

BOURNEMOUTH & DORSET SOUTH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Newsletter

September 2025

Report from the Chair

As I write this report we are only into the second half of August and already the flowers have faded and there is a lack of forage for the bees. The blackberries have long finished and it has been so dry this summer the flowers have struggled to flourish. Your bees could be hungry so please do check they have enough stores as it could be a long winter and feed them 2:1 syrup, especially if you have removed all your supers. Mine are feeding voraciously. Now is also the time to treat your colonies for the varroa mite, if you have not already done so. It is recommended that you do not always use the same treatment year after year but use different ones so that the mites do not develop a resistance.

Over the summer we enjoyed two BADS-BKA social gatherings which were well attended, and the weather was gorgeous for both. Many thanks to Natalie and David for welcoming us to their lovely garden for afternoon tea, with the bees and hens, in June and to David and Helga for hosting our BBQ in their equally delightful garden in August. They were both great events with delicious food and great company and conversations.

This year is the first year I have been selling honey through a shop and thought it would be a good idea to take a Food Hygiene and Safety Level 2 course. It is not compulsory but is recommended. I did an online course run by Smart Horizons for a Home Food Business. I thought it was worth doing to raise my awareness of hygiene issues and keep my working area at catering standard cleanliness for extraction and bottling. I now wear a disposable catering hat for these activities.

Our evening meetings restart in September with the first one being held on **Tuesday 15th September** at St

Mark's Church Hall, West Parley, when we welcome back Dan Basterfield to give us a talk entitled Queen right – Brood right. We hope to be back very soon at St Andrew's Church Hall in Kinson when the flood damage has all been repaired.

As you are bottling your honey please put at least two jars aside for the honey show which will be held this year on **Saturday 15th November** at our usual venue, St Catherine's Hill Community Hall. If you have a particularly good filled super frame the association has acquired two display cases which you can borrow for the Honey Show. There are ample opportunities to display your skills in candle making, cooking, photography and making mead etc. so do please come along and participate in this year's Show. Volunteers are also needed for the event itself. More details to follow.

This association is committed to education and helping beekeepers become more proficient, encouraging good practice and keeping up to date with current beekeeping issues. As part of that aim we shall be running the BBKA Module 2 course Honeybee products and Forage starting early December with a view to sit the exam at the end of March 2026, for those who wish to do so. It will run on Tuesday evenings and will be about 8 sessions.

I look forward to seeing you on Tuesday 15th September

Anne Jablonski

Association Diary Dates 2025

The Evening Meetings will recommence in September at St Marks Church, 250 New Road, West Parley, BH22 8EW unless notified. An alternative larger venue would be preferred. If any members have a suggestions do contact me.

Speakers

Tuesday 16 Sep 25 “Queen right/brood right”
- Dan Basterfield

Friday 17 Oct 25 - Skittles - BADS vs East Dorset BKA
at Hamworthy Sports & Social Club, Magna Road,
Canford Magna, BH21 3AP

Wednesday 22 Oct 25 “The simple sustainable apiary
for the hobby beekeeper”
- Kevin Thorne

Saturday 15 Nov 25 - BADS BKA Honey Show
St Catherine’s Hill Community Hall, Christchurch

Tuesday 18 Nov 25 “Nucs and their uses”
- Celia Rutland

Tuesday 09 Dec 25 - Christmas Plate Supper with a
talk by Joanna Bellis entitled “Bees in Music”

Please also feel free to contact me if you have any
questions or need any additional information.

Thank you.

Lesley Morton

Speakers secretary
speakers@bads-bka.org

Dear Members – Your Contributions please

The next Newsletter will be in December 2025. I don’t
mind what you would like to send in so long as there
is a bee theme...good or bad experiences, some ideas
on how to do things better, anecdotes, interesting
photos, honey based recipes.

