

# North Somerset Beekeepers



*Bristol Bee & Pollination 31  
August/1<sup>st</sup> September*

**August 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 25<sup>th</sup> 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/>

### **Honey extraction– Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August**

The next branch talk and demonstration will be on extraction of honey and will be held at Kenn Village Hall starting at 10:00.

### **Upcoming local shows**

#### *Tickenham Show 17<sup>th</sup> August*

Another opportunity to show off your honey product skills. Enter honey, cakes etc in the Honey Show, the schedule and rules can be found here:  
[www.tickenham.org/tickenham-flower-show-schedule-2019/](http://www.tickenham.org/tickenham-flower-show-schedule-2019/)

#### *Winscombe Michaelmas Fair 14<sup>th</sup> September*

Adrian Wells is looking for volunteers to help with the stand. If you are available, please contact Adrian via WhatsApp or text on 07847 015 155.

As ever, anyone selling products must enter their honey for judging to ensure that David's time is not wasted. Honey show rules can be found via this link in Section 7 page 32.  
[http://www.winscombeca.org.uk/uploads/8/2/5/2/8252487/2019\\_programme\\_contents\\_final\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.winscombeca.org.uk/uploads/8/2/5/2/8252487/2019_programme_contents_final_pdf.pdf)

The entry form can be found here:  
[http://www.winscombeca.org.uk/uploads/8/2/5/2/8252487/2019\\_entryform\\_final.doc](http://www.winscombeca.org.uk/uploads/8/2/5/2/8252487/2019_entryform_final.doc)

The Bristol Bee & Pollination Festival will be held on Saturday the 31st August and Sunday 1st September at the University of Bristol Botanic Garden, Stoke Park Road, Bristol, BS9 1JG.

This year, the Honey Show celebrates the 90th Birthday of the Silver Queen Trophy, with a special class of her own. Entrants from neighbouring branches, such as our own, are very welcome. Last Year David Capon from North Somerset took away the top prize!

See attached leaflet and for information about the Honey Show, show schedule and entry form, contact:  
[www.bristolhoneyshow.co.uk](http://www.bristolhoneyshow.co.uk) or Email:  
[showsec@bristolbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:showsec@bristolbeekeepers.org.uk)

### **Hire our honey extractor**

Most of us will either have already taken off supers or planning to do so, then comes the potentially messy job of extracting the honey.

We currently have three extractors plus uncapping trays and filter buckets, which can be hired by members. The cost is £5 for a four-day period. The extractors will be supplied clean and must be returned clean to our Honey Extractor Manager.

The extractors must be collected from the Honey Extractor Manager and returned on time as there is often a lot of demand at this time of year. Please email to arrange your time slot:  
[sheilajamesgardendesign@talktalk.net](mailto:sheilajamesgardendesign@talktalk.net)

### **New membership IT system (eR2) – Heather Pitch**

Just a reminder that we are using the BBKA's new membership IT system to distribute the August branch newsletter to current members.

If you have previously unsubscribed, and really do not want to receive communications from us, please click on unsubscribe a second time.

## Branded garments

A limited range of garments branded with our logo has been ordered and will be available to buy at the apiary. The items ordered are T-shirts and sweatshirts in small, medium and large sizes, plus 6 caps.

If there is interest in these, we will open orders again next month. You can view the online catalogue here: <http://www.monmark.co.uk/catalogue/>

## Report from the Portishead Show – David Capon



We had a very busy show and, once again, our stand won FIRST PRIZE. Well done and thanks to all the helpers and to those who supplied honey products for sale.

## Apiary update – Eric Sortwell

Don't forget the apiary opens every Sunday during the summer at 9.30am for coffee, tea and bee chat.

I am looking for beekeepers willing to act as mentors for this year's new beekeepers in most areas. Please get in touch if you would like to do it, it's very rewarding.

Contact me at: [eric.sortwell@talktalk.net](mailto:eric.sortwell@talktalk.net)



## Wider educational events

*Wiltshire Bee & Honey Day, Saturday, 5 October at the Corn Exchange in Devizes*

Don't forget, Wiltshire BKA have invited North Somerset beekeepers to the Wiltshire Bee & Honey Day on Saturday, 5 October at the Corn Exchange in Devizes (10am-4pm). It is free to attend.

They have three very interesting lectures lined up:

10.00 Talk: *Comb - how and why bees make it and how to manage it* by Lynfa Davis.

11.40 Talk: *The future for local bees in Britain* by Norman Carreck.

13.45 Talk: *Honeybee communication* by Lynfa Davis

There is also an open honey show. Visit the website below for full details of the programme, honey schedule, maps showing parking locations and order forms for \*lunch, which needs to be ordered in advance.

