



Wiltshire BKA

# Honey Bee Times

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## ***Wiltshire BKA Special General Meeting***

This important meeting is being held at 7pm on Tuesday 8th March 2022 at The Corn Exchange, Devizes. You can also attend online or vote by post. The sole purpose of this meeting is for members to decide whether or not Wiltshire BKA should apply to the Charity Commissioners to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

If you have not already registered your attendance contact  
[secretary@wiltshirebeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:secretary@wiltshirebeekeepers.co.uk).

## ***Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day – Part 2***

Last month we gave the first in a series of articles about the Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day that will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at the Corn Exchange in Devizes: that article provided an overview of the day and a few notes on entering mead into the show. This month we'll tell you all about the trade stands that attend and some notes on the photography section of the show, just in case you'd like to place an entry.

### ***Trade Stands***

Each year we have a number of trade stands selling bee related products, as well as a few of our favourite charities. Last year, the main hall was again filled with the sound of shoppers happily filling their bags with all sorts of treasures from hand-made ear rings from Barking Hen Jewellery, balms and lotions from Hive Originals to wildflower seed bombs from Meadow In My Garden and beeswax candles from Candle Cavern, as well as pottery and glassware from Pam Shellard Ceramics and Bee Happy Glass Design.

There were fewer stands in 2021 than in previous years as some companies couldn't make it but the ones that did attend have all said that they would like to be involved again this year. For 2022 we are hoping that more companies will be back on their feet after COVID and that it will be a welcome opportunity to sell their wares. For us beekeepers it is an opportunity to support local producers and, who knows, maybe you can snap up a few early bee-related Christmas presents! If you know anyone that might like to take a stand this year, do get in touch with Emma Morley  
[emma@thebeeskneeshoney.co.uk].

We also invite charities to attend so that they can gain some exposure from our event as well as helping us fill the hall and create a great atmosphere. In 2021 there were 5 bee and environment related charities with their own stands and we are expecting a similar turnout this year - or maybe even a few more as staffing becomes less of a problem.

We also approach a number of companies to sponsor the day so that it doesn't cost so much for Wiltshire Beekeepers. The 2021 event was sponsored by Eden Renewables who build solar farms, Viridor waste management and Wadworth Brewery (more about Wadworth in a later article). Corsham Print provided all of our printing at cost and Brunel gave us one of their microscopes, which was the star prize in our raffle. We do need sponsors to make the event as successful as possible at minimum cost. Eden Renewables will be our main sponsors for this year's show in October but if you can think of any companies or organisations that might also be able to help for this year, please just let us know? If you'd like to help us with organising the trade stands, charities and sponsors, please also speak up.

### ***Honey Show – Photographs***

Last month's article was about mead, because it's one product that needs time to mature. This month we are writing about the photography section... not because photographs need time to mature, but because now is the ideal time to start thinking about taking some photos before the year gets too busy and we simply forget. Those first few examinations of the season are the ideal time - before swarming is a concern and when we aren't under pressure - that the odd foray into the apiary or garden with the camera can provide some excellent photos.

There are three classes in the show for photographers:

- A honey bee (or bees) on, approaching or leaving a flower
- Beekeeper(s) going about their business
- The hive or the apiary

These are classes where there is always a wide variety of entries. Here are some top tips to help you along the way:

1. Whether you have a professional digital camera or even just a smartphone (on which the quality of images nowadays can rival that of digital camera anyway), capturing that great shot can be a numbers game - if you hang around clicking for long enough you are bound to get lucky.
2. Place a plant on an outside table, sit and wait for the bees to come to it, rather than crouching in a flowerbed getting back ache trying to get just the right angle.
3. Get up close and personal - you can buy cheap macro lenses to fit on your phone's camera if you want to take close ups that are just that little bit more detailed.
4. Fish eye lenses can also add another dynamic which will make a distance shot stand out from the crowd.
5. Don't be tempted to zoom in with the camera app on your phone - you'll lose a lot of the detail that way. Instead try cropping the photo in the edit mode afterwards.
6. When you do capture the perfect picture, make sure you share it with us, enter it into the show and see whether you have a prize-winning effort.

## ***Get involved***

The Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day is run by volunteers across the membership of WBKA and although we have already started organising this year's event, we welcome newcomers who would like to get involved. Your contribution, however small, will be very welcome.

We are a small, jolly team of beekeepers who like to get stuck in and do our bit. There are plenty of jobs from designing/printing marketing materials, organising trade stalls and writing editorials, through to the more public facing roles of coordinating honey show exhibit entries, stewarding and manning stands on the day.

If you'd like to join our little team, please email Sophie Butcher ([wiltshoneyday@gmail.com](mailto:wiltshoneyday@gmail.com)) so that we can find the best role for you. You never know, you might even have some fun!

## ***Dates for the Diary - County and Branch***

### **Wiltshire BKA**

**8th March -Special General Meeting** to decide whether or not to convert to a Charitable incorporated Organisation (CIO). Details as described above.

**2nd - 4th June - Royal Bath & West Show.** Bath & West Show Ground near Shepton Mallet.

**3rd September - WBKA Honey Bee Health Day.** Market Lavington Community Hall. This is an opportunity for beekeepers from across the county to remind and up date themselves on all aspects of honey bee diseases. The day will be led by our Regional Bee Inspector, John Geden, with talks by other bee inspectors from neighbouring counties.

