

THE BUZZ

CENTRAL SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

CHARITY 1051548

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Welcome to the September 2022 Edition of The Buzz.

During this month we should prepare our colonies for the winter ahead. Check they are strong (disease and pest free) and queenright. It may also be prudent to consider combining weak or small colonies. Help to protect them from wasps and robbers by reducing the hive entrance/fitting a mouse guard and ensure they have sufficient stores for the winter by giving them a good feed.

As the Saturday morning meetings end our monthly Winter Meetings will be returning – thank you to Kim and Fiona for arranging these. More details will be issued soon once dates and speakers have been confirmed.

Finally, don't forget the forthcoming South of England Honey Show at Ardingly 24th & 25th September. There is still time to register and enter competitions!

Yolanda Noye



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES – Ben Hewson

And with stunning swiftness here is September, a line from Shakespeare's famous Sonnet 18 seems very apt ...

"And summer's lease hath all too short a date; Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines"

There is no doubting a glorious summer teetered on the unbearable for a few days and if all predictions proved correct this is the nature of things to come.

These increasing temperatures bring new challenges for keepers, aside from donning additional layers of protective clothing on the hottest of days. The record-breaking highs are only part of the story, it concerns me that with average temperatures rising year-round, the bees will be tempted out when there is a lack of available forage and increasing the need and reliance on feeding. The majority of beekeeping is done by individuals with a handful of hives, in an environment we can shape. We can take positive steps to aid not just our bees but other pollinators by considering the positioning and planting around our hives, simply choosing species that are less reliant on watering or that flower at various times can make a big difference.



Drought tolerant plants for your garden: Catmint, Eryngium "Bleu Waves", Achillea "Moonshine", Cerinthe major "purpurascens", Euphorbia ceratocarpa

But enough doom and gloom, the winding down of the season brings the possibility of honey shows, these shows are always a great place to learn and see how others are doing it. The closest (and just about local) was the Worthing Division (of the WSKBA) show at the Findon Sheep Fayre on 10th September. I wonder how many members show their honey, or whether there is the desire to hold our own show – either way we would love to highlight your achievements in future issues of Buzz.

Lastly – don't forget to label your jars properly, this month's BBKA News has a great feature on the do's and don'ts if you are unsure.

Once again, I wish you all good luck and happy beekeeping.

All the best.



NEWS FROM THE APIARY – Ade Belcham

Summer is winding down; the wasps are getting everywhere, and the early morning mists have started in the low-lying areas where I live. It must be September! Hopefully you've had a good harvest, you've got your varroa under control and your bees are well stocked and winding down into autumn mode.

It's about now that that I begin to reflect on what I've learnt during the season. There always seem to be a catalogue of failures to learn from and some gems received from others - like the idea of strip magnets taped to a piece of wood in the tool pocket on the leg of my bee suit. No more fiddling about trying to get hive tool in and out while balancing on one leg holding a super at arm's length – grab tool and go; slap leg with tool and it sticks. Genius! Thanks Rob and Roland Hogben for that one.

Anyway, I'd be grateful if you'd help us learn some lessons at the club apiary. What did you think worked well this year and what would you like to see done differently next season? Are there any topics you would like to see included? Have a think and let me know by e-mail to adebelcham@icloud.com or better yet come along to the end of season tidy up and BBQ and talk to one of the apiary team in person.

Our last few sessions on the 'prepare for winter' theme have been well attended and we now gear up to the season finale with a hearty BBQ at the apiary so please do try to make to that. Many hands make light work of the clean-up and it's a good chance to enjoy a bit of a social gathering before we close the apiary down for the winter.

17 th September	NO APIARY MEETING
24 th September	Apiary Clean-up and end of season BBQ

In the meantime, a round up of photos from our recent Saturday morning meetings









TIPS OF THE MONTH – Melvyn Essen

If you haven't treated your bees for Varroa you still have time, providing the temperature remains favourable. Remember, you need healthy bees to take your colonies through the winter - even more so now the deformed winged virus (DWW) variant is causing problems.

