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# HONEY BEE TIMES

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Journal of the Wiltshire Beekeepers' Association



**Bottling Honey - Bees in a Horsebox - Honeydew**

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Cover: Honey bee on mahonia – one of the few sources of pollen and nectar in the winter months. Photo: Richard Rickitt.

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## Chairman's report

**On the evening of 27 November, I was elected Vice Chair of the WBKA Council. This had been a long-standing aim, having discussed it with Richard Oliver back in November 2017.**

However, Richard indicated he wants to concentrate on his role of Education Officer for WBKA (and an expanding clutch of grandchildren), so I agreed to stand in as Chair for 12 months to 'bed in', with the support of the committee and the branch delegates.

Ordinarily, the Vice Chair role would be a 'chair in waiting' but I'm in at the deep end. That said, the attendees were profuse in their offers of support and I feel very positive about the year ahead.

For those who don't know me, I'm a member of Melksham BKA, as well as their Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT) co-ordinator. I've kept bees since a bee from a swarm landed in my (then copious flowing) locks back in the late 1980s in Stroud, Gloucestershire.

While at University in Reading, I made a nuisance of myself at local beekeeping meetings as I studied Rural Resource Management and then Agricultural Management. I later went to Medway meetings when I was living in Kent, and Edinburgh meetings when I work there too.

All the while I kept few colonies in the garden at Callowell Farm, at the bottom of the Painswick valley in Stroud, and popped back when I could to attend to them.

Fast forward 29 years, and I'm keeping a lot more hives in and around north Wiltshire. I'm always happy to have my experience challenged and questions asked.

I do not proclaim to have a great knowledge of microscopy or to know all the Latin names of bee parts. But for those starting out in beekeeping, the years bring experience of situations you may



hear or read about. Nothing is ever boring in beekeeping!

It seems to me the availability of knowledge has vastly improved for all beekeepers – and I, like many others, will 'Google', 'Bing', or 'Ecosia' a question when I'm lost for answers (Ecosia being a fabulous search engine that plants trees in return for search results). This has to be a good thing.

My objectives for the next 12 months:

- I will support the Wiltshire AHAT efforts and encourage other counties to do the same.
- I want to expand membership across the county, and especially in Swindon and Malmesbury and east Wiltshire.
- I want to investigate WBKA holding an equipment auction in the spring of 2019 (similar to those held in Gloucestershire and Meon Valley).
- I hope we can expand our social media presence and engage with a wider audience.
- I will encourage and support training across the associations.

On that final objective, I am confident this will be achieved, led as it is by by Richard Oliver and the branch trainers.

May I end my first piece for the *Honey Bee Times* by thanking Richard for all his hard work as our former Chairman; Wiltshire beekeeping is all the better for it.

*Stephen Auty, Chairman WBKA  
(Melksham BKA)*

# Branch reports

## Kennet

**Happy New Year, to new and existing members with very best wishes to you all for your beekeeping year ahead.**

It would be remiss of me to go any further without offering sincere thanks to John Barber for the years of service he has given as branch secretary. John stepped down due to work commitments, but we very much look forward to seeing him around the club at various events and, of course, at our monthly club nights.

At the Kennet AGM in October, with the exception of the secretary, all other posts remain unchanged. Your committee members are:

- Chair – Robert Carpenter Turner
- Secretary – Elaine Lewis
- Treasurer – William Allen
- Apiary Manager – David Brown
- Membership Secretary – Sophie Butcher
- Fetes & Fairs Coordinator – Sarah Benson
- Education – Dick Church
- Website Editor – Sian Morgan

The role of secretary has fallen to me, and I have huge boots to fill, but I hope to do you proud in my term of office. As some of you will know, beekeeping is very new to me and I have been nothing short of amazed by what can be learned in a year – but equally terrified about what I still don't know.

Chair Robert Carpenter Turner reported that, after a difficult winter for the bees, 2018 was still a reasonable year for the Association, with interesting talks and a good response from members visiting the apiary.



We benefited from a range of interesting guest speakers at club nights, and an exciting drone congregation hunt in the summer, lead by Stephen Fleming from *Bee Craft* (my family thought I had truly lost it at this point), through to many successes at our own Honey Show, and representation at the Wiltshire County Show. Many congratulations to Peter Amor, John Barber, Paul Bollen, David Brown, Sophie Butcher, Dick Church, Nigel Cross, Richard Oliver, David Rider, Alan Stonell, Colin Tomlinson for their successes locally. And further congratulations to John Barber, David Brown, Sophie Butcher, David Rider, Vicki Lowes and Nigel Cross for their success at the County Show – well done to you all.

Our education programme is currently under review while it looks for ways to offer additional training to up-and-coming beekeepers. Please don't forget there is a wide range of reading material available through the club library on club nights. Our grateful thanks go to those who have very kindly donated books.

In October, several members supported the Wiltshire Bee and Honey Show. A big thank you to Sophie Butcher for co-ordinating this and making the day such a success. The good news is that we have managed to persuade her to co-ordinate the 2019 show and I would encourage every member to give thought on how they could assist in staging this year's show. Many hands light work and all that! A special call out to Vicki Lowes who won the Novice Class at last year's show.

The year ended on a high with our annual social get-together competing for the 'Beekeepers Skittles Cup' at the Fox

and Hound – congrats to Susan Horton who was a very deserving winner on the night. We rounded off the year with the the renowned Mulled Wine, Mince Pie and Oxalic Acid Party, treating the apiary bees at the end of December.

Looking forward, note that club meetings will continue to take place at Bishop

Cannings Village Hall SN10 2LA @ 7.30pm on the **first Friday of the month during January to March** and then on the **first Wednesday of the month from April onwards** (Wed 3rd April).

*Elaine Lewis, Secretary, Kennet*

## Melksham

**How quickly time passes when you are having fun collecting all those filled frames of honey... and wondering how and where you can store them until you find a minute to extract!**



As the new chair of MBKA, I would first like to thank to Tony Awdry for his work and support as chair for the last two years.

Looking forward, we have a great opportunity to make Melksham beekeepers an even greater club than it already is. We have a very experienced and enthusiastic team on the committee, and I am really looking forward to working with them to meet the challenges ahead.

Our first meeting under my tenure was the annual quiz, superbly hosted by Andrew Tyrer and supported by 29 members, forming five teams.

A special thanks go to Emma, Lucy and Alison for their input in organising what turned out to be a great evening. Well done all involved.

