

# Beemaster

The Newsletter of the Nottinghamshire Beekeepers' Association  
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## Website and contacts

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NBKA website.....	<a href="http://nottsbees.org.uk">http://nottsbees.org.uk</a>
President.....	<b>Alec Thomson MB</b> alec.thomson3@ntlworld.com
Chairman.....	<b>Andrew Barber</b> andrewbarber891@hotmail.co.uk 01636 671844 or 07867 797812
Honorary Secretary.....	<b>Griff Dixon</b> honsec@nbka.email 07500 876836 or 01636 636565
Treasurer.....	<b>Paula Duckworth</b> polly.duckworth@gmail.com
Membership Secretary.....	<b>Janet Bates MB</b> janet.bates@ntlworld.com 01623 794687
Education Secretary.....	<b>Janet Bates MB</b> , as above
Show Secretary.....	<b>Karen Burrow</b> kburrow3@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor.....	<b>Stuart Humphreys</b> stuartnbka@gmail.com
Librarian.....	<b>Karen Burrow</b> , as above
Farm Liaison.....	<b>David Chambers</b> sandraanddavid@greenbee.net
Media & Publicity.....	<b>Alison Knox</b> alisonnbka@btinternet.com 0115 985 6878 or 07768 153526
Newark Region Chair.....	<b>Andrew Barber</b> , as above
Nottingham Region Chair.....	<b>Alec Thomson MB</b> , as above
Asian Hornet Team Coordinator.....	<b>Alec Thomson MB</b> , as above
Webmaster.....	<b>Griff Dixon</b> , as above
Regional Bee Inspector.....	<b>Dhonn Atkinson</b> <a href="mailto:dhonn.atkinson@apha.gov.uk">dhonn.atkinson@apha.gov.uk</a> 07775 119437
Seasonal Bee Inspector.....	<b>Tim Roper</b> <a href="mailto:timothy.roper@apha.gov.uk">timothy.roper@apha.gov.uk</a> 07775 119441

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Cover photo: Bee on echinops, Stuart Humphreys

Other photo credits: Griff Dixon (page 6), Stuart Humphreys (p8), Alison Knox (p16), Alan Moulton (p17), Anne Mason (p18)

*Please note:*

Beemaster is published monthly. Contributions by 25<sup>th</sup> of prior 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 his opinion, to be unsuitable. Views expressed in Beemaster articles are not necessarily those of the Editor and may not reflect the opinions of the Council of the Nottinghamshire Beekeepers' Association.

## Diary dates

Nottingham and Newark in-person meetings are back!

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We are pleased to report that the **Nottingham region** are restarting their monthly Monday evening meetings on the first Monday in each month. The **Newark region** meets on the third Monday of the month at the Ferry Inn at North Muskham.

Monday, 6 September  
7.30pm

### Nottingham Region meeting

Eagle's Nest Community Road, Gedling Road, Arnold NG5 6NZ  
**Preparing Your Bees for the Winter**, led by **Alec Thomson**  
followed by **The Honey Show, How it Works, Hints & Tips**

Monday, 20 September  
8.00pm

### Newark Region meeting

Ferry Inn, North Muskham NG23 6HB

Sunday, 3 October  
Open from midday  
Judging from 1.30pm

### Honey Show

To be held at Lowdham Village Hall NG14 7BD  
– see page 11 et seq and the Show Schedule,  
Rules & Entry Form appended to this newsletter

Monday, 4 October  
7.30pm

### Nottingham Region meeting

Eagle's Nest Community Road, Gedling Road, Arnold NG5 6NZ  
**Region AGM** followed by **Beekeepers Question Time**

Monday, 18 October  
8.00pm

### Newark Region meeting

Ferry Inn, North Muskham NG23 6HB

Members should keep an eye on the excellent **NBKA website** which is regularly updated.

[www.nottsbees.org.uk](http://www.nottsbees.org.uk)

All 66 videos from **BIBBA's** spring webinar programme are available on their Spring 2021 YouTube playlist.

The NBKA website contains back issues of *Beemaster* from January 2019 onward.

## From the Editor

Stuart Humphreys introduces this month's newsletter

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### Death of Stuart Ching

It is with great sadness that I record the death of Stuart Ching on 26 August. His daughter Jane reports that, after his long battle with illness, Stuart passed away peacefully in his sleep, without pain, at the City Hospital's palliative care unit.

Our sincere condolences go to Stuart's family.

Amongst many other things, Stuart was, of course, the long-standing former editor of *Beemaster* and our Archivist. A full appreciation of his major contribution to beekeeping in general and our Association in particular will appear in next month's newsletter.

With that very sad news in mind, may I offer you a warm welcome to September's *Beemaster*.

As ever, my thanks go to this month's contributors...

**Griff Dixon** is evidently very busy setting up his bees on the heather moors but is also turning his thoughts to winter preparations.

In my 'View from the Vale' I finish harvesting honey, note that the weather has turned somewhat autumnal, and keep an eye out for the relatively few wasps that are around..

Our long-distance correspondent, **Penny Forsyth**, has updated her seasonal advice on everything we should be thinking about and doing in September in preparation for what is really the start of the beekeeping season.

With the NBKA Honey Show taking place on Sunday, 3 October, we have plenty of encouragement and advice on how to enter. Show Secretary, **Karen Burrow**, explains the arrangements for the Show. **Andrew Barber** draws on his extensive experience to help us prepare exhibits. And former Show Secretary – and Best in Show winner the very first time she entered – **Alison Knox** adds her encouragement for members to support the Show. The Show Schedule, Rules and Entry Form are appended to this newsletter after the Thornes advert. Even your editor will (for the very first time) be submitting his bees' produce for scrutiny!

