

SEVENOAKS AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS BEEKEEPERS BRANCH NEWSLETTER

September 2019

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Get Ready for the Honey Show

It is just a matter of weeks to our annual branch honey show. Have you put aside some of your best honey, begun to prepare your wax and considered what candle moulds to use? There is still plenty of time to take a photograph, practise the cake recipes and think about this year's new class: Any decorative or artistic item related to beekeeping. Don't forget there is a new venue for the show. It will take place at St. John's Church Hall, Hildenborough TN11 9HT, on Saturday 21 September.

You need to stage your entries between 9.30 and 10.30am

Judging takes place between 11am-2pm and the hall opens to the public from 2pm for viewing
The schedule was emailed to you. You can also look at it on our website: <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk/honey-show/>

Should You Switch to Double Brood?

This month also sees the start of our evening talks. Bob Smith will be speaking about the pros and cons of double brood boxes on Tuesday September 17 at Weald Memorial Hall.

Honey Harvest from the Club Apiaries



Photos of the Barrwood honey harvest in Cliff Hayward's kitchen by Sue Knights

Porter escapes were placed on the supers at Barrwood to clear the bees in preparation for the honey extraction. Thanks to Brett McCulloch for running this meeting, and to all the volunteers who came along on the Tuesday for the extraction 'party'. I wasn't expecting quite such a response to my request for help, but 14 of us squeezed into my kitchen. For new beekeepers it was a chance to learn the process and practise uncapping. It was interesting that most found the simple kitchen knife easier to use than the purpose designed uncapping knife. We had two large extractors for the super frames, plus a three-frame extractor for the brood frames that needed extracting. We set up an uncapping production line, which kept the extractors in constant use for a couple of hours. The crop this year has come out as quite a dark colour, with just over 100lb. Particular thanks go to Philip Runacres and Tim Johnstone for taking away the bulk buckets for filtering, bottling and labelling.

September's meeting will concentrate on ensuring the bees are prepared for winter. Checking on their health and stores. Possibly uniting small colonies.

Cliff Hayward and Liz Birchenough

The honey harvest from **Hilbert Road** apiary was completed, with a good crop being collected. The extraction was undertaken in Robin Toop's kitchen; huge thanks to Robin for his generosity.

Liz Birchenough



Built-in Beehive

A school in Sevenoaks had bees in an air vent and no-one was quite sure how long they had been there. They weren't causing any problems apart from preventing the builders from completing work to the surrounding areas.

We managed to resolve the situation by the loan of a crown board with Porter bee escapes and a veil.

The caretaker attached the crown board to the wall, and when the builders needed a bee free day, on went the porter escapes.

The crown board will be taken off permanently once the scaffolding comes down, leaving the colony to carry on with its business.

Sarah Rapley

Honey for Sale

Our branch honey is now for sale. Barrwood honey is £5 for a 12oz jar and Hilbert Road honey is £6.50 for a 1lb jar.

Discussions at the AGM

If any members would like to raise issues at the AGM on November 19 it would help if they could e-mail the secretary, John Farrow at least two weeks beforehand, so that adequate time can be allotted.
Email: dynesbarn@gmail.com

Looking for an Apiary Site?

We've been contacted by three people who are interested in hosting apiaries

- * I recently had a lovely lady visiting our garden under the Kent Wildlife Trust WAG visit scheme. She mentioned that sometimes beekeepers are looking for gardens to 'host' one of their hives? We would possibly be interested in doing this. We live in Sevenoaks, Loes Penz: Loes.Penz@fremantle.com
- * The owner of a 12-acre organic apple orchard in the Bitchet Green area of Sevenoaks is interested in offering hive space to a local beekeeper. If you are interested in taking up this offer, please contact oboorman@googlemail.com or 07956 112770.
- * Jimmy Sherwin, the Head Chef at the Hotel du Vin, in Tunbridge Wells has contacted us, offering space in the Hotel's garden for a beekeeper to keep a hive or two. Anyone interested please contact Jimmy at chef.tunbridgewells@hotelduvin.com You will need to assess yourself whether the site is suitable and safe for a hive.

Bee unit survey 2019

DEFRA's Bee Health Policy Team are seeking information from beekeepers throughout the county. Please take a few moments to complete their survey by logging on to <http://www.fao.org/teca/forum/beekeeping/en/> It is really important to get accurate information from beekeepers so that we can inform policy in the future.

Liz Birchenough

Asian Hornet Week

This is the time of year that Asian Hornets may be spotted hawking around your hives. Please try to put an hour aside during the week of the 9th to the 15th of September for observation.

If you see something, try to get a photo and report it to <http://www.nonnativespecies.org>. There is also information on the BBKA website <https://www.bbka.org.uk/2019-asian-hornet-week> and our branch website <http://www.sevenoaksbeekeepers.org.uk>

Liz Birchenough

Diary Dates

Saturday 7 September at 2pm: Hilbert Road apiary meeting.

Saturday 14 September at 2pm: Barrwood apiary meeting.

Tuesday 17 September at 7.30pm: Bob Smith will be talking about the double brood system at Weald Memorial Hall, Sevenoaks Weald.

Saturday 21 September: Branch Honey Show at St. John's Church Hall, Hildenborough.

Tuesday 15 October at 7.30pm: A talk by Peter Hutton about feral honeybees in awkward places - Weald Memorial Hall.

Tuesday 19th November at 7.30pm: AGM and Prize-giving at Weald Memorial Hall.

Beekeeping Courses

Wisborough Green BKA have asked us to publicise their two one-day courses for beekeepers in November.

Tutor: Roger Patterson. Cost: £10/head including refreshments. Please bring your own lunch. Venue: Rudgwick Village Hall, Guildford Road, Bucks Green, West Sussex. RH12 3JJ

Sunday November 3: "The Early Years". Sunday November 24: "Intermediate/advanced".

For further information and to book (essential) please see <http://www.wgbka.org.uk/>

Please send any photos, articles or ideas for the newsletter to Mary Staffurth: marystaffurth@yahoo.com