One major thing I hope we can change in the coming months is the number of members attending our meetings: 29 of

over 100 members is quite disappointing – especially given what a superb event it was. One way I think we can improve on this is to have new speakers, not necessarily talking about bees and beekeeping techniques.

The problem, I believe, is that experienced beekeepers generally have their own way of doing things and do not wish to listen to someone telling them about swarm control, or how to rear queens, while this goes over their heads of our new members.

If the members and committee are in agreement, future speakers will focus on subjects not directly connected to beekeeping: for example, the environment, organic farming, local wildlife and the like – hopefully a more diverse subject matter will encourage more of our members to attend our meetings.

Mentoring new beekeepers is, I believe, the way forward, rather than having them baffled by the 'pagden method of swarm control' or 'how to raise your own queens' at the monthly meeting. The club apiary, run by Liz and Colin, is a great asset to new and existing members.

The best way to learn this wonderful craft is by hands-on experience, either with your own bees and an experienced mentor,

or making use of the club teaching apiary. A list of members willing to act as mentors would be a good start.

My own goal is to explore the possibility of helping people with a physical disability to take up beekeeping, when they may have thought it impossible.

Wheelchair access to our club apiary could be possible, with a separate area adapted for the purpose. The use of non-conventional hives, such as topbar, could be

a great and cost-effective way to facilitate this, and further discussion will be required on this.

Finally, we need to adopt social media platforms such as Facebook. An MBKA Facebook group where members could post their beekeeping exploits for all to view has to be good.

*Andrew Vidler, Chair, MBKA*

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## Swindon

**What a year for weather! That hot spell resulted in the best honey crop I have experienced in eight years of beekeeping, and my customers and family reported it was absolutely exquisite – the best they have ever tasted.**



No attempt was made to harvest honey from any of the new club colonies. Instead they were fed copious quantities of syrup, resulting in each taking approximately 20lbs of solid sugar equivalent.

An unusual event resulted in Mike Benson and me being called to Twigs: both their polytunnels (where they propagate and rear new plants) were heavily invaded by bees, which turned out to be a species of Colletes mining bees – there were thousands! We could only think that they had all hatched from nests in the polytunnel floors.

We had a full year of talks and presentations by various speakers, usually well attended by members. One

of our favourites, as usual, being Robert Carpenter-Turner. I will miss his twice yearly visit to my sentinel apiary near Lyneham.

It is our turn to take on the challenge of preparing for next year's Honey Show. We have a steep hill to climb to match the success of the recent show in Devizes.

Membership of the Swindon branch is decreasing. We are not sure whether this is due to the heavy winter losses and members not renewing – or for other reasons.

Planned talks for 2019:

- 31/01 DVD Beekeeping throughout the year and open forum.
- 28/02 Swarming – prevention and control.
- 28/03 Beekeeping – from Buckfast to Buckingham Palace by Richard Rickitt.

Swindon will be running Introduction to Beekeeping and Basic Beekeeping courses in 2019 anybody interested in attending these should contact Kathy Hobson.

*Ian Cowdy, AHAT Liason and Committee Member, Swindon*

## West Wilts

**On the 15 September we held our branch honey show. The number of exhibits was up on last year.**

Our Annual General Meeting took place on 12 November, Dennis Pictor was re-elected as chair, Donald Watt as treasurer and Geraldine Lenert as secretary.

We held a skittles evening at The Organ in Warminster in October, which was much enjoyed by all who attended.

Sadly, Bill and Pam Clark have stood down from the committee after many years of service to West Wiltshire. We thank them for all they have done for the branch over many years.

We are holding a Beginners' Beekeeping Course starting on Tuesday 19 February, lasting six weeks. This is going to be held at Larkrise Community Farm, Trowbridge.

Chris Rawlings is planning to run a Basic Beekeeping Certificate and Improvers study group starting in February, date to be

confirmed. Our annual branch dinner takes place on Friday 19 January at Cumberwell Park Golf Club.

The Bee Health Day was much appreciated by members who attended and was considered really informative and useful. Everyone felt they benefited from it. The Wiltshire Honey Bee Day in Devizes was a great success and enjoyed by many of our members.

Other planned meetings are:

- Monday 14 January 2019, 7.30pm – Making Asian Hornet Traps.
- Monday 11 February 2019, 7.30pm – Beekeeping From Buckfast to Buckingham Palace – Richard Rickitt.
- Monday 11 March 2019, 7.30pm – Preparing and Using Wax.

These meetings will take place at The Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Westbury BA13 3JL.

*Geraldine Lenert, West Wiltshire*

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## From the Editor

**This is my last editorial for *Honey Bee Times* since, after the completion of this issue, I will be standing down as editor.**

It was a hard decision to make, but my increased work and family commitments have made it difficult for me to continue giving this publication the attention that it deserves.

I would dearly love to say that I am leaving *Honey Bee Times* in some other capable hands, but, as yet, no one has come forward. Therefore, I regret to say that this

might be the last edition you receive – a great shame as this magazine has been going in one form or another since 1939.

As this is my last opportunity to do so, I would like to urge anyone who feels they can spare a few hours now and then to step forward and volunteer their services. If several people – perhaps one from each branch – were willing to work together, then producing each issue of *Honey Bee Times* would be surprisingly light work. Sadly, you won't receive any financial gain, but from personal experience I can promise

that it will greatly enhance your knowledge and enjoyment of beekeeping, and the pleasure of interacting with your fellow Wiltshire members.

Before signing off I would like to express my very sincere gratitude to Sophie Butcher who does a splendid job designing each issue. I am very glad to say that Sophie has agreed to continue in this role, which will make things very much easier for anyone who might care to step into my shoes.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed over the last three years and made working on *Honey Bee Times* such a pleasure.

I will finish by offering a reprint of an editorial from 1951 which, whilst rather amusing, is in parts just as relevant today as it was sixty years ago.

And if you are thinking about volunteering to help with future issues of

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## A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

AN Editor's first duty is to his readers, and to you the Gazette brings best wishes for the New Year. May you continue to keep more and more bees and prosper in doing so. May the year 1951 bring better luck than 1950 did. It is our constant hope that readers enjoy the Gazette and during the coming year we shall strive with that object in view.

Best wishes to our contributors, hard at work and generously marshalling their knowledge for the benefit of readers. We cannot manage without you, so keep going. A special plea to those on the verge of contributing to our pages. Take the plunge. You have nothing to lose and a lot to gain.

May our advertisers prosper in the coming year. They are our true sponsors and owners. The Gazette's prosperity is but the image of theirs. Best wishes to our printers who, with greater speed and accuracy than might be imagined, produce a polished article from a seeming bundle of muddle.