**Alan Moulton** sets up a WBC bait hive but finds a swarm ignores the prepared brood box and super in favour of lots of roof space.

Although she will no longer be raising funds for Bees Abroad next year, **Anne Mason** explains that she has a busy time ahead in what remains of 2021.

Pesticides and their impact on pollinators in general, and honeybees in particular, are never long out of the news, and **Rob Mason** summarises some recent scientific research in this area.

And **Linda Jordan** provides us with an old seasonal favourite, the recipe for spice apple cake...

I hope you enjoy the read!

# Notes from Norwell

Griff Dixon has his hands full on the heather moors

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## In the apiary

Those beekeepers who I have bumped into say that it's been a bumper crop this year. My slow start (rebuilding after having suffered a poor winter) means I haven't really caught up with this suggested bumper crop, only really getting to the same level as last year. However, we still have some possible late additions and there is always the heather and ivy. Not to forget that I usually have a first crop of oil seed rape, but not this year!

On the agreed heather start date (by beekeepers' legend) of 8 August, I took my first eight hives in the pouring rain up to Beeley Moor in Chesterfield. The location had been changed which was somewhat confusing to begin with as the field where they are usually located had no hives so, of course, I thought I must be first in. When I then drove onto the site to start unloading I noticed that hives were in the next field. Two other beekeepers had already been (probably the day before when it was a sunny day – much more sensible) and areas had been flattened by the farmer ready for our hives. After getting thoroughly soaked to the skin spending time orientating hive entrances away from each other, I finally left the site.

I returned a few days later (11 August) with a further eight (six hives and two poly nucs) sited adjacent to my first layout.

What caught my eye was how individual beekeepers had laid out their hives.



The Precision Layout – precise and exact



The Wagon Train Grouping



Haphazard but Entrances Opposite



The Angle Staggered group facing the heather

On 18 August Maurice Jordan reported his hives were stuffed and he was going to put second supers on. A couple of days later I called in for a quick look and many of my hives were looking like a second super would be required. I returned on 22 August and added a total of 12 supers and an additional poly nuc super. Whether these will get filled remains to be seen. For good measure I re-queened one hive and a poly nuc.

The hive groupings now looked like this...



... with most hives expanded with extra supers after only 14 days on site!

The main problem now is lifting them up to take them back to base for extraction!

To try and counter-balance the poor overwintered queens last year, I have set up some nucs with Jolanta queens to try and have some in-hand should I need to boost things next spring. Hopefully I can keep them going over winter and have some strong activity at the start of 2022.

Varroa treatment is in-hand with Apivar; I'm giving Oxybee a miss this year. Mouse guards are on early to counteract the invasion I had last winter and I've starting winter feeding. I hope that I have learnt a few things from last year's experiences.

Every year is a continual learning experience...

### **NBKA matters**

With several 'celebrities' holding the honeybee torch on national TV during the pandemic, many corporates are looking to be associated with saving the honeybee; HM Prison Nottingham and the Victoria Centre in central Nottingham are two recent examples.

With regard to BBKA and National Honey Show activities the following have been announced:

- The BBKA budget commencing 1 October 2021 has been circulated for comment;
- The BBKA Asian Hornet Week will be held between 6-10 September 2021;
- The BBKA Annual Hornet & Wasp Photo Competition is currently running with a closing date of 20 September;
- The BBKA Web Shop for Resources – the Education & Husbandry Committee have commissioned many BBKA News Special Issues to help new and experienced beekeepers improve their beekeeping knowledge and husbandry skills.
- The BBKA 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Delegate Meeting to be held on at 10am on Saturday, 15 January 2022 will be a hybrid meeting via Zoom.
- The National Honey Show from 21-23 October will be held at Sandown Park with a video streaming facility available.

Our own NBKA Honey Show (just the one this year) will be held on 3 October 2021.

The next NBKA Council Meeting will be held on Thursday, 30 September 2021 at Brackenhurst College.

## View from the Vale (of Belvoir)

How bees are faring in the south-eastern corner of Notts by **Stuart Humphreys**

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It has been a nice quiet time at our garden apiary. The weather in August was fair and towards the end of the month our bees were actually quite subdued as the temperature dropped towards more autumnal levels. Generally, though, they have been busy foraging on echinops, heleniums, salvias and dahlias, and well as gathering water from the pond.

We've now extracted all the honey we intend to take. The photo below shows the harvest in progress; we have painted the clearing boards red to remind us that they are on!



Our focus now is on reducing the hives to their winter formation, treating for varroa and, if necessary, feeding sugar syrup to help the bees top up their stores. To this end we have bought a bottle of newly-advertised *Mineral Bee* from Thornes to supplement the syrup, so it will be interesting to see if that has a discernible effect in the period ahead.

Having talked about the paucity of wasps last time round, we're pleased to have seen a few on windfall fruit. The wasps seem to congregate on fallen apples while the honeybees much prefer the sweet offerings of Victoria plums and greengages.



Nonetheless, we have noted that, when returning extracted supers to the hives for the bees to clean out, there have been far fewer wasps buzzing around than in previous years.

## This month in your apiary: September

**Penny Forsyth** looks forward to the start of the beekeeping year...

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September is the month when the beekeeping year really begins – the honey crop has been removed and our actions now will determine how well our colonies will fare in the winter months ahead.

