

BOURNEMOUTH & DORSET SOUTH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Newsletter

September 2021

HONEY SHOW – now 30th October

Hopefully as you are reading this you will start to receive your honey show schedules.

We are looking forward to having a more relaxed atmosphere this year and enjoying being able to meet up again.

Can I encourage you all to enter something, especially class 11 with the NEW Margaret Davis Cup.

If you are new to the association and haven't got any honey yet there are many different class like cooking, art work or interesting pieces to get involved in.

If like me you are having a "terrible year," (will say no more) I want to remind you that you can enter honey from any year, so not all is lost.

Volunteers...

The Honey show can't be without it's volunteers and this year is no different. We need people to bake scones/cakes for us to enjoy. We also need a couple of people to help serve tea and coffee. If you would be happy to make a something or help out then please do let me know.

Looking forward to receiving your entries and seeing you all soon.

Please Note: Through much consideration, it has been decided that as we are coming out of Covid restrictions, that this year the Show will be a closed event opening only to BADS members and not to the general public although members wanting to attend with a family member or friend would be welcome. For this reason, we are staging it at West Parley Memorial Hall, a hall we are all very familiar with and know the layout well.

Fred Sedgeley – Honey Show Secretary

.Association Diary Dates

West Parley Memorial Hall

2021

Tuesday 21.09.2021 (evening) - September meeting

Tuesday 19.10.2021 (evening) - October meeting

Saturday 30.10.2021 (daytime) – Honey Show

Tuesday 16.11.2021 (evening) - November meeting

Tuesday 14.12.2021 (evening) - December Christmas meeting

2022

Tuesday 18.01.2022 (evening) - January AGM

Tuesday 15.02.2022 (evening) – February meeting

Tuesday 15.03.2022 (evening) - March meeting

Tuesday 19.04.2022 (evening) - April meeting

Evening meetings from 7:00pm to 10pm

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need any additional information. For arranging speakers I am being helped by Ed Gentle.

Natalie Sewell, Treasurer

07786 998614 treasurer@bads-bka.org

21st September Meeting

Speaker

Brian Durk..."My Work in Africa"...

Return please...

Please bring any **books** that you have borrowed from the Association to the meeting. Because of Covid you may have forgotten that you have borrowed them!

Also, please bring back any **cups or shields** that you received as prizes during our last Honey Show (2019) so they are ready for the **October Show**

The Hive at Kew Gardens



There has been a formal bee garden and working hives at Kew since 1992. A further development on the bee theme followed with the creation of “The Hive”. Designed by Wolfgang Buttress, a UK based artist, The Hive is a visual tribute to Britain’s honeybees. Originally created for the UK Pavilion at the 2015 Milan Expo, it was subsequently moved to Kew.

The Hive is 17 metres tall with a honeycomb structure made of aluminium and set in a floral meadow. The LED lighting makes the Hive glow according to the vibration of the bees in the Gardens.

You can gain the full experience by walking into the middle of the Hive. At the time of writing, the Hive is open and no separate ticketing required. You have to book your entry to Kew in advance. Open 7 days a week 8 till 5...

<https://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/visit-kew-gardens/tickets>

Adrian Rozkovec

Bumblebee calls 2021

This year, to help the swarm collectors, I offered to take all the bumblebee calls that came in. Historically, bumblebee calls make up one third of all swarm calls that BADS receives.

Clare Tilly, our swarm coordinator, passed on these calls and I contacted all the callers. Some, having listened to what the bumbles were doing and the fact that the nest would die out naturally at the end of the summer, were content to let the bees run their natural course. Some insisted that the nest be removed. It was heartening that no one ‘wanted to harm the bees’.