The Gazette would also like to pay tribute this season to all the hard-working secretaries, treasurers, chairmen, librarians, organisers of outings and lectures, foul brood officers, local advisers and nursemaids generally. And to those of us who are always trying to get other people to take up beekeeping. What should we do without them?

Greetings, sincere but of a lesser calibre, to all those who still have to borrow an extractor and to those who flood the August market with honey at 1s. 6d. a pound. An honourable mention also to the "leave alone" people who ultimately call in an expert and to those who have mouldering W.B.C. hives and wish they hadn't. Greetings, smaller but still sincere, to those who ignore requests for a subscription and twelve months later complain that the Association looks rather dead. Best wishes to tellers of long and involved bee stories. May they continue to have inattentive listeners who miss the point. Greetings even to those who plough a lonely furrow and do not join us. These latter at least demonstrate their individuality in a world of dwindling freedom.

Lastly, the Gazette sends very sincere greetings to the British Housewife. We believe that she buys the greater part of our honey crop and that every man jack of us is, in the long run, dependent upon her and the way she manipulates the purse strings.

*Honey Bee Times*, consider this: in another sixty years it might be your words and thoughts that are looked on as a matter of historical curiosity...

*Richard Rickitt (Melksham)*



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- Melksham: Richard Rickitt
- Swindon: Ian Cowdy
- West Wilts: Geraldine Lenert

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## Bottling honey

**Honey is made up of two main sugars, glucose and fructose (there are others as well, but in such small quantities that we do not need to dwell on them).**

The proportion of these two sugars varies depending on the source of the nectar. Glucose is less soluble in water than fructose and so the crystals that form in honey are glucose crystals.

Plants of the cabbage family Brassicaceae (formerly known as Cruciferaeae) produce honey with a high proportion of glucose. From a beekeeping point of view, the key genus is oilseed rape – *Brassica napis*.

Honey from other plants can also granulate with hard but fine crystals. These include clover and sea lavender (not common in Wiltshire). Other common honeys, such as blackberry and ivy, will granulate with very coarse crystals.

Unless dealing with very small quantities, it is best to filter newly extracted honey through both a double strainer filter and, if you have the patience, a fine straining cloth of 500 microns. This will remove all but the finest particles of dirt and wax, but, crucially, not the pollen.

200 micron straining cloth can be used if the honey is for showing purposes.

Once honey is filtered it can be run into buckets for storage. Choose a bucket size that suits your lifting

abilities and your storage facilities.

### Bottling run honey

1. If bottling a small quantity immediately after extraction and filtering, proceed from point 5 below.
2. Honey stored in bulk can set solid quite quickly, especially in areas where oilseed rape (OSR) honey has previously been in the comb – some minute crystals remain in the comb and act as a seed for granulation.
3. For run honey, it is best to avoid using a fast-granulating honey such as OSR. Apart from the rather bland flavour, it will re-granulate faster than other honeys, even if managed as below.
4. After scraping the top layer of 'bits and bubbles' from the top of a solid bucket of honey, warm the bulk container in a warming cabinet (plans for homemade cabinets are available on the internet) for about 24 hours at 50°C/120°F until the honey is completely liquefied. The time depends on the size of container and type of honey, the time given here



Competition was tight at last year's Honey Show at the Wiltshire Bee & Honey Day

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is average for a 30lb bucket. It is possible to liquefy honey in smaller batches in a domestic oven – scoop the set honey into pyrex bowls, cover with a plate, and place in your oven at 50°C/120°F. It should liquefy in about three hours.



No matter how liquefying is achieved, the honey should be fully liquid, with no misting caused by crystals – these will cause rapid re-granulation.

5. Pour the liquid honey into a settling tank through a fine, 200 micron cloth to remove any remaining debris. A settling tank can be any container with a tap at the bottom to facilitate bottling.
6. Allow the honey to settle for some hours for the air bubbles to rise to the surface.
7. Skim the bubbles off (cling film draped over the surface and then peeled away works well). This froth can be used to make marmalade or mead.
8. All jars should be thoroughly washed and air dried.
9. Run honey into clean jars and lid firmly
10. To extend shelf life, jarred honey can be re-warmed immediately at 63°C/145°F for ¾ to 1 hour in a water bath (a large pan on the hob with a trivet to prevent jars sitting on bottom). This will ensure honey will remain liquid for 4-6 months.
11. Store honey below 10°C/50°F to prevent deterioration of quality.
12. Treating honey at the above temperatures and times will not affect diastase or HMF levels and the quality

of the honey will be unharmed.

### Bottling natural honey

Honey bottled immediately after extraction will set either with fine crystals (eg oilseed rape) or coarse crystals (eg blackberry). Honey that sets with a coarse crystal will have sugary lumps throughout, giving a crunchy sensation when eaten, which most customers – though not all – will dislike.

A fine-grained honey will set very hard and may shrink from the sides of the jar leaving an air gap. This is called frosting and, while it does not affect the quality of the honey, customers tend to avoid these jars when on a shop shelf. This is why bottling straight from extraction and filtering is not really recommended.

However, if you don't want the hassle of bucketing and then re-warming honey, then this may be your only choice. The granulation will depend on the nectar collected by your bees.

1. Fine filter the honey into the settling tank.
2. Allow to stand for the bubbles to rise.
3. Skim the bubbles.
4. Bottle into warm jars, the honey running down the side and holding jar as close to tap as possible to avoid

introducing bubbles.

5. Allow to set on a level surface at as near to 14°C/57°F as honey granulates fastest at this temperature.
6. Store as recommended above.

### Soft set honey

Soft set honey requires some work but some customers really appreciate the texture and will buy nothing else.

Beekeepers wanting a soft set honey should preferably use a honey that naturally sets with a fine grain (eg clover or lime). After extracting and filtering, the honey will need to be stirred once it starts to set and then once or twice a day for some days thereafter. This will have the effect of preventing the forming crystals from interlocking and producing a solid honey.

You can use a long-handled wooden spoon, but a commercially available honey stirrer is much better – this is attached to a drill which spins it (handheld version are available). Keep the stirring tool below the surface when it is spinning to avoid drawing air into the honey.

Keep the honey as close to hive temperature as you can – around 32°C/90°F. As the honey sets it will take on a lighter colour.

Bottle at this stage or store it in its bucket as soft set for bottling later. Once fully set it should not be liquid enough to

run out of a bottle if held on its side, but should be as spreadable as soft butter.