This month our inspections need to focus on the amount of stores in the hives and whether our colonies are big enough and healthy enough to overwinter successfully: it's time to perhaps unite small colonies, treat for varroa and to start autumn feeding if your colonies are light on stores. Whichever varroa treatment you decide on – and there's plenty of advice out there – you must keep records for at least five years: you can download a record card from BeeBase.

Our bees will be building up their winter stores, bringing in nectar and pollen from phacelia, rosebay willowherb, bramble and Himalayan balsam, and there will be ivy to come. Wasps may become a nuisance, constantly trying to sneak into the hives to plunder their hard-won stores: you can help your bees by reducing all entrances and putting foam strips in the gaps between varroa floor and brood box. Wasp traps baited with beer or cider and a little jam are also effective – wasps can wipe out a small colony in days. This is also the peak time for Asian hornet activity, so stay alert for them hawking around your hives or feeding on ivy and fallen fruit and check traps frequently.

Now that you have taken your last honey crop you will need to make sure that your colonies are sufficiently well-provisioned to get through the winter: each full-sized colony will need around 20kg (44lbs) of stores as a minimum, more if the winter is mild. I leave my bees at least one super of honey and always do a visual inspection of each hive to be sure that there are good stores in the brood box, never assume. I also take the opportunity to rearrange frames of stores to ensure optimum accessibility then use the weight of the hive as my guide as the season progresses.

How do we measure the weight of a hive? Various scales and spring balances can be used but an easier, if less scientific way, is to lift one side of the hive about half an inch (hefting). If it feels so heavy you can scarcely lift it (feels as if it's nailed down), then the stores are likely to be adequate. For autumn feeding we use a ratio of 2:1, that is 2lb sugar dissolved in 1 pint of hot water (1 kg in 625 ml for the metrically-minded). Use white granulated sugar dissolved into hot water and allow it to cool before putting it on the hive – never heat the syrup. Use contact feeders (bucket feeders), rapid feeders (these have a central, covered, cone-shaped access) or large capacity feeders such as Miller or Ashworth. Feed early in the month to give the bees time to process the syrup sufficiently; syrup stored with too high a water content will ferment and cause dysentery. Many beekeepers prefer to use a commercially prepared fortified syrup such as Ambrosia, which is thought to be easier for the bees to process. It's a fairly costly option but can be bought in bulk and certainly cuts down the work if you have lots of colonies.

When feeding take care not to excite robbing in your apiary: ensure you don't spill any syrup, check that the box surrounding the feeder has no gaps which could allow wasps or robber bees to enter, and feed only in the evenings. If you haven't already done so, reduce

entrances and set up wasp traps if needed. If you do leave your bees a super of honey on for the winter, be sure to remove the queen excluder: the bees will not move through it to fresh stores if that would mean leaving their queen behind, and the colony will be lost to starvation.

Small colonies – of 5 frames of brood or fewer – have difficulty maintaining an adequate temperature in the cluster during the colder months and so have a lower chance of survival than larger ones. If you do decide to overwinter them you will need to give them extra protection, perhaps in a polystyrene nucleus box, and in a sheltered part of the apiary. I have successfully used polystyrene blocks around the brood nest in a standard National brood box but a pair of frame feeders filled with foam or straw (with the opening sealed) do the job well and are easier to handle. If your DIY skills are up to it then it's worth making yourself a couple of pairs of 'fat dummies': they come in handy at any time of the season and can be quickly made from a couple of brood frames and some plywood and filled with insulation such as polystyrene, foam or fleece. You may also wish to consider uniting small colonies: this provides an opportunity to select for your best queens. You will find instructions on how to unite colonies in beekeeping books and magazines, online and by asking more experienced beekeepers.

### Jobs for September

-  Estimate winter food stores by hefting hives and/or inspecting each frame.
-  Top up the stores to at least 20kg by feeding heavy syrup.
-  Be alert to wasp activity in and around your hives and to robbing by other colonies – block up any holes or gaps in roofs or between boxes, reduce entrances and set up wasp traps.
-  Monitor for varroa mites and treat immediately if the natural drop exceeds 20 mites per day.
-  Monitor again after treatment to ensure it has been successful.
-  Unite small colonies or ensure that the hive or nuc is well-insulated
-  Remove the queen excluder towards the end of the month if you are leaving a super of honey on the hive. Clean it and store it under the roof ready for use.
-  Store extracted comb securely, protected from damp and mice: clear plastic crates are better than stacked supers (wax moths love the dark) and this drawn comb will help your bees get off to a good start next spring.
-  Remain alert for the presence of Asian hornets, either hawking around your hives or feeding on ivy or fallen fruit. Use sweet baits in any traps and monitor daily.
-  Take advantage of this year's Asian Hornet Week 6-10 September to learn more about this potentially devastating intruder and spread the word! Visit the BBKA website for more information.

# Annual Honey Show 2021

Show Secretary **Karen Burrow** explains the arrangements for this year's Honey Show

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This year there will be only one Honey Show, the Autumn Honey Show on Sunday, 3 October at Lowdham Village Hall. The hall will be open from 12:00 midday so you can register and prepare your exhibits before the judging begins at 1:30. (NB. No exhibits can be entered once the judging starts.) The judge this year is Bill Fisher. I am still in the process of finding a speaker for the show but hope to confirm this shortly.

There is parking at the Village Hall. Light refreshments will be available during the judging. We normally have a raffle but this may not be possible due to COVID restrictions.

An updated class schedule is appended to this newsletter and can also be seen on the website. There are two changes this year:

- The honey preserve class has been widened to include any preserve (sweet or savoury) that uses honey as its main sweetening agent.
- The other major change is to the beginners/novice class which now includes anyone who has not entered a honey class previously and/or is in their first 2 years of beekeeping.