Also, feeding your bees now sufficiently could save a lot of faffing around with fondant. It's best to use inverted syrup as it doesn't ferment in the comb while the bees are dealing with it, especially if the temperature drops. I hear you asking, "but how much is sufficient?". Well, it depends on what type of bees you have ... if you keep locally bred queens then they will use less winter stores than for example "Buckfast" which will be much larger colonies that will use considerably more food during winter. The temperature through the winter can have a bearing on how much of their stores they use too. As a rule of thumb, I give each of my colonies a 12.5kg of inverted syrup but if I leave them with a full super or more (of partially capped honey) under the brood box for the winter, I will give them less syrup - although the best place for winter stores is in the brood box itself so this is what you should be aiming for. Colonies in just a single brood box containing winter stores should overwinter happily without the need for additional fondant.

When you have treated and fed your bees get used to their weight by using a spring balance and weighing each side of the hive then adding them together - then, do the same periodically during the winter so you can monitor how much stores they are using. Or another simple method to assess their weight is by hefting - lifting the back of the hive with a few of your fingers - then do the same again throughout the winter. If you notice they start to lift very easily in the spring, you may need to use fondant or syrup depending on the temperature.



Hefting the hive to estimate the weight of the stores

Overwintering small colonies and nucs

If you have a small colony that was a late split or swarm in a full hive then move it into a poly nuc, they can maintain their temperature easier, if you feel there are too many bees in a standard nuc then use a brood extension with preferably a top feeder and feed them syrup until the temperature drops, you can then put fondant in the feeder during the winter.



BC SCIENTISTS MAY HAVE FOUND A NEW WAY TO PROTECT BEE COLONIES FROM DEADLY MITES

Thank you to Andy Campbell for directing us to this interesting online article written by Ali Pitargue of CBC News, Canada ...

3C36 compound discovered by SFU (Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia) researchers could prevent varroa mites from wiping out colonies

If Janne Potter didn't have to deal with mite infestations, she says her life as a beekeeper would be much easier.

"The mites suck the nutrients out of your bees, get on them and ride them, then they eventually kill your bees. You could also end up with deformed bees," said Potter, who runs EquiFlora Honey Farm in Vancouver.

That's why she is supportive of the efforts of a team of Simon Fraser University researchers developing a chemical compound that could paralyze and eventually kill parasitic varroa mites. Varroa mites are a nuisance for beekeepers worldwide and if left untreated can decimate entire colonies over the winter. The mites attack and feed on bees, leaving them vulnerable to secondary diseases.

Preliminary data released by the Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists last month shows nearly half of Canada's honeybee colonies didn't survive the winter. It was the largest rate of colony loss in Canada in the last 20 years and the association largely blames the varroa mite.

The SFU researchers found that the chemical compound — code-named 3C36 — can paralyze varroa mites without harming bees. Erika Plettner, an SFU chemistry professor and researcher, is testing the compound at an apiary in South Surrey. The trial is in its third year. *"The mites poke a hole in the bee's exoskeleton wherever they're vulnerable. The problem is that the bee has wounds that don't heal and it's open to viruses and bacteria,"* said Plettner.

Potter uses an array of treatments, including a combination of chemicals, to fight off parasitic varroa mites at her apiary. She is curious about how long 3C36's efficacy might last. *"Resistance to some of the drugs is a big problem,"* said Potter, noting ways in which some mites mutate to endure drug treatments. *"It runs the risk like all the other drugs of being the 'wonder drug' for a few years and then not quite so well,"* said Potter.

To test the 3c36 compound, researchers use cardboard tablets and sticky sheets with a grid underneath, which sift mites that can fall from the hive. *"Its many repeated trials,"* says Plettner. *"We have seen some very promising activity both in the lab and the field".*



SFU chemistry professor Erika Plettner trials the 3C36 chemical compound at a South Surrey apiary. She uses sticky sheets to sift varroa mites from honeybee hives.

Plettner and her team came upon the discovery accidentally. She was involved in studying the sense of smell in insects during her post-doctoral studies at the University of Utah. She and her team were trying to develop substances that could interfere with insects' food choices. *"We decided to test it against other arthropods and among them was the varroa mite,"* said Plettner. *"That's how I came upon the study."* She also notes it might take years for the compound to get approved and industrialized. *"We do have to be realistic. There are still some years ahead of us,"* she said. Still, beekeepers like Potter help motivate Plettner and the other researchers. *"If it's something that's easy to use and safe — to the bees, the honey, the environment, and the people using it — then it would be a very good thing."* She also stresses affordability. *"If it's expensive, then the cost of honey will go up, same as everything else."*



HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II – YOLANDA NOYE

We are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.
She gave a lifetime of service and will be greatly missed.