### Seeding honey

Honeys that do not set with a fine texture will feel grainy in the mouth, which detracts from the flavour of the honey.

In such cases, the required fine grain needs to be induced by 'seeding' the honey with a sample of very fine-grained honey. Done commercially, this is called the Dyce process.

1. Find a very fine-grained set honey, typically oilseed rape. The honey can be ground in a pestle and mortar to further reduce any crystals. You will need enough of this honey to equal about 10% of your overall batch.
2. Liquefy a bucket of stored honey as for run honey (see above). Let it cool.
3. Warm the seed honey until it is a soft, easily stirred consistency.
4. Add the seed honey to the cooled run honey. Stir carefully without introducing air bubbles – a honey stirrer really is the best thing for this.
5. Bottle into warmed jars or store as recommended above, the honey will set with a fine grain that replicates that of the seed.

Keeping bees is a fascinating and rewarding hobby in itself, but producing a beautifully presented jar of honey that consumers will want to buy is another skill that can also have financial rewards.

*Roger Smith  
(Melksham)*



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## Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day 2018

After a sterling Honey Show staged by West Wilts in 2017 (including lectures on insect flight mechanics, no less) the gauntlet was passed to my own branch, Melksham.

Cue a year of preparation and trepidation as a committee, composed for the first time of members from several branches and led by Sophie Butcher of Kennet, decided on general themes, found a venue, approached potential speakers and stall holders and generally scurried around like workers during a nectar flow. Finally, the big day arrived.

### The exhibitors

On the morning of Saturday 6 October, some 300 beekeepers from Wiltshire (and from as far afield as Hampshire) and members of the public rolled up at the Corn Exchange in Devizes for five hours of beekeeping goodness, lectures and prizes.

On entering the building the first thing everyone encountered was the mead and honey tasting table – always a good way to make an event go with a swing. Along with



David Brown (Kennet) and his team on the Honey Stand sold over £750 of honey and candles. Cut comb ran out very early – something for beekeepers to note in their planning for next year

the honey beer sales from Devitera Beer, there were stands selling honey and related products (the fudge, particularly that made by David Brown, was amazing), as well as wildflower seeds from Meadow in My Garden, cosmetics from Hive Originals and gifts from Little Bee Designs.

Moving into the main hall, there were more stands including the Butterfly Conservation Trust, the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, and Central Association of Beekeepers (a bee research organisation based in Kent). There were several general beekeeping stands, including Cotswold Beeskeps and Candles, as well as stands where children could roll their own beeswax candles or have their face painted. And bustling in and around the stalls was a huge number of volunteers from all branches answering questions, directing people and, most importantly, manning the refreshment stand.



Nigel Cross (Kennet) uses a virtual hive to explain to members of the public how a colony lives in a hive

## What a Whoppa

Very soon, though, it was time for the first lecture. Before the show I had been a bit hesitant about the title of the lecture, *Wot a Whoppa!* by Robert Smith, NDB, but it proved to be fascinating.

The process he outlined was simple: you begin the year with the bees in a single 14 x 12 brood box and, as soon as the queen begins to lay you add a second brood box over top with fresh foundation and no queen excluder.

The bees (providing they've attended this lecture, of course) move up into the top box and the brood oval ends up split equally between the two boxes, with pollen and honey as per usual but with lots of unused cells around the outside. At this point the beekeeper reverses the brood boxes so that the brood forms semicircles at the top and bottom of hive with an hourglass pattern of cells between them.

All things being equal, the bees will rapidly draw the rest of the comb allowing the queen to lay as they strive to link the separated brood. Very soon you will have



Members listened attentively to Robert Smith



Angus Boyd and his daughter Rosie did well on the day

two brood boxes (one with this year's comb) brimming with bees and you can start adding supers to reap the rewards of your much-expanded workforce.

At the end of the season you remove the supers as normal and drive the colony to the lower brood box to overwinter on new comb. It is a technique that I will be trying with my bees.

Before the second lecture we were treated to brief talk from local MP and Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth Claire Perry, herself a beekeeper and a member of Kennet branch, who explained some of the government's pollinator policies and the assistance offered to farmers to help bees and other insects.

## Sex, Drugs and Ecosystem Services

Following this was a lecture with the intriguing title of *Sex, Drugs and*



Richard Oliver, Martin Phipps, Sophie Butcher, Malcom Anley, Frances Shires and Lucie Castleman were among the members who were presented with certificates for various BBKA qualifications by Alan Stonell, president of Wiltshire Beekeepers Association

*Ecosystem Services*. The lecturer, Phil Stevenson, is a senior researcher at Kew Gardens and has been looking at the affects of caffeine on bees and other pollinators.

The main point I took away from the lecture is that bees are very susceptible to caffeine – it seems to enhance their location and orientation abilities, allowing them to 'lock on' to a plant after only a single visit. They will even prioritise plants that have higher nectar caffeine content than others.

While this has advantages to the plant – as it aids pollination – it can pose a serious problem for the bees as they will return to plants long after their resources have been drained, wearing themselves out in the process.

This goes a long way to explain the phenomena of dead bees around lime trees at the end of summer – the flowers have stopped producing nectar, but the plant is so imprinted on the bee that it will not find another food source and thus dies of starvation. For those who missed the lecture, you can view it here: <http://bit.ly/hbt1901>

## Really getting to grips with swarm control

The third lecture was another from Robert Smith, who gave a very comprehensive overview of what happens when a bee

colony swarms and offered several options for effective swarm control – too complex to detail here. Needless to say, it made many of us consider whether we truly understand swarming and how best to tackle it in our apiaries.

## The Honey Show

As for the Honey Show, national BBKA judges Suzy Perkins, Hazel Blackburn and trainee BBKA judge Claire O'Brian had their work cut out for them with an incredible 311 entries from beekeepers from all four branches in classes ranging from clear honey to cut comb and from candles



The quality of wax exhibits in the Honey Show was high

and mead to fudge and honey cakes.

At the event, Rosie Boyd (Melksham) became the youngest beekeeper in Wiltshire to be awarded the Basic Certificate in Beekeeping. Her father, Angus Boyd (Melksham), meanwhile, walked away with the King Shield for the best jar of honey out of 80 entries, as well as the Methuen Cup for the individual with most points in the show.

Alan Hepper (West Wilts) was awarded the Lovegrove Memorial Trophy for the best bottle of mead in the show. Vicki Lowes (Kennet) received the Novice cup for her jar of honey in the novice class. The much-coveted Applegate Trophy for the branch with the most points in the show was kept, once again, by West Wilts.