Prizes and cups (where appropriate) will be awarded to the winner of the respective class this year as we only have the one show. Normally points are awarded at both shows and the cup awarded to entrant with the most points.

Participation at honey shows in the past few years has been poor. I would therefore like to encourage everyone to consider taking part. If anyone has any ideas on additional classes that can be included in future, please let me know so we can help the show meet modern needs going forward.

The classes for jarred honey use 1lb jar which I know many people do not use. Therefore, I will bring some along to the Nottingham region meeting in Arnold on 6 September if you wish to enter.

As Alison Knox attests in her article, over the years classes have been won by first-time entrants, so please don't think your honey or other items are not good enough!

## Show prep

Preparation of show items is not difficult; many books cover it well and Andrew Barber gives you the benefit of this experience on the next page. For honey exhibits the main points are **a full, clean jar of well-filtered honey without air bubbles, froth or bits.**

If you are unsure whether your honey is light, medium or dark the stewards on the day will help you pick the correct class.

There are two brewing classes and although it is a little late to produce mead for the show there is just time to make a honey beer. Check the schedule for the requirements for bottles and caps. All are available from home brew shops and Amazon.

The baking classes have often been the preserve of the ladies, but it would be nice to see more of our male members entering. The honey cake is a good place to start as you are given the recipe.

The other classes include a preserve and the strangely-named 'dainties', which really means small cakes or biscuits which you can interpret in your own way, but bees and beekeeping is the theme.

The final two classes are the bee display and photograph. For the display think of a small window or stall display for your honey sales and you are on the right lines. Check the schedule for the maximum size and have a go. The photography class is for any photo with bees or beekeeping as a theme.

I hope I have given you some encouragement to enter!

## Preparing exhibits for a show

**Andrew Barber** gives us some invaluable tips

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As a steward and sometimes judge for our various Honey Shows, I thought I would share with you a few tips about preparing exhibits for shows.

The paramount principle for all entries is to pay strict attention to the Show Schedule which is appended to this newsletter. Study it. That in itself is pretty obvious, but you would be surprised how many people only give it scant attention. If the Schedule states "standard 1lb jars with metal lids", don't enter 12oz hexagonal jars because you think they look better (so do !!) because if you enter any of these, the judge will reject them, even if they have the finest honey in the show in them.

The judge has a difficult job to do, especially if there are a lot of entries, so they are judging them from the basis of what they can get rid of. Rather negative but true, but that's how it works. The schedule will state two matching jars, so it stands to reason that they must match. If the honey in one jar is slightly darker than in the other, then they don't match. At a national level, when the judge is left with two sets of jars and they are both equally good, then they are looking to get rid of one. It might come down to something as petty as the jars being from different batches. We are not so pedantic at our shows!

**Honey.** The product must be clean, fairly obviously: a dirty jar or a bee's leg floating in the honey is a sure-fire way of getting your entry rejected. Wash your jars before bottling; a dishwasher is a good way of doing this and either air-dry them or polish them with a lint-free cloth. Your honey needs to be finely filtered and left in the ripener for between 12-24 hours for any air bubbles or scum to float to the top. A powerful torch shone from behind the jar will show up any small particles which still manage to get through. Sometimes the honey starts to granulate. If this is the case then gentle warming will clarify this. When you fill your jars make sure that there is no daylight between the top of the honey and the bottom of the lid. Judges hate to see this, even if you have the correct amount of honey in by weight.

Make sure **lids** are clean as rust sometimes gathers in the threads, and make sure they have no scratches on them. This happens on new ones as well, so be careful. If you get bubbles on the top, these can be removed with cling film placed over the top and then removed of course.

Obviously, taste will have a big impact. Not much you can do about that, but those of you from the city and its suburbs get some superb tasting honey from the parks and gardens.

As for **naturally set or granulated honey**, note the word “set”. It’s no good entering honey into this class if it moves when tilted. It should have no gradation of streaks in it and the texture should be smooth. Again, a good taste will win. Frosting does occur on the sides of some granulated honey, but this in itself would not disqualify it. At least it shows that it hasn’t been meddled with.

**Soft set or creamed honey.** Well, this has obviously been touched by you in order to achieve the aim – quite difficult to do successfully. The best I can describe as to what it should be like is soft, spreadable butter ready from the fridge, so when it is tipped up it shouldn’t slosh about.

**Cut comb honey.** If you are entering cut comb honey, be careful what sort of honey you are going to use. Most people would probably use heather honey, although it doesn’t have to be and is sometimes in a separate class. Don’t enter oilseed rape honey because it will set and the judge will more than likely take the cut comb from the box in order to taste a sample from the underside. Check the schedule once again for the weight. The weight is usually eight ounces and you would need to buy the correct size container for the weight. You also need the correct size cutter that will cut the comb to the size of the box. Make sure that the weight of the comb is correct or slightly over, if it is underweight it will be rejected and if the schedule states matching pair, make sure that they do match or again the entry will be rejected. Boxes and cutters can be bought from beekeeping suppliers. Alternatively you can also use a sharp knife or cheese wire to cut the comb, but I find the proprietary cutter much easier to use. I didn’t mention that the comb you use needs to be from thin unwired foundation, so it’s no good just selecting a comb from any old super. You need to have wanted to produce cut comb honey.

