

# BEEMASTER

**Nottinghamshire  
Beekeepers' Association**  
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<http://www.nottsbees.org.uk>

President: David Chambers [sandraanddavid@greenbee.net](mailto:sandraanddavid@greenbee.net)  
Chairman: Andrew Barber [andrewbarber891@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:andrewbarber891@hotmail.co.uk) 01636 671844/07867 797812  
Honorary Secretary: Griff Dixon [griff@norwellapiary.co.uk](mailto:griff@norwellapiary.co.uk) 07500 876836/01636 636565  
Treasurer: Chris Hutter [chris.hutter@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chris.hutter@hotmail.co.uk) 0115 983 0038  
Membership Secretary: Karen Gladman [kabee21@gmail.com](mailto:kabee21@gmail.com) 01909 480 581  
Education Secretary: Janet Bates MB [janet.bates@ntlworld.com](mailto:janet.bates@ntlworld.com) 01623 794687  
Show Secretary: Alison Knox [alisonnbka@btinternet.com](mailto:alisonnbka@btinternet.com) 0115 9856878/07768 153526  
Newsletter Editor: Penny Forsyth [pennyforsyth16@gmail.com](mailto:pennyforsyth16@gmail.com) 01777 248842/07803939372  
Archivist: Stuart Ching [jsching37@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jsching37@yahoo.co.uk) 0115 952 1859  
Librarian: Karen Burrow [kburrow3@gmail.com](mailto:kburrow3@gmail.com)  
Farm Liaison: David Chambers [sandraanddavid@greenbee.net](mailto:sandraanddavid@greenbee.net)  
Media and Publicity Contact: Alison Knox [alisonnbka@btinternet.com](mailto:alisonnbka@btinternet.com) 0115 985 6878/07768 153526  
Regions: Newark Chair, Andrew Barber [andrewbarber891@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:andrewbarber891@hotmail.co.uk)  
Nottingham Chair (acting), Alec Thomson MB [alec.thomson3@ntlworld.com](mailto:alec.thomson3@ntlworld.com)  
Regional Bee Inspector: Dhonn Atkinson [dhonn.atkinson@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dhonn.atkinson@apha.gsi.gov.uk) 07775 119437  
Seasonal Bee Inspectors: Tim Roper [timothy.roper@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:timothy.roper@apha.gsi.gov.uk) 07775 119441  
Nick Mitchell [nick.mitchell@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:nick.mitchell@apha.gsi.gov.uk) 07796 548575  
Adrian Wilford [adrian.wilford@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.wilford@apha.gsi.gov.uk) 07775 119444

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The Editor would like to thank the following members for their contributions:

Andrew Barber Karen Burrow Stuart Ching Griff Dixon Bob Logan Anne & Rob Mason Alan Moulton  
Other BKAs through the Bee Editors Exchange scheme  
Newsletter Archive [jsching37@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jsching37@yahoo.co.uk)

## DIARY DATES

Saturday 11 May **Nottinghamshire County Show**, County Showground, Winthorpe, **Newark**  
Sunday 12 May **NG24 2NY**  
Monday 13 May **Nottingham Region**, Arnold Hill Community Centre, **Arnold NG65 6NZ**  
7.30 pm **Queen Rearing: Keith Cosgrove**  
Sunday 19 May **World Bee Day**: Canalside Heritage Centre, **Beeston NG9 1LZ**  
Monday 20 May **Newark Region**, Ferry Inn, **North Muskham NG23 6HB 8pm**  
Saturday 25 May Copy date for **June** newsletter  
Monday 3 June **Nottingham Region**, Arnold Hill Community Centre, **Arnold NG5 6NZ 7.30pm**  
**'Food Hygiene- a legal view'**: Rachel Harby, EH Officer, Gedling Borough Council

[www.nbkaeducation.weebly.com](http://www.nbkaeducation.weebly.com)

## Training sessions at the Apiaries at SOUTHWELL and WOODTHORPE - 2019

All sessions start at 2pm

May	18 May	25 May	1 June	8 June
15 June	22 June	29 June	6 July	13 July
20 July	27 July			

Apiary training sessions are held at Brackenhurst College, Southwell and at Woodthorpe Park in Nottingham.

The Brackenhurst apiary is open to association members and non-members to visit on all of the dates above. Parking is at the College campus – you can then walk down to the apiary which is on the opposite side of the road. If you need any further information please contact Maurice Jordan - 01636 821 613 mauricejordan11@btinternet.com

The Woodthorpe apiary is open to members for all the dates shown, but non-members are only able to attend on **dates in red**. The contact for Woodthorpe is Bob Logan - 0115 952 0945 bob.logan@ntlworld.com

If you have a bee suit please bring it, otherwise please bring wellingtons and gloves – washing-up gloves will be fine. The apiary managers/demonstrators have the right to turn away those who, in their opinion, are not correctly attired.

### From the editor

May is here, the merry month of balmy, blossomy days with colonies building up and supers filled with early honey! In an ideal world, perhaps, but after the record-breaking heat of Easter came the relentless northerly weather systems we seem to have been plagued with in recent years and this Bank Holiday weekend is set to be the coldest on record for 40 years. The rape fields are now greening up as the blossoms fall and the hawthorn is taking its time to flower, held back no doubt by the cold winds, leaving our bees reliant on their stores- which may be lower than we expect given that cold weather inhibits the production of nectar and we've had several long cold spells this spring. Never mind, our bees will make the best of it if we let them. In this issue Griff gets to grips with the new BBKA membership and reporting system eReturn2 (eR2); Anne and Rob Mason give us the buzz from Beeston and Chilwell and invite us to go wild in Langer; Andrew reports on the Newark auction; Alan has an adventure in New Zealand. Also, dealing with Rape honey; swarms; teatime treats and breakfast delight; reporting winter losses; World Bee Day; Invasive Species Week and AHAT news. Don't forget your regular beekeeping magazines: BBKA news has some particularly fascinating articles this month. Kettle on?