Collecting a swarm of honey bees can be interesting, but the bees are quite happy to be boxed up and rehomed. Bumblebees are not happy to be rehomed, and do not wish to be disturbed.... and they can let you know it. However, as with honey bees, the secret is to get the queen. I have made bumblebee collection boxes with ventilation and closable entrances, so in theory you expose the nest, loosen the ground underneath it and carefully, with both hands, suitably gloved, put your hands under the nest and lift it, in its entirety, into the box. Great in theory and it usually works. But, sometimes it doesn’t, because a bumble nest is not a thing of great and ordered beauty but a loose collection of jumbled wax cells. You can gather in what appears to be the whole nest only to miss a dozen cups that are out of the way and where the queen may be located. Without the queen present, the swarm will not fly into the box, its new home, and you then have to dig very carefully to find these missed cells.

Also, the nest can be feet away underground from where the bees are entering and careful digging is the only way to trace back to the nest. Sometimes the bees are not particularly bothered, but on other times they take great exception to this intrusion and ping you relentlessly. Bumblebees can sting as many times as they like, since they have a smooth, not a barbed sting. The sting is just as painful as a honey bee sting. At one site in Corfe Mullen, Alison and I surrendered, and left the colony for an hour to settle down and for the pain of the stings to go away, but in the end we rescued the colony and took it away to finish its life cycle elsewhere. The house owner, an older lady, had never been stung before but on being stung by the bees in her garden suffered anaphylactic shock and

ended up in A&E. She still didn't want the bees to be harmed. 'It's not their fault' she said and gave us £30.00 which we passed onto the treasurer. We did make two extra visits there, one to collect stragglers and late returnees and the other to reinstate the garden, part of which looked a section of the Somme.

Dealing with bumbles is an interesting and worthwhile pursuit. Sometimes difficult, but always rewarding, and giving the opportunity to explain to people how important all bees are as pollinators and an essential part of our food network

Below is an analysis of the calls received this year.

59 Total Calls (14 Apis mellifera, 43 Bumble bees)

Bumblebee Nest Locations ...

40% Under sheds/decking
26% Wall (pipes, vents/soffits)
9% Nesting boxes
9% Hedge (bottom/gardens)
7% Paths
5% Compost heap
1% Tree roots
1% Bins

As can be seen, man-made habitats are very popular, accounting for the majority of the locations where bumblebees took up residence. So, in our own way, we are providing opportunities for these insects, showing how nature will always exploit the available. The paths were all mining bees.

Peter Darley

90th National Honey Show 21st to 23rd October

Don't forget. Live again this year. Here is the link of you want to apply to go.

[National Honey Show](#)

Previous year's talks available through the site

BBKA Learning Resources

Over the past few years the Education & Husbandry Committee have commissioned many BBKA News Special Issues to help new and experienced beekeepers improve their beekeeping knowledge and

husbandry skills. They are also useful for members revising for exams. These are available for sale on the BBKA web shop but we thought it would be helpful to produce a summary of all the Special Issues: [BBKA Resources](#)

Wannabee Day comments

- Thanks to all for a great day with the bees today. **CM**
- Wannabee Day was fab. Thank you to you and the team for such a fantastic day. Although I have seen beekeepers tending hives on TV that was a very first time for me to actually wear a suit, get so close to a an active hive and hold a frame. So very much appreciated. **SC**
- Thank you and the trainers for a great day on Saturday, it was fantastic. **SC**
- Please thank everyone for their time. A well run happy day. **JF**
- My dad and I had a great time, it was lovely to meet everyone, and the event was extremely well organised. Thank you again for a wonderful day. **CB**

And next year...

Wannabee Day April 9th 2022
Beginners Course 23rd April 2022

Anne Moran – Membership Secretary

Peach, Honey, Pine Nut & Lavender Cake ...



This recipe serves 8 to 10 and is made in a large roasting tin (60 x 40cm) or a large round cake tin. I halved the quantities and made a round 8 inch cake (see picture).

INGREDIENTS

For the top

8 peaches (halved and de-stoned)
110 g caster sugar
90 g honey
3 tbsps fresh or dried lavender
80 g pine nuts, toasted

For the cake

225g caster sugar
375g butter, softened
Grated zest of a lemon
6 eggs
300g plain flour
125g ground almonds
1 ½ tspn baking powder

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 220c/200c fan/Gas7.

Grease and line your baking tin.