When you have selected a frame and have carefully cut out the comb, don’t put it straight in the container. Place it on a mesh cake stand so that any surplus honey can drain off. No judge likes to look at comb that is swimming in honey. It’s no good preparing items for showing the day before. Many producers of cut comb honey prepare their exhibits weeks before, put them into containers and then place them in the deep freeze. This stops the honey granulating. Remember to remove them before the day of the show.

**Frame suitable for extraction.** When I was stewarding and judging it was frequently the case that this category would have a beautiful frame of honey, in an elaborate brand new showcase (which the judge will ignore), only to find that the frame itself was dirty, with wax or propolis or both on the top bar. Make sure the frame you enter is fully capped, is nice and even and that the frame is clean. Again I wouldn’t enter oilseed rape honey as the judge will often taste the honey and if the honey is solid he/she will reject it, as it wouldn’t be suitable for extraction.

**Wax blocks.** The wax should be clean, the edge and writing on them clean-cut, good aroma, the correct weight (the judge will probably weigh them). Give them a polish with a sift lint-free cloth to remove any bloom. With the large block of wax, look at the specifications in the schedule and stick to them.

**Mead.** Again, look at the Schedule. Stick to the rules. The mead should look good and also, most importantly, taste good. In the past some of it has tasted like nail varnish remover – not that I would know what that tastes like!

**Honey beer.** Again, the above applies.

**Honey cake.** If you are an experienced baker your own judgment will come into play here. You know your own oven. I don't think that honey is the easiest thing to bake with, so be careful, but do put honey in. When cut open, the judge will be able to tell because they will see the gradation getting darker further down the cake.

Honey dainties and honey preserves. These are good classes to go for as few people have a try at these. The same again in respect of the “**Display relating to bees or beekeeping**”: some years we have only one or two entries in this class. Make a note of the size of the base.

**Photography.** Pretty obvious: it must be the correct size; it must be something that will catch the judge's eye.

And last but not least, the **Beginners or Novice Class**. All the other parameters apply and if you have not been beekeeping long, then it's worth a go.

**Remember:** you can enter in more than one class. The prize-winners usually do! You could enter in them all if you have enough exhibits. You can make multiple entries in a class, and as long as you have enough matching entries you can enter as many as you like. You will only win one prize though. The judge will, through elimination, pick your best matching pair. They won't thank you for it, but that is quite acceptable.

**To sum up.** Stick like glue to the Schedule. Follow my tips – there are many more on the internet (I don't agree with all of them though). Remember – the judge is looking for a reason not to pick your entry; don't give them a chance to do so. Don't think that your entry won't be good enough. In the past we have thought that many of your entries, especially from beginners, were as good as those seen at the National Honey Show.

## Supporting your NBKA Honey Show

Former Show Secretary **Alison Knox** encourages you to enter the forthcoming Honey Show

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Although I have now stepped down as Show Secretary and leave that role in the capable hands of Karen Burrow, I would like to offer some words of encouragement to any of our members, especially our 'newbies', who may feel a bit daunted at the prospect of taking part.

When I first started keeping bees in 2009 my mentor, Bob Logan, was instrumental in giving me the push I needed to take part in what was then the Moorgreen Show. I had only had my bees 5 minutes (they were delivered in June) but they had found the lime blossoms on the trees that line the roads in our area, and made merry, filling a super in no time at all. The capped frames looked very nice, and Bob was keen for me to spin it off and get it jarred up according to the specifications of the Show Schedule. The criteria were pretty strict, but with a bit of diligence and concentration I managed to rustle up a rather smart looking 'frame for extraction' in a borrowed display case in Category 8, and couple of matching 1lb jars to enter into Cat 16, the novice class.

In those distant days, membership numbers were much lower, and I was basically the only entrant in Cat 16 with my two jars... so that was a bit of a one-horse race. My frame for extraction had a bit of stiff competition though!

Imagine my surprise and delight when I was awarded not just a 1<sup>st</sup> prize for my two jars in Cat 16 but a *Best in Show*... and 2nd prize for my frame. This boosted my confidence and enthusiasm no end, as my competitors were all very experienced beekeepers. I can't take any personal credit for the quality of the honey, which was pure lime flower (pronounced "exquisite" by the Honey Judge) as it was a fortuitous combination of perfect timing of acquiring my bees, good weather, lime flowers in bloom, and the bees knowing what to do. I can honestly say that was my 'magnus opus' and I never took such a high prize ever again, but I always looked forward to preparing my entries and trying to do my bees proud. I learned so much by entering the Shows, and eventually fell into helping out the Show Secretary, Andrew Barber, with a bit of stewarding. It was always fascinating watching the Honey Judges at work, paying attention to what they were looking for and making note of the pitfalls. That eventually led to my stint as Show Secretary.

As an association the NBKA is constitutionally obliged to offer a Honey Show to Members to allow them to gain points to enter at National level. The Constitution states:

*'The main honey and bee produce competition is the Autumn Show, traditionally held on the first Saturday in October. Points may also be gained at other designated shows within the county. Shows are an excellent way of fostering friendly rivalry'.*

Friendly rivalry aside, anyone who has ever prepared exhibits for a show will know that it also fosters a great pride in your bees, as you must pay attention to presentation standards, and to ensure that the criteria for your chosen category of entry is fully met. Often it was something as simple as messy lids, mismatching jars, under-filled jars, or the wrong type of jars, or strange floaty bits, that immediately ruled out what could have been a beautiful honey. Attention to the finer detail really pays dividends.

All details of criteria are available in the Show Schedule which you'll find in this edition of *Beemaster*. The Honey Judge will always be sent a copy of the Show Schedule in advance of judging. In a world that seems set on 'fast and instant', the noble art of beekeeping offers us the opportunity to take our time with our produce, really pay attention to it, and care enough to put forward the best we have.

