



# BURTON and District BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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## Dave Coates — 'To Do'

### Notes on Spring from our meetings.

Due to the continuing cold weather, keeping an eye on your colonies food supplies is critical to their survival at this time. Remember, even if you see your bees flying, they may just be taking cleansing flights and not be able to collect any nectar if the temperature is below 9 degrees (the minimum temperature for nectar to flow).

This time of year is critical for our bees, stores will have been used up over the past 5 months keeping the colony going over winter, now the bees are looking to build up their numbers in anticipation of the spring flow, they are much more active within the hive and will need more food to sustain them and to rear new brood.

Be aware of what forage is available in your area for your bees at this time. Heft your hives, if they feel light, lift the lid, if your bees are gathering on the crown board they are most likely looking for food, feed extra fondant to tie them over until the weather warms up. Spring syrup is an option if the weather is warm enough for nectar flow and will allow the bees to take at least 2 cleansing flights a week.

As Beekeepers we can spend the wet, cold days indoors, making up new frames, repairing hives, cleaning equipment and planning our bee keeping year.

Maybe you're taking a colony to Rape Seed or Heather this year? Or thinking of entering the Honey Show, taking a BBKA Module or just learning a new technique...whatever your plans, your monthly club meetings, fellow bee keepers, association library and web pages are a great place to discuss ideas, learn techniques and share views.

Happy Bee Keeping



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### Committee Members and contact details:-

<b>Club President :</b>	<b>Ken Logue</b>
<b>Chairperson:</b>	<b>Richard Matkin 01283 812958</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>David Coates 01283 713603</b>
<b>Membership &amp; Honey Show Secretary:</b>	<b>Cath Ambler 07973 369888</b> <b>cath.ambler @gmail.com</b>
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### Club Meeting Dates for your Diary 2018

<b>Henhurst &amp; District Recreational Club</b>	<b>DE13 9TB</b>
<b>Henhurst Hill,</b>	<b>16th April - Talk by Celia Davies</b>
<b>Burton-On-Trent,</b>	<b>21st May</b>
<b>Staffordshire,</b>	<b>18th June</b>



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### Events Programme : April 2018 - ~July 2018

**BBKA Spring Convention April 13th—15th**  
**Harper Adams University**  
**Ticket Info at [bbka@bbka.org.uk](mailto:bbka@bbka.org.uk)**



## **Bee Inspector, Noel Parker on The Asian Hornet/ Vespa Velutina**

- Queens emerge from hibernation between January and March, this is the best time to set your Traps and catch the queen before she starts a new colony.
- Workers emerge between April/May .The hornets nest is approximately same size as a wasp nest at this time.
- Colony growth between May and September builds the nest up to several thousand in habitants/workers.
- Hornets will prey on many pollinating insects during the summer including Wasps, Native hornets, Bumble bees and Butterflies.
- Sexual adults appear between September to November, this is when they are most likely to start hawking outside your bee hives.
- Up to 300 Queens can be produced from one nest in autumn and will hibernate and start a new colony in the spring.
- The Asian Hornet has a one kilometre foraging range, but can fly over 80 miles from the original nest site. The Asian Hornet does not fly at night.
- They are very aggressive around the nest site but not aggressive when they are out hawking/hunting. They can spray venom and have a 6mm sting.
- You can use small fishing nets to catch them quite easily when hawking outside your beehives. Traps are best used in spring and autumn.
- If you think you see an Asian Hornet, visual confirmation is critical, either a photo or a caught individual is needed to confirm your sighting.
- Report all sightings to your local Bee Inspector as soon as possible. Or email the Non Native Species Secretariat [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk)



**Hamish Low was the winner of this years GRAND RAFFLE**

Winning the prize of:-

**QUEEN EXCLUDER, ONE SUPER, CROWN BOARD AND A ROOF.**

**Thanks to everyone who supported the Raffle this year**

## Events Feed back



### Februarys' Meeting - Talk by Susan Bennet from BBKA.

Susan gave a slide show and talk on the recent changes and future prospects for the BBKA. Her talk focused on the aims and objectives of the BBKA as it is now applying for charitable status as a CIO. She updated everyone on the new approach to education, involving the organisations' role in schools, and use of their training apiary. She also covered changes to the exam system, the update of office premises and views on employing staff, (which would be possible if they were successful in their application for CIO status) along with the introduction of a staff pension scheme.

