

# Brighton & Lewes Beekeepers Newsletter



August 2017

Editor: Norman Dickinson

BRIGHTON AND LEWES DIVISION OF THE SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION  
[www.brightonlewesbeekeepers.co.uk](http://www.brightonlewesbeekeepers.co.uk)

## Next out apiary meeting

Sun 10<sup>th</sup> September - Preparing hives for winter with Amanda Millar @ Grassroots

## Invitation to Saltdean Primary School 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 by Hilary Osman

Last year we had an enquiry to attend a school summer fair for this summer. Having swapped details we were duly asked if this was still possible in early May.

It was slightly overcast from the previous weather we had been having and the cool breeze was very welcome. The school fair was well organised, and we were there to show off some bees and sell some products from the hive. During the session the school had x3 races of differing distances depending on age for 'Race for life'. So this gave us a continuous supply of visitors to the stall. When we asked the children questions on the bees it was amazing how much some of them knew and in fact some more than their parents. Generally a good day out and we have already been invited to go back next year.



## Amanda advises

The honey flow has nearly finished, the blackberries are over and although there are a few things still in flower and the Water Balsam has started, this unsettled weather has put the lid on any more serious nectar coming in now. I have removed all that is capped and am just waiting and hoping that the rest will be capped very soon. With the supers off they can start storing honey in the boxes they will be wintering on, so I like to get all the supers off in the first week of August. I will be leaving them with about a super of their own honey and still have frames of stores to return to several colonies, which I removed in the spring before adding supers. Once the honey has been extracted, I put the supers and frames back on the colonies they came off, over an open crownboard for a few days for them to lick clean. Then I can clean them up, either treating with Acetic acid or freezing to remove any wax moth eggs and stacking in my honey room. At this time of year I look at my colonies with a view to next year, making a note of those with dark comb which will need a shook swarm or Bailey next year, and move dark combs to the edges of the brood boxes for removal in the spring when they are empty. I run a lot of my colonies on several supers for brood, and often they move up in the winter to where the stores are and I can remove the bottom dark empty super in the spring.

As soon as the honey has been removed is the last chance to requeen if you have a poor queen if you are starting with a queen cell or virgin, so there is still time for her to mate well. Hopefully, you are aware of the colonies involved and may have a mated queen already lined up which means you may prefer to requeen after the varroa treatment when colonies are smaller, healthier, less robbing etc. I have a super productive colony which has a queen in her fourth summer; I doubt whether she will last until next year and don't want to end up with them drone laying in the winter so am just debating whether to put her in a nucleus for safe keeping and let them rear a new one. It is not a good idea to treat for varroa while you have a queen cell or virgin waiting to mate. I have a couple of queens in my Apidea which show such promise that I plan to build them up rather than risk them in requeening another colony. Normally I have to wait ages for them to move down reluctantly into a nucleus, but last week I wired their little frames into a shallow nucleus I made, just using a standard frame top bar. They are expanding much more willingly and if the weather deteriorates will manage much better in one (or two) shallow nucs than crowded in an Apidea where I am unable to treat them for varroa (see picture). I am very pleased with the result.

As early as possible after removing the last of my supers, I like to get the varroa treatment underway. After the supers are off and before the varroa treatment goes on I give them a thorough health inspection. Be aware of the temperature though; last year August was very warm at times and Apiguard for instance is not advis-

able above 25 degrees or it can drive the bees out. Monitor before and after to check effectiveness of whichever treatment you use.

In mid July, I was in the garage scraping some old frames and heard a hum. Rushing outside, I saw a medium sized swarm of bees in the middle of the garden which rapidly made off over the wall, across my neighbour's garden and up and off far away at quite a speed as though they knew where they were going. Oh heck! Was my first thought, but after checking all my colonies, and marking and clipping my only unclipped young queen, I realised it could not have been any of mine, phew! But if I had had a bait hive out, maybe they would have stayed. I have never had a swarm settle in one of my bait hives, and this year was the first for a long time I did not bother with one.....ohh well, I have too many colonies anyway.

This July the flowers most attractive to my bees and other pollinators in the garden have been Goat's Rue, Marjoram, also used by a good number of butterflies this year, and scabious. I was watching the bees on the Goat's Rue (see picture) and they stuffed their heads and tongues into the nectary, forcing down the lower wings and keel with front pair of legs and paddling like mad with the rear to release and pack the orange pollen. Useful having so many pairs of legs!