NBKA has many excellent beekeepers, some of whom have been consistent winners over the years, but that is not to say they hold the floor! The floor is **OPEN TO ALL** – you just have to show up with your entries and register on the day.

I do hope that 2021 sees a resurgence of interest and enthusiasm from members for something that we should all be proud of, i.e. the NBKA Honey Show(s). Show Secretary Karen Burrow has provided the more formal details but I really felt inspired to share my own experience, and offer encouragement to those who have been wavering on the sidelines or never yet had the chance to enter their contributions.

As Show Steward, I will continue to offer my services 'behind the scenes', helping out the Honey Judge and filling in the winners certificates on the day.

Why not give it a whirl this year, to celebrate your bees? I really hope to see you there!

Thanks to Andrew Barber for his invaluable advice in the previous article. Incidentally, there is an excellent handbook available written by the inimitable Yorkshireman, beekeeper and honey judge, Dave Shannon. We have been fortunate to have Dave judge our shows on more than one occasion and he has a keen eye, a very dry wit, and a wealth of beekeeping knowledge that he was ever ready to share.



The book was produced after Dave was invited by the editor of Halifax BKA Newsletter to explain the fundamentals of the process of preparing honey and wax for a show bench. It was particularly aimed at beginner beekeepers and the guidance is presented in a clear and comprehensive way. It is available from [www.northernbeebooks.co.uk](http://www.northernbeebooks.co.uk). You may find it a useful reference guide.

## Using a WBC hive as a bait hive

**Alan Moulton** finds a swarm ignoring the brood box and super in favour of the roof

---

I made up a bait hive at the bottom of the garden consisting of a brood box and one super, all equipped with drawn frames.

The lifts (the outer wall sections) were placed for storage, five in all. This was in late May and within two weeks bees appeared. Initially they used the landing board and entrance as normal, then I noticed bees getting in under the top left corner of the roof; use of the main entrance reduced and then stopped.

At this juncture I had a quick look and the bees had started to lay down natural comb all anchored to the inside of the roof in the cold figuration. There was nothing to do, so I left them to it. Last week I thought I would have look... No way! The roof was stuck down and after prising it revealed comb filling what I could see of the top lifts.

The lessons to be learned...

The space created under the roof by the three stored lifts was deemed as ideal for a colony and so they took it as an opportunity over the prepared brood box and super.

There is no way of doing an inspection without destroying the nest, so I will leave nature alone and let the bees live in harmony with the semi-rural garden, hopefully not annoying the neighbours.



## Bees Abroad update

**Anne Mason** prepares for a busy last few months of fundraising

At the end of this year I will discontinue fundraising for Bees Abroad after almost 10 years. Bees Abroad have requested that my shop be used to support the Royal Bath & West Show over the August Bank Holiday and, in October, the National Honey Show. So, my Bees Abroad stand will be absent from the next couple of NBKA meetings but I hope to be selling Bees Abroad Christmas cards in November and December and going out 'with a bang' with the Bees Abroad Christmas raffle on Monday, 6 December!



I would like to thank the NBKA for allowing me to join meetings of all kinds over the years and for the members especially who have supported my fundraising, helping me no end to contribute funds for a number of Bees Abroad projects, including the recent 'Rory's Well' one in Sierra Leone. Here, beekeeping is a key income-generating part of the programme, supporting the provision of clean water and sustainable farming for over 47 communities living on the fringe of the Gola Rainforest.

We first heard about Bees Abroad and its aim to relieve poverty through beekeeping at an NBKA meeting when Jo Hiscox came to speak about the project she was running in Cameroon and her need for a fundraiser! Rob and I have really enjoyed doing our bit for Bees Abroad, meeting the public as well as beekeepers from all parts of the UK to help raise funds and awareness of Bees Abroad. The charity, as with many others in the current climate, is reassessing how it fund raises and the Bees Abroad online shop is vital at the moment – please go to [www.beesabroad.org.uk](http://www.beesabroad.org.uk) and find 'Shop' under the menu.