She also talked about the BDI insurance, what was covered and what was not, giving a brief update on notifiable disease such as EDB AFB. She advising that in it was always worth looking at what other insurances were available. Dave Coates thanked Susan for her most informative talk and she was asked to present certificates to the following club members who were successful in passing their BBKA Module exams last November. For more information visit the BBKA website

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### Marchs' Meeting - Talk by Noel Parker / Seasonal Bee Inspector.

Noel is the Bee inspector and education coordinator for the West midlands covering 953 apiaries. His talk was based around notifiable diseases, the Small Hive Beetle and the threat to Britain from the Asian Hornet. He explained about the NBU 1980 power of entry act and the threat from diseases to the wider bee keeping community. His key advise for spring is to pay particular attention to possible signs disease, at your first inspection, take a close look at larvae, and seek advice on anything you are unsure of , reporting notifiable disease as soon as it is found to minimize the risk of spreading it, repeat this in the autumn to ensure you have strong healthy colonies going into winter.



Noel also asked us to be vigilant for signs of hive beetle and invited members to become "Hive Sentinels" for the NBU by submitting floor scrapings and hive samples for testing and placing eggs traps for hive beetle within "Sentinel Hives. He explained how the adult beetle could fly 28 miles to seek out a bee colony, the female laying up to 3,000 eggs and able to survive on fruit for up to 3 months outside of a colony. The lava can burrow over a foot deep into soil under the hive, and disperse over a 25mtr radius, surviving for 6 weeks without food before emerging as an adult. It can be imported in many ways including through fruit imports from Africa and imported bee colonies. Vigilance is key to preventing the hive beetle from getting a foot hold in Britain as it has done in so many other European countries. Noels then went on to recap on the threat of the Asian hornet and a question and answer session followed. Thanks was expressed to Noel by Richard Matkin. Full details from Noels' talk can be found at:-

[www.nationalbeeunit.com/downloadDocument.cfm](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/downloadDocument.cfm)

Useful websites:-

## DAVE CUSHMAN

[www.dave-cushman.net](http://www.dave-cushman.net)

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## ROGER PATTERSON

Honey recipes

[www.honeyrecipes.org.uk](http://www.honeyrecipes.org.uk)

<https://bibba.com>

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## BEE CONNECTED

[beeconnected.org.au](http://beeconnected.org.au)

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## BEE BASE/NBU

[www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com)

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk>

[www.bee-craft.com](http://www.bee-craft.com)

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## BURTON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

[burtonbka.weebly.com](http://burtonbka.weebly.com)

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BBKA website

[www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk)



## A welcome sight, Bees on Snowdrops -



### From the Editors Apiary.

Last month, whilst strolling down the garden to carry out my daily duty of checking on the owls and feeding my hens, I was enjoying the fact that it didn't seem as cold as it had been of late, when a most welcome and familiar sound caught my ears. Buzzing! Having not heard it yet this year, and certainly not expecting to hear it, as we still had snow on the ground up here in the hills, I was delighted to see the



snowdrops in front of my hen run alive with bees, and even more delighted to see that they were collecting both pollen and nectar. This was indeed cause for celebration as I went to check on my hives to discover both were active and the bees happily coming and going. After about an hours watching I soon realized one colony (with my local, older, darker Queen in) was much more active and stronger than the one with a

young queen, which was the daughter of a Buckfast Queen that I'd raised last year. Both colonies still had fondant available. So last week, the when temperature went up enough for me to peak inside I did so, saw a big difference in colony size. Going back over my notes I saw that the younger queen, when treated for Varroa last autumn, had a very heavy mite drop, I can only presume this resulted in weaker autumn bees being raised. Needless to say I am now keeping a close eye on progress and considering a spring amalgamation if needed.



## Education

### BBKA Modules and Opportunities 2018

Suzanne and Dave are sorting out which courses to run this year and at present they are planning to run BBKA Modules 1, 2 & 3 and Basic Assessment.

The basic assessment is purely practical with a question and answer section. With modules you will be asked to sit a one and a half hour written examination. If you wish you can just join the group course and not sit the examination, using the course purely as a learning tool to increase your beekeeping skills.

To take the basic assessment you will need to have kept bees for 12 Months, you will be given a date when to attend for assessment which will be carried out with an independent assessor and will last for approximately 1 hour.