The open classes, brand new to the show,



*There were many entries in the mead class, and competition was very close*

received 56 entries from 50 members of the public, most of whom are pupils from 3 local schools – All Cannings C of E Primary School, Nursteed Community Primary School, and Rowdeford School. Ma Cuisine cook shop in Devizes judged the *Three Cup Cakes Decorated in the Theme of a Bee* class, which was won by 8-year-old Katie Bollen of Potterne.

At the same time, Councillor Andy Geddes, Mayor of Devizes, was judging the *Bee Made Out of Fruit or Vegetables* class, and the *Artistic Exhibit Relating to Bees or Beekeeping* class. The former was won by 6-year-old Meredith Martin from All Cannings School, while the latter was won by 10-year-old Nathalie Dennis of Nursteed Primary School.

The event was supported by Corsham Printers of Corsham, which generously printed much of the marketing materials for free.

*Jeremy Tyler (Melksham)*



*Katie Bollen came first in the Three Cup Cakes Decorated in the Theme of a Bee class*

## Bee education in Wiltshire

### Module exams

**Five members sat module exams on 10 November. The results should be available in late January.**

Sixteen members have joined a study group for Module 1: Honeybee Management. Over half those attending have not been involved in taking exams before. The exam itself takes place in March, but not everyone is eligible to sit it as they do not have their Basic Assessment.

### Microscopy workshop

Eleven members plus a guest from Gloucestershire BKA enjoyed a very interesting day on 16 November. There were representatives from all four branches of Wilts BKA, so each branch now has a few more members that are able to test for acarine and nosema.

Our thanks go to Sally Wadsworth, who travelled down from Worcestershire to lead the dissecting element of the day, while Alan Stonell (Kennett) led students through the steps to making successful pollen slides from samples collected in the field or from honey.

### Beginners courses

All branches will be running their own Introductory and Beginners Courses in the new year. I will post details on the Facebook page as soon as they are known.

### Honey Bee Health Certificate

Nine members have signed up for this course, which is now full. Theory sessions will be held in late March and April followed by a couple of practical sessions in late April/early May (weather permitting).

Assessments will be held between late May and the end of July.

### Microscopy Club

Ten members have expressed an interest in setting up a Microscopy Club. The aim is that this should start in the new year with one meeting a month, probably on a Sunday morning.



### Entering exams

If you are planning to sit a BBKA Module exam in March 2019, please send your application to Richard Oliver, the WBKA Examination Officer, by 1 February in order to ensure it reaches the BBKA by the 10 February deadline. The fee is £30 per module.

If you are planning to take either the Honey Bee Health Certificate or the General Certificate of Beekeeping Husbandry this year please send your application to Richard Oliver by 21 February in order to meet the BBKA deadline of 28 February. The fee for the Health Certificate is £35 and £60 for the General Husbandry.

*Richard Oliver, Education secretary  
Raoliver.62@gmail.com*



## The Bee Shed project (or folly)

**Every year when I carry out my first inspections, I encounter frames with mould, boxes with signs of wet weather exposure, and so-on. Both my apiaries are exposed to westerlies, so perhaps it's no surprise.**

I had been thinking about some sort of shelter for my hives and decided to look for a trailer that I could convert into a bee shed.

Along came an ancient horse trailer which I stripped down to bare chassis and frames. I rebuilt the old rod operated brakes, spent hours de-rusting and painting and replaced the rotten floor. The walls were clad in tonge-and-grove and the whole lot re-painted.

Windows and an open/shut roof vent were fitted. I had read on the web that these were essential to allow bees somewhere to escape from the shed's interior.

The inside was fitted-out with a long bench capable of holding 5 hives with bespoke floors, with slots cut in the side wall.

I had to go to Scotland at one point, and my son joked: 'I bet a swarm moves in while we are away.' When we returned, a huge colony was established in one of the hives stacked inside. This somewhat slowed down completing the project, as the bees were unhappy with anyone working outside their entrance, so fitting mudguards entailed wearing a beesuit.

The swarm colony continued to increase and, just prior to moving the bee shed to another site, there were 15 Langstroth frames of brood each covered in bees, and hordes of the little ladies flying in and out.

Inspections were rather strange, being locked inside a dark shed with bees flying around and tending to go out of the open roof vent (I discovered later that most of these bees waited until I opened the door to leave).

Light from the window was more than adequate for inspections, the bespoke floors had 3-inch gaps at the back under the mesh

so I am able to keep mite boards in place all year round.

In the hot spell, the interior sometimes approached 40°C but this did not affect the bees as temperatures measured directly over the brood box never exceeded 34°C – although you could hear the roar of bees fanning to cool the brood box down.

Finally, it was time to move the bee shed to another site – to my wife's relief because the flight path was across the entrance to our front door. Steady streams of inquisitive neighbours were shown the interior, all fascinated at seeing the bees through the perspex quilt over the brood box.

Moving day arrived. Having closed the entrance to the colony the previous evening, I hitched the trailer to the car and drove 1.5 miles to a wood with open glades and rides.

I parked the trailer up so the entrances faced south to south east, levelled the

trailer, and removed the tow hitch lockdown mechanism so it would be extremely difficult for someone else to take away.

I opened the entrance and the bees poured out. Within a day they had settled and were bringing back pollen and nectar.

The hot spell of weather eventually turned cool and the weather turned wet but the inside of the shed and hive all remained dry. This must approach the conditions that bees achieve when they set up home on their own in hollow trees or in roofs.

I have to say that inspecting the bees in the bee shed is much easier than in the outside apiaries. It also means that I am continually learning how to read mite board debris throughout the year.

*Ian Cowdy (Swindon)*

*ian.cowdy@btinternet.com or  
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## Bees and Bibles

**I recently returned from Lincoln where I spent a weekend hearing about fascinating stories from around the world.**

I was volunteering with an organisation called Open Doors. They support Christians in some of the most dangerous countries in the world by providing training, support and practical relief.

### Hidden from view

This was not a beekeeping conference, but my ears perked up when I heard a story about a courageous beekeeper in North Korea. This particular beekeeper had used a beehive to hide their Bible from government officials. We know so little about North Korea. It had never really occurred to me that there would be beekeepers there!

What is the strangest thing you have found in your beehive? A mouse? A hornet's nest? Honey?! I certainly haven't heard of any local beekeeper using their beehive to protect their valuables! Why would someone in North Korea hide a Bible in their beehive? The freedom we experience in the West is very different to conditions people in North Korea live with on a daily basis. If caught with a Bible in North Korea you could be sent to prison camp.

