

Brighton & Lewes Beekeepers



A DIVISION OF THE SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

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EDITORIAL



Thieving bees and the evolution of flowers

Are honey bees as benign for the environment in general and flowers in particular as we've assumed?

People have always thought that bees and flowering plants—angiosperms—evolved together in a form of symbiosis. At the top of the list of pollinators in most people's minds is the honey bee. As beekeepers, we'd not inclined to disagree.

So it was interesting to find news in a [recent edition of New Scientist](#) of research that pours doubt on that theory. For one plant at least, anyway.

According to the story, researcher [Tao Wan](#) at the Fairy Lake Botanical Garden in Shenzhen, China, and his

colleagues have discovered that, in the tropical rainforests on the Chinese island of Hainan, the Asian honeybee (*Apis cerana*) steals pollen from a plant called *Gnetum luofuense* (left). The bees keep all the pollen they collect from this plant for themselves, to the detriment of the plants that they take it from. And they avoid female plants, so they don't facilitate pollination for this species.

This is against a background of [research](#) that increasingly suggests that in some areas of the UK, the numbers of honey bees could be crowding out other pollinators, such as bumbles and solitary bees, wasps, flies and others.

Such knowledge won't stop me keeping bees, nor will it you, I suspect. But it's something to think about.

Bee Chats in the pub

B&L Committee member Graham Bubloz has been organising get-togethers in pubs recently—outdoors for obvious reasons. They've been enjoyable occasions, just sitting and chatting about bees over a drink for a couple of hours. Please do join us! Go to the [events page](#) for details.

We shall of course be running the usual indoor meetings as well this winter: a full list is on the [back page](#).

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2021

EVENTS

- Bee chats in the pub and indoor meetings.
- See [back page](#) for details

NEXT MONTH

- Winter tips
- Your contributions
- Apiary reports
- Committee news
- Asian Hornet update
- News updates
- From around the web

PHOTOS WANTED

Do you have interesting photos or video links you'd like to share? Or an insight from your beekeeping that would could enhance the hobby for others? Do you have skills that could be useful to other members? Anything else you'd like to see in this newsletter?

Ideas and contributions welcome; all contact details are on the [back page](#).

ONLINE

brightonlewesbeekeepers.co.uk



QR link to our website

Seasonal tips for October

Medication

Not yours, but the bees'. Last month I provided a link to all of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) approved varroa treatments. All of the summer treatments should now be done. However, The Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013 sets out legal text on the manufacture, authorisation, marketing, distribution and post-authorisation surveillance of veterinary medicines.

Our bees are classed as a food-producing animal and therefore beekeepers, especially those who sell their honey via a third party, must comply with these regulations. The most important of these is the keeping of a medicine record card.

The regulations say: "Beekeepers must keep documentation containing details of veterinary medicinal products administered in colonies for at least five years, irrespective of whether or not the colony concerned is no longer in that keeper's possession or has died during that period." A standard form you can copy is available [here](#).

It goes on to say that the use of generic substances such as oxalic acid or self-made thymol solutions should not be used. If traces are found during routine honey sampling, which the Bee Inspector may take when visiting you during a routine EFB inspection, beekeepers are liable for prosecution. It is also important to note that some



Approved medicines only, please



Cleaning: use cold/tepid water first, then hot water with soda

products available on beekeeping manufacturers' websites are not registered medicinal products and although available, should not be administered to a colony.

Cleaning your kit

For those of you that had a honey harvest and used your centrifuge and settling tanks, it's time to make sure they are clean and dry for storage until next year. I find that when washing any equipment that has come into contact with honey it is best to clean it initially with cold or tepid water to remove any wax particles. If you use hot water, it is likely to melt the wax which will then be smeared all over the inside of the spinner and or settling tank. Only after this has been done, do I use hot water with some soda to clean and remove any propolis followed by a final hot wash and then dry.

For drawn brood comb it's best to freeze it for about 48 hours before it is stored, to kill off any wax moth. If not, wax moth larvae will hatch over the winter and feed on the nutrient rich cocoons in the comb. It's best to burn any that still have dead bee larvae in. You don't want to reinfect a new colony with whatever caused the issue

in the first place. Wax that is black should be removed, disposed of and the frame cleaned.