I have already seen a lot of wasps bothering the bees in spite of dealing with 4 wasp nests I found in my garden, so must put my wasp traps up soon and reduce the entrances right down. I have also noticed a normal reduction in the populations as they wind down for winter, this might be more obvious in strains with some native genes rather than those with a lot of Italian genes. I don't expect swarms now but will be on the lookout for supersedure cells. I hope your harvest was good; it has to be better than last year!





## Photo Corner



*Apidea frames wired into a shallow nucleus*

*Photo by Amanda Millar*



*Honey bee working Goat's Rue*

*Photo by Amanda Millar*



*Two of Amanda's hives*

*Photo by Amanda Millar*

## FOR SALE

Keith Macfarlane, a beekeeper based in Tunbridge Wells is retiring from beekeeping due to health reasons and has the following items for sale:-

1. 4 Nr colonies: currently hived in 2 WBCs and 2 nationals. (3 very strong, 1 weaker)
2. 3 Nr empty hives: 1 WBC and 2 nationals
3. 1 Nr 4 frame stainless steel 2 years old manual extractor. (to be sold AFTER hives have gone)
4. 1 Nr unused Paynes polystyrene nuc (1 month old)
5. Spare / additional supers and broods for national and WBC.
6. 2 Nr Bee suits (to be sold AFTER hives have gone)
7. Miscellaneous equipment, strainers, tools, frames, foundation, buckets, etc. etc.

Keith asks if any B&L member would like to purchase any of the above, based on agreed generous discounts from new prices.

Keith can be contacted on 07808 40355 or 01892 525993 or email: [keith@macpart.c.uk](mailto:keith@macpart.c.uk)

His address is 63 Culverden Close, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 9SL

## 2017 National Honey Show @ Sandown Park, Esher

The 86<sup>th</sup> National Honey Show takes part from Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher, Surrey, KT10 9AJ with a full programme of lectures, classes and traders. This will be in addition to the main business of the show which is the display of honey, wax and other products of the hive together with honey related produce such as cakes, mead etc.

Whilst we are eagerly awaiting our honey harvest, now is the time to consider entering your honey, wax, candles, honey cakes/biscuits/cookies, mead or any other honey related product into the show. Latest date for entries is 9<sup>th</sup> October. The exceptions are essays, videos, microscopy slides and photographs which must reach the Entries Secretary by 15<sup>th</sup> September. In previous years late entries have been allowed for all except essays, videos, microscopy slides and photographs, however there has been no confirmation that late entries will be permitted. The Show Schedule is due for publication in August and will detail late entries, if permissible this year.

If you are considering entering any of the honey classes, some of the key points that the judges will be looking for are

Is the exhibit of the correct weight and in the right class.

Ensure that the entry is free from particles of foreign matter, no rusty or discoloured lids, non-matching entries where two jars are specified or crystals or have in a jar of "clear honey"

Aroma and flavour are key elements. Beware of overheating your honey as this is likely to destroy the perfect aroma.

Ensure your honey is stiff and viscous, unripe honey tends to be very runny and watery.

Clear and bright honey will most certainly catch the judges eye, but make sure that there is no froth or scum on the top of the honey.

Preparation of your exhibit is fundamental if you expect to be in with a chance to win a prize. Some consider that the process of extracting the honey plays a pivotal part of this preparation. Check individual frames for bands of discoloration and depending on what class you intend to enter you may wish to give these a miss. If entering light or dark honey classes then separate and spin-out the light and dark frames separately. To ensure that the correct viscosity is achieved, only use frames that are 90% capped. Spin out any thin or unripe honey BEFORE uncapping. Try not to use supers that have been used as brood boxes as these may well contain fragments of pupa skins and larval debris, which may affect the colour or flavour of the honey. To prevent imparting a caramel flavour to the honey, do not use an electrically heated capping knife, which can overheat the honey at the top of the cells.

The filtering process will dictate the final clarity of the honey. It is best if the honey is warm before commencing and use at least three filters of different mesh size. The standard course and "fine" mesh used by most beekeepers may be used to remove most impurities, then pass the honey through a very fine denier nylon, similar to the size used by winemakers.