Our late Queen had several colonies of bees on an island in Buckingham Palace gardens and the harvest from the royal apiary enabled Her Majesty's estate to be self-sufficient. With all the ceremonial duties following the death of our monarch it comes as no surprise that there is also a tradition, thought to date back centuries, which involves the royal beekeeper draping black ribbons tied into bows on the hives and officially informing the bees (both at Buckingham Palace and Clarence House) of the death of their mistress Queen Elizabeth II. John Chapple, the royal beekeeper knocked gently on each hive and in a whisper informed them that their new master is now King Charles III. The ancient custom is believed to prevent the bees going on strike and no longer making any honey or possibly vowing to never work again, ultimately perishing in a serious show of loyalty to their old mistress.





EVENTS

17th September (Saturday) – West Grinstead & District, Ploughing Match & Show

We will again be hosting a Honey Pitch at the Ploughing Match.

CSBKA Volunteers are needed to help during the day PLEASE!

You don't need to be an experienced beekeeper, just bring along your passion and enthusiasm for bees and have a chat to people. Morning/afternoon/couple of hours is fine and lets the others on the stall have an opportunity to look around – please contact Pip Edgcombe at csbkamembership@gmail.com with Ploughing Match in the Subject Line and let her know if you can assist. Help would also be gratefully received for the set up from 9.00am and ... to take everything down at the end of the day (approx. 5.00pm/6.00pm).

The Ploughing Match is held in Dial Post – visit <https://www.westgrinsteadploughing.co.uk/> for more information.



24th September – Apiary Clean Up Party and BBQ from 10am

Sadly, Saturday 24th September will be our last Apiary meeting for this year.

We will be giving everything a good clean up in preparation for the winter which will be a great opportunity for those new to beekeeping to learn how to use a blow torch and other methods to sterilise excess/used hive equipment this year and store everything correctly in preparation for the Spring!



There will also be food! Plentiful sausages and cakes etc and as always, the kettle will be on!

24th/25th September - South of England Honey Show: Selsfield Road, Ardingly, RH17 6TL - (9am to 6.30pm)

Previously held in the Bees & Honey Marquee at the South of England Show during June now more conveniently later in the beekeeping year and indoors, the South of England Honey Show is being held as part of the Autumn Show & Horse Trials. Top Judge Bill Fisher will be judging all classes this year a great opportunity to enter your honey at a regional show a month before the National Honey Show takes place in October. Visit this page <https://www.seas.org.uk/competing-autumn-show-horse-trials/> to see more information and access the Bees & Honey Schedule & Entry Form.

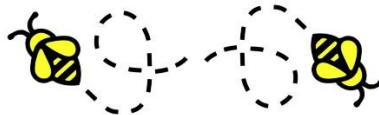


19th October – Lynne Ingram NDB: The Truth about Honey? Online 7.30pm to 9.30pm



Lynne Ingram NDB has kept bees for over 30 years and runs 15 – 20 colonies in Somerset. She is a Master Beekeeper, has recently gained the National Diploma in Beekeeping, and is an examiner for the BBKA modules and practical assessments. Lynne is heavily involved in educating beekeepers in Somerset, running study groups, and curating the popular Somerset Lockdown Lecture series. She is the chair of the Honey Authentic Network (HAN) UK, and a member of the BBKA Honey Adulteration Working Party.

To register for the online presentation, visit <https://www.bbka.org.uk/Event/the-truth-about-honey> The webinar is free, but the BBKA would welcome a donation to one of their appeals, either **Save the Bees** or **Apiary and Education**.



27th to 29th October - 91st National Honey Show, Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AJ



Purchase your day tickets for the 2022 from 1st September until 11.59pm on Monday 11 October! Schedule and visitor bands are sent out to the original purchaser following placement of order. For more information and a copy of the Schedule visit <https://www.honeyshow.co.uk/>



Save the Date: 25th February 2023 – WSBKA Annual Convention, Lodge Hill