Line another baking tray with baking paper, put the peach halves on the tray and sprinkle with the sugar. Bake for about 15 minutes until the peaches are caramelised on top and beginning to soften.

While the peaches are baking, toast the pine nuts in a dry frying pan, taking care not to burn them

Remove the peaches from the oven and reduce the temperature to 180c/160c fan/Gas 4.

For the cake batter, put the sugar, butter and lemon zest in a bowl and using an electric mixer, beat until pale and fluffy. Add the eggs slowly (and a little of the flour to prevent from curdling) and beat well after each addition.

In a separate bowl, add the ground almonds, flour and baking powder and mix thoroughly, then fold into the cream butter mix.

Spoon the batter into the cake tin. Arrange the peaches on top, drizzle with the honey, then sprinkle the lavender and pine nuts on top.

Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until golden and cooked through.

Serve warm or at room temperature.

Anne Moran

Bee Supplies – Mike and Liz Duffin

If you need bee equipment or supplies please be aware that the Duffins, are the local agents for Thornes (EH Thorne Beehives Ltd), a major national Beekeeper supplier. They are very helpful, keep a good stock and you don't have to pay for packaging and postage!

Upper Hurst
Snails Lane
Blashford
Ringwood
BH24 3PG
01425 474552

Please support them!

Hunting Asian Hornets

The numbers were looking alarming, by mid-season over 30 Asian Hornet primary nests had been found on Jersey, significantly more than the previous year.

An invitation to visit Jersey and see the invasion could not be refused, albeit delayed 12 months due to Covid. So with fair winds last Friday week, BADS member Conor Wall generously sailed us on his yacht Toucan to St Helier port.

Emanating from a lock-down beard and unkempt hair we were met by the beaming smile and hearty laugh of Bob Hogge, an enthusiastic member of the Jersey Asian Hornet team who instantly gained our affection. He talked not in terms of desperation, plague and pestilence that incursion of Asian Hornets that some have predicted, but rather joyfully of the species that clearly captivates much of his waking hours.

After a short drive we arrived at the first site, a bramble hedge on the edge of a field. We suited up, not in the 'space suits' that we'd read about, but in a beekeeping suit of similar 3-layer construction to my own. Apparently the 'Asian Hornet suits' are "*murder to work in*", the 3-layer mesh of the bee suit providing adequate protection, yet breathable in the hot sun.

Nevertheless, it was with some trepidation that we approached our first Asian Hornet nest, the erroneous phrase 'killer hornet' going through my mind. Getting really close to the nest was challenging, the nest being on the wrong side of a bank, only accessible by

scrambling on ones hands and knees, severely limiting ones chances of running away should things turn ugly.

The nest itself was about the size of a football, with half a dozen guard hornets crawling over the nest. It was at this point that I was buzzed by an Asian Hornet, a sound in pitch that is as memorable as a WWII merlin engine, and only slightly less in volume. She must have told her sisters because shortly after a few more hornets started to take an interest in me, hovering in perfect static flight. I don't doubt the potential for aggression, she was as interested in me as I was of her.

Asian Hornet nest



The second nest was similarly in a large bramble bush at the edge of a field, but on a steep slope. Sat on his posterior Bob calmly cut away the brambles supporting the nest, whilst Conor literally hoovered up the hornets. Eventually Bob was able to remove the nest, placing it quickly into a box into which CO2 was administered, temporarily 'knocking out' the hornets.

BADS member Conor Wall 'hoovering hornets' prior to the removal of a 'live; Asian Hornet nest



Anaesthetising an Asian Hornet nest

I have never been to a dissection party before, but if you are ever invited to one, I thoroughly recommend you accept, a more fascinating 'party' you are unlikely to attend.

Exercising great care Bob cut open the nest to reveal the beautiful structure of the nest. With Asian Hornets removed, our job was to count capped brood and larvae, which with exposure to oxygen once more, were now wriggling.

