



BURTON and District BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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October 2018

Issue No 9

Winter Pressure.

Notes from the September meeting talk by Julian Routh

Bee Prepared



Thanks must go to our September speaker Julian Routh, Always an excellent speaker Julian is happy to share his many years of bee keeping experience and knowledge with us. This time his talk was about preparing our bees for winter with sound advice on amalgamating smaller colonies, ensuring our hives have enough bees to keep warm and to feed and care for larvae in the spring and so survive a long winter. Culling the weaker or less desirable Queens as part of your breeding program. He advised on checking over your hives, checking that hive stands and boxes were in good repair , that boxes fitted tightly and wouldn't allow wet to get into the hive and rotten stands wouldn't give way. He advised to check that the bees have adequate stores and to feed winter syrup where necessary. Well fed, young bees hatching now, with good fat stores are better prepared to survive the cold months ahead. A very useful skill and one that you can only acquire with time and practice is the art of hefting a hive to estimate the amount of stores the bees have. This is useful in enabling the bee keeper to keep a tally on the bees reserves of food without actually opening up the hive in cold weather. Bees need approx. 44lbs of stores to comfortably get through a winter, as a guide you can estimate one brood frame full (both sides) with stores weights around 5lbs, a full super is around 20 lbs. He also talked about winter Varroa treatment and the use of Oxalic Acid via sublimation or trickle method then moving on to remind us all of the necessary basics of using of entrance blocks fitting mouse guards, checking apiary fencing is strong enough to keep stock out if you have an out apiary that is at risk and netting against woodpeckers. The best advice for both bees and bee keepers, it's always best to

"Bee Prepared"

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Committee Members and contact details:-

| | |
|---|--|
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Club Meeting Dates for your Diary 2018

Henhurst & District Recreational Club
Henhurst Hill,
Burton-On-Trent,
Staffordshire,
DE13 9TB



Events Programme : October 2018 - December 2018

| DATE | TOPIC |
|---------------|---|
| 15th October | - Norman Carrick , Senior Director of INBR |
| 19th November | - Talk by Ged Marshall & presentation night |
| 10th December | - Christmas Social & Quiz night |



NOTES FROM THE COMMITTEE

Our last Committee Meeting was held on the 3rd of September and was kindly hosted by Alan and Cath Ambler at their home in Newhall. There was plenty of business to discuss but the main items were as follows.

Treasurer Report:

Sam presented a Balance Sheet showing the current financial position. The funds remain in good order. We have 112 paid up members and as before around 4K of our total is ring fenced for the training apiary

Training Apiary:

It was finally decided not to proceed with the Byrkley Park site due to access and other problems, but two other prospective sites, Paget School and the RSPCA will be actively pursued. We were also contacted by an estate agent in Ashby who has a client in London willing to fund land to help out bees! We view this as only a slim possibility but have agreed to keep in touch with the agent.

Programme of Events: There were detailed discussions on arrangements for the Honey Show. We also discussed the next three Henhurst Club Meetings, being:-

October when we have a talk by Norman Carrick, the Senior Director of International Bee Research Association.

November with Ged Marshall and when we plan to present the Trophies to winners from the Honey Show

December our Quiz and Social night .

Asian Hornet. There was considerable discussion on the very real threat from this Hornet, mainly based on an excellent article in the September issue of BBKA NEWS. There have now been several sightings of this Hornet in this country, and we considered the actions that we, and all Associations should take.

Membership Secretary. Following the decision of Cath Ambler to stand down from this position, one of our newer members, Francis Oldfield has volunteered to take over this post. He will be most welcome and work alongside Cath until the AGM, and we propose to co-opt him on to the Committee.