## Hon. Sec. Report & Notes from Norwell May 2019

Griff Dixon

It's been all go in April with lots of frame building and new supers being added at a fast rate as the warm weather – as compared to last year's Beast from the East – has brought the colonies to life and queens have been laying at a furious rate where space allows. A couple of my single broods were not so good – one appeared queenless and only a smattering of bees while another was limited to 4 frames as the other 8 were still full of stores from last year. I quickly dispatched this to a nuc and put some mores bees in it from another hive which was bursting! They seem to be doing fine now. Honey to be extracted shortly followed by the OSR supers which will be ready to take off next week.

I have not completed all the full inspections yet as I was looking for nectar build up in the supers and any that did not appear to be performing yet or had not taken any of the 1:1 put on in early April meant I delved a bit deeper to find out why.

Most of my one and a halves are onto second supers and performing well. Those that I have inspected still have 2018 queens and sheets of brood. Although one appeared to have back to back drone brood cells and I thought I had a drone-layer but the rest of the frames had normal brood. I think that frame had larger cells from last year as it had been re used after extraction and that's how they rebuilt it.

Norwell Apiary has now been set up with the 16 Colonies, 15 empty nuc boxes, 11 empty mating boxes and four swarm or bait hives all in anticipation of doubling the apiary size over the rest of the season. Additional Nationals are waiting to be built to take the new colonies as they grow. My one WBC in a back garden in Caunton is doing very well and I have two hives to establish at Cromwell Lock during May for the Canal and Rivers Trust. This year I will definitely undertake Queen Rearing myself as well as bringing in new mated Queens from other sources.

As Hon Sec I attended the Spring Convention. The purpose was to find out more about the eR2 system and how it could best benefit our Association. The sessions I took part in were the BDI AGM, An update on the Revive Project (Bees uncapping brood to find varroa and recapping) – anyone know of any untreated colonies over the past 10 years they would love to take a look at! A one hour session on the eR2 system followed by one-to-one hands-on introduction – I have now seen where we are with the NBKA data entry. There is still much work to do and also to decide how we use the additional 15 custom columns.

NBKA have done a manual Spring Capitation which will be followed by a manual BDI payment as we are just not there for BDI to do their invoice via eR2– I agreed that they would do a manual one and we would look to get our system right up to date for the Autumn Capitation. There is still a lot to do and understand. NBKA did not take advantage of the eR1 system (predecessor to eR2) as one of the 20 Associations which refused to use it and therefore we have been put in a situation where we couldn't migrate it across to the new one.

I am now an "approver" on the eR2 system and can do many of the tasks on line that previously would require emails, phone calls and paperwork. We can email from eR2 to all the paid up members a variety of information that is all data protection verified. The list of NBKA swarm collectors has now been updated through eR2. Anyone missing let me know.

BBKA are looking into a standard membership application form which has data protection and covers the key items. The intention is to simplify the membership entry with direct payments through the system probably using Paypal, which a lot of associations use.

I had some discussion with both BBKA and BDI about costs and not only do we pay BBKA £19 per head but also £2 for the basic insurance cover, making only £4 to run the association from our £25 membership fee. I also discussed Gift Aid as NBKA have decided not to pursue this potential income stream. It seems we are in the minority as other Associations cannot survive without it and were horrified to learn we have dropped it as a method of income. It's a tick box in eR2!

We have the annual NBKA stand at the Nottinghamshire Show (Newark Show) 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> May 2019 with the usual honey tasting, large Observation Hive and wax rolling. The stand attracts a lot of curious future beekeepers and they will be given the chance to be put onto a list for future courses or awareness days. We have a larger stand this year (9m instead of 6m) so we can add audio visual and any other relevant marketing tools.

The next Council Meeting is on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 7:30pm Brackenhurst Pippin Cottage  
Griff Dixon Hon Sec NBKA

07500 876836

01636 636565

### **This month in your apiary: May**

**Penny Forsyth**

May is usually a delightful month for beekeeping with orchards, hedgerows and gardens in full bloom. In those areas where there is a spring flow the honey will be ripening in the supers and our hives will be full of bees- it's swarming time! The very thought often fills the novice beekeeper with dread but there's no need, swarming is what honey bees do and we need to understand why they do it and how to handle it.

#### **Why bees swarm**

It's the honey bee colony's natural way of replication and without this process honey bees would have died out many years ago. The queen produces queen substance, or pheromones, from her mandibular glands and all worker bees need to receive a minimum level. This communicates to the bees that they are 'queen-right' and it is a stimulus for foraging and other activities within the hive. If the colony is overcrowded, then not only may the queen not have sufficient space to lay, but her pheromones may not reach all the bees in the required quantities- leading to swarming preparations. There will be drones present, or at least drone brood, and the bees will begin to build little acorn-shaped queen cups (play cups) around the edges of the comb. Keep an eye on those queen cups- when they have a rim of new white wax you can be sure that preparations for swarming are afoot.