The colony has been in the hive for at least five or six months and has had time to stick everything down with propolis or wax or both. This could be the ideal time to change all of the hive components for clean, well-repaired items. Let's face it, the concept behind most of our hives is the movable frame; there's a clue in the name. If we can't do that because of the detritus that's built up over the summer, we might as well go back to using skeps.

Setting up for winter

Now is the time to take stock of the colonies you have and to assess whether they will make it through the winter.

One of the first checks concerns feeding: do they have enough food to see them through? The average approximate weight of stores should be about that of a full super. In reality and as a good rule of thumb, when you try to lift or 'heft' one side of the hive, it should feel like it is fixed to the floor. Remember to remove the queen excluder between the brood and super

Now the weather is turning cooler, all drones should have been ejected. If there are still a significant number still in the hive, it could signal that the queen is failing in some way and should be replaced sooner than later. It's unlikely that you have spare mated queens at this time of year so think about uniting it with a nice strong

(Continued on page 3)



Sad drones ejected from the hive in autumn

Seasonal tips for October (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

colony. The same goes for any colony that is too small (bees covering four or fewer frames).

Next, look at the hive itself. Reduce the size of the entrance to help the bees defend against robbing wasps or other honeybees. Make sure it is bee and weather tight. Those small gaps between the boxes or around the roof that were not much of a problem in the summer can be a magnet for unwelcome guests.

With regard to the entrance block, some suggest the hole should be at the top under the brood box not down next to the mesh. As any build-up of dead bees will not block the entrance and stop the bees flying on sunny still days.

Guard against other pests such as mice and Green Woodpeckers. Mice can

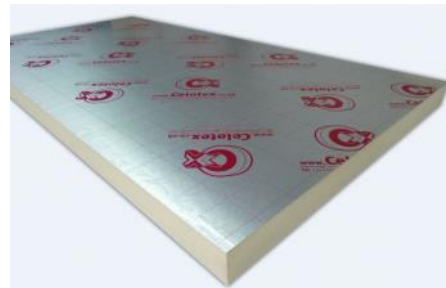
wreak all sorts of havoc in a hive if left unchecked but can be dealt with by fitting a mouse guard or reducing the size of the entrance. They may have very supple bodies but the one thing they can't manipulate is their skulls, so if you reduce the entrance to about 9mm in depth, it should keep the blighters out.

In some areas, Green Woodpeckers have learnt that beehives are a good source of food later in the year. Woodpeckers do as much damage inside the hive as mice, with the added bonus of a hole drilled through from the outside. To protect the hive, place wire chicken mesh loosely round the outside of the hive to stop them being able to reach the hive and peck at the wood. Or, wrap the sides of the hive in plastic to prevent them being able to perch on the hive. This also makes the hive more weather-proof.

Check there is good ventilation to stop the build up of condensation. We know it's the wet that gets our girls not the cold. Now that most hives are on open mesh floors there is plenty of air coming in at the bottom, so don't worry about the size of the entrance block. You can cover the holes in the crown board with a flat piece of ply but spacing it off the board with a couple of matchsticks to maintain a through draught. Some argue that bees in the wild live in tree trunks that have no such through draught, and that we should aim to replicate that scenario. Your choice.



Chicken wire protects against woodpeckers



Celotex: a great hive insulator. Probably available from a skip near you.

Whichever option you select, you should insulate the inside of the roof, remembering to keep the vents free.

And finally, make sure the hive stand is sturdy and the hive won't fall over in the next storm. And breathe.

Winter is coming

Now you're onto monthly maintenance visits, it's time to think about what's next. For you, there's winter meetings, honey shows both locally and nationally to attend; and of course how to improve my beekeeping.

For the bees, planning which queens to mate from to breed that elusive 'gentle colony' and not those maniacs you've had to deal with all year. There is even a plus to the 'maniacs'. They've helped in reducing my reaction to being stung so I don't look like John Merrick after each visit.

Roll on next season.

This production of the Veiled Beekeeper was brought to you in association with [Loratidine](#).

