide, is available to purchase and will help to reinforce the learning. Beebase <https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/home-2#> holds some of the great photos used and the recently updated Foulbrood guide (2024) together with essential fact-sheets on Beekeeper hygiene and Comb rotation.

Many thanks to our Education Secretary Alison Hollman for organising this event.

THIS MONTH IN THE HIVE—AUGUST 2024

At the end of August as the nectar flow begins to diminish and our bees will shift their focus to storing enough honey to sustain them through the winter. It is important to continue weekly checks in all your hives which should include identifying the queen, checking for pests and diseases and looking for robbers. There should still be some honey available for you to extract but if you are unsure how much to remove be considerate to your bees and leave one box for them for over winter.

During late summer the bees work on building their population for winter, will work long hours to hopefully collect enough nectar to feed the colony through winter and this is a good time for you the beekeeper to begin your winter preparations.

Late summer Varroa treatments are advisable, monitor your hives and undertake a varroa count for each of your hives. As the Queen's laying rate reduces the varroa rate can end up higher because of the reduced number of occupied cells.

August is the last month where you have some flexibility and options for management of your hives and preparation for next year.

During August:

- ◆ Continue weekly checks hive inspection checks to ensure the health of each colony including;
 - ◆ finding the queen,
 - ◆ checking for pests and diseases, and
 - ◆ looking for robbers.
- ◆ Extract any final honey

- ◆ Check & monitor for varroa.
- ◆ Check for any emergency or supersedure queen cells.
- ◆ Remember to practice good apiary hygiene and clean all your equipment.
- ◆ Remember to keep good records for each of your hives.



QUESTION & ANSWERS FROM THE CLUB

Q: When is it a good time to check varroa count?

A: Now is a good time to put in under-floor boards and work out your daily varroa drop. If your bees do need treating for varroa, you can still make a plan whilst there is still time.



Q: Do bees tend to fill a top or bottom super first?

A: You will normally find the bottom one closer to the brood is full before the one above. If you are adding a second box and the first is fairly full put the new second one on first closest to the brood.

Q: If I have some uncapped cells on my supers how can I tell if the rest of the honey is ok ?

A: If you have open cells or are unsure if the honey is dry enough it is suggested that you use a refractometer. This will tell you the moisture content of the honey you test. a good guide to aim for is somewhere between 16-18%. Below 17% moisture content, no fermentation will occur. At 18% no

fermentation will occur unless there are large amounts of yeasts present. Above 19% moisture there is a definite danger of fermentation regardless of the amount of yeasts present. At 20% and over, yeasts will multiply freely, and the higher the moisture content, the more rapid the fermentation becomes.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH – HONEY ORANGE POACHED PLUMS



Ingredients:

750g Plums
140g clear honey
4 tbsp orange blossom water
300mls orange juice
Few ginger biscuits crumbled and Greek yoghurt to serve

Method:

- 1: Cut plums into halves or quarters and remove the stones.
- 2: Put plums into a pan with just enough water to cover.

3: Add the honey, orange blossom water and juice.

4: Bring to a simmer, then cover and cook for about 15 mins until the plums are tender but not mushy.

5: Using a slotted spoon lift plums out into a serving dish.

6: Bring the remaining liquid in the pan back to the boil and simmer until you have a syrup to the consistency you like (not too thick).

7: Pour syrup over the plums and leave to cool.

8: Put plums into individual bowls and add spoonful of Greek yoghurt and sprinkle with crushed ginger biscuits. Enjoy

9: Serves 4



If you have any stories, photos, info that you'd like included please email to:

alison.hillman@btinternet.com

By 20th each month