#### **So what can you do about it?**

We can manage the impulse to swarm by keeping young queens- it is thought that a young queen will produce larger amounts of queen substance than an older queen.

We can ensure that the bees have enough room by supering early. Nectar takes up a lot more space than honey because the bees spread it out to evaporate the water and ripen it so add another super when the last one is full of bees, not honey.

Make sure that the colony has plenty of ventilation as this ensures that the queen substance can be distributed easily: it also helps in the ripening of nectar.

Repeatedly destroying queen cells will demoralise the bees and will not delay the swarming process for long once the colony has started making preparations- the bees are very good at hiding a cell or two!

Work with your bees to your mutual advantage- practise swarm control by performing an artificial swarm or making up a nuc or two. Read up on it or ask for help.

#### **Tasks for May**

~ If you have not already done an artificial swarm, continue 7-day inspections for occupied queen cells and take swarm control measures immediately if necessary

~ add supers ahead of the bees' requirements ie when a super is full of bees, not full of honey

~ remove 'ripe' oilseed rape honey: give super frames with unsealed honey cells a firm shake and if nectar flies out, leave it a little longer- it will ferment if the water content is too high

~ order your nucleus if this is how you want to start your beekeeping

~ book the loan of a honey extractor from NBKA or arrange with a fellow beekeeper to use or borrow theirs

~ maintain vigilance for Asian Hornets- check traps regularly and release non-target insects (they will not drown if you put a piece of foam or crumpled kitchen roll in the bait reservoir)

### **Nottingham Region meeting report Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019**

**Karen Burrow**

Alec Thomson gave a talk on Shook Swarm and Bailey Comb Change.

He covered the reasons for comb change including:

~ disease

~ damaged and holed comb

~ darkened comb

~ excess of drone cells

~ Varroa control

~ reduced cell size

Alec demo'd each of the methods and covered some of the pros and cons of each, and the importance of marking the queen!

Laminated sheets covering the Bailey Comb and Shook Swarm Change are available from the BBKA website - <https://www.bbka.org.uk/shop/bailey-comb-change-laminated-sheet> and <https://www.bbka.org.uk/shop/shook-swarm-laminated-sheet>

There are other useful resources on the internet including a couple of documents from the National Bee Unit -

Replacing old brood comb - <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/downloadDocument.cfm?id=1074>

Shook swarm - <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/downloadDocument.cfm?id=1075>

### **Beeston and Chilwell Bee Club**

Easter has been an exciting time for our beekeepers- Easter eggs and Easter swarms! After the cooler weather of late the bees have obviously been busy and, once the warm sunshine returned, some of our colonies decided it was time to go, with Easter Saturday being particularly busy! Tim, our Asian Hornet Action Team member, even had a call-out to see an 'Asian Hornet', which turned out to be an enormous queen European Hornet!

On Thursday, 25 April, our second meeting this year of the Beeston and Chilwell Bee Club took place and we had plenty to talk about! From Asian Hornet trap making (see the latest edition of Beecraft) to seeing the real thing encased in an acrylic block (£5 from Thorne's).

Bob reported back from the BBKA Spring Convention and two talks about varroa that he had attended. Dr. Samuel Ramsey fed back the findings he made whilst doing his PhD which provided definitive evidence that varroa mites feed on honey bee fat bodies, which provides a potential future target for novel approaches to manage varroa. The research was published in PNAS January 2019 and is available as a pdf download

<https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/116/5/1792.full.pdf>

A second varroa presentation by Prof. Steve Martin covered his recent findings on the hygienic behaviour of honey bee colonies from different countries in their response to varroa infestation. We then talked about the importance of reducing the threat of varroa and the viruses associated with them in our own colonies- the recent talk by Alec Thomson at the last Nottingham Region meeting about Shook Swarm and Bailey Comb manoeuvres was very timely. Sacrificial brood removal of capped drone larvae is also a useful tool to keep varroa numbers in check when the colonies may be expanding rapidly.

Fancy another NBKA trip? I am going to make enquiries about a visit plus talk at Naturescape, Langar, a wildflower nursery with a wonderful range of flowers to see in and around the local area. The second idea I have had is for a bus trip to Heaton Park apiary, Manchester, one of the best training apiaries in the country. Please let your regional committees know if either/both of these activities are something you are interested in so that further enquiries can be made.

The winter colony survival survey from the BBKA was emailed on 17 April- don't forget to respond.

Unfortunately, Kim Bell from the Small Food Bakery is unable to hold a World Bee Day event on Saturday, 18 May as originally planned to correspond with her launch of local honey for sale. Instead she hopes to hold an event in the summer. She apologised for not having contacted all those beekeepers who have offered her honey as yet but she will be in touch shortly and is still keen to receive honey!

Lastly, Rob and I are taking part in the Beeston and Chilwell Garden Trail so please make a note in your diaries of the weekend it will be taking place- Saturday & Sunday 8 and 9 June.

## **World Bee Day event at the Canalside Heritage Centre, Beeston Lock NG9 1LZ**

**Sunday 19th May, 10.00am – 3.30pm**

Come and join our second year of celebrating all things 'Bee'! There will be family activities, beekeepers will be alongside the Centre's apiary and there will plenty of yummy treats in the tearoom- see poster on p19

### **Newark Region**

**Penny Forsyth**

We had a good turnout for our last meeting on 15 April at the Ferry Inn, North Muskham, with several new and aspiring beekeepers coming along to make themselves known, source bees and equipment and get some useful advice- they soon learned the truth of the old saying "ask two beekeepers get three answers". Topics discussed were the cold weather and its effects on available forage (less nectar), colony build-up (good), swarming (expected soon), the upcoming auction (all set and hoping for a good turnout). Early swarm calls and queen cells were reported.

