

ABKA

ABERYSTWYTH AND DISTRICT
BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION



The ABKA newsletter has been a valuable asset to our club over the last few years.

As in all publications it has come to a new chapter in its life.

Alan Cole, our first editor, has decided to stand down. It was through Alan's hard work and energy that the newsletter has become so successful. Therefore can I thank Alan for all his hard work and dedication, its very much appreciated. Thank you.

Our new editor is Phil Springham. Phil needs no introduction as he is one of the stalwarts of our club but I do want to wish his well in his new role. I'm sure like all new editors he will be making a plea for articles. So lets all show him our support and please send him anything of interest, even if its just a few words or a photo.

Rob Davies (Chairman)

Message from the Editor

Welcome to our new-look newsletter. In a moment of madness I volunteered to take over as editor, and now find myself desperately trying to learn how to use the software. As a result the newsletter will start with a simple design, and hopefully evolve as I discover how to do things. Whether or not I manage to reach Alan's standard remains to be seen. So far I can do boxes, fonts and colours, so this could be a colourful issue!

Please consider sending in articles, photographs, interesting tidbits and anything else you think that other members might like to see. The internet is full of bee-related items, and I will happily pick some that I think are suitable for inclusion if we can't find enough local-interest stories.

Please email any items to tycoed@icloud.com

Many thanks, Phil.



In this issue

October is the month for our Honey Show, when you can bring honey and wax products to be judged, along with the photographic and honey cake competitions. Full details can be found below. Please note that in order to fit everything in, proceedings will begin at 6pm at the usual venue of the Waunfawr hall.

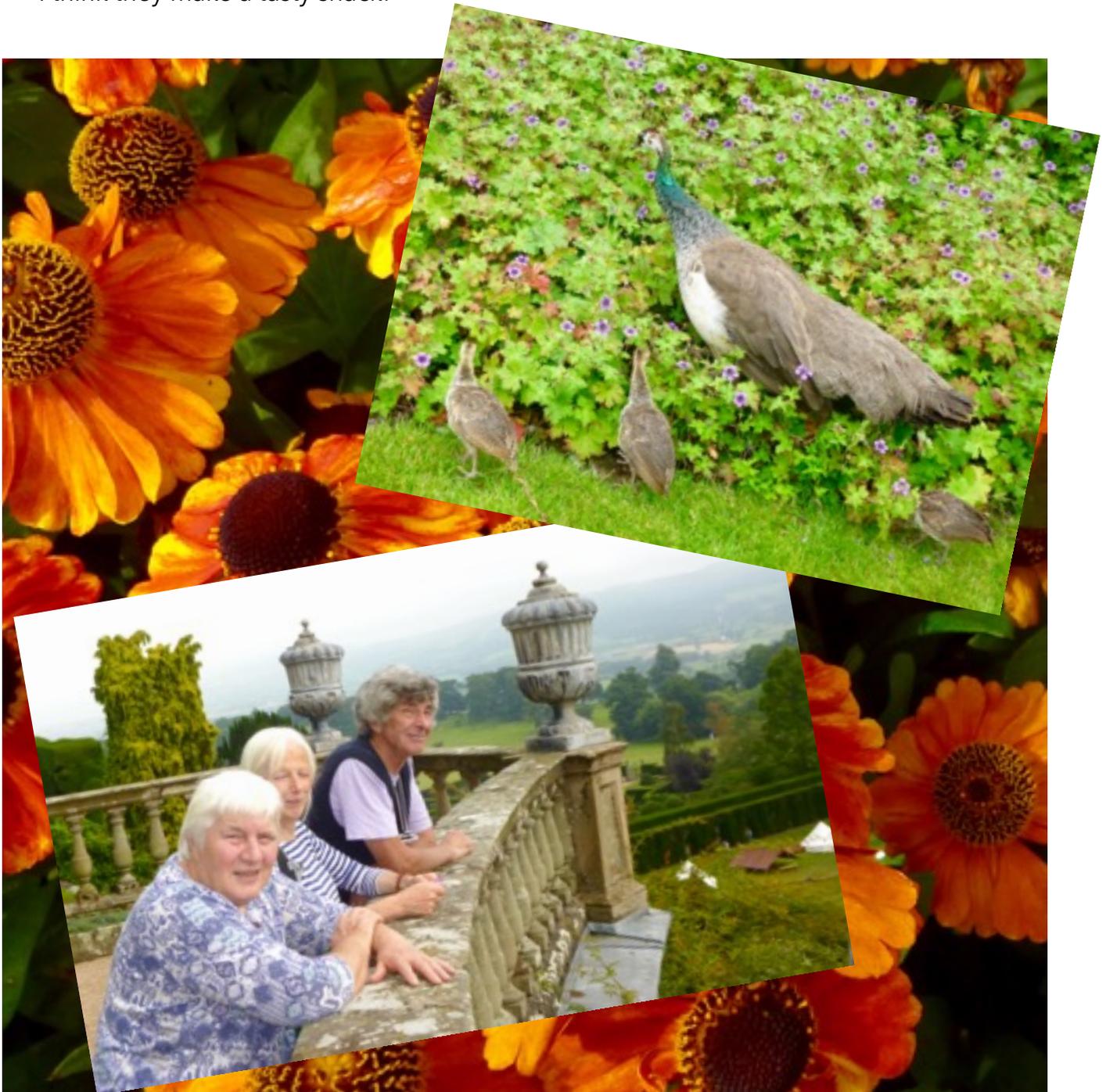
Our club, along with many others across the UK, is contributing to a research project looking at a possible breakthrough in the battle against varroa. I attended a talk about the project earlier in the year, and a summary is included in the newsletter.