Wash all glass jars, even new ones before use, then dry by upturning onto a clean wire rack and leave in a warm room to dry. Use of any drying cloth can leave loose fibres, which the judges will pick up on and disqualify your entry. Ensure that the warm honey is kept in the settling tank for at least 24 hours to allow air bubbles to rise to the surface. Pour the honey into warm jars and allow the honey to run down the inside face of the tilted jar, this will reduce the chance of air bubbles being introduced.

By following the rules noted above, this will give you every chance of picking up an award, so, whats stopping you.

Visit the NHS website for more details  
<http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/>



# Divisional Diary 2016/7

**Out Apiary Meetings:** Meetings are on Saturdays and Sundays. Unless otherwise stated a 1.30pm start for beginners will be followed by a general meeting at 2.30pm. All meetings advertised will be weather permitting. Location maps are on the website in the member's section.

## Summer Programme

### Out apiary meetings

**Sun 10<sup>th</sup> Sept: Grassroots – Preparing hives for winter with Amanda Millar**

## Winter Programme

### Indoor meetings

Wed 27<sup>th</sup> September: The Inspector Calls with David Rudland

Wed 18<sup>th</sup> October: The Asian Hornet with John Feltwell

Wed 15<sup>th</sup> November: Mead Making with Steve Gibson

Wed 17<sup>th</sup> Jan 2018: AGM followed by a quiz with Amanda and the B&L Annual Honey Show

Wed 21<sup>st</sup> Feb: The Effect of Bee Stings on Humans with Mike Williams

Wed 21<sup>st</sup> March: Skep Beekeeping with Chris Parks

## For your diary

**Sat 5<sup>th</sup> August - Rottingdean Fair.**

**Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept – Social BBQ at Heather McNiven's.**

**26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> Oct - 86<sup>th</sup> National Honey Show, Sandown Park Racecourse, KT10 9AJ.**

**Sat 25<sup>th</sup> November - Sussex Beekeepers' Association Annual Convention, Uckfield Civic Centre.**

The Brighton and Lewes Division of the SBKA cannot accept any responsibility for loss, injury or damage sustained by persons in consequence of their participation in activities arranged.

## Officers of the Division

### President

Lionel Reuben

### Chairman

Ian White

E: [anda.pinehill@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:anda.pinehill@yahoo.co.uk)

### Vice-Chairman/Treasurer/Membership Secretary

Pat Clowser, 5 Wivelsfield Road, Saltdean, BN2 8FP

T: 01273 700404 E: [patricia.blbees@hotmail.com](mailto:patricia.blbees@hotmail.com)

### Secretary

Hilary Osman, Holly Tree Cottage, Norlington Lane,

Ringmer, BN8 5SH T: 01273 813045

E: [secretary@brightonlewesbeekeepers.co.uk](mailto:secretary@brightonlewesbeekeepers.co.uk)

### Meetings Secretary

Mary King

### Swarm coordination

Ian White

### Webmaster

Gerald Legg, E: [gerald@chelifer.com](mailto:gerald@chelifer.com)

### Newsletter editor

Norman Dickinson, 34 Abergavenny Rd, Lewes, BN7 1SN

T: 07792 296422 E: [editor.blbees@outlook.com](mailto:editor.blbees@outlook.com)

### Librarian

Vacant

### Out-Apiary Managers

Amanda Millar: - "Burgess Hill"

Heather McNiven: - "Knowlands Farm"

Sue Taylor: - "Big Park"

### County Representatives

Bob Curtis, Ian White

### Education coordinator

Amanda Millar

### National Honey Show Representative

Norman Dickinson

### Committee Members

Sue Taylor, Gerald Legg, Heather McNiven, Mary King

## Contributions to our newsletter

Contributions, including photos, to the newsletter (max 900 words) can be sent, preferably by email, to the editor see panel above for details. Photos etc. for the website should be emailed to our webmaster, see panel above.

Regional Bee Inspector - Sandra Grey, Mobile: 07775 119430, email: [sandra.grey@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sandra.grey@apha.gsi.gov.uk)

Seasonal Bee Inspector - Diane Steele, Mobile: 07775 119452, email: [diane.steele@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:diane.steele@apha.gsi.gov.uk)