### Questions

You may have seen a recent documentary with Michael Palin. It was very interesting that one of the first questions he was asked when he arrived at a North Korean station was: 'Do you have a Bible with you?'

It would be fascinating if more information was available about North Korean beekeeping. What kind of hive

were they using? Was it a skep? Was it a Langstroth? What type of bees are native to North Korea? What does North Korean honey taste like? What are the common species of flowers in there? Are North Korean bees better behaved than their British counterparts? Do North Korean beekeepers naughtily eat honey while doing hive inspections? How often do they inspect their hives? Do they make as much mess in the kitchen as we do when extracting? Do they share the lows of missing a queen cell or the highs of a bumper honey yield? I wonder if North Koreans use their time in the hive to get away from the worries of the world. When closely observing the bees, do beekeepers there see a window into a different society? So many unanswered questions...

### No respecters of borders

I like to think that British beekeepers would also trust their bees to protect what is precious to them. Fortunately, we don't have to resort to such extreme measures. Meanwhile, however hard he tries, Kim Jong-un will never get bees to obey him. Bees are no respecters of borders. They may pass the DMZ as they please!

As our thoughts return to our own lives and beekeeping dilemmas, we can reflect how fortunate we are to live in a country that has political and religious freedom. We can visit our beehives whenever we want and live a life free from physical persecution.

Spare a thought for beekeepers all over the world that do not have the freedom that we do.

*Paul Smith (Kennet)*

# Have you got honeydew – and what is it?

**In 2018, a number of Wiltshire beekeepers commented that they have harvested some honey that is darker and thicker than normal.**

It is also said to have a somewhat 'malty' taste. Although it can't be certain without testing, it is likely that, in some cases, this honey is, or at least contains, honeydew.

Increased honeydew crops have been reported across the UK in this unusual year, perhaps because the prolonged, hot, dry weather boosted the population of the insects responsible for honeydew production, or the quantity or quality of sap produced by some plants and trees.

## What makes honeydew?

Aphids, scale insects, coccids and a variety of other common bugs which are members of the *Homoptera* sub-order of insects are equipped with specialised mouthparts that consist of a system of piercing needles and tubes for transporting liquids. The liquids in question come from various plants that produce large quantities of sap. These are mostly trees, including certain species of ash, lime, beech, cedar, chestnut, elm, fir, larch, maple, oak, pine, poplar, spruce, sycamore and willow.



*Homoptera produce quantities of honeydew*

A few forbs (herbaceous flowering plants) produce honeydew as well, including alfalfa (lucerne), currants, grapes, gooseberries, and sunflowers.

The plants in question have within their stems and leaves, tubes called phloem. These are like arteries that transport sap around the plant. It is this sap that most members of the *Homoptera* 'tap' into to feed. When an aphid (or other Homopteran – but we'll stick to aphids for simplicity) pierces the phloem with its mouthparts, a duct pours saliva into the wound, starting the digestion process. A second duct then transports the sap up to the insect.

The sap within the plant's phloem is transported around under pressure, so when an aphid's mouthparts pierce the phloem, the sap is literally 'pumped' into the insect without it even having to suck. Once an aphid has pierced a phloem it stays on the spot – plugged into a constant supply of food.

The food flowing into the insect contains all the nutrients that it needs to survive. However, there is a certain amount of excess, and this emerges from the insects' anus and is 'flicked' away by a shake of the body. The discarded material may fall to the ground, land on a nearby leaf, or might fall on your car if you are unfortunate enough to be parked below.

## Harvested by bees

The spots of discarded material are sweet and extremely sticky and it is this material that honey bees find and collect – much as they do with nectar. Sometimes the substance is so thick and sticky that it can only be collected in the early morning, when

it has been diluted by dew.

Honey bees process and store honeydew in the same way as normal honey, adding their own enzymes and evaporating-off any excess moisture before capping. Small quantities of honeydew are usually mixed with ordinary nectar honey and go largely unnoticed and it is rare in the UK for significant crops of pure or high-strength honeydew to be harvested.

The exception is where bees are kept in extensive woodlands where few sources of flower nectar are available – hence honeydew's other names: forest honey or tree honey.

## Mouldy honey

When honeydew is exuded from aphids, it can sit around for some time before being collected by bees. In this time, it can attract various moulds and spores, which tend to darken the substance, resulting in very dark honey. It is these spores and moulds which show up under the microscope and help to identify the presence of honeydew in honey samples.

When sold, honeydew is often named after its primary component, such as pine honey, fir honey, oak honey, etc.

It is generally dark, strongly flavoured, less acidic, and less sweet than floral honey. It is prized in many parts of Europe and in New Zealand, often commanding high prices. I have a small jar of German black forest honey (aus dem schwarzwald vom Glasswaldsee) which looks black but when held up to the light is the deepest mahogany colour.

It is as stiff as caramel and tastes like pine and bitter figs. It's more than ten years old and hasn't crystallised in the slightest. I doubt the average consumer would even guess that it was a type of honey.

## Honeydew and bees

Honeydew honey is not considered good winter feed for bees because it can be quite high in ash and the sugar melizitose, both considered a possible cause of honey bee dysentery. Therefore, you don't need to feel guilty about removing an entire crop of honeydew before winter.



## Honeydew and the law

If you want to sell honeydew, there are slightly different requirements in the Honey (England) Regulations 2015.

Total sugar content (fructose + glucose) should be not less than 45g/100g (as opposed to 60g/100g for blossom honey) and the maximum sucrose content should be not more than 10g/100g (5g/100g for blossom honey).

## The Marmite of honeys

Some people regard honeydew as a luxury, others won't touch it. In the US, it is usually sold at a lower price and used only as a baker's honey.

In Germany it is prized and sold at a premium. Either way, it is another fascinating example of our bees' interaction with the wider environment.

If you think you have harvested some in this year's crop, enjoy it – it might be some time before you see it again.

*Charles Inkpen (Melksham)*

# Asian Hornet Action Teams

**Each association (including Salisbury) now has an Asian Hornet Action Team co-ordinator, led at a county level by Martin Phipps (Kennet).**

As a team, we have met once to discuss how to organise ourselves and have agreed that a closed map of the region will be managed by Mario Caves (Kennet) to identify the locations of hornet traps being monitored each spring, and also link to a database/spreadsheet that each beekeeper can access on Google Drive to update their trap findings.