<http://www.wiltshirebeekeepers.org.uk/events-calendar>

Any questions, please contact Sophie Butcher: [sophie@activeinfo.co.uk](mailto:sophie@activeinfo.co.uk)

## BBKA Queen Rearing Workshop – Dick Berry

I have been keeping bees for around fifteen years. I have about twenty hives on six sites stretching from National Trust Tyntesfield to Ashton on the edge of South Bristol. Most of my hives are nationals 14x12 but I do have a Beehouse which is a type of long plastic hive which resides in our garden in Long Ashton, and I have just put a long hive onto Alderman Moore's allotment site in Ashton Vale which I am about to populate.

Queen rearing for me has always up until now been a bit hit or miss with my usual method being to place a queen cell into a nuc when available or to split my brood from the rest at the appropriate time. It has worked over the years in terms of volume of colonies but quality may have suffered due to which colonies decided to cooperate with the plan. I have not necessarily been increasing what I would consider to be my better bees.

Management of unruly hives has meant that I concentrate these at a gulag in Long Ashton away from everyone and I don't make nucs from these, although they can be very productive. It was time to look into being a bit more scientific about it. I bought a book but didn't get around to reading it. Queen rearing seemed to be a bit mysterious and was something other people did. I had previously bought in a few queens from the usual sources, but the bees did not always accept them or they only lasted a season then fizzled out.

I saw the opportunity to go on a course at Bridgwater and, as my bees were still in credit from a good honey harvest last year, they paid for me to go. The two-day course was excellent, delivered by Shaun Stevens who is a Master Beekeeper from Buckinghamshire. The course covered: queen rearing made simple; drones, life and

behavior; queen introduction and management of queen mating.

There was a good mix of theory and practical and I must say it was pitched just right to give a reasonably experienced beekeeper the confidence to have a go and take it further. We all had a go at grafting and at least gained an understanding of the process and minimal equipment required. We placed grafts into a hive overnight and a couple of these were accepted by the bees who started to draw wax around the cups.



We all also came away with a mini nuc populated with a cupful of nurse bees taken from the Quantock Apiary with either a queen cell taken from a Miller frame or a cup brought by Shaun from his home apiary. We were told not to expect too much from these as it is late in the season but at least we were able to practice with real bees for next time.

Shaun has provided all the participants with copies of his slides in PDF format so we have material that can be passed on to others. We were asked to complete a feedback survey on returning home. I gave it full marks and feel confident and inspired to start next season actually picking which bees I want to increase. I have the knowledge, had a practice so see no reason not to make the best of it. If anyone is interested in more details I would be happy to pass on what I was told and shown.

Contact me via: [d.ickberry@icloud.com](mailto:d.ickberry@icloud.com)

### **Queen rearing group – Tony Slater**

The queen rearing group has decided to move forward towards a more practical approach and intends to allocate a part of the new apiary to the business of queen rearing. Demonstrations of techniques and the establishment of mating nucs will bring the subject alive for anyone interested in the subject.

### **Essential supplies scheme – John Banks**

The Essential Items Purchase Scheme continues to provide good value for membership money. This year we have purchased: 80 MAQS; 150 trays of Apiguard; 838 1lb. Honey jars; 576 3/4lb. Honey jars; 166 1/2lb. Honey jars; 97 x 14 kg Ambrosia (1.3tonnes); 84 x 2.5kg. Fondant; 14 x 35gm API-Bioxal; 8 packs of SN4 Frames

and 10 packs of 14 x 12 frames at a cost of just over £3,000.

If you haven't collected your items yet, please do so.

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:shop@bbwear.co.uk) See the website for further information: [www.bbwear.co.uk](http://www.bbwear.co.uk)

### **Seeking local honey (Cleeve area)**

We have received a request for some local honey for someone who suffers with pollen allergies. The family live in Cleeve post code BS49. If you can help, please contact Amy Billitteri at: [amy\\_billitteri@hotmail.com](mailto:amy_billitteri@hotmail.com)

### **Wax reclamation – Jenny Wakenshaw**

If you have any wax/frames you wish to dispose of, you can drop them off, securely bagged, at:

- Branch apiary (Sundays)
- Annabel's home in Backwell – email to arrange: [busybee6@virginmedia.com](mailto:busybee6@virginmedia.com)
- Or Jenny will collect – call 07816 547 886

### **Nuc for sale – Jane Boss**

I have a 6 frame Nuc for sale for £120. It meets the BBKA standard and is ideal for over wintering. Ready now. Contact me at: [boss.jane@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:boss.jane@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Mated queens for sale Jenny Wakenshaw**

I have several mated queens for sale for £25 each. Contact me on: 07816 547 886.