**The BBKA modules consist of the following subjects .**

**Module 1 Honeybee Management.**

**Module 2 Products and Forage**

**Module 3 Pests Diseases and poisoning**



The courses are offered free, but if you wish to sit the exam there is a £30 fee to do so. If you would be interested in doing any of these courses or you would like any more information don't hesitate to contact either Suzanne or Dave ( Contact details are on page 2 of every newsletter) . Or have a chat at the next meeting.



## **Education Opportunity.**

### **A Practical Bee keeping Course for Beginners and Improvers**

#### **THE COURSE.**

To be run over six Sunday mornings, starting on 8th April. The training will begin at 10.00am and finish at 12.30pm. Notes will be supplied as will protective clothing if needed. Both discussion and practical sessions are designed to give wide-ranging knowledge and confidence in order for students to become competent beekeepers. Each session will include hands-on experience with the bees.

#### **THE DATES.**

8th April, 15th April, 22nd April, 29th April, 6th May and 9th May.

#### **THE TRAINERS.**

Kathy and Kevin Shaw have both kept bees for over forty years and currently operate a honey farming business with out-apiaries situated in Staffordshire and Derbyshire. The Shaw's are both disease assurance scheme for honeybees accredited having been audited by the National Bee Unit inspectors. Keeping healthy bees and keeping up to date with scientific advances regarding honeybee pests and diseases are key to successful beekeeping in the 21st Century according to the Shaw's.

#### **THE COST.**

£125 per person.

To book a place email; [info@beeworthyhives.co.uk](mailto:info@beeworthyhives.co.uk)

or ring 01889 562196 evenings,

or 07714022971 during the day

## Education Continued.... **Beekeeping Courses Course**



### **Tutor:**

Margaret Cowley Margaret has been a beekeeper for over 30 years. She has a Master of Science in entomology, is a qualified teacher and holds the British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) Advanced Theory Certificate in Apiculture and the General Certificate in Beekeeping Husbandry. Margaret is also a Qualified Beekeeper, a BBKA examiner and for 12 years was Deputy Editor of Bee Craft journal.

### **Spring 2018 Saturday Mornings.**

There are five places remaining on this course

**Details:** A 15-hour course running over five Saturday mornings.

**Dates for 2018 :** 1). 2nd June. 2). 9th June. 3). 16th June.  
4) 23rd June. 5). 30th June.

### **Autumn 2018 Wednesday Mornings.**

There are six places remaining on this course

**Details:** A 15-hour course running over five Wednesday mornings.

**Dates for 2018 :** 1) 1st August. 2) 8th August. 3) 15th August.  
4) 22nd August. 5) 29th August.

**Course Details** Each course runs from 9:15am to 12:15 pm and the course fee is £120. The maximum group size is 8.

**Venue:** Three Roofs Apiary, Quarndon, Derbyshire.

The course includes both theory and practical work and follows the syllabus for the BBKA Basic Assessment in Apiculture. It will suit people who are thinking of taking up beekeeping or have already started. A set of course notes is provided and students will receive follow-up practical and email support.

Protective suits and veils will be provided.

**For more information and a booking form, email [bees@honeybee.org.uk](mailto:bees@honeybee.org.uk)**



## Buy & Sell



**For Sale - Please Ring Bob Hurd on 01283 542746**

- **1 Plastic 4 frame Tangential Extractor (Hand operated) £ 70-00 (O.N.O.)**
  - **4 x Wire Queen Excluders £ 3-50 each.**
  - **1 Smoker £10-00**
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**For Sale - Please contact Kathy and Kevin Shaw**

Email : [info@beeworthyhives.co.uk](mailto:info@beeworthyhives.co.uk) or ring 01889 562196 evenings,  
or 07714022971 during the day

Over Wintered five frame nucs, containing an August queen, on British standard or 14x12 frames also available from mid April. £175 each.

*Congratulations*

Congratulations were given to the following members at February and Marches meetings for passing their chosen Modules in November 2017 :-

Tim Wigfall—M1, Nigel Collier M1 & M2 and Penny Ward M1.

Suzanne King M2 and Dave Coates M2



### **Training Apiary Fundraising : Monthly Raffle.**

As part of our ongoing fund raising we will now be holding a monthly raffle at our meetings. If you feel you are able to donate any items to the Raffle please bring them along to the meetings and pass them on to a member of the committee. Tickets will be drawn at the end of each meeting.