## Recent scientific research

**Rob Mason** reports on the latest research into the impact of pesticides on honeybees

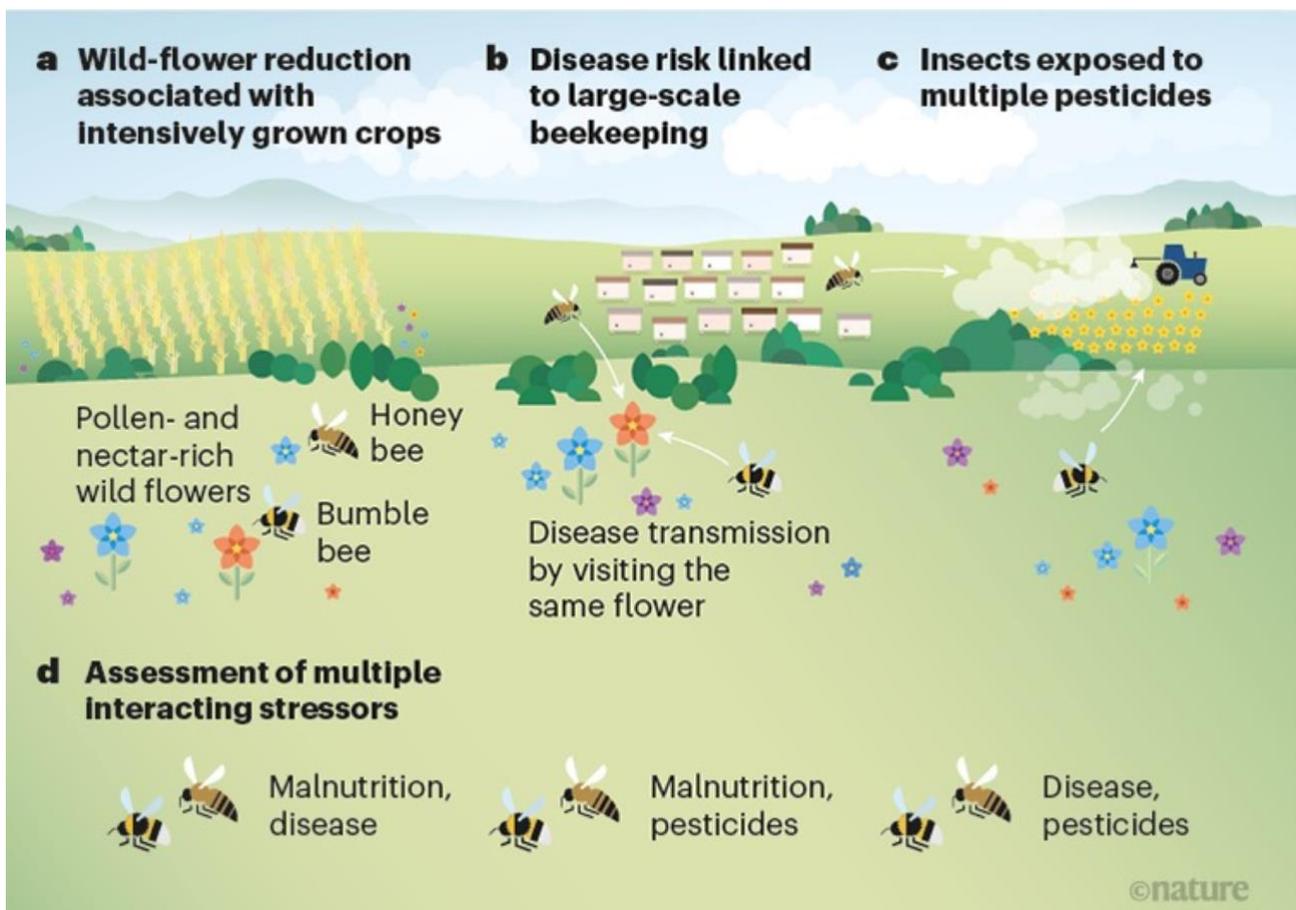
There have recently been a couple of bee research articles which may be of interest.

The first is a study concerning the risk of exposing bees to potential replacements for the controversial neonicotinoid insecticides.

Modern agricultural practice relies increasingly on insecticides to control crop damage caused by insect pests; unfortunately, these agents do not discriminate between pests and beneficial insects. There are a decreasing number of insects around nowadays (as we drivers might have noticed from the far fewer dead insects on our windscreens/headlights following a journey in the car). Insecticide use is just one factor implicated in the worldwide decline of insects.

The impact of neonicotinoid insecticides on bees is well-documented and it would appear that one of the new alternative chemicals, a sulfoximine-based insecticide, Sulfoxaflor, also unfortunately has a negative impact on pollinators (please refer to a summary review published in Nature, Siviter *et al* 2018 at [www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-05917-0](http://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-05917-0)).

The second study (Siviter *et al* 2021, also published in Nature is summarised at [www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-02079-4](http://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-02079-4)). It looks at the combined effects of intensive farming practice, the use of high-density bee colonies for commercial crop pollination, as well as the exposure of bees to multiple insecticides. This interaction is illustrated in the image below, taken from the article.



# Recipe of the month: Spiced apple cake

Linda Jordan shares this autumnal delight

This recipe is originally from the BBKA Honey Show at the Royal Show in 1998. Linda notes that no indication is given for the size of the tin or adjustment for a fan oven.

## Ingredients:

- 8oz (200g) self-raising flour
- 2 tspn (10ml) mixed spice
- 4oz (100g) margarine
- 2oz (50g) golden caster sugar
- 2oz (50g) honey
- 6oz (175g) sultanas
- 5 fl oz (150ml) milk
- 1 egg (medium) beaten
- 6oz (150g) cooking apples peeled & sliced
- 1oz (25g) demerara sugar
- 1 tspn (10ml) honey to glaze

## Method:

1. Mix the flour with the spices.
2. Rub in the fat, add the sugar & sultanas.
3. Warm the honey slightly and blend with the milk and the egg.
4. Add to the dry ingredients and mix well.
5. Place half the mixture into a greased cake tin, cover with half the apple slices.
6. Spread the rest of the cake mixture on the apples and spread the remaining apples over the top.
7. Warm the honey glazing and pour evenly over the top.
8. Sprinkle the demerara sugar on the top.
9. Bake for approx. 1½ hours at 190 degrees C (375 degrees F) until well risen and golden brown.

## Advertisements

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### 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 & 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.

# The Honey Pot, Supplying Beekeeping Equipment since 1990

**2021 - 2022 Price List Available Now**



Welcome to this year's price list, there are some changes now, especially regarding the opening times.

With time marching on and Coronavirus still with us, I am only open by appointment. So please email, text or leave a message on the web site, let me know what you want and what you would like, and when you would like to call and I'll open up for you. Most days are fine and mornings at 10am are normally good to go.

