

North Somerset Beekeepers



December 2019

Welcome to the latest edition of our branch newsletter. As usual your feedback and contributions are very welcome. Please send items to the editor by 25th of the month.

Branch talks and educational events – Rob Williams, Programme Manager

Keep your eyes on the events programme for up to date information. It can be found on our website here:

<http://northsomersetbeekeepers.org/activities/>

New branch website – John Banks

The new revised North Somerset Beekeepers website is up and running. Whilst we have tried to get everything right, we are aware that there may still be errors within the website that needs to be corrected or removed. If you find anything that needs correcting or adding, please contact us with details of the required change and we will do our best to accommodate your request.

The website can be found at:

<https://www.northsomersetbeekeepers.org/>

Please help us to make your website as good as it can be.

New committee members

We voted in new committee members at the Annual General Meeting in November. The new members are:

David Capon – branch secretary
Janet McCulloch – communications officer
Jodi Moger – member without portfolio
Lucy Joy – member without portfolio

In addition, Annabel Lewis agreed to stay on as chair for a second term of office.

Vacancy on committee – Education Coordinator

Due to unforeseen circumstances Paddy Brading has had to relinquish the role of Education Coordinator and we are looking for a member with an interest in education and teaching to fulfill this role. The job description is attached.

Branch AGM

We had a really good attendance for the branch AGM last month and were very pleased to hear Professor Francis Ratnieks, who is the Director of the Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects at Sussex University, give an extremely informative talk on the efficacy of different methods to control varroa. See video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fMP9QjNy94>

Several attendees said they are planning to change their method on the basis of his talk. Further information on his research and videos are available at: www.sussex.ac.uk/lasi

We also asked Prof Ratnieks to award the certificates to members who have successfully completed BBKA courses this year and to the winners of honey show cups:

- David Capon - who once again won the Silver Queen, the top award at the Bristol Honey Festival
- Jane Boss - Hans Wilson Cup for most points in the North Somerset Honey Show
- Paddy Brading - George Simms Cup for most points in the Portishead Honey Show.

The Branch also won the Portishead Townswomen's Guild cup for the best stand at the Portishead Summer Show.

Basic certificate:

- Alice Patterson
- Simon King
- Fran Frappell
- Charlotte Matthews
- Ian Matthews

Module 6 (Honeybee behaviour)

- Michael Bachelor
- Sandra Slater
- Robert Williams
- Tony Slater

Well done to everyone and photos on the last page!

Winter Cluster – Rob Francis

The next winter cluster will be held on Tuesday 21st January at the Crown Inn, Churchill at noon.

Nailsea Christmas Fair

In the late spring a swarm was collected from Crown Glass shopping centre in Nailsea and is now hived in our teaching apiary. The shopping centre management took a keen interest as the manager has beekeepers in the family and also the centre's mascot is a 6 foot tall bee called honeysuckle.

The branch was invited to sell the surplus honey from the apiary bees at the Christmas fair. This of course turned into the coldest night of the autumn so far but was thankfully dry. Thirty-three jars of honey were sold along with some cut comb and a block of wax raising a total of £161.35 for the club.



As always people were very interested to stop to talk about bees and honey. The biggest smile of the night belonged to the security guard who stayed late many months ago to look after the swarm as

it slowly clustered in the box.

Apiary update – Eric Sortwell

The new apiary is almost complete, just a few items to finish:

- Hedge to continue planting
- All hives to be renumbered
- New log-style shed for storing spare hives and hive parts.

Ongoing, we are looking for volunteers who have two hours per month to spare to assist with apiary maintenance, i.e. grass cutting, hedge cutting, hive painting. Many hands make light work and your help would be very much appreciated. Please get in touch if you would like to join the apiary team. Contact me at: eric.sortwell@talktalk.net

The new apiary has been fully approved and signed off by Avon. Watch out for some exciting news and events this Spring and the official Grand Opening on 15th May 2020.

The apiary is open to all members, with all levels of experience; get involved and share your experience. It's all about helping each other and, in turn, helping the bees.

Wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas from the Apiary Team.



10% discount from BB Wear

We have been offered 10% discount and free carriage on orders if we can provide proof of BBKA membership. If you are interested, please contact our Membership Secretary at heather@pitch.plus.com to obtain confirmation of your membership before placing your order over the phone or by email.

You will need to provide your name, address, phone number and details of your order. Contact BB Wear phone on 01872 562731 or email shop@bbwear.co.uk See the website for further information: www.bbwear.co.uk

Happy Christmas!

Wishing all our members and readers a very happy Christmas and New Year. May all our colonies survive the winter and have a healthy and productive 2020.



Module certificates and cup/trophy winners