### **Association Auction**

**Andrew Barber**

On Saturday April 6<sup>th</sup> the Notts Beekeeper's Association held its annual auction of bees and beekeeping equipment on the Notts. County Agricultural Showground.

We traditionally hold our auction on the Saturday following the Lincolnshire Beekeeper's Association on their county showground. There is no reason for this, apart from it being historical. We have in the past held our auction on the week before Lincoln's and once by mistake at the same time. I think the theory was if you bought something at Lincoln, which in the cold light of dawn you realised you didn't want, you could sell it again next week at Newark. Lincoln is a much bigger auction than ours, selling many more colonies of bees. The upside for us, is that because of the rarity value of bees at Newark they tend to make better prices, so that is a bonus for the seller and also to us as the recipients of the 10% fee, both from the seller and the buyer.

My day at the auction starts at about 7.45am. There are generally one or two trucks waiting by the time I get there. We regularly have one customer who arrives early with a truck load of bee equipment. He never stays, but having off loaded, takes his wife to work. I have commented to him in the past that he can't have much more stuff to bring, but he assures me that he has enough stuff for the next few years. We have another customer who comes from Essex. He regularly brings dozens of packs of Thornes super and brood foundation. He usually does very well, often selling at a greater price than you could buy it straight off the shelf at Thornes. Gradually the next few members of the team arrive. My wife Janice and Pete Bull's wife Arlene, set their tables up as they do all the office work, such as booking in the lots and entering them into a computer program. Pete comes along and brings the fruits of his winter labours, namely beehives and parts of beehives that he has made. His main role this year was to make himself available to sort out problems as they arose. Our secretary Griff Dixon arrived and he set to, recording all the lots down on sheets, to pass onto the office staff for entering onto the computer. Joshua Lapworth a regular for the past few years and member of the Beverly BKA assisted Griff by sticking lottery tickets onto the items for sale. One of our regular attendees Bob Logan, was not there as he was away on holiday. His main role is to fetch chips from a nearby chip shop. Luckily our president David Chambers was able to step into his role, so those who wanted were duly fed, he also carried the completed lot forms to the office staff. A former council member David Chase came along to help and fancied having a go at auctioneering. I don't think he found it quite as easy as he thought it would be, but he acquitted himself well and said that he had enjoyed it. Pete Bull managed the auctioneering of the bees by dint of the fact that he was the only one to have remembered his bee suit and all the bees made good prices, which was excellent as the seller had brought them all the way from Staffordshire.

As with all auctions there is a lot of rubbish but also some real gems. Anyone starting out would have been able to buy a really good manual or electric extractor or a really first-rate hive for about half the price of one from a main dealer.

Auctions are really good fun as long as you keep your head and do your research in order that you are not paying over the odds for something, or you are not buying an item because you don't like the person who is bidding against you. I think some people are worried that by going to an auction you are going to cough or blink and end up with something you didn't want to buy, it really doesn't happen like that. However, on one occasion I had to ask our editor Penny, if she was really bidding, as she was having a rather an animated conversation with someone and waving her arms about, not a good idea at an auction.

The auction ended at about 5 pm. Amazingly everything sold. There are always issues to be sorted out afterwards, as inevitably someone goes home with somebody else's purchases, but everything gets sorted out in the end. This year with numbers of lots down, we will only make a small profit, but we do provide a service for those wishing to downsize and those wishing to grow.

Do come along next year around the start of April, especially if you have that odd box of jars in your garage that you don't know what to do with, or if you really could do with an extra super or two.

My grateful thanks to all those mentioned who helped on the day and for all those who attended whether buying anything or not.

### **An Adventure in New Zealand**

**Alan Moulton**

Last year I presented an article to this journal entitled 'Monitoring a New Beekeeper from a Distance, (Beemaster March 2018 No 347 page 9) and now I have had a real face-to-face when I visited my son (the new beekeeper) in New Zealand, who started with two nuclei. I came back last week. With New Zealand being on the opposite side of the world the seasons are six months out, so we were there in March/April, which is the end of summer/autumn there, and we are here in England now in spring/summer- a little difficult to appreciate initially since the ambient temperature is the same. So it was the end of the season for him, his first harvest!

So what do the bees eat on the Canterbury Plain in South Island NZ? Well, it is clover on the irrigated farmland all the year round so the results of the harvest were 45 lbs. one hive, 25 lbs. the other- I wish we could get that here!

In my baggage I took down a spinner (my back-up, brand new and unused, still in its box) 2 bee suits (1 medium and 1 child). To do the harvest we needed a honey bucket with tap and a sieve (I borrowed one initially from a nearby Kiwi who was building a straw-baled house) but then bought a bucket and 2 double sieves (one for me) from a nearby neighbour about 23 kilometres away, who was the only enterprise processing beeswax in New Zealand. However, it did have a small shop with a range of essentials and Langstroth hive bits, including the dreaded plastic frames.