Kids get bees at Wivelsfield Wildlife Day

B&L put up a stall at the Wivelsfield Wildlife Day on Saturday 11 September, manned by committee members Graham Bubloz and Ian White, and we subsequently received this delightful email from Sheila Blair:

"Thank you so much for helping to make yesterday such a success. It was a real bonus to have you there with your bees. Young children need to see real creatures, like your bees, rather than be taught about them from books or videos.

A number of people came & told me how interesting you stand was & we were all very pleased that you could come. It was a good day with such a happy, relaxed atmospheres, with people of all ages socialising & enjoying themselves—and a special thank you to God for blessing us with such good weather after a rather dismal forecast earlier in the week.

*Very best wishes
Sheila"*





Norman Dickinson
Chairman

Words from the Chair

As a follow-on from my September report, we have now vacated the Piddinghoe apiary and relocated to Isfield. I look forward to meeting with members there next season. Ian White, previously Apiary manager at Piddinghoe has agreed to manage the new apiary and we look forward to building up the colonies over time.

The Bee Disease Day, which was cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic has now been reorganised for May 2022. Full details will be published on the website as well as being sent out to all members. Final details will be agreed at the September committee meeting.

September saw one new member join B&L as a Friend, so a big welcome to Kate. As mentioned last month please keep a lookout for the membership renewal form which will be sent during the first week of October. For those who cannot wait the form can be accessed, either as a PDF or Word Document [here](#).

I am sure that your winter feeding and treatments are just about completed by now and whilst it is getting a little late for Apiguard treatment, oxalic acid sublimation

really needs to be done when the weather is a lot colder than now. I generally do this the week after Christmas and into the first two weeks of January. I would also encourage those members who have not registered with BeeBase to do so soonest as it is inevitable that registered beekeepers will be receiving a starvation alert from them, especially if we get a mild winter.

National Honey Show

The National Honey Show takes place at Sandown Park on 21- 23 October 2021. The 2021 schedule is now available for download on the website [here](#), from where you can also join as a member, buy day tickets or book workshops.

It's uncertain whether—for Covid reasons—Sandown Park will allow queuing at the front desks to collect members' badges or pay for day entry, the Show has decided that all badges and day wristbands will be sent out by post so, if you are not a member and wish to visit then please go to the on-line shop where you will be able to make your purchases.



Manek Dubash
Asian Hornet
Team Co-ordinator

Asian hornet report

Asian hornets remain conspicuous by their absence—as far as we know—on the UK mainland, although the activities of the Jersey and recently Guernsey Hornet Action Teams bear testament to the battle they are undertaking against *Vespa velutina*.

That said, it hasn't taken much for the more—shall we say—speculative elements of the local press to get excited.

One nameless outlet reported that the UK had suffered an invasion of Asian hornets, which at first shocked me until I realised that it was referring to Guernsey.

And yes, though the numbers there are nowhere near those on Jersey, the insects are present. What makes it worse from a public perception point of view is that the website printed a picture of *Vespa mandarinia*, the so-called murder hornet, which has invaded North America but poses no threat to the UK. It simply is nowhere near us.

It brings home the message that the public are the first line of defence, so I thank those who have asked me to identify a hornet; in each case it has been *Vespa crabro*, the native European hornet.

Five members to take BBKA bee behaviour exam

Five B&L members have set themselves the task of taking the [BBKA Module 6 exam](#) entitled Honey Bee Behaviour.

Members Ben Castle, Manek Dubash, Julie Lawrence, Jude New, and Jeff Rodrigues agreed to take the exam in November 2022, and prepare during the intervening 14 months.

They will be working together using a group study process proposed by Jude. This involves studying elements of the syllabus individually, and meeting either physically or virtually every two months to review progress. The BBKA provides study notes for this very purpose. The five also have set up an online messaging group to aid communication.

Their work will be guided and overseen by Nottingham University academic and beekeeper Dr. Jane Medwell.

Most of the five were successful recently at passing the BBKA Basic Assessment, the exception being retired teacher Jude New who created a course to help guide them to towards a positive outcome.

From our apiaries: Barcombe, Grassroots, Hove & Isfield

Barcombe



Barcombe apiary. Photo: Tony Birkbeck

What a strange year this has been. Unfortunately the honey crop at Barcombe this year is non-existent. At the beginning of this month each hive had a number of supers on but the bees just weren't putting any honey in them so I decided to start winter preparations and remove the boxes—which are now going through the freezing process back in my newly equipped "bee room" at Park Farm Cottage.