**8th October - Wiltshire Bee and Health Day.** The Corn Exchange, Devizes (see earlier).

### **Branch Events**

#### **Kennet BKA**

**2nd March - 7.30 at Bishops Cannings Village Hall.** Talk by the Buckfast Beekeepers on "Preparing for Spring"

**6th April - 7.30 at Bishops Cannings Village Hall.** Talk by Richard Peterson on "The Demaree Method".

**4th May - 7.30 at Bishops Cannings Village Hall.** Talk by Richard Oliver on "Swarm Prevention & Swarm Control".

#### **Melksham & District BKA**

**28th March - 7.00 at Broughton Gifford Village Hall.** Question & Answer session within the club.

**25th April - 7.00 at Broughton Gifford Village Hall.** Images of Wild Life & Insects of Wiltshire by Alan Benson.

## Swindon & District BKA

31st March - 7.30 at Hayden Wick Club. Talk by Richard Oliver "Spring into Summer".

28th April - 7.30 at Hayden Wick Club. Talk by Avril Earl, Seasonal Bee Inspector.

## West Wilts BKA

3rd March - 7.30 via Zoom. "Swarm Control" by Dave Bonner.

## National Events

12th March - BeeTradex at NAEC Stoneleigh. <https://beetradex.co.uk>.

8th - 10th April - BBKA Spring Convention. Harper Adams University, Shropshire TF10 8NB  
<https://www.bbka.org.uk/Pages/Category/about-spring-convention>

## Beekeeping Tips for Early March

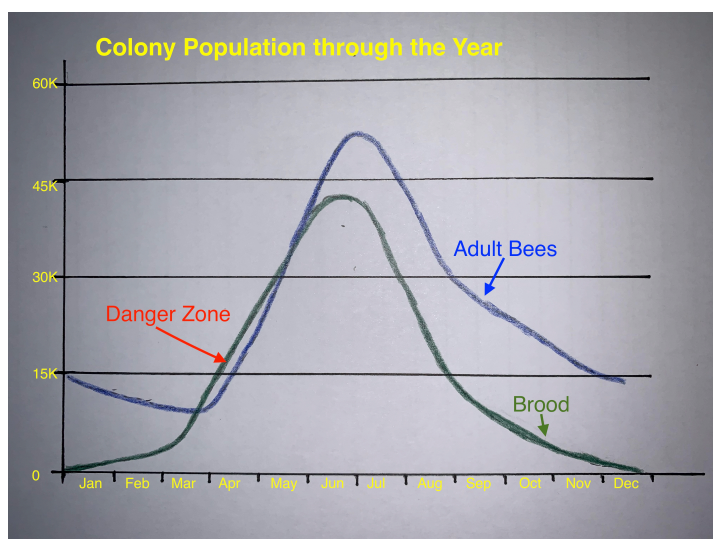
### Resist the Temptation to Inspect

In the graph the blue line shows the number of adult bees in a colony in decline until early April. At the same time the amount of brood (green line) is increasing. This is a **dangerous period for the colony**. The adult bees need to be caring for the brood by feeding and keeping it warm while having to forage for stores. You can help but not by opening up the hive and letting in cold air.

Feeding brood and generating heat uses up a lot of energy. Stores consumption increases to 4kg/month. They can clear a slab of fondant in three weeks. So **keep hefting the hives and feed if necessary**.

Breaking down fondant or sealed stores requires a supply of water so make sure there is a source nearby.

Observe the entrance and breath a sigh of relief when you see pollen being taken in as it's a good sign that the queen is in lay.





### ***Late March - Quick Inspection***

Should temperatures reach 14°C then on a calm day when the bees are flying a quick inspection is in order. Check for the presence of the queen and that there is space for her to lay.

There is no need to find the queen, the presence of eggs will suffice.

If the brood nest is hemmed in by stores (sealed honey or pollen) then remove a frame on one side of the brood nest and replace with drawn comb or foundation.

Now is the time to remove mouse guards and any protection against woodpeckers.

### **Equipment**

Beekeeping is set to become more hectic next month so use March to prepare supers and the equipment you will need for your preferred method of swarm control.

**BeeTradex.** If you are after new equipment then nearly all the major equipment providers will be at Stoneleigh for BeeTradex on Saturday 12th March



### ***Important Beekeepers***

Continuing the series of historically important beekeepers, brings us to Brenda V Ball. Brenda Ball worked alongside Leslie Bailey in the Bee Department at Rothamsted Experimental Station and with him co-authored Honey Bee pathology when it was revised in 1991.

With the arrival of Varroa in the UK in 1992, Brenda Ball devoted her research to the relationship between Varroa and various viruses and other pathogens. She is credited with numerous research papers on the topic working with researchers around the world including Norman Carreck and Professor Stephen Martin. Much of what is known about the links between Varroa and Deformed Wing Virus stems from Ms Ball's research.

She is a Past President of The Central Association of Beekeepers (CABK), which aims to bridge the gap between the beekeeper and the scientist. Her pamphlet "Varroa Jacobensii: Host Parasite-Pathogen Interaction" was published by CABK in 1995.

### ***National Bee Unit - Bee Inspectors covering Wiltshire 2022***

**Regional Bee Inspector.** The new RBI for the Central Region is John Geden. John founded Sinah Warren Honey on Hayling Island in 1991. (john.geden@apha.gov.uk Mobile: 07501275259)

**Seasonal Bee Inspector.** Avril Earl continues as our SBI. (avril.earl@apha.gov.uk Mobile: 07824 529422)