



Wiltshire BKA

Honey Bee Times

In this Issue

- A Small Success in Somerset
- Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day - Part 7
- More Competitions
- Dates for the Diary
- Beekeeping Tips for September
- Repelling Wasps
- Education, Examinations and Assessments

A Small Success in Somerset



Following Wiltshire's resounding defeat at the Bath & West Show earlier this year, Sue and I decided that Somerset could not be allowed to get away with taking back the County Shield. So we set about entering their own show; The Somerset County Honey Show held in Taunton. I entered 13 classes and Sue entered a further 5 classes spread across the schedule.

To our surprise, we were 'over the moon' to have racked up 15 place cards.

We spent 2 days meeting and chatting to friends new and old at the Bees and Honey Section in the Floral Marquee at the Taunton Flower Show. They were all so friendly and welcoming and looked after us with tea, coffee and cake.

Our biggest surprise was yet to come; winning trophies for the most points in the honey section, the best cake of wax, the best mead and Sue had the most points in the baking. Sue even took their Blue Ribbon.

Thank you Somerset for a great 2 days and Andy and team for a well organised friendly show. We'll be back!!

Anyone can achieve success, just follow us and learn the tricks of the trade that I revealed in my presentation, 'Preparing to Show'.

Chris and Sue Rawlings (President Wilts BKA, West Wilts BKA)

Editor's comment: We may expect a counter attack from Somerset members at our own Bee and Honey Day on 8th October. All the more reason for Wiltshire BKA members to enter the Honey show and claim the prizes - see below

Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day – part 7

Another in our series of articles about the Wiltshire Bee and Honey Day - this one is designed to entice you to enter into the Honey Show element of the day.

As well as first, second and third prize awards in each class, there are plenty of trophies up for grabs. A list of them all, together with what they are awarded for, is below:

The King Shield	for the best jar of honey
Kennet Perpetual Trophy	for best entry in show (not honey)
The Norman Lovegrove Memorial Trophy	for best bottle of mead/melomel
The Methuen Cup	to the individual with the most points in all classes
The Novice Cup	for the best novice entry
The Applegate Trophy	to the branch with the most points
The Teal Cup	awarded to a branch/individual by the chair for service or achievement.

For 2022 we have a brand new trophy carved out of wood, which has been commissioned by a local artist:

The Geraldine Lenert Trophy, which will be awarded for the best wax product exhibited at the show. Geraldine was a stalwart of the Wiltshire bee community and a key member in both her own West Wilts branch and at the Wiltshire Bee & Honey Show. She taught many beekeepers over the years and inspired us all with her show exhibits, especially at the Bath & West and County shows, usually clanking home with several cups. She was well known for her beautiful wax flowers, so when it came to honouring her for her contribution to beekeeping, awarding a trophy in her name for the best wax entry was obvious.

(Photo shows a delighted Geraldine receiving the Blue Ribbon for her wax flowers, the best entry in show last year.)



In previous years, one of the classes that has been quite low on entries is **honey frames for extraction**. There is a trophy: **The David Wicks Cup** which is awarded for the best honey frame for extraction.

If you'd like to have a go at winning an actual trophy at the show, it might be a good idea to enter an exhibit into this category. Some hints and tips are below:

1. Combs should have been drawn on new, wired foundation, preferably fitted in a new frame.
2. The frame chosen to exhibit should be evenly drawn and well capped; it should be heavy for its size.
3. The honey should all be of one colour, with no sign of granulation and there should be no cells containing pollen or other debris.
4. The cappings should be clean and even, without dips and hollows, and clear of the woodwork so that uncapping would be an easy process.
5. Travel staining and weeping will penalise the exhibit and the presence of wax moth larvae will result in disqualification!
6. When the frame has been chosen it must be scraped clean of all dirt, propolis, etc. (do not forget the underside of the lugs) before being placed in the showcase.
7. The showcase should be glazed on both sides. The case should be bee-tight and the correct size for the frame; it should be easily opened allowing the judge to remove the frame for inspection.