That covers the main items from the meeting, which was rounded off with some excellent home made cakes. Cath and Alan were thanked for their hospitality

Richard Matkin
Chairman





Events Feed back



August Meeting Honey Tasting - Talk by John Goodwin

This was a most interesting talk given by professional Honey show Judge, John Goodwin. It was very much a test for our taste buds night, as we were invited to taste test 10 samples of different kinds of honey and then try to identify which plant we thought the bees had been foraging on. An excellent pre-show evening, with much advice on showing honey, tips on what judges look for, such as full jars with pristine lids, the pureness of the honey—no foreign bodies or bee bits in the jars and no crystals in the bottom of the jar. How to keep the smell in, the viscosity and water content of the honey and ensuring it is in the right class according to it's colour. All this is up to the bee keeper to get right, the last and final test is the taste, this part is mainly up to our bees and we just hope they have sourced their nectar from the judges favourite plants. It came with some relief that just about everyones' taste buds correctly identified the "Tesco" blended EU/non Eu Honey as little more than sugar syrup honey. John was thanked for his presentation and everyone returned home a little wiser as to the range and diversity of honeys available.

Ashbourne Show - Report by Dave Coates.

We held a stall at Ashbourne on 19th August, this year we were able to take our official stand and the stall was set up and run by Dave, Cath and Alan. We were in a good spot and the weather was fine. The show was well attended and throughout the day we had a lot of interest, particularly in the bees, which is normal for these shows. The honey sales went well, particularly Peter and Ceila Dickenson's honey as they live in Ashbourne. Many thanks to Peter and Celia for helping out on the stall which gave us all a chance to have a look around the show, which was very good with the weather being as it was.

Update on MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY post

I would like to say a very warm welcome to Francis Oldfield for volunteering to be our new membership secretary. He will be shadowing Cath over the coming months preparing to take over the role in January, when he will also be invited to become a new member of our committee.

I am sure you will all join me in expressing many thanks to Cath for all her hard work, commitment and support to our members over the past few years in this role.



SUGAR for SYRUP

If you still need sugar for Winter feeding, or you are wanting to prepare early for spring, please contact Dave Coates or Alan Ambler, who will be only too happy to supply you with Sugar at just £3 per 10 kilo bucket. Don't forget to bring your empty food grade buckets to our monthly meetings to pass onto Dave.



Monthly Raffle

In March the Committee decided to trial a regular Monday Meeting raffle, we were not sure if it was something that members would be willing to take part in. However, Kathy and I have to say a big Thank You! Over seven months we have raised £212 for club funds. The big Thank You extends not just to those of you who have bought tickets on the night but also to everyone who has most generously offered items for use as prizes. We try to have, each month, a beekeeping item, something related to the garden, an alcoholic beverage, and a couple of other items. You have provided us with some lovely things so far and my plea now is to please keep them coming. It's a great way you can contribute directly to our fundraising and we can build a good selection of prizes to put out on the table each month.

If your contribution is not used the month you bring it in rest assured it is being saved for its special moment.

Thank you all again, from your Raffle Host Sheila Pirie



Library

Our library is for all of us, maybe for interesting new reads for the more experienced keeper, as winter reads to boost our knowledge, or for valuable information and guidance as a beginner and for notes as a learning curve when we are studying for BBKA modules. What ever your reason, please do remember to always sign books out and return as soon as agreed for others to read. If you have any duplicate books, or older books you have updated copies of, why not donate your unwanted ones to our library? It's a great way to support our club and clears the clutter off your shelf for all those wonderful new reads that are on your Christmas list!

For info on our library please see our librarian Sue Coates.

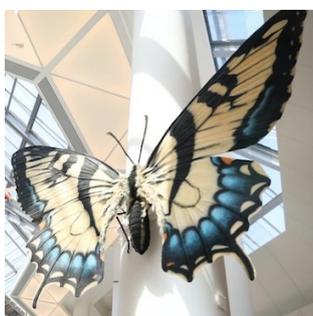
Did You Know?



Giant bugs have been visiting shopping centres throughout the UK this summer in a bid to reconnect children, and indeed their parents, with nature and to make them happier.

The initiative came on the back of new research that revealed that being closer to nature makes you 67% happier, but, one in six British children

had not seen a single bug in the past 6 months. The display featured 12 super sized indigenous bugs including the honey bee, ladybird, hornet, swallowtail butterfly and the nut weevil. The campaign comes as reports show children are now better at identifying Pokemon characters than British Wildlife.