The extraction was unbelievably easy: the honey just dropped out, nice runny clover honey (no OSR (oilseed rape) there) and there was no standing in ripener for 24 hours but straight into the jars! The jars demonstrated the method of true recycling/reuse of household containers: all clean and put through the dishwasher and a brief period in the oven, but the jars were mainly jam jars of various sizes and despite my protests all the original labels were left on. The reason for this? As given to me, if they were not selling the honey then the labels stay on.

So what do the locals do with the excess honey? They all use it for bartering (swapping), which is part of the rural way of life. So the honey maintains its value and the local honey in the supermarket is equal to local honey here (not the cheap European honey found in our supermarkets).

I left my son with some bee books, the spinner, honey bucket, sieves and 2 bee suits – all worth it for me to have the experience. Nice to for him and nice for me, encouraging and enthusing me for a new season with my bees in the countryside near Southwell – field beans this year!

### **Dealing with Rape honey** *reprinted from The Apiarist, Harrogate & Ripon BKA*

Oilseed rape (*Brassica napus*) was the saviour of British beekeeping last century, when wild-flower meadows began to disappear to be replaced by arable deserts. Its vivid yellow fields are a common sight now, though density of sowing fluctuates with the demand and price of its oil for bio-fuels, culinary use etc. It produces a bland, inoffensive honey, rather despised by older beekeepers used to more flavoursome wild floral offerings. It does yield profusely in warm weather, but it comes with a catch! So what is the problem with rape honey? It granulates quickly and sets like concrete- maybe even before you take it off the hive! Love it or loathe it, though, most beekeepers have to deal with it at some time, particularly if their hives are in the countryside.

Ideally your rape honey should be gathered by strong colonies in settled warm weather. Nectar would flood in, be turned into honey by the bees; full frames would be capped over and harvested by you in a couple of weeks; the sun and the strength of bees would keep the honey warm enough to inhibit granulation, and extraction would be easy. Unfortunately, as it flowers so early (March this year), the weather is often cool or wet, nectar yield is intermittent, colonies have not reached full strength, they can't forage regularly and supers get cold when the bees descend to the brood box on cold nights. This is when granulation can be a real problem if you let it. Often a frame will have a capped portion of honey from an early nectar flow, with liquid honey from a later flow all round it. The capped honey may well be granulated and the liquid too wet!

### **What you can do.**

With most honeys you wait until almost the whole frame is capped before extracting it, ensuring optimum ripeness. With rape honey it is often advised that half capped frames should be removed, the ripe capped honey hopefully countering the wetter liquid honey. However, if the liquid honey can be shaken from the frame it is too wet and should be returned to the hive for further ripening. If you want to sell your rape honey, you should invest in a refractometer to verify the moisture content as it is illegal to sell honey of more than 20% moisture. Honey that is too 'wet' may ferment, as the sugar concentration is not high enough to inhibit the wild yeasts that are always present.

In cold weather you could extract frames as they become capped, but this is tedious. Ripe frames can be kept warm in a super, with a hot-air heater blowing under it, for a few days until more frames are ready. This will also reduce the moisture in any uncapped cells. Do not let it get too hot (over 45C) or the comb will soften or melt and you will have a MESS!

If you end up with a box of mainly granulated, unextractable honey, the best option is to melt the honey out of the comb. There is equipment available to do this but it is aimed at larger producers. Honey warming cabinets are ideal but failing this an electric oven with a thermostat set to 45-50 C, or even a large bain-marie will suffice. Do not use a higher heat as the honey will be spoiled and the wax will melt- never use a gas oven, wax burns very easily! Scrape the

granulated comb back to the foundation, or simply cut it out, remove the wires and chop it up. Put it into a container to fit your oven and wait! It will take hours or days depending on the size of the container. The wax will rise to the top and may be scooped off the honey. Run the honey through a coarse sieve to remove bits of wax, bees' legs etc. You can feed the sticky wax back to the bees, or make mead from it.

You may be lucky and extract all your rape honey easily, but the granulation problem is still there- it will set solid in whatever container you run it into. Virtually all the bits in the honey will rise to the top and can be easily scraped off the surface when it has set. To soften the set honey permanently, warm it up until it is easy to stir- then stir even more. Try not to incorporate air into the honey. This action will destabilise the crystal formation and it will not reform into a solid again, but stay much softer. This is 'soft-set' or 'creamed' honey. Stirring madly before it sets initially does not produce the same result. Jars can be warmed in a water bath on the hob: buckets need purpose made heaters, the larger honey warming cabinets or if you are handy, a home-made water-bath. Warm to about 30 C (microwaving jars is hit and miss and risks overheating ). Because rape granulates so quickly, the crystals are small, giving the honey a fine, smooth texture. Honey which granulates slowly has a coarse texture- it can be crunchy. If you want to convert crunchy honey into smooth set honey, heat it until liquid and all crystals have dissolved (do not overheat!) Stir in about 10% by weight of fine honey, usually rape, this is called seeding. When the honey sets again it will have the fine texture of the seeding honey, but the flavour of the original crunchy honey.

### **Swarms**

The swarming season is now with us and swarms can be a useful and cheap way to increase your bee stocks. Whilst swarms from an unknown source will be of an unknown temperament, this should not deter you. Swarming is the natural process by which a honey bee colony reproduces itself. The process begins when the colony starts to produce drones. Some time later it may produce up to 20 queen cells. Once most of these are sealed, the queen and around half the bees in the colony swarm (leave the hive).