Also, I invite you to send me the story of one of your
mistakes! I have made plenty over the years and in
this newsletter. Please contribute and don’t feel

embarrassed. If you want your piece to be anonymous
it will still be acceptable!

Thank you

Adrian Rozkovec newsletter@bads-bka.org

Asian hornets have a unique sound – and that could be the key to controlling their spread

“The frequency and volume of the sound from the
nests of yellow-legged hornets – or Asian hornets –
has been established for the first time by researchers
at the University of Southampton.

It paves the way to faster detection and removal of
the nests of the invasive species, which is
experiencing a surge in numbers this year.

The [National Bee Unit](#) is reporting 73 Asian hornet
sightings and 28 nests in 2025 to date – more than
double the 28 recorded sightings in the same period
last year.

Scientists at Southampton have established the
fundamental frequency of Asian hornet nests to be
125 Hertz (Hz) and the loudness in the region of 51
Decibels (dB), which is comparable to a normal
conversation.

This means that Asian hornet nests, which peak in
numbers during September and October, can be
detected and their sound used to distinguish them
from the nests and hives of other wasps and bees.

The project was led by Paul White, Professor of
Statistical Signal Processing at the University of
Southampton, and project advisor Adrian Dwyer, with
research undertaken by Acoustic Engineering
graduate Sophie Gray.

Sophie said: “We observed and measured two Asian
hornet nests and a European hornet nest in Jersey
before they were destroyed. We found that the
fundamental frequency is 125 Hz, and that the nest
can be detected from about 20 metres away with a
directional microphone.



Researcher Sophie Gray measuring the frequency of a yellow legged hornet nest in Jersey. Credit: University of Southampton

“We also recorded European hornets and honeybees to determine if we can differentiate the frequency. The fundamental frequency of the European hornet is about 110 Hz, and honeybees about 210 Hz. It was great news to discover that the frequency is unique for each species, so they are distinguishable.”

Asian hornets originate from Southeast Asia and pose a threat to native biodiversity in the UK – especially honeybees. So far this year, there have been [37 confirmed sightings](#) of Asian hornets in the UK.

Sophie said: “The main issue with Asian hornets is that they are omnivorous and [feed on a wide range of pollinators](#) to feed protein to their young, especially honeybees. One nest of Asian hornets can destroy an entire beehive in two to three days.”

Asian hornets measure 1-1.5 inches long and are black with an orange stripe on the fourth segment of the abdomen, with legs that look like they have been dipped in yellow paint.

They are not yet established in the UK, and all discovered nests – which can measure up to 80cm in diameter – are destroyed. Last year, 24 nests were destroyed predominantly in the South, and 260 in Jersey where they are prevalent.

“Asian hornet nests can be difficult to find because there is no typical place where they build them,” explained Sophie. “They can be underground, or 50

feet up a tree, or in a bird box, or a bush – they can be anywhere.



Researcher Sophie Gray (centre) with Alistair Christie, Senior Scientific Officer (Invasive Species) for the Government of Jersey, and John De Carteret, member of the voluntary programme to eradicate Asian hornets in Jersey. Sophie is holding a hornet nest that is being removed and destroyed. Credit: University of Southampton

“It typically takes two to three days to find the nest once a sighting of an Asian hornet is reported – and in that time the hornets can have completely killed a beehive of upwards of 20,000 bees.”
In the UK and Europe, Asian hornets are active between April and November, peaking in September and October.

Sophie added: “Asian hornets [first entered Europe](#) in France in 2004, most likely in a shipping container. They spread like wildfire and are now established in France as well as across Southern Europe. They first came to England through Kent in 2016 and in the last two to three years have begun to establish themselves here.”

Sophie is hoping to start a PhD at the University of Southampton in September, building on her research. She said: “The next step is to build a drone that can locate nests and significantly speed up how long it takes to find them.”