Research found that 78% of parents want their children to be more connected to nature, but that just one in six children had set foot in a park or forest in the last 12 months.

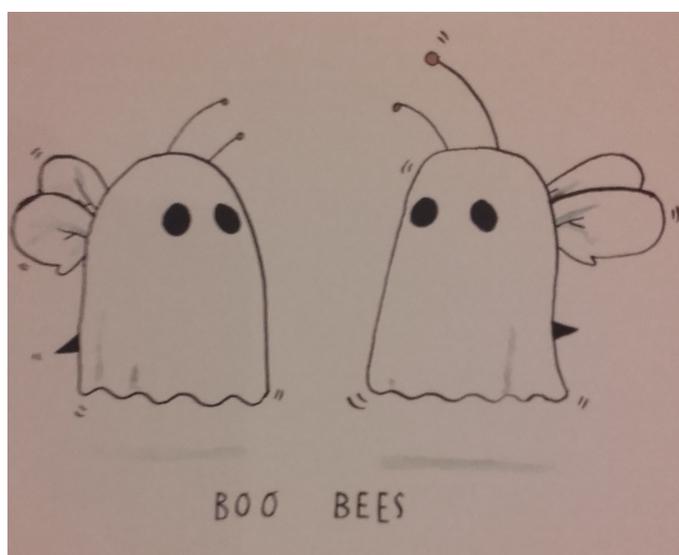
One in five children were unable to correctly identify the honey bee, one in four had not seen a caterpillar in over a year and one in ten did not even know

that honey came from bees. Adults were also lacking in their bug knowledge with one in four being unable to tell the difference between a bee and a wasp.



Adults fear of wasps and bees is usually based around the insects ability to sting, some fear the fact that they fly and feels there is no escape, others see all insects as ugly to look at, but few see them as something to treasure, event though they are aware of our need for pollinators.

On a light hearted note, the image below is one of a birthday card sent to me by my daughter.... Bee humour for Halloween



Vespa Velutina - Hornet Traps

For detailed instruction on how to make an Asian Hornet trap -

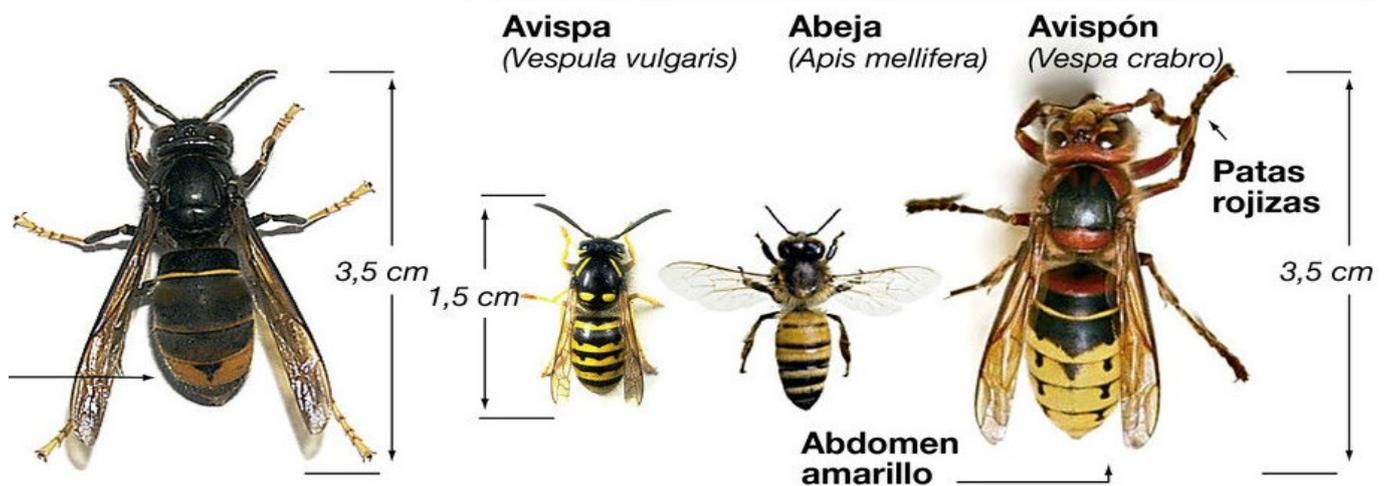
Go to - <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com>

If you already have a hornet trap, have made one at our meetings or have purchased one ,

The following advice of what to use for bait from NBU is as follows :-

What bait should I use?