In Melksham, we agreed at Committee to fund the purchase of a Vita-Pharma Hornet Trap for each active member. The NBU has been very specific in its recommendation that all beekeepers trap for Asian hornets in the spring.

While we don't expect to capture any this year, we have no way of knowing whether they are about unless we monitor. I call it a 'Rumsfeld' – 'an unknown unknown'.

I would expect spring (and summer bait trapping) to become routine for beekeepers as the years progress – a bit like managing for varroa.

The hornet traps chosen use a pheromone that is very attractive to overwintered queen hornets. It is mixed with water and sugar syrup. I have used them for the past two seasons to cull queen wasps in apiaries where I have particular problems with wasps, and to great effect.

You are likely to get 'by-catch' with any trap, especially in the spring, as the contents of the trap are one of the few food sources about. It's up to each beekeeper to release unwanted species.

I am also the main co-ordinator for Salisbury Plain. Working with the MOD and Defence Infrastructure Organisation's biologists based at Tilshead, a number of other organisations have come forward to assist us. The conservation and butterfly groups far outnumber us beekeepers (almost 4 to 1). They are very engaged on the issue of trapping and monitoring – they are very adept and used to it – and they also realise the impact the Asian hornet will have on ALL insect life – not just honeybees and other pollinators.

As a county, the WBKA Council agreed on 27 November to Martin Phipps's proposal to purchase 25 traps for each association, with an additional 25 for Salisbury Plain. These traps will be used by the associations, and a few spare held back in case an Asian hornet is spotted, as we will then have to flood an area with traps at the behest of the NBU.

In the spring of 2019, the AHATs are planning a summer trap making session – dates to be confirmed.

*Steve Auty, Chair WBKA, and Melksham AHAT coordinator*



*It's up to each beekeeper to release unwanted species*



*Organised beekeeping has been going on for thousands of years in Crete*

## Beekeeping in Crete

**The strong relationship between the Cretans and bees goes back thousands of years to the stone and bronze age (4,000 years BC) – the Minoan civilisation was streets ahead of our own development in everything.**

In Greek mythology, the bee, Melissa, was the daughter of Crete's first king Melisseas. She nested inside the sacred cave, the birthplace of Zeus, and became his nanny.

She was entrusted by Zeus's mother with his upbringing and accomplished her task by feeding him honey. At the same time a goat provided Zeus with milk – hence the claim that Crete is 'the land of milk and honey' (ah well, we are talking about the Greek myths).

To see the close link with bees and honey you just have to go to the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, a museum

showcasing the secrets of the Minoan civilization.

You'll find an exquisite piece of gold jewellery representing two bees flanking a round portion of honeycomb.

The piece was found in one of the Minoan Palaces at Malia. All over the island you can buy copies of this brooch, but sadly they never come close to the original in delicacy.

Bear in mind that whilst farming had been well established for thousands of years and that towns were built around enormous palaces that were founded mainly for religious and ceremonial purposes, we were



*Golden Bee Pendant, Crete Middle Bronze Age about 1700BC. Width: 4.6cm. Material: Gold*

well behind the times.

Furthermore, an excavation in Phaistos (South Crete) brought to light clay pots with traces of honey, indicating that honey was an essential part of the diet of ancient Cretans (both the Minoan and subsequent Mycenae and other civilisations). It was the only known sweetening substance for thousands of years.

The father of medicine, Hippocrates, recommended honey as a cure for many diseases and Aristotle believed that life could be prolonged with the daily consumption of honey – so use the ‘knowledge of the ancients’ when advertising your own honey!

### How did the clever Minoans keep their bees?

Whilst our European ancestors were raiding wild honey comb (no bee suits), in Crete beekeepers used clay pots as small hives.

Along the side there was either a series of holes to enable the bees to enter – or just one larger hole – just like today.

The hives would be stacked on top of each other – I assume with some form of wooden support – facing the morning sun, and certainly not exposed to wind and rain.



Minoan bee hive circa 2000 BC

To collect the honey, the beekeeper would carefully extract the honey after removing a wooden door or ceramic lid.

Archaeologists have shown that the ‘brood area’ was close to the entrance of the beehive, whilst the majority of the honey stores could be found at the rear. Minoan beekeepers could collect honey without doing too much damage to the colony – they were years ahead.

### Smokers are not a new invention

Despite their sophistication, the Minoans had similar problems to us – they used smokers to keep bees ‘quiet’ when harvesting honey

Many examples of ceramic smokers have been found, all working on the same principle – a ceramic pot with small holes at one end and a larger hole at the rear. You filled the pot with leaves and grass, lit the fire and blew down the rear hole to send smoke out of the small holes.

### But what of today?

Crete is rich in honey producing plants, particularly herbs like thyme (thyme honey has a special aromatic aroma and flavour), sage and oregano, and also pine trees, acacias, eucalyptus and citrus.

Today – and it has been a relatively recent introduction – Cretan beekeepers use standard brood boxes, but use much larger supers than we do – collecting honey requires strength.

I visited Crete in November (temperatures of 20 °C) and found many single brood boxes collected together. There is little food at this time, so the beekeeper brings his hives into larger groups. But when spring arrives along with the flowering of the many aromatic bushes

and herbs, the Cretan beekeeper takes his hives to sites all over the island. That’s why you find a small amount of ‘country flower honey’ but lots of thyme, and other single flower honeys in Crete – and believe me, they taste is superb.

### Is the honey organic?

The answer is a simple – YES.

Cretan farms are very small by UK standards. Many have been run by the same family for hundreds of years. The Cretans feel ‘at one’ with their land and there is very little, if any, use of pesticides. They do have varroa and the usual diseases, but their problems do not loom as large as they do over here.

However, if you are a beekeeper in Crete, you never have a down season – their weather means that bee colonies are ‘on

the go’ all the time (no closing down for the winter).

Finally, if you want to find out more – visit Crete – you can even go for a holiday at a bee farm – but that might be a step to far.

*Brian Wilson (Melksham)*



Minoan smokers – circa 1,800 BC

## Honey Bee Times

is looking for a

### NEW EDITOR

From January 2019 this magazine will need a new editor - will it be you? It doesn't have to be a single person - why not think about doing it with your beekeeping friends? You don't need any design experience, as design and print are done by others.

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## Athollbrose ice cream

**This is a perfect winter icecream – sweet and delicious and strangely warming (it's the whisky).**

It works beautifully with all kinds of warm winter puddings or with just a piece of shortbread.