The swarm will settle in a temporary, and often exposed, location. Only then will the scout bees stop searching for food and start to look for a new home, a process that can take from several hours to several days. Collecting a settled swarm can sometimes be as easy as simply brushing them into a box and then emptying them into a hive. On other occasions it is a little more challenging! An alternative approach is to site swarm boxes, sometimes called bait hives, around your apiary to provide tempting new homes for swarms. Ideally a swarm box should take 6 frames of whatever size you are using in your regular hives, smell right, and be at least two metres off the ground. To make them smell right, add a frame of old drawn comb and rub the inside with propolis and herbs such as lemon grass. Ideally, swarm boxes should be erected in the autumn so that they weather before the swarming season starts. Once the swarming season starts, simply walk by your swarm boxes every 1-2 weeks to check and remove any swarms to appropriate hives. Once in their new home, it is advisable to shut the queen inside for a few days to avoid the possibility of the swarm absconding.

*Courtesy Lune valley Community Beekeepers via ebees*



## How do you take your honey?

Professor Jane Ching, daughter of our Archivist, is on secondment from NTU in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. This is how honey is served for breakfast in her hotel. Straight from hive to plate!

Stuart Ching, NBKA Archivist



**Recipe of the month** (from *Beemaster*, March 1992)

### Apricot Strudel Slices

Jean Redgate

Makes 12 triangles; you will need a 27.5 x18cm (11x7inch) Prestige (oblong) cake tin

#### For the filling:

the grated rind of 1 orange & 1 lemon

60g (2oz) ground almonds

60g (2oz) flaked almonds

3 tbsp demerara sugar

119g (4oz) no-need-to soak dried apricots, roughly chopped

110g (4oz) sultanas

#### For the pastry:

85 (3oz) unsalted butter, melted

6 large sheets of filo pastry

#### To decorate:

15g (½ oz) flaked almonds

#### For the syrup:

13 tbsp clear or Orange Blossom honey

the juice of 1 orange & 1 lemon

#### Method

Preheat the oven at gas mark 5/375F/190C

Beat all of the filling ingredients together well in a large mixing bowl

#### To make the strudel:

Melt the butter, cut the sheets of filo pastry to the size of the tin and layer up 4 sheets, brushing each alternate layer with butter (use any trimmings left over to make extra layers). Place one third of the filling over the pastry and continue to repeat these layers of pastry and filling until they have all been used up, ensuring that the last layer is pastry. Brush with a little butter.

With a sharp knife, score the top into 6 squares then score across the squares diagonally to form 12 triangles. Sprinkle with a few flaked almonds then bake for about 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, to make the syrup combine the honey with the orange and lemon juices in a small pan. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 3 minutes then pour over the cooked but still warm pastry. Leave to cool in the tin for 5-10 minutes. Serve warm or cold.

## **Beelines: notices, news and views**

**From Leigh Sidaway, General Manager BBKA**

**This email is being sent to all BBKA Registered Members**

Dear Member

The BBKA Winter Colony Survival Survey has gone on-line this year so that all registered members can take part. Please can you spare a few minutes to complete a dozen questions about your colonies of bees? It really does only take a few minutes. You can access the survey via the BBKA website: [www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk) or the link is below:

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/winter-colony-survival-survey-1819>

The responses each year help develop a picture across the country of what is really happening to honey bee colony numbers. We will be publishing a report on the survey in the BBKA News magazine in the summer and issuing articles to the media so please take part; your views are important.

**From Anthony Williams, COLOSS Survey Coordinator for England**

Last year beekeepers in your region participated in the COLOSS survey for Winter Losses in 2017. Thanks to your support for the first time in a number of years we were able to submit a return to the pan European COLOSS Monitoring initiative. I can report that overall Winter losses were on average 28% for England. Losses in Europe were on average 16%. Losses varied from region to region from 9% in Cornwall to 33% in Warwickshire and 41% in Leicestershire, my home regions, which were above the national average. A more detailed note of Winter losses will shortly be presented in the Journal of Apicultural Research. Some of the highlights of this survey have been presented at Eurabee in Ghent back in November and more recently at Speakers Corner during the Beekeeping convention at the Harper Adams University this weekend.

As the COLOSS English survey coordinator for 2019, I am again asking for your help in disseminating and completing the Spring Hive Losses Survey for this year. COLOSS would like to invite all English bee keepers to complete the hive loss survey for 2019; in particular we would like to get better handle on data for the Nottinghamshire area. I would like to share the COLOSS open letter inviting you and your fellow beekeepers to complete the survey for this year. Last year we received approx 500 valid responses which represents about 1.7% of all beekeepers in England, this year I hope we can improve on this and get a more accurate picture of Winter losses at a Local, National and European level.

The survey can be access through the following link

<https://www.bee-survey.com/index.php/368949>

I have also enclosed a little advert/card promoting the survey. I would be grateful if you could include it in your association's newsletter or website, social media page over the coming weeks. The survey is scheduled to close on the 5th June. If for whatever reason your executive committee was unable to support this survey I hope that you will be able to support this effort at some personal level.

If you have any questions at all please don't hesitate to get in touch, my contact details can be found in the open letter. Lastly I wish you and your bees a prosperous season.

Regards, Anthony Williams: Open Letter follows

## Letter from COLOSS

Dear Beekeeper.