At the end of hibernation emergent queens have a raised energy requirement and show a preference for sweet foods. In early spring such food resources are comparatively rare in the environment, so this means that sweet baits are highly attractive for the early capture of Asian hornet queens. There are many variations of sugar baits, all of which appear to be reasonably effective. These include mixes of sugar and various types of dark beer, various types of alcohol and even simple sugary baits such as apple juice. French beekeepers have also used a mixture of dark beer, mixed with 25ml of strawberry dessert sauce and 25ml of orange liqueur. At the height of the beekeeping season, when predatory worker hornets are seeking high protein foods to feed the larvae, consider creating a protein bait by adding raw meat or fish to water. In the field we have found that a protein bait of mashed fish e.g. prawns or trout, diluted to 25% is highly attractive. However, if you use protein bait, it will need changing after 3 days due to decay and an unpleasant aroma.



Education

Update on BBKA Modules

The exam date for this years BBKA Modules is 10th November 2018

Good Luck to all those taking exams this time.



HONEY SHOW

Report by Penny Ward



This years Honey Show was held on 22nd and 23rd September in Coopers Square in Burton. Saturday started early, with the setting up of display show stalls, the shop and the live Bee display . The variety of honey, mead, cakes, candles, wax, honey frames and novelty entries on show was a credit to our association, and this year we had a record number of entrants, being 146 entries in total.



Our Judge this year was Alan Woodward, and I was fortunate in being selected to perform the role of judges steward. My duties were not only to record his 1st, 2nd, 3rd and VHC choices, but to ensure he had a clean and ready supply of glass tasting rods, I was wearing a white



stewards coat I was also asked to act as a white background for measuring the shade/colour of honey against. As vague as this sounds, it was one of the first measures he took of the honey to ensure that it was in the right class, - any that were too light or dark for the class they were entered in to were dismissed. I found the role quite a privilege, it gave me the opportunity to learn about what a judge looks for in all classes, presentation techniques. Looking back on the day, the tasting of the mead was a particular favourite. Having never made mead myself, it was fascinating to taste the variety we had on display, and to record scores for clarity, presentation, colour, bouquet and taste. I was quite surprised by the high standards required by our judge and pleased that in all areas we did our club credit. We



moved on to was and wax candles where the judge lights one of a pair of candles that have been submitted for judging, he explained he was looking for easy lighting of the wick, a clean burn, and no or very little black smoke or spitting once lit.

It was then the turn of the cakes, every cake was cut in half and Alan inhaled the smell of the fresh cut to identify if the honey

scent had come through, he then tasted and if necessary re-tasted the cake, looking for cakes with good fruit distribution and that had a firm and not doughy texture. Last but not least was the novelty classes, scored on their level of interest to the public and bee keepers alike. On occasion, I did have time to glance over at the shop stand



to see that there was never any doubt about the publics interest in the event, and those who were able to take the opportunity to ask certainly did have their knowledge of bees and bee keeping improved too.



Our Youngest Bee Keeper and Show Stopper!

Report by Kathy Lamb

In May 2017 **Heidi Clark** received a rather intriguing birthday card.

Inside it was a message which read:-

“This card entitles Heidi Clark , now aged 9, to receive one complete bee hive with honey bees, a bee suit ,a smoker and a hive tool. These to be delivered at a time appropriate to the best interests of the bees.”

Heidi had to wait until the end of June before the National hive with a marked queen and a full complement of bees, brood, larvae, eggs, honey and pollen was delivered to her home in Marchington Woodlands. Clearing the nettles and positioning the hive to face South-east in a spare patch of unused ground was Heidi's first task on her way to becoming a beekeeper.