We need you!

We are still looking for volunteers to help out on the day. Jobs are split into separate areas and hourly slots so that the more people who get involved, the less there is for everyone to do. Even if it is only for an hour or so that someone can have a lunch break, we need everyone to do their bit to help. The following is a list of the areas we need volunteers for:

- Tea and coffee
- Children's corner
- Candle rolling
- Wiltshire Beekeepers Association stand and Hive Experience
- Honey sales
- Honey Beer sales
- Handing out balloons

If you'd like to put your name down for a one hour slot, or even longer, please email Sophie Butcher (wiltshoneyday@gmail.com) so that we can start getting organised.

More Competitions

Bee Bold Awards (Entries close 9th September)

West of England Metro Mayor, Dan Norris, has launched the region's first Bee Bold Awards to recognise organisations big and small that are taking positive action to support bees and pollinators.

All businesses, charities, or community organisations currently operating within the region. Applications are welcomed from all sizes of organisations.

There are two awards:

- Space for Nature award: that recognises organisations that use their land, buildings or influence to actively create pollinator-friendly places.
- People for Nature award: that recognises organisations that engage their employees, customers, communities and partners to actively create pollinator-friendly places.

The awards are open until 9th September and if you know anyone or any organisation that would benefit, please go to <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/bee-and-pollinator-capital/bee-bold-awards/>.

National Honey Show - Special Entry Classes for Younger Beekeepers 2022

The National Honey Show takes place from 27th to 29th October at Sandown Race Course, Esher, Surrey KT10 9RT. There are 12 classes for young people either as individuals or part of school or youth groups including poems, photographs, artwork, jars of honey or an essay about honey bees. Entries close on 10th October. Details are on the National Honey Show website: www.honeyshow.co.uk.

Dates for the Diary - County and Branch

3rd September - WBKA Honey Bee Health Day, Market Lavington Community Hall, SN10 4DG

All you need to know about honey bee diseases, pests and pathogens.

For further information and to register go to: <https://bit.ly/beehealthwiltshire>.

8th October 2022 - WBKA Bee and Honey Day, The Corn Exchange, Market Square, Devizes
A day for beekeepers and the general public with something for everyone. Two talks by Bob Smith NDB. A talk by Richard Rickitt for those thinking of keeping bees. A bee experience area and lots of stalls. All members are encouraged to enter the County Honey Show even if you enter only one class you stand an excellent chance of winning a prize.

The day is sponsored by Eden Renewables. Dr Guy Parker, a research scientist who oversees the company's ecological implementation will give a talk on "The Future of Bumblebees in the British Countryside".

Visit: <https://www.wiltshirebeekeepers.co.uk/events/wiltshire-bee-honey-day/> for full details of the day including the Honey Show schedule.

Branch Events

Kennet BKA

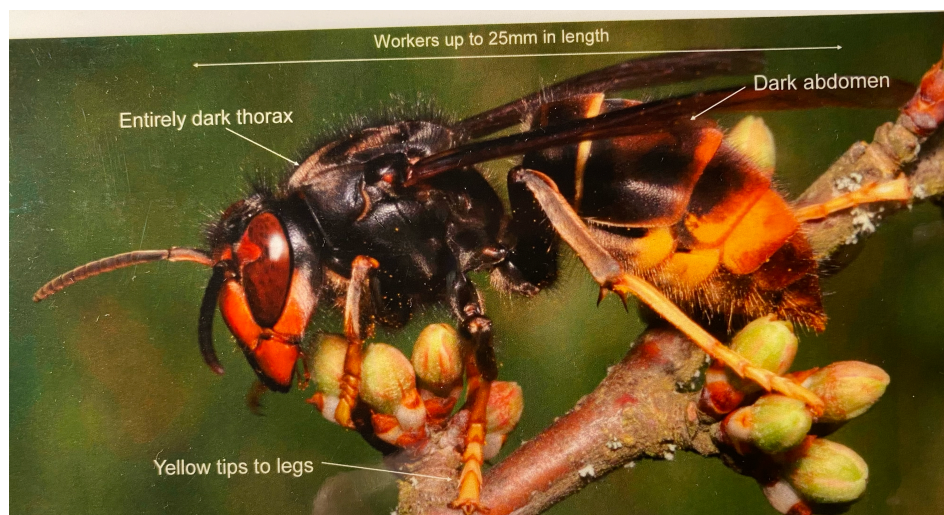
Wednesday 7th September - KBKA Honey Show and Film. Bishops Cannings Village Hall