Each super frame gets frozen for at least three or four days to kill any wax moth (of which there seems to be quite a few this year) before being taken back to the shed at Barcombe to store over winter. Quite a laborious task but hopefully it protects one of the most prized possessions: drawn-out comb.

My own bees at my apiary have been much the same. Although the bees managed to produce a small honey crop with a few really heavy supers, I think I've probably managed about a third of what I harvested last year. It does make me wonder though what's happening: why should a couple of my colonies produce a couple of supers of honey while other colonies, that look



Frozen supers. Photo: Tony Birkbeck

stronger just haven't done anything? I love the learning opportunities though of asking myself what I could have done differently!

So I started with six colonies this year and I'm now putting the same six colonies into winter. All have almost wall to wall brood but stores are low and varroa seems to be a problem. Luckily I managed to grab four tubs of [Invertbee](#) early in the month which the bees have taken really quickly so feeding will continue for a while.



High varroa drop. Photo: Tony Birkbeck

Varroa seems to be a problem this year though, with a very high drop from some hives (see image above) so all colonies are being treated with Apitraz at the moment. I will monitor this carefully though as there is a risk that the queen stops laying during treatment; it's the last thing you want at this time of year.

Tony Birkbeck, Apiary Manager

Grassroots & Hove

Once the weather gets colder and the bees begin to cluster, the colonies will be moved, and Grassroots should be open for business next season. The top bar hive still needs populating, that is work in progress, perhaps there will be more swarms next year and we can get that started again. Both apiaries have been monitored during the season, they are not quite 'put to bed for the winter' All the colonies in both apiaries are being fed and checked for mite drop.

Hove apiary has four strong colonies ready for the winter, they have been



Last open hive meeting at Hove Apiary on 22 August, taken by Graham Bubloz

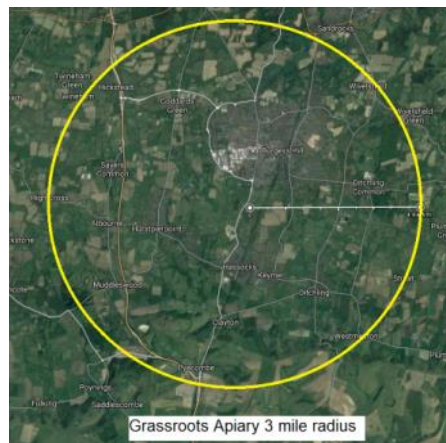
fed and we will continue to be monitored for mites.

We will be checking our inventories and identifying what equipment will be needed for the next season.

Help requested

First request: Is there anyone in Brighton and Lewes BKA land with a petrol strimmer or hedge cutter? I'd like to meet with volunteers for a clearing party to meet at Grassroots, weather permitting, on 2 or 3 October. I can provide hot water, tea bags, coffee, and cake if you can bring some shears, loppers, bags to collect the green waste. It can be dried and used in your smokers for next season. Take away as much as you like.

Second request: Is there anyone who could provide us with some wood chips or similar? There is weed suppressing sheeting there, but it seems to have grown through. Can it be brought to Grassroots that weekend or before so that it can be spread soon afterwards to prevent further growth?



Varroa treatment: which oxalic acid should you use?

I was taught not to treat for varroa unless the drop indicated it was necessary. So, at the Hove apiary, when the mite drop was five or fewer after a week, I put rapid feeders on the hives.

I then watched a Cambridge BKA-hosted presentation by Californian [Randy Oliver](#) of some of his current research.

He said that at this time of the year it was best to 'knock out' the varroa, because even a small number of mites can grow quickly. I started thinking that maybe I should treat at Hove to stop the mite count rising.

Randy showed how one beekeeper had treated his colonies with oxalic acid sublimation fortnightly for a whole season, and counted the varroa drop. That involved some 8-10 treatments, whose results were recorded.

I looked for guidance on how to use sublimation in the UK, as it's a relatively new treatment. I can't remember where I heard or read that in the UK the maximum treatments in one season is three with 7-10 days between treatments.