Our next job was to count the number of Asian Hornets, separating the larger ones as possible queens. Asian Hornet queens are very difficult to identify, a difference of approximately 0.7mm between wing muscles being a key differentiator. Disappointingly, we failed to find her, but we were told this is not unusual.

Expecting the second nest dissection to be much of the same we started counting larvae and capped brood with confidence and enthusiasm. . . until I thought I saw a hornet leg twitch, surely an illusion of the mind. And then another twitch . . . and another, and another. These hornets, spread out on the dining room table, were waking up !!! If you are ever at a party and things have gone a bit flat, I can thoroughly recommend releasing an Asian Hornet into the room to liven things up. As the party-goers dived for cover Bob, in his calm unflappable and imitable way, said "*it sometimes happens*". I didn't doubt his assertion, but was later told he has been stung more times than he admits to. After a few sorties the hornet eventually took cover above a kitchen unit, "*something for the grand children to deal with tomorrow*", said Bob.



Asian Hornets, thought to be fully anaesthetised...

Unfortunately the CO2 bottle had run out, and although we tried put the hornets into the freezer for 20 minutes or so, it's surprising how quickly they recover. Indeed, we were told that AH can recover from several hours in a freezer, a point I will remember should I ever be allowed to keep Asian hornets in our kitchen.

On our final day we saw a small nest high up in the canopy of a tree, all-but impossible to see unless at a particular angle. And the nest, again in a bramble bush, adjacent to a golf driving range - the risk to life from the consequence of retrieving a misplaced golf ball could not be over-stated. As if to further emphasis the problem, the hornet's flight path was right over a school.

The efficiency with which the Jersey Asian Hornet team locate nests is quite astonishing. If there were an analogy, it is finding a needle in many, many haystacks. Whilst it is testament to their dedication and skills that the team find nests, 100 so far this year, the team know it is unsustainable in Jersey. For us on mainland UK, it is simply not realistic to replicate what the Jersey Asian Hornet action team do.

So are we facing desperation, plaque and pestilence from the invasion of Asian Hornets in 5 or 10 or 15 years' time, and what can we learn from Jersey?

It is unrealistic to think that we won't have further incursions of individual Asian Hornets, and on the balance of evidence so far, it is probable they will become established. But, what we have learnt from the Jersey Asian Hornet is that education is vital – ALL of the reports of Asian Hornets in 2021 have come from members of the public, not beekeepers. In one case a child, having seen a presentation in school, told

his parent, who then reported the incident, ultimately resulting in the location and destruction of a nest.

The Jersey Asian Hornet team have worked 'hand in glove' with Government of Jersey, and this has been crucial in developing what is a highly effective, undramatic, methodology for the removal and destruction of Asian Hornet nests. Rather than an entity held at 'arms length', the Jersey Government see the AH team as a deployable resource and valued partner in the management of Asian Hornet.

The value of the data being gathered, to understand the habitat and nature of the Asian Hornet, is in its infancy, yet I am sure will pay dividend in the years to come.

Not only is the willingness and enthusiasm with which the Jersey Asian Hornet team share their information to be applauded, but it is surely a way that collectively we can learn to manage the inevitable incursion of the Asian Hornet. Whether it be developing better methodologies, or adapting or inventing technologies, or perhaps simply their enthusiasm to act, rather than sitting back and wait for incursion to happen, as has been the case in other countries.

The purpose of our visit to Jersey was to better understand the issues of the Asian Hornet, and to investigate a potential technology. More on that next time.....

Adrian Dwyer

Jersey Asian Hornet Group <https://en-gb.facebook.com/groups/293640477963172/about>

This is YOUR Association Newsletter. Please feel free to share your beekeeping experiences – good or bad – along with photos, honey recipes, hints and tips, anecdotes and links to any interesting articles.

In response to the members, and whilst we could not hold meetings at West Parley, we agreed to provide a 2 monthly Newsletter. We will be reverting to a quarterly Newsletter from 2022 now that we can meet. Thank you very much to all our past, present and future contributors. Please keep coming. We still need as many contributors as possible.

Please email Adrian Rozkovec: newsletter@bads-bka.org

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