From the day her bees arrived last year Heidi has kept a bee-diary detailing the date and what she sees both before and after opening her hive, what she must do and any questions she must ask her mentors and good friends, Kevin and Kathy Shaw.

Last year Heidi joined the Burton beekeepers, treated her colony for varroa, fed syrup to boost the bees stores and didn't take any honey for herself. This year by the time of Heidi's birthday she had already removed one and a half supers of Spring honey, probably mostly oilseed rape. This crop resulted in thirty-seven pounds of honey.

Helping to extract the honey and bottle it provided ample opportunity to learn about the sticky properties of honey. After much research and a little help from her mum, Heidi designed and printed the unique labels for her honey and enjoyed selling it to friends and neighbours.

Following very favourable weather conditions Heidi took another three supers of Summer honey from her hive, leaving a full super for Winter stores for the bees. This added up to a total harvest of 115 lbs.



When it came to honey-show time Heidi was told not to expect to win anything as some of the entries would be put forward by expert beekeepers as well as other keen beginners like herself. Total amazement was Heidi's reaction when she realised that not only had she had won one of the junior classes but also a novice class and most impressive of all the gift class against all of the other beekeepers.



Heidi's careful and deliberate handling of the bees and the bees good temperament have resulted in her winning the Fred and Amy Sharman rose bowl at the honey show before she has received a single sting! She has been warned that she cannot call herself a competent beekeeper until this painful occurrence has been both met and dealt with.

Heidi said,

" I know that sting's coming, but hopefully I won't have too bad a reaction"!

When Oldfield's Middle School learnt of their pupil's successes Heidi was asked to give a presentation all about her bees and the honey show to the 125 people in her year group. This resulted in great interest from students and teachers alike!



Heidi is now working on a way of selling her honey on the internet and is looking forward to next year when she says that she hopes to have a second hive and learn more about skeps, too.

THE HEATHER EXPERIENCE

How can the worst heather honey entry win first prize at the Honey Show? Well, of course, the answer is simple. The worst is also the best when there is only one entry! I have made the only entry in this class for the past three years and the year before that there were no entries at all.

Ever since I started beekeeping in 2014 after retiring from Rolls-Royce, I have taken at least one hive to the heather moor at Rod Knowle Farm, Eastmoor, roughly 5 miles west of Chesterfield. Taking my bees to the heather is a real nostalgia-trip for me. I was born and brought up on the Bowes-Lyon owned estate at Fettercairn, about 30 miles south of Aberdeen, where my father was head gamekeeper. Every year in the late summer after the clover season had passed, I helped my dad move his bees from the front garden, two hives at time in the back of the land rover, to a small plantation in the foothills of the Grampian mountains about five miles from home. This was an annual routine in the 60's until I scarpered to University in St Andrews.

One of the pleasures, or chores depending on how you see it, is processing the heather honey. Because of its thixotropic (or jelly-like) nature, you can't extract it like other honey. It has to be pressed from the comb in a honey or fruit press.



MY BEE-HIVES AT ROD KNOWLE FARM , 2017

The sight of the first honey oozing through the holes in the press, combined with the distinctive aroma is sheer delight. This was not experienced by my father because back then the supers were filled with sections, which were sold on to customers.

If any of the readers are keen to indulge in the heather experience next year, it is important that you prepare your hives properly. There are many websites available to explain the details for you. Totally ignorant of this information, the first year I took my bees north I ended up with four half pound jars of honey. Lets just say I didn't make a profit that time, but there was a jar for me, one each for my brother and sister and one for my trusty mentor, Bob Hurd, and that was all that mattered. After earning about appropriate preparation I have enjoyed larger returns, typically fifty pounds or so off two hives per year. That is very pleasing, but the real joy for me is to see that magic purple haze just below the horizon every time I turn off the A619 and head up the lane towards the farm.