So I emailed Randy to find out whether the oxalic treatment he referred to was oxalic crystals or Api-Bioxal, and why Api-Bioxal leaves a sticky residue. He replied:

"If a colony is broodless, OA vaporization or dribble is very efficacious.

"If a colony has much sealed brood, from all the data I've seen, you don't get much mite reduction from a single OA vaporization. It takes multiple (like 8-10) vaporizations to bring the mite level way down. But you say that that many are not allowed by the regulators. So another type of treatment may be necessary.



VETERINARY MEDICINE ADMINISTRATION RECORD – TO BE KEPT FOR 5 YEARS											
NAME:					ADDRESS:						
APIARY NAME/LOCATION:					POST CODE:						
TO BE COMPLETED AT TIME OF PURCHASE					TO BE COMPLETED AT TIME OF ADMINISTRATION						
Name and Address of Supplier of Medicinal Product	Date Purchased	Identity and Quantity of Medicinal Product			Date of Administration	Hive numbers/ID	Duration of treatment	Withdrawal period	Name of person administering veterinary medicine	Total quantity of veterinary medicine used	Date & route of disposal if not administered
		Name	Batch No	Quantity							

Beekeepers are required to keep proof of purchase and a record of purchase, administration and disposal of all veterinary medicines for a minimum of 5 years under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2011 SI 2159. Further information can be obtained from Veterinary Medicines Directorate, Woodham Lane, New Haw, Addlestone, Surrey. KT15 3LS. Telephone: 01932 336911. www.vmd.defra.gov.uk

Medicines applied to bees must be recorded: it's the law. Download it from the NBU [here](#).

"Api Bioxal has a small percentage of what appear to be anticaking agent in it. But it's the only registered OA. On Amazon it's easy to purchase 99.6% pure OA dihydrate [below, left], but it isn't registered for varroa control, so can't be officially recommended.

"It kinda makes it difficult for beekeepers to stay within the law."

Which oxalic acid?

So what is the difference between forms of oxalic acid?

Api-Bioxal is designed to be used as a trickle treatment with syrup and is licensed as such. Oxalic crystals from Thornes are sold as a hive wash (below, middle), with no suggestion of any other purpose. When keeping a veterinary record of treatment for each hive there is no information for



recording oxalic crystals. Api-Bioxal (below, right) on the other hand has a use-by date and references which can be recorded. Apiguard and Apivar have something similar, and can be recorded using the veterinary treatment document (above).

I am still pondering about what the best course of action will be for the bees. I have Apiguard to use, but I think that the temperatures are getting unpredictable, so the bees will get Apivar strips and the oxalic treatments.

Jude New



How I became a beekeeper



Suzie and her dad at one of his hives

My first encounter with bees was way back in 1971. My dad returned home late one evening with a sheet bundled under his arm. He unfurled the sheet to reveal a straw basket, and unrolled it in front of a WBC hive in the rear garden underneath several plum trees. I was utterly amazed as the bees walked up to the entrance and disappeared inside.

The bees' arrival had been long awaited. My father had refurbished an old hive and made his own frames. I was seven at the time and thought there was something magical about the little things. I also thought how incredible my father was to be able to get them just to walk into the hive. I must admit I was also a little scared.

Bees in my hair

My first encounters with the girls from the garden that year were not great. I had long hair and was always getting them stuck in my hair and scream. I would hear my father shout: "Bugger! Pat and roll". But he'd come running to the rescue to either retrieve the bee or clout me over the head and dispatch the bee. Hilarious, looking back.

My first experience of a swarm had me hiding underneath the dining-room table. I was petrified as the sound of the bees echoed down the chimney as they circled in a menacing black cloud.

Happily, I overcame my childhood fear partly due to my father taking the

time to introduce me to the hives and the bees. Nothing like educating the young to overcome their fear. Introducing me to drones and discovering that not all bees sting. Still love the boy bees and get upset seeing them ejected in the autumn.

I would be dressed in an over-sized white shirt, belted at the waist, an old felt hat draped with netting and a pair of my mum's washing-up gloves.

No such thing as a bee suit for kids in my day, but I was never stung. I visited the hives many times, helping my father carry boxes and frames up to the rear garden.