If you spot an Asian hornet, you should report it to

the [UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology](#). Information on how to identify Asian hornets is on [The British Beekeepers' Association's website](#)



<https://apigateway.agilitypr.com/distributions/history/918d95b2-2577-42e2-ac55-ca899f19ea14?recipientId=4eab11b9-7e45-477a-9c58-225939febd9c>

Adrian Dwyer

Fermenting Honey...

It is very tempting to extract a maximum of honey from super frames. If any of the honey is not fully capped then shake vigorously and if any nectar falls out, do not extract. If you do extract regardless of the presence of uncapped honey and the water content is too high, then one can use a dehumidifier.

If the frames you have jarred have spun honey with too high a water content, then over time it is likely to ferment. Wild yeast may make the fermented honey unpalatable but often leaves a distinctive but pleasant taste. If the fermentation has not got too far you can gently reheat the jars over a few hours in a saucepan filled with water at high hand temperature at minimum heat setting, thereby evaporating the alcohol and "preserving" the honey. Alternatively to sterilise the honey, use a higher temperature at the expense of some of loss of honey quality.

You can use the honey as the base for a marinade or as part of a dressing, smoothies or savoury dishes. For mead, if you want the unique initial wild fermentation flavour then let the process run. Alternatively, sterilise the honey and add a recommended mead yeast strain to your mix.



Jars before and after warming of fermented honey



Same process can be used for "clearing" partly filtered honey....

Adrian Rozkovec

Update on the Super Lifter...

I finally received the Super Lifter and used on my inspections.

It is a really nice piece of engineering - clearly A LOT of thought has gone into its design. It can be used on any wooden cuboid box, including Nationals, but can't be used on polyhives.

Hives with multiple supers would need latches to hold the supers together, but I don't see that as a particularly big problem.

As an example, I was able to tilt my super back in order to expose the brood box for inspection, using just 1 hand ! (using the optional handles). Although the extra handles are promoted as 'optional', for gently lowering the super, or easy of lifting it initially, I'd say they are well worth having.

And better, when tilting the super back, I was able to do so with care, thus minimising the casualties that I would otherwise have squashed when lifting a heavy super back in place.

The Super Lifter is expensive, but for anyone with back problems, or simply of an age where the weight of a super is a problem, this could be a game-changer.

Adrian Dwyer

Visiting the Turner Contemporary Art Gallery in Margate, I came across this unusual use for (very) old brood frames.....



The Egyptian artist Anna Boghigian often references beekeeping in her work to symbolise 'society and environmental fragility'. This particular work called The Salt Traders consisted of a series of 'easels' holding sequences of brood frames most filled either with works on paper or salt. The installation was inspired by the global history of salt with the use of comb alluding to the hexagonal

pattern in salt's chemical structure. Personally, I'm unsure if many people would naturally make that link between salt and honey but the visitors I saw were really interested in seeing comb up close. (I think the bees' own artistry was more of a hit than the artist's!)

Joanna Bellis

Recipe

Ginger and Honey Snaps

INGREDIENTS

- 225 grams self-raising flour
- 2 teaspoons bicarbonate of soda
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 100 grams caster sugar (plus extra for sprinkling)
- 125 grams butter (cubed)
- 100 grams honey

METHOD

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180C (350F). Grease a large baking tray with vegetable oil.
- 2 Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda, salt and spices into a large bowl, add the 100g sugar and mix well. Add the butter and, using your fingertips, rub it into the flour until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.
- 3 Heat the honey gently in a small saucepan, then pour it into the flour and butter mixture and bring together to form a dough using a wooden spoon.
- 4 Sprinkle the 1 tablespoon of caster sugar over a plate.
- 5 Using floured hands, roll the dough into small balls, then roll in the caster sugar and place on the greased baking tray about 5cm (2 in) apart.
- 6 Flatten down with the back of a damp fork and bake in the oven for 10-12 minutes or until they are medium brown. If the cookies are too dark, they will taste bitter. Leave on the baking tray for 2 minutes before carefully transferring to a wire rack to cool.