## “Disease Bailey Comb Change”.



Dr Lesley Bailey, a bee disease expert at Rothamsted, developed this technique specifically to get weak colonies onto new comb. This technique is not to be confused with the technique used with strong colonies to create a full set of freshly drawn comb – confusingly called a Bailey Comb Change. We have a weak, diseased colony, probably three or four seams of bees. Obviously, a hive this weak will have no supers on it and it will also have a very limited number of foraging bees. Therefore, to move them onto fresh comb requires some patience and TLC, do not expect miracles.

To start you will need:

1. Some tape or sponge to block the hive entrance.
2. A clean brood box with 4 frames of fresh foundation.
3. Two dummy/blanking boards
4. A clean queen excluder.
5. An eke with a small entrance cut in it.
6. A clean crown board.
7. A gallon of weak syrup/ambrosia in a contact feeder.
8. An empty super to use as a large eke.
9. Some pollen or pollen substitute may be required. The procedure is very straightforward.

Next:-

10. Open up the hive, remove the crown board and queen excluder (if one has been left on).
11. Find the queen and place that frame (hopefully with open brood on), with the queen and bees, to one side or in a nuc box for safe keeping.
12. Remove all the frames which have no bees or very few bees on them, even if they have stores on them. Shake these few bees back into the brood box. This leaves enough frames, some with brood, sufficient in total, for the number of bees.
13. Push the frames together against the side of the brood box where the old entrance was, if necessary turn the brood box around to be the ‘warm’ way. Now put a dummy board at the end – so this now looks like a 3 or 4 frame Nuc.
14. Put on the CLEAN queen excluder.
15. Put on the eke, with the entrance pointing in the same direction as the old entrance.
16. Put on top the new, clean brood box with the 4 frames of foundation.
17. Create a gap, at the entrance side, between the wall and the first frame of foundation.
18. Insert here the frame (dirty) that has the queen on it.
19. Close up the frames of foundation and use a dummy board as the ‘end wall. So, this looks like a 5 frame nuc.
20. Put on the CLEAN crown board positioned so the feed hole is above the bees.
21. Now put the full contact feeder onto the crown board and the Super ‘eke’ around it and then the roof.
22. FINALLY – block up the old entrance to the colony.

**NOTE:** If the frames left in the old brood box have very little pollen stores on the top bars of the new brood box) so the bees have a source of protein.





## The clean up:

This is the bit that beekeepers do not like – cleaning up! Take the old frames – all of them – and burn them. The amount of wax in them is small and it is not worth trying to recover the wax nor to recycle the frames. Scrape the wax and propolis etc. off the dirty crown board and queen excluder, then either scorch or immerse in a bleach solution (non-wooden items).

Remember, if you used a nuc box, to give the inside a quick scorch or wash out with bleach.

What have we achieved?

The nurse bees and brood are in the bottom brood box with the majority of the dirty comb.

The queen, some house bees and the flying bees will now concentrate into the new brood box, using the new entrance and onto the clean foundation.

The house bees will use the energy from the syrup to create wax and draw out the new foundation.

As brood in the old frames emerges bees will migrate up through the queen. We have now, as far as we are able, isolated the contaminated comb to the bottom box. What do we do now?

Keep the feeder filled especially if it is a small container. The bees will need about one gallon to do what we want them to. This source of food means that the few foragers that exist will not have to use energy flying to gather forage. Any foragers can be focussed on collecting pollen and water. After three or four days, inspect the top box. Once the bees have drawn out some foundation and the queen is laying eggs in it we take the one dirty bees – so the queen remains in the top box and put this dirty frame into the bottom box. Do NOT go into the bottom. Now we wait two or three weeks, keeping the feeder filled, until the brood in the old bottom box has emerged.

Then we do the following – this is the final bit:

1. Move the hive to one side, about one metre.
2. In its place put a CLEAN floor, with only a small, easily defended entrance and the entrance pointing in the same direction.
3. Lift what is the clean/new brood box, plus crown board, feeder and roof and place onto the clean floor.
4. Remove the old, dirty floor, the old brood box, the queen excluder and the small eke that provided the entrance.
5. CLEAN the old/dirty equipment ie. burn the frames and scorch/disinfect the equipment.

The colony is now on clean equipment (apart from the roof) and clean comb. As the colony grows, gradually add more frames of foundation into the brood box until there is the full complement ie. for a National, 11 frames + a dummy board.

Stop feeding when there is a nectar flow AND there are sufficient foragers in the colony to sustain the hive.



( Article sourced by Nigel Collier from Warwickshire BKA )