Honey harvest helper

Honey harvest was definitely my favourite time, where I would sit in front of the spinning extractor. I was never allowed to help jar the honey, as I was considered too clumsy to keep all the honey on the inside of the jars.

We never used jars of honey at home; we had ours out of ice-cream cartons. It was OSR honey, set so hard we could cut it into squares and eat it like fudge. Delicious!

After I left home at 17, we'd always talk about the bees when I phoned home. Dad told me he spoke to the bees and relayed any pivotal events about me to them. Whenever I visited home I would walk up and say hi to the bees, just standing in front of the hives listening to their thrum. It was so peaceful. I suppose I missed them.

Bee therapy

I started beekeeping again four years ago after being diagnosed with cancer. I found it such a levelling experience where all your thoughts are centred on the bees and other worries disappear.

I look forward to my weekly visits to bee-tropolis. When I had decided to start beekeeping on my own, I tried to get my father to give me some bees, but he refused and quite rightly so. His main concerns were any disease his bees might have, and also the wax moth problems he had.

But he did show me how to catch them and sure enough I did. Not sure who was more pleased when I phoned

him to say a swarm had adopted the box I had built from scrap timber pulled out of a skip (in true country bumpkin style). This particular colony has proved itself to be good-natured and prolific at gathering honey.

I am sure he had a sixth sense where bees were concerned, as he always knew when a swarm was going to arrive and always had room in the apiary for new bees. He was also one of the gentlest of beekeepers and was concerned my weekly inspection were too much for my bees. I truly hope I inherit his laid back approach.

My beekeeping guru

My father would talk endlessly about beekeeping and I think so much has stayed with me as I look back with fond memories. Sadly, he died last year and I miss our bee chats and his in-depth bee lectures and helpful advice. Beekeeping has not felt the same, maybe it's tinged with a little feeling of loss. But if I do have a problem, I usually just slow down and know in my heart what my dad would say to help.

I recently took my basic beekeeping course and gained a distinction pass, so like to think of my father looking down and saying: "Definitely a chip off the same block."

Suzie Brockbank



Suzie and dad at the family home in Wilts.

B&L vacancies: volunteers required

Two key members of our Committee will be resigning as of the next AGM in February 2022. Volunteers are required.

Chairman

Norman Dickinson, who took over the Chair last year and has steered us smoothly through troubled waters, said he would only do so for a year.

Secretary

Hilary Osman, a Committee stalwart has done a sterling job as Secretary, managing correspondence, assembling the

minutes and agenda, and lots besides for the last seven years, but she now wants and deserves to spend more time with her bees.

So B&L will be looking for two key officers from February 2022. If you would like know more about what the jobs entail, see Hilary's column in the July issue.

Mentors

Helping new beekeepers is what we're all about. We still have members who need mentors, which can be done over the phone.

Please let Hilary know if you can help (details on [back page](#)).

Charity calls for volunteer beekeeper



[Emmaus Brighton and Hove](#), based in Portslade, is a charity that supports people to work their way out of homelessness.

Julika Hüther of Emmaus said: "We currently have three bee hives. Unfortunately, for the past few months, we have had no one to look after the bees and so are looking for one (or more) beekeeper(s) who might be interested in managing the hives, with a view to selling honey in our shop and ideally teaching us (residents, staff and volunteers)."

If you're interested, please [contact Julika](#).

Equipment for sale

B&L member Stephen Lee wants to sell a few pieces of beekeeping kit. He says:

"I have three national bee hives for sale. Brood boxes, supers, roofs, floors etc. Any reasonable offer accepted."

Please contact Stephen at this email address: steveselmeston@yahoo.com

Adam wants your honey

If you have a honey surplus, Adam Strawson of Acre Honey will buy it from you at 'above market price'.

Adam has helped B&L in the past, for example by supplying syrup and fondant at a bulk discount which we have then passed on to members.

If you're interested, please contact Adam either [by email](#) or on 01273 974120.

Qecre

Bee Disease Day 2022

Planning is underway for our Bee Disease Day on 31 May 2022, to be held at Laughton Village Hall.

To advertise the event, we have designed a poster which the committee will be discussing at its next meeting.