In the last decade, elevated losses of western honey bee colonies have been observed, mainly in Europe and North America, but the underlying causes still remain unclear. In 2008, European and USA honey bee experts formed a network "COLOSS" realising that efforts by individual countries to identify the drivers of losses were unlikely to succeed, given the current consensus that causes are complex and can be different between regions and between the years. Now more than 1000 scientists are working together in this network in specific working groups. The epidemiological working group have developed a standardised questionnaire to identify the underlying causal factors of losses and provide beekeepers sustainable management strategies. We now invite you to fill in the questionnaire for 2019 which you will find below. This will enable us to compare your answers with other beekeepers. With your data we can estimate the relative risk of colony losses for beekeeper decisions such as Varroa treatment, migration of colonies and comb replacement. We also aim to identify differences in relative mortality risk between regions. This will enable follow up research projects in specific regions.

At your option your personal details may be recorded however we undertake not to disclose them to any third party to protect your privacy.

The survey can be access through the following link

<https://www.bee-survey.com/index.php/368949>

Not counting the comments section and informed consent section there are 34 questions not all are compulsory. The first two pages cover background information, reasons for the survey, privacy policy and also informed consent. The survey questions start on the third screen. If you have information at hand the survey should take from between 10-15 minutes to complete. There is a facility to start the survey and complete the survey at a later date if you wish, just click on a grey link "resume later" found at the bottom left of the screen.

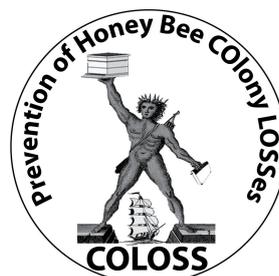
We are most interested in production colony numbers at three intervals, Spring 2018, Autumn 2018 and Spring 2019. We do not count nucs as a production colony. We are then interested in the number of colonies that survived, those that are healthy, those that are weak. Of the colonies that are considered lost we are interested in dividing those into three categories: a) lost due to natural disaster, ie flood, badger, mice, beekeeper, accidents b) those not queen-right and finally c) dead or empty hives.

The remaining question relate to queen performance, beekeeping practices such as Varroa treatment. Optionally there is a comments section for you to use if you have any observations or notes either on the year or about the survey.

Finally your help is much appreciated. Please can I ask you to promote this survey and the questionnaire link through this open letter to as many English beekeepers as you are able to do so. Feel free to share the link by email, word of mouth, newsletters or social media and to your local beekeeping organisations. In doing so you will be making a contribution to tackling the problem of colony losses and ensuring that English data is represented as an equal partner in the COLOSS European community.

Thanking you

Dr Anthony Williams



<http://www.bee-survey.com/index.php/368949>

COLOSS Survey Coordinator for England

De Montfort University

A Member of Leicester and Rutland Beekeepers Association

Email: [anthony.williams@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:anthony.williams@dmu.ac.uk)

Tel: 0116 207 8468

For further information about the COLOSS colony loss core project and past results please see the COLOSS website: <https://coloss.org/core-projects/colony-losses-monitoring/>

The results paper for 2016-17 can be found here:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00218839.2018.1460911?fbclid=IwAR1oGIZIedonLwSH7Jeppw7AyB5K2KN1g2MR6FKn7bWLStpdxwBuAqMT52w&>

### **From Sue Daynes, Bees for Development (BBKA chosen charity )**

I would be very grateful if you could forward this to your members: I am pleased to send you Bees for Development's latest newsletter. You can find it [by clicking here](#)

### **World Bee Day 19th May 2019**

The purpose of this international day is to acknowledge the role of bees and other pollinators for the ecosystem. World Bee Day is celebrated on the baptism day of Anton Janša, who was born in 1734 in what is now Slovenia. In beekeeping he is noted for not only writing a number of impressive books on beekeeping but for advocating changing the size and shape of hives to a form where they can be stacked together like blocks. As a painter he also decorated the fronts of hives with paintings. Janša rejected the belief that the male bees are water carriers and assumed that the queen is fertilised mid-air. He advocated moving hives to pastures.

The main purpose of the events is to spread awareness of the significance of bees and other pollinators for our survival. We must realise that simply proclaiming World Bee Day does not do much for bees and other pollinators; the main work aiming towards their preservation still needs to be undertaken and World Bee Day is an excellent opportunity in this regard. Beekeepers and nature conservationists would like to ask everybody to help improve the conditions for bees, thus improving conditions for the survival of people. No major steps are needed; what counts is each and every action that facilitates the existence of bees.

**Schools** can liaise with local beekeeping associations and organise a number of different activities:

- ~ visits to and from beekeepers to become acquainted with their work
- ~ learning about honey and hive products
- ~ learning about nectar-bearing plants
- ~ setting up a hive or providing suitable nest sites for pollinators
- ~ organising art competitions on the theme of beekeeping and pollinators

**Every individual can contribute to the preservation of bees and other pollinators:**

- **Plant [nectar-bearing flowers](#)** for decorative purposes on balconies, terraces, and gardens.
- **Buy honey and other hive products** from your nearest local beekeeper.
- **Raise awareness among children and adolescents** on the importance of bees and **express your support for beekeepers.**
- **Set up a pollinator farm** on your balcony, terrace, or garden; you can either make it yourself or buy at any home furnishings store.
- **Preserve old meadows** – which feature a more diverse array of flowers – and **sow nectar-bearing plants.**
- **Cut grass on meadows only after the nectar-bearing plants have finished blooming.**
- **Offer suitable farming locations** for the temporary or permanent settlement of bees so that they have suitable pasture; as a consequence, they will pollinate our plants, which will thereby bear more fruit.
- Use **pesticides that do not harm bees**, and spray them in **windless weather, either early in the morning or late at night**, when bees are not active.