Wednesday 5th October - KBKA AGM. Bishops Cannings Village Hall

Wednesday 2nd November - Bee viruses and *Wolbachia*. A talk by Dr Kirsty Stainton, a research scientist working on honey bee viruses at the Pirbright Institute. Usual venue.

Melksham BKA**Monday 26th September - MBKA Honey Show.** Broughton Gifford Village Hall.**Swindon & District BKA****Thursday 29th September - SDBKA Honey Show.** Haydon Wick Club.**West Wilts BKA****Saturday 10th September - WWBKA Honey Show.** Bratton Jubilee Hall.**National Events****27th -29th October - National Honey Show.** Sandown Race Course, Esher, Surrey. Honey Show classes for all ages (see earlier article for Junior and school/youth group classes). There is also a full lecture programme with international speakers and a wide range of workshops.***Beekeeping Tips for September***

Asian Hornet. There has been a positive sighting of an Asian Hornet in Essex. It was dead but Bee Inspectors are conducting a thorough surveillance of the area to check for a nest. Asian Hornet Week runs from 5-11 September.



Wasps. The strange weather pattern this year seems to have favoured wasps and many beekeepers across the country, yet alone the county, have reported heavy attacks against even their strongest colonies. Strong, healthy colonies with a young queen combined with entrances being reduce to one or two bee spaces is usually sufficient deterrent. In the article below Colin Thomlinson (KBKA) describes two methods he has adopted this year and there is also a suggestion for helping smaller colonies in nucs keep the enemy at bay.

Winter Stores

I mentioned this last month but it is worth a repeat as the very dry weather means that in some areas nectar has been in short supply whereas pollen has been bountiful, so much so that it may have taken up valuable storage space needed for winter honey stores.

Assuming you have harvested the honey, find a moment to go through your hives to assess the stores available. An averaged sized colony will need 16 kg (35lb) to see it through the winter months. A full deep standard national frame holds about 5lb, a super 2lb. Take into account the odd sections in the corners of the frames. Calculate the balance required to meet each colony's needs and make this up by feeding syrup (2:1, 1kg white granulated sugar to 625ml water or 2lb sugar in one pint water). 8lb sugar gives the equivalent of 10lbs honey.

Some beekeepers find this too much of a faff and prefer to purchase inverted syrup that requires no processing and the bees take on board faster. Others feed fondant from the outset in which case make sure it is accessible to the bees especially when the temperature drops and the bees cluster.



Plan Winter Tasks and Training

Now that there is little to do in the apiary find a moment to plan those autumn tasks in particular the cleaning, sterilising and safe storage of equipment. The cost of frames rises annually so perhaps invest in a 30l water boiler, which can be found second hand online if you're lucky. A full tank with 5kg of soda crystals in near boiling water will leave you with clean frames within minutes. A quick wash in clean water, allow to dry and you will have saved yourself pounds.

Repelling Wasps

Last year I lost two hives through wasp attacks, this was after closing the entrance down to twenty millimetres. Therefore this year I made some changes to the management of my hives. One hive I converted to an Upstairs Downstairs configuration and my second hive I fitted with a HiveGate. Other methods are available. The bees in both hives seem to be able to defend the entrances better this year, the pictures show how the bees dealt with a wasp attempting to gain access to the Upstairs Downstairs hive.

I hope the pictures and descriptions, while not totally explained, are detailed enough to have a basic understanding of the system.