Just to recap, the aim of the event is for us all to learn more about bee diseases, their effects and how to spot them. It will include hands-on time with diseased colonies, led by the Bee Inspectors.

Additionally, there will be lunch and refreshments, and at least two members of the committee have committed to bake cakes for the event.

One not to miss!

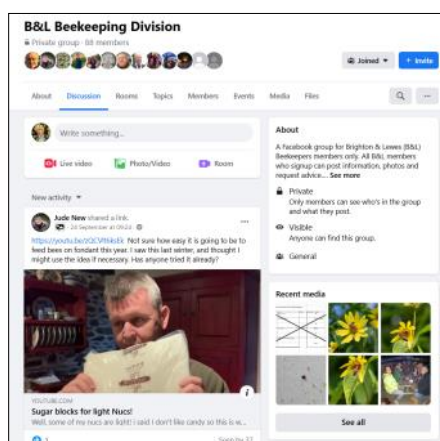
Out-apiary updates

We were a little unlucky with our out-apiary meetings over the last month or so.

A couple were cancelled due to unsuitable weather, and another was cancelled due to a clash of timetables between us and the landowner.

However, it's worth noting that we now have four sites, three have bees, and a fifth, on the outskirts of Brighton, is at the planning stage. At some stage we may need someone to manage it. Could that be you? Think about it...

B&L Facebook group: Come and join us!



to do so there's lots of practical advice from group members, all related to our area and its unique micro-climate. And it's a great way of getting to know people, finding who the people are behind the names.

So if you have thoughts about any topic, you'd like to help and to offer advice or you need advice, please jump in! The water's warm and the atmosphere friendly.

Group membership is now nearly 90-strong—well over half our 165 members are here.

To join, log into Facebook and search for **B&L Beekeeping Division**, or follow [this link](#). Members only admitted.

Latest post: a new take on winter feeding. The beekeeping season may be winding down, but there's still plenty

B&L meetings

The outdoor meeting season is over—so it's off to the pub! Graham Bubloz is organising a series of Bee Chats at local pubs around our area. The next one is at **The Dorset, 22 Malling Street, Lewes, on Wednesday 13 October 2021 at 19:00.**

The next formal meeting is on **Wednesday 20 October 2021 at 19:00.** Speaker: Andrew Halstead. Topic: New insect pests. Venue: Zoom (link to be sent nearer the date).

For the full list of winter meetings, please see back page. Please note that all physical winter meetings will be held at St. Thomas' Church Hall, Lewes.



90th National Honey Show 2021

21-23 October, Sandown Park Racecourse.

The [90th National Honey Show](#) takes place this month. It will be a hybrid show, both live and online, with the usual range of [highly informative lectures](#) and [workshops](#); booking now.

To cut queues for Covid reasons, the everyone needs to book online before midnight on Monday 11 October. Queuing avoidance takes priority, so the admins decided not to sell entry tickets on the door.

[Chairman Bob Maurer](#) said: "We can't wait to bring you a live show and see you face to face. We have to be realistic though. There will almost certainly be some social distancing requirements during the show but things may not be quite as you remember them from our last live show in 2019.

"We may have to reduce the number of people attending our lectures if that is what legislation and the Jockey Club require.

"We may also need to restrict the number of attendees for our workshops. [...] With your support and tolerance for whatever restrictions Covid 19 inflicts on us we will have a great show. I'm really looking forward to being back at Sandown Park and I hope I will have the chance to talk to you there."



Sussex BKA Autumn Convention

Saturday 30 October 2021

Hastings and Rother Division will be hosting this year's event, which will be held at [Robertsbridge Village Hall](#).

There will be a hybrid event with both live and remote speakers. You will be able to attend the meeting in person or connect remotely via Zoom.

R&H said the Division is still in the early stages of planning and will provide further details once the speakers and booking arrangements are known.

More details [here](#).



What can we learn from ancient beeswax?

Wednesday 6 October 2021, 19:00

Speaker: Matthew Collins. Hosted by Cambridgeshire BKA.

Beeswax can tell us a lot about its environment. It may prove to be one of the most remarkable and yet overlooked biomolecular archives. The source of illumination of the medieval church, it can shed new light on a domesticated insect, the management of forests, crops and weeds, medieval trade in wax, social networks of people, of rituals associated with exchange, and the bureaucracies and protocols of medieval authentication and security.