Athollbrose is a traditional Scottish drink that is made with oats, honey and whisky. There are many different methods of making it, but in essence the oats are steeped in warm water and the resulting milk is used as the base of the drink.

Honey and whisky are added to taste and some people like to add cream as well. It can be served cold or warm.

Do try making the drink – kind of a homemade alternative to Baileys. The recipe below is for an ice cream made with Athellbrose. The presence of alcohol will make this quite easy to scoop.

### Ingredients

- 55g pinhead oatmeal
- 150ml milk
- 200ml double cream
- 55g runny Scottish heather honey
- 100ml evaporated milk
- 30ml whisky

### To finish the ice cream

- 1 tbsp runny honey (Scottish heather is traditional – but use the best of your own)
- 15g butter
- 30g pinhead oatmeal

### Method

- Put the oatmeal in a bowl, warm the milk to hand hot (no hotter) and pour it over the oatmeal.
- Leave to steep for 1 – 2 hours.

- Put a sieve over a bowl and pour the oatly milk through it. Press the oats well to release as much of the milk as possible.
- Meanwhile preheat the oven to 180°C/ Fan oven 160°C/ Gas mark 4.

- Put the butter and 1 tbsp honey into a small saucepan and melt carefully. Don't allow it to get too hot.
- Mix in the oatmeal and spread out onto a baking sheet that has been lined with baking parchment paper.
- Put into the oven for 15 minutes or until the oatmeal has caramelised and is mid brown in colour.
- Cool on the paper.
- Lightly whip the double cream with the 55g honey.
- Add the evaporated milk and the oat milk.
- Mix well and taste for sweetness and add more honey or whisky as needed.
- Put into an ice cream maker and churn until it starts to thicken.
- Break up the caramelised oats and add to the ice cream mixture. Once well churned and thick put into a plastic box and store in the freezer.
- Alternatively you can freeze the mixture and then, when nearly frozen, but still a little soft, place in a food processor and process until smooth.
- Add the crunchy oats and put back into the freezer to freeze.



*For another honey icecream recipe, check out [www.foodabovegold.com](http://www.foodabovegold.com)*

## Book Review

### **Healthy Bees are Happy Bees (2nd Edition)**

**By Pam Gregory**

**Published by Bee Craft, 2018. £30.00**

**ISBN: 978-0-900-147302**

Pam Gregory was a seasonal and regional bee inspector in Wales, a Master Beekeeper and held the National Diploma in Beekeeping.

She was a founder member of Bees Abroad and taught beekeeping in Africa and Asia. This deep knowledge of beekeeping, combined with her broad experience, particularly as a long-serving bee inspector, places her in a unique position to write about honey bee health.

Two quotes from the introductory chapter explain the author's approach. When reading the bees, 'Looking is no good without seeing and seeing is based on knowing, so theoretical knowledge is also important.' As for healthy brood, 'The most important thing in all disease control is to be able to recognise what is healthy. If you cannot tell what is healthy you cannot tell what is sick.'

Thereafter, each section follows the same pattern that leads the reader through from the theory to the practical, from the life cycle of a disease, through identification, to the actions needed to bring it under control. Each section can be dipped into or read in full.

Varroa is dealt with in considerable depth and there is a hint of frustration that the author has seen too many colonies suffering from the effects of varroa because the beekeeper has failed to keep on top of the mite. From her perspective, the arrival

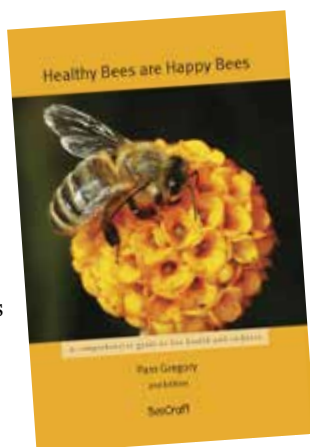
of varroa changed beekeeping from a 'happy-go-lucky' pastime to the more rigorous approach that is now required.

The logical sequence of each section is supported by some truly excellent descriptions of life cycles, control methods and procedures – some of which are supported by really good photographs. But I do feel these could have been further enhanced by a few well-drawn diagrams.

Pam Gregory died in 2016 and this edition has been cleverly updated by the Bee Craft team. There are more complete sections on new threats such as Asian Hornet and small hive beetle. New procedures, such as oxalic acid vaporisation, have also been included. Elsewhere, there are more subtle additions to reflect recent trends. Overall, there is more content, a better index but fewer pages thanks to an improved typeface. The overall result is a slimmer, more handy feel.

This book would be particularly useful for those taking BBKA Module 3, the Honey Bee Health Certificate and the General Certificate in Beekeeping Husbandry. However, the importance of matching theoretical knowledge with practical experience makes this a book that should be in every beekeeper's library. If it results in more beekeepers raising the long-term health of their colonies it will have met its aim.

*Richard Oliver (Kennet)*



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Sarum Bee Supplies is a small family company located in rural Wiltshire, having in excess of fifty colonies spread in various apiaries across the South of Wiltshire. Some of these colonies are moved to selected areas to collect honey from some of the more unusual flowers of Wiltshire and its chalk down landscape.

Our website [www.sarumbeesupplies.co.uk](http://www.sarumbeesupplies.co.uk) provides more information, along with full details of our history and what we do.

Our shop presents a large range of products; hives, frames, foundation, medicines and starter kits: everything for the experienced and novice beekeeper alike.

There are also special discounts available on BB Wear beekeeping suits.

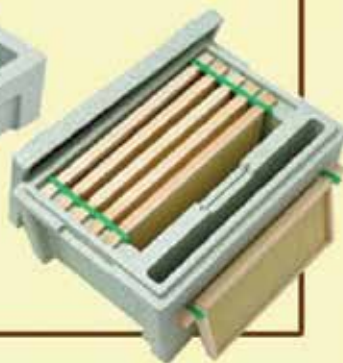
The Buckfast project is on going, expanding the Buckfast strain with new breeding material being added to the gene pool to further enhance the range of queens available. Daughters will be taken to Dartmoor for mating to a known Drone line and more queens will be available later in the season, along with our own locally bred Queens.



We are now in the process of stocking the popular range of Poly Hives, manufactured by Paynes Bee Farm and will be stocking the standard National Hive along with its individual components.



We will also be stocking the National Poly Nuc boxes to start with and 14x12 to order. To avoid carriage charges, these items will be stocked and available for collection. See our website for full details.



Orders now being taken for 2018 Queens and Nucs  
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[www.sarumbeesupplies.co.uk](http://www.sarumbeesupplies.co.uk)