Since we became an independent Association I have retained associate membership of the Derbyshire group and always submit entries for their Honey Show. This year I have won three trophies, two for my heather honey. On this occasion the worst wasn't the best in either the jar or cut comb variety with a healthy number of entries in both. To beat the experienced Derbyshire boys and girls in both the heather classes gives me immense satisfaction. The Cokayne Vase awarded in the cut comb class is a splendid trophy. I must admit I pondered for about two nanoseconds whether the heather would have survived the long summer drought this year sufficient to make the pilgrimage worthwhile, but fifty two pounds of honey and a well decorated sideboard later I think I made the right call.

Hamish Low

Recipes from Julys Cookery meeting.

Almond, Orange and Honey Cake

Ingredients:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Caster Sugar | 220 gm |
| Honey | 4 tablespoons |
| Butter | 220 g |
| Ground Almonds | 300 g |
| Baking Powder | 1 tsp |
| Orange | 1 Large with Zest & Juice |
| Polenta | 150 g |
| Eggs | 3 large (beaten) |
| Greek Yogurt | 450g mixed with a further 4tbs of runny honey. |

Method:

- Line the base of a 20 - 22cm/8-9in tin with greased baking parchment.
- Cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy
- Add the ground almonds and stir together
- Add the beaten eggs, one at a time, then the orange zest and mix well
- Add the polenta and baking powder, mixing until fully combined
- Pour into the baking tin and bake at 180°C for about 25 minutes, then at 160°C for a further 25mins. When cooked, the cake should be golden brown and tested with a skewer, which should come out clean.
- Warm the orange juice gently with the honey until combined and remove from the heat
- Once the cake is baked, poke holes all over it and drizzle the juice over whilst still warm
- Allow the juice to cool and be absorbed whilst the cake is still in the tin
- Once cooked, remove from the tin, spoon over the yogurt and honey to decorate, or serve separately.



Recipes from Julys Cookery meeting



Banana, Honey & Apricot Tea Bread

Ingredients:

| | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| 125 g | No soak Apricots | 3-4 | Ripe Bananas chopped (peeled weight) |
| 75 ml | Runny Honey | 2 Large | Eggs. |
| 225g | Plain Flour | 5ml | Baking powder |
| 150g | Light Muscavado sugar | 85g | Softened Butter |

Method:

- Cut up the apricots into small pieces, put into small saucepan, add the honey and bring to the boil. Simmer for 2-3 minutes until the apricots begin to turn pale, stirring frequently.
- Leave to cool for 10 minutes.
- Grease and base line a 900g (2lb) non-stick loaf tin.
- Preheat oven to 180°C/ Fan oven 160*/ 350°F/ Gas4.
- Place all the ingredients , (except the apricots & honey) in a food processor and blend until smooth.
- Remove the blade and stir in the apricots with honey.
- Spoon into the loaf tine and bake for 1 hour, covering the top of the3 loaf with a piece of foil for the last 20 minutes of cooking time.
- The cake is ready when a skewer is inserted into the centre and comes out clean.
- Cool for 15 minutes in the tin then turn out onto a wire rack.
- Serve warm or cold in thick slices.



Honey Fruit and Almond Thins

Ingredients:

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|--------|----------------------|
| 25g | Plain flour | 65 g | Butter |
| 25g | Caster Sugar | 30 mls | Runny Honey |
| 25g | Glace Cherries | 40 g | Dried Tropical Fruit |
| 50g | Flaked almonds | 25g | Plain Flour |
| 75g | Dark Chocolate, melted. | | |

Method:

- Preheat oven to 350F/ 180C (160C for fan oven)
- Lightly grease 2 sheets of baking parchment.
- Melt butter in a small pan, stir in the sugar & honey heat gently until bubbling
- Remove form heat and stir in cherries, tropical fruits, almonds and flour.
- Place 5 teaspoons full onto baking paper, spacing apart, bake for 6-8 minutes until edges are golden. Remove from oven and using a biscuit cutter push the edge into the centre to give neat round biscuits—return to the oven for 2 minutes.
- Leave to cool slightly then transfer to a wire rack. When cool spread chocolate over the bases and place on a sheet of paper to set, then turn over and drizzle chocolate over the tops and leave to cool. Sore in an airtight container,.