Matthew is a Niels Bohr Professor at the University of Copenhagen and McDonald Professor of Palaeoproteomics at the University of Cambridge.

Register [here](#).



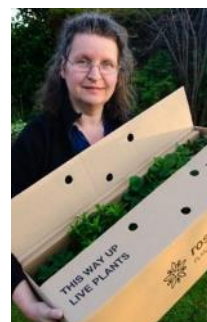
Planting for bees

Wednesday 13 October 2021, 19:00

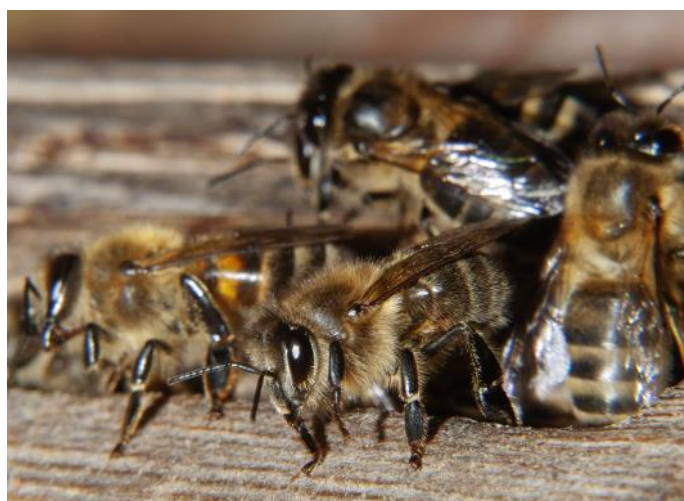
Speaker: Rosi Rollings. Hosted by Cambridgeshire BKA.

If you can't make the Bee Chat (top left), try this. Rosi will share both the findings from her research and plans for future research. She will also talk about how she has used those findings to provide bee-friendly habitats.

Register [here](#).



A September scene in pictures



Today, 25th September, it is mild with a high humidity and drizzle, but despite this the bees are busy, especially visiting the ivy which is approaching full bloom, gathering nectar, the air thick with the characteristic heavy musty scent of ivy.

Back at the hives a few days ago, the entrances were busy with bees returning with pollen but today, it was like rush hour with field bees returning laden with nectar and then going out again. Pollen

and honey at this time of the year are critical for the queen to produce the over-wintering bees. Those out working today will not survive the winter, being worn-out by all the late season work.

Colonies have been checked ('hefted') and fed as needed, now the bees were bringing in more stores. Ivy nectar produces a strongly flavoured honey that sets like concrete.

Words & photos: Gerald Legg

Hard-working honey bee



A hard-worked forager on Michaelmas daisy, captured with an Olympus E-30.
Photo: Gerald Legg

September bramble blossom



Spotted on a weekend trip to Dorset in early September, bramble blossom with bee mimicking hoverflies a-plenty. Like many beekeepers, I can't help but notice that nature is about a month behind its usual schedule this year. Photos: Manek Dubash

B&L Divisional Diary October 2021

Out-apiary meetings

None until 2022

Indoor winter meetings 2021/22

20 October	Zoom	New insect pests	Andrew Halstead
19 November	Live *	From escaped caterpillars to new species: a life-long fascination and devotion to natural history	Gerald Legg
15 December	Zoom	Bee houses	David Evans (The Apiarist)
18 February	Live *	AGM / Honey Show / Auction	
16 March	Zoom	Dance like no-one's watching	Lynne Ingram
31 May	Live	Bee Disease Day	Laughton

* Meetings held at St. Thomas' Church Hall, Cliffe High Street, Lewes BN7 2AH.

Deadlines

Please send all contributions for the newsletter, **including photos**, to the Editor (details on right).
Max. length: 700 words.

Copy deadline: 18th of the month before the publication date. Email photos etc. for the website to Webmaster Gerald Legg (details on right).

Publication date: 25th of the month.

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Disclaimer

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 by the Division.

grassroots
grants

The co-operative membership
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Managed by the Community Development Foundation
Funded by the Office of the Third Sector

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