You will see on the upstairs downstairs hive I have blocked two of the entrances, or Intrances as the manufacturer prefers to call them, to give the bees less access points to defend.

The HiveGate extends into the hive as a tunnel and emerges under the brood. The guard bees have about 8 inches in which to defend the hive.

The upstairs downstairs system has baffles behind the circular holes. Therefore, to enter the hive the bees need to go down, they learn very quickly. If the wasps get in they go up and can't get into the hive giving the guard bees more time to deal with them. The configuration of the hive is: a solid floor, a super, a brood box with three circular holes, a queen excluder, a super with one circular hole giving the bees direct access to the honey stores, a crown board and roof.

Cons: more work to inspect the hive.

Pros: the bees maintain a warmer hive which Varroa can't thrive in.

The bees keep the floor clean. I have been using this system for four months and the floor is totally clear of any debris. Colin Thomlinson (KBKA)

(Editor's Note: Bee Watch is exhibiting again at the Wiltshire Bee & Honey Day on 8th October so people can find out more about Intrances there.)



For a Nuc. A short piece of hosepipe helps the guard bees defend the colony



Education, Examinations & Assessments

Assessment Results 2022

Congratulations to the following members who have taken assessments during the summer months:

General Husbandry

Rachael Banyard (KBKA)	Pass
------------------------	------

Honey Bee Health Certificate

Tom Kenyon (WWBKA)	Pass
--------------------	------

Donald Watt (WWBKA)	Pass
---------------------	------

Ruth Watt (WWBKA)	Pass
-------------------	------

A big thank you to Christine Coulsting (Hampshire BKA) and Jenny Morgan (Reading BKA) for conducting these assessments.

Basic Certificate

Trudi Granger (KBKA)	Distinction
----------------------	-------------

Gloria Pilz (WWBKA)	Distinction
---------------------	-------------

Cressida Hemmings (WWBKA)	Credit
---------------------------	--------

Gerren Mayne (WWBKA)	Credit
----------------------	--------

Barry Roberts (SDBKA)	Credit
-----------------------	--------

Peter Stanley (KBKA)	Credit
----------------------	--------

Colin Thomlinson (KBKA)	Credit
-------------------------	--------

Andrea Waylen (KBKA)	Credit
----------------------	--------

Claire Ashley (KBKA)	Pass
----------------------	------

Stephen Double (KBKA)	Pass
-----------------------	------

Becky Dymond (KBKA)	Pass
---------------------	------

Richard Hunt (WWBKA)	Pass
----------------------	------

Peter West (MBKA)	Pass
-------------------	------

A big thank you to Chris Rawlings (WWBKA) and Richard Rickitt (MBKA) for conducting the assessments for the Kennet candidates.

Module Exams**Policy**

The BBKA's Education Committee has recently announced that it plans to move to an 'Online Only' method of taking module exams. This will come into effect in 2025. It will be possible to sit handwritten exams this November within the county. In 2023 there will be three venues spread across the country where handwritten exams can be taken. In 2024 this will reduce to one (Stoneleigh).

November Exams

Any member wishing to sit a Module exam on 12th November needs to register before 29th September. Contact Richard Oliver (raoliver.64@gmail.com) for an Application Form.

March 2022

I plan to facilitate a course for Module 5: Honey Bee Biology starting in the last week of November. All members welcome even if you have no desire to sit the exam. Most sessions, perhaps all, will be via Zoom. If you are interested please let me know (raoliver.64@gmail.com)

Improvers Course

There is a big gap between the Basic and the General Husbandry assessments. There are also very few opportunities either within the county or nationally for beekeepers to improve their knowledge and practical skills.

The plan is to run a mainly practical course of four or five sessions to enable members from across the county to become better beekeepers. The course will also help prepare for the Bee Health and the General Husbandry Certificates. Priority will be given to those who have the Basic Certificate.

Dates to be confirmed but provisionally between late March and the end of May 2023.

If you are interested please let me know: raoliver.64@gmail.com.