**From the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat**

**Invasive Species Week 13-17 May 2019**

Invasive non-native species harm the environment and wildlife, are costly to the economy, and can even pose a risk to our health and way of life.

During Invasive Species Week, organisations across the UK, Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man are working together to raise awareness and ask everyone to help prevent their spread to protect the environment and recreational spaces for future generations to enjoy!

From **13 - 17 May** we'll be taking a closer look at invasive species across a range of important environments:

**Mon:** Freshwater and riparian

**Tues:** Urban

**Weds:** Marine

**Thurs:** Woodland and bogs

**Fri:** Small islands

Follow along at [@InvasiveSp](#) and look out for events taking place throughout the week near you.

Sign up to the mailing list for updates by contacting [nss@apha.gov.uk](mailto:nss@apha.gov.uk)

**Resources**

- [Suggestions for ways to take part](#)
- [Key facts for awareness raising](#)
- [Postcard](#)
- [Poster](#)
- [Logo](#)
- [Email signature](#)

## NBKA Asian Hornet Action Team News

**Latest:** In Jersey and France queens have been spotted feeding on tree sap from oak trees as well as beech, maple and willow, as well as on single open camellias, so keep an eye on those and other flowers open in your garden

The NBKA Asian Hornet Action Team is now registered on the AHAT website and with the BBKA. I am currently registered as Coordinator with Pete Bull as North Notts contact and Alec Thomson the City and South Notts contact. We have a further 10 team members and between us we cover several postcodes but the aim is to provide a county-wide contact network ready to react to reports of possible Asian Hornet incursions into our region and to coordinate with the National Bee Unit, the Non-Native Species Secretariat (NNSS) and other BKA's **so we need more!** There is no limit to the number of members an AHAT may have so if you would like to be involved please contact me at [pennyforsyth16@mail.com](mailto:pennyforsyth16@mail.com) for information or if you wish to join the contacts register. There is excellent information and a set of guidelines on the AHAT website <https://ahat.org.uk>

Any Asian Hornet queens that have successfully overwintered in this country will have come out of hibernation and be nest building **right now** so be extra vigilant in your apiaries and keep a close eye on any traps you may have put up- don't forget to put a piece of crumpled kitchen paper or sponge into the liquid reservoir so that you don't drown non-target insects.

Download the identification pdfs, laminate them and put them up in your apiary, on your allotment information board or local notice board.

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/home/index.cfm>

Get the Asian Hornet Watch app for smart phone and tablet

Read up about traps and baits and be sure to deploy them- visit <https://ahat.org.uk>

If you have not already registered your apiary on Beebase then please do so now. If there is an Asian Hornet incursion in your area it is vital that every beekeeper can be located and contacted. When you register and record your apiary information you can also report whether or not you have AH traps in place. Follow the link below:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/login.cfm>



**And finally.....**

*A swarm in May is worth a load of hay  
A swarm in June is worth a silver spoon  
A swarm in July is only worth a fly  
A swarm in August is worth a pint of sawdust  
A swarm in September is something to remember  
A swarm in October is rarely seen when sober*

*Bournemouth BKA*



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**BEEMASTER** is published monthly. Contributions by 25th of previous month please to the Editor. Copy received after this date may have to be held over to the next **BEEMASTER**.

**The Editor retains the right to amend submitted articles or to reject articles which appear, in her opinion, to be unsuitable. Items which do appear may not reflect the opinions of the Council of the NBKA.**

## EXTRACTORS

Members may borrow the NBKA extractors - 4-frame, hand driven kept at Brackenhurst and hired from Maurice Jordan. An electric one (with settling tank) is held by Glenis Swift 0115 9538617. The EasyBee extractor which is useful for extracting frames that hold honey that has granulated is held by Frank Chambers in Calverton (0115 965 2128).

## ADVERTISEMENTS

NBKA accepts no responsibility for advertisements appearing in this newsletter. Please mention **BEEMASTER** when replying to advertisements.

## ADVERTISEMENT RATES

Advertisements free to paid-up members but 10p per word – minimum charge £1 to non-members. Circulation approx 300 throughout the UK and abroad.

Short adverts may be paid for in First and Second Class postage stamps which should be sent directly to the Editor. Cheques should be made out to NBKA and sent to the Treasurer.

## CASH AND CARRY BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT at discount prices



See our website (Products/Cash and Carry)

for new beekeeping equipment being introduced  
continuously throughout out the year.

Major cards accepted.

Normal opening times: Wed, Thu, Fri and Sun 12.00 – 5pm

The Honey Pot, Unit 73, Trent Business Centre, Canal  
Street, Long Eaton, Nottingham, NG10 4HN.

0115 9726585  
Mobile/text numbers 07703 711009  
Email [localhoney@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:localhoney@hotmail.co.uk)



# World Bee Day



Come and learn more about the fascinating world of bees on Sunday 19th May, 10-3pm.



There'll be the opportunity to talk to local beekeepers, discuss the CHC Apiary project, and get involved in free bee related family activities. We'll have honey based treats in our tearoom and an opportunity to buy bee related gifts to support the Bees Abroad charity.

Come along and have fun!

For more information about the activities and the community bee project contact Janet on 07904 067160.

Canalside Heritage Centre, Weir Cottages, Canal Side, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 1LZ