**Open:** By Appointment only.

**Ample Free Parking:** And a large free car park, entry at the bottom of Canal Street. It can get busy at times but you can always find somewhere to park nearby

**The Honey Pot Unit 73, Trent Business Centre, Long Eaton, Nottingham, NG10 4JB.**

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## Hives and Hive Parts

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## Branch Sale Days 2021

Windsor

11th September - 9am to 1pm

Stockbridge

25th September - 9am to 1pm

Devon

2nd October - 9am to 1pm

Rand

9th October

National Honey Show

21st - 23rd October

All our usual bargains will be available including;  
second quality hives parts and frames,  
beekeeping equipment and accessories



## Apivar

The Varroa treatment of choice  
exclusively available from Thornes

## Nottinghamshire Beekeepers Association Schedule for all Honey Shows (from 2021)

Show secretary: Karen Burrow

Exhibits to be staged by 11:00am for the Annual Honey show and by 1:30pm for the Autumn Honey Show. Entries to be completed at the time of entry.

### Classes

1.	Two 454g (1lb) jars of light honey.
2.	Two 454g (1lb) jars of medium honey.
3.	Two 454g (1lb) jars of dark honey.
4.	Two 454g (1lb) jars of granulated honey.
5.	Two 454g (1lb) jars of soft-set honey.
6.	Two 454g (1lb) jars of heather or heather blend honey.
7.	Two containers of cut comb approximately 227g (8oz).
8.	One deep or shallow frame for extraction. Must not be granulated.
9.	Six 28g (1oz) blocks of wax.
9a.	One block of wax, not patterned, at least 454g (1lb) weight and at least 2.5cm (1in) thick.
10.	One bottle of mead, any type, in a standard clear 737g (26oz) glass bottle with a flanged stopper of cork or plastic material.
10a.	Honey beer, any style, although must have honey as an ingredient, 2 bottles, minimum 330ml, not commercially available.

11.	<p>Honey cake. Exhibits must be made from this recipe:</p> <p><b>Ingredients:</b> 227g (8oz) self-raising flour, 170g (6oz) honey, 113g (4oz) butter or margarine, 170g (6oz) sultanas, 2 medium sized eggs, pinch of salt.</p> <p><b>Method:</b> Cream the butter and honey together well. Beat the eggs well and add them alternately with sifted flour and salt (save a little flour to add with the sultanas). Beat all well and lightly. A little milk may be added if necessary. Fold in the sultanas and stir well. Pre-heat the oven to 180C/325F/gas mark 4.</p> <p><b>To cook:</b> prepare a tin approximately 180mm. (7 inches) round, pour in the cake mixture and bake for approximately one and a quarter, to one and a half hours depending on your oven.</p>
12.	Honey dainties not exceeding 227g (8oz), judged on novelty.
13.	Honey preserves. 1 jar of jam or preserve with honey. Jar to be labelled with contents.
14.	Display relating to bees or beekeeping. Base not exceeding 46cm x 33cm (18" x 13").
15.	Photograph connected with bees or beekeeping. Only one print per entry – minimum size of print 15cm x 10cm (6" x 4").
16.	Beginners/Novice class. Two 454g (1lb) jars of honey. Open to beekeepers who have not entered a honey show previously and/or are in the first 2 years of beekeeping.

## **Rules**

1. No two persons may exhibit the product of the same apiary in any class. Other than in a partnership, exhibits must be the produce of the exhibitors own bees.
2. More than one exhibit may be entered in the same class by the same exhibitor but only one prize may be awarded to any exhibitor in any one class.
3. All extracted honey must be in the Ministry of Agriculture squat 454g (1lb) jars with matching lacquered top. The stewards are empowered to transfer any exhibit considered wrongly graded to the proper class before judging commences.
4. Cut comb must be in cut comb cases as for marketing. Frames must be in protective cases; no fancy edging; both sides to be visible. Wax must be cast by the exhibitor. Mead must be in clear glass and corks must be removable without the use of a corkscrew.
5. Cakes and confectionary must be covered in plain cellophane, easily removable by the judge.
6. Entries must be marked solely with labels supplied by the show steward. For jars and bottle labels they must be placed 2.5cm (1 in) from the bottom; sections and frames in the top right hand corner, cakes and confections on the doily.
7. The judges' decision is final.
8. All reasonable care will be taken of the exhibits but the show committee will not be responsible for the loss or damage sustained either to the exhibits, exhibitors or their property.
9. No exhibit may be removed interfered with by the exhibitor or any other person during the show, without the stewards' permission.
10. No entry fees are payable. Places will be rewarded by place cards. For members of the Association points will be awarded thus. 1st – 5 points; 2nd - 4 pts. 3rd – 3pts. Highly commended – 2 pts.; commended 1 pt.
11. Nominated shows are those where the NBKA holds a honey show. Points are gained towards awards, by taking points gained in both shows. The only exception being the Marshall Cup which is awarded for the most points gained in the naturally granulated class at the Autumn Honey Show.

## **Honey Show Registration Form**

In order to help your Show Secretary book everyone in more efficiently and with minimal errors, it would be appreciated if you could fill in this simple entry form to hand over with your submissions. Just print it off and hand it in... simples!

THANK YOU

# Nottinghamshire Beekeepers Association Honey Show

ENTRANT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ENTRANT NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick the classes you wish to enter

1	Light Honey	2	Medium Honey	3	Dark Honey	4	Granulated Honey	5	Soft Set Honey	6	Heather Honey	7	Comb honey	8	Frame of honey	9	Wax	9a	Wax Block	10	Mead	10a	Honey Beer	11	Honey Cake	12	Honey Dainties	13	Preserve	14	Beekeeping Display	15	Photo	16	Novice Honey
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