

North Bucks Bee Keepers' Association

Newsletter August 2015

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Calendar at-a-glance

9 th August	Stewkley Bee Safari
27 th September	Honey show
6 th October	NBBKA AGM
20 th October	Lecture
17 th November	Lecture
19 th January	Lecture
16 th February	Lecture

Our own Bee Health Advisor

Well done to Andy Fenner on becoming our first and to date only Bee Health Advisor. APHA seasonal bee inspector Karen Smith writes:

Dear North Bucks BKA

This is confirm that Mr Andrew Fenner attended the Bee Health Advisors training day on Saturday July 11th, and is now ready to provide support to your members in this new role.

Please could you contact him to discuss how best to promote his role to your membership, and how he would like any members that have concerns about their colonies health to contact him for advice.

Thank you

regards

Karen Smith

Seasonal Bee Inspector

South Eastern Team

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

Umbrella Fair – 15th & 16th August

Writes committee member Phil Gabel:

Could you put around a general request for help at the Umbrella Fair held on Northampton Race Course on the 15/16th August.

Andrew [Beer] will help me set up our stall on the Saturday morning and supply an observation hive to use for the day and would like to have it returned at the end of the day to reduce stress on his bees.

The Fair is open to the public from 12.00 - 6.00pm with all stall holders vehicle movements to be finished by 11.00am. On Saturday the fair continues until 11.00pm but stall holders can exit at 6.00pm.

There is room for one vehicle behind the stall and free off-site parking for helpers.

I would like other association members to help me man the stall even for a couple of hours during the day. It would be a good opportunity for them to sell any bee related products they might have. If someone could also provide an observation hive for the Sunday that would be great.

The website for the Umbrella Fair is <http://www.umbrellafair.org.uk/>

We will be located in the green village, I believe next to Friends of the Earth.

This is a green ecology, environmental festival containing arts and music stages as well as stalls, so plenty to keep you amused.

This is a vegetarian festival, so no meat products are sold here and all power is produced from wind, solar or recycled chip shop oil.

Anyone interested in helping out can contact me on my mobile 07906662193 or e-mail showsley@hotmail.co.uk for more information.

Any help from beginners or experienced bee keepers would be great.

Calls for assistance

Please don't forget to answer the following calls for assistance from your committee:

- Swarm collection service
- Documentation of the history of our honey show trophies
- Website automated renewal process testers

Seasonal Notes

August already – how the season has rushed on! Indications are that 2015 will not be quite such a good year, honey wise, as 2014 but better than many, and it is good to hear of some beginners getting their first crops.

Talking of beginners, I must say we have had some tremendous sessions with them this year; first in the classroom and then out at Cosgrove. I must congratulate them for their enthusiasm and what they have achieved. For them this is only the start of what we hope will be a long happy journey with bees. The beginners' class, of course, goes on at Cosgrove until December as we start winding the bees down for winter. However, beginners please be assured help from our association goes on much longer and if you have any 'probs', we are all here to help at the end of the phone or on the touch of the screen. I congratulate Terry Lock for the way he has drilled the beginners, us and Cosgrove into shape. In thanking Terry may I thank all those who have helped in the technical sessions (Andrew and Fiona Eelbeck, Chris Jay, Sue Long) or at Cosgrove (Carol Gale, the Eelbecks and all those others my geriatric brain has forgotten.)

Changes on the Committee

Sandra Knox, a beginner, has sweetly agreed to be Membership Secretary. It is a taxing job because it is inextricably linked with the BBKA capitation payments, and if we get it wrong we could end up in Carey Street, i.e. bankrupt. Tania Thorne, who needs to give more time to her young family, is stepping down, but as Tania says she wants to continue to play a part in our affairs. She will! Also joining us in a new post is Helen Picton, another beginner, as our Data Control Officer. It is a fact that data now rules our lives, and I am sure we could not be in better hands. Jeff Martins, thank you for what you have done, will be standing down from his temporary role as secretary, at least by the AGM. It would be marvellous if someone would volunteer for this role – we have a lot of fun on the committee, you may be sure. If you would be so kind to do the secretary role, please do get in touch with me, I would really appreciate that!

It would be useful too if someone could take on from me the role of Education Secretary. It requires no beekeeping skills whatsoever, only a bit of administration and an ability to ensure that beekeeping suits ordered are dished out to their intended recipients if they are to fit!

Our next big event

Honey Show in conjunction with Buckingham BKA at Buckingham Nurseries on Sunday 27th September.

This is going to be a marvellous day, a climax to the season, an opportunity to be with friends in the convivial atmosphere of Buckingham Nurseries and an opportunity too to join in their fun day including Apples. You know you will enjoy the day, so please come along and, of course, with lots of exhibits for the show. Now is the time to get them ready, of course!

In the Apiary

You will be pleased that I am not going to go through all the tasks for this month as I am under a three-line whip to keep these notes short, but will just mention...

Robbing: Keep 'them' out

Review: Open and review each stock, take any necessary steps including varroa treatment, so as to ensure it emerges healthy and strong in spring. A key is to have it well supplied with autumn raised bees.

Feeding: consider what feeding will be necessary. I try to start feeding in the last week of August, and finish by 20th September.

Equipment: Is it fit for purpose?

There is no quicker way for killing bees than a cold damp hive.

Don't forget the cause may not be the hive itself, but an unsuitable location such as that with long wet grass, dripping trees or those never warmed or dried by winter sun or winds. And if your hive leaks you are simply asking for trouble.

As usual, have fun and please get ready for the event of the year, our Honey Show on 27th September.

- Andrew