We have a new Seasonal Bee Inspector - Karen Smith. Karen has kindly offered to help beginners preparing to take the Basic Assessment. Again, full details below.

Club Events

We have had a number of very successful club meetings this year, including a great visit to Ian and Ann's place. The weather was rather wet, so we couldn't look at the bees, but the Mitchells had a back-up plan - a bee-friendly quiz. We were able to explore their grounds and organic veg plot while getting to know each other and learning about plants that are beneficial for bees and other wildlife. Of course, the afternoon finished with loads of tea and cake. Just what we all love! Many thanks to Ann and Ian.

In August, about 15 of us spent a lovely afternoon exploring Powys castle and gardens. The grounds are kept in immaculate condition, and the late Summer flowers were glorious, and what's more, it didn't even rain! We saw some plants that were alive with honeybees, and I think a few cuttings were discreetly taken! A number of peacocks were also enjoying the bees - I think they make a tasty snack!



Basic Assessment

Karen Smith, our new seasonal bee inspector has been to visit a few of our members' colonies, and is a very approachable and enthusiastic lady. She has kindly offered to provide a set of revision sessions for anyone that wants to take the basic assessment next year (2017). If you are interested in doing the basic assessment, and would like to participate in these revision sessions -likely to be 4 evenings around the month of May, followed by a mock practical- please do get in touch with Helen on helen.ovens@yahoo.co.uk. Karen is kindly giving her time for free to do this, and has experience of running similar sessions with other associations.

Helen Ovens.



Honey Show

The honey show will be held on October 18th at Waunfawr Community Hall, starting at **6pm**.

The evening is always great fun, and the competition is not taken *too* seriously.

In addition to the competition categories listed in the **Schedule** below, we also have the **Photographic Competition** and the ever-popular **Honey Tasting** event, so bring an extra sample of your honey for us all to taste and rate.

We also have a **buffet supper**, so don't forget to bring a plate of food to share, plus a plate and cutlery to eat with. Tea and cups will be provided!



Ok, so I'm showing off, but I have to fill the gaps with something!

Schedule

Entry Fee 20p per item/class

Entries should be from 2015 or 2016 and must not have been entered in our competition before.

1. Bottle of mead.
2. Two one pound jars of light honey.
3. Two one pound jars of medium honey.
4. Two one pound jars of dark honey.
5. Two one pound jars of granulated honey.
6. Two one pound jars of heather honey.
7. Cake of beeswax approx. 8oz in weight.
8. Four cakes of beeswax approx. one ounce each.
9. A shallow comb of honey suitable for extraction.
10. Ornamental display, incorporating wax. Base of entry to be no more than 6 inches in diameter.
11. Fun class - Best super frame of drawn out comb, with nothing in it -i.e. one full of potential, like the 2016 season of beekeeping!
12. Cookery class -See honey cake recipe below.



Photographic Competition

Categories:

1. Flowers for Foraging
2. Best Apiary Layout
3. An Impressive Swarm
4. Returning to the Hive
5. Other Insects

Rules:

1. Up to 5 photos per member - can be in any category (e.g. 1 in each category, all 5 in one category, 2 in one, 3 in another, etc.).
2. Printed pictures only 8 x 5 or less, colour or black & white.
3. All entries to be presented in one envelope with your name on it.
4. Each member present on the evening will vote for their favourite three pictures in each category and their overall favourite picture from all three categories.
5. The winners will be the photos with the most votes, if there is a tie then the number of second place votes will be used.



The Not Much Honey Orange Cake!

Preparation time: About 25 minutes. Cooking time: 25 to 30 minutes.

Ingredients:

- 8 oz margarine
- 8oz soft brown sugar
- 3 standard eggs
- 2 tablespoons of clear honey
- Grated rind and juice of one small orange
- 6oz plain wholewheat flour
- 3 level teaspoons of baking powder

Instructions:

1. Pre heat the oven to 375 deg F (Mark 5).
2. Grease and line two 7 1/2 inch sandwich tins.
3. Cream 6oz of margarine and 6 oz of sugar together until light and fluffy.
4. Beat in eggs, one at a time.
5. Beat in 1 tablespoon of honey and the orange rind.
6. Sift in the flour and baking powder and add any remaining bran left in the sieve.
7. Lightly mix in 3 tablespoons of orange juice.
8. Divide the mixture between the prepared tins. Smooth the tops.
9. Bake in the centre of the preheated oven for 25 to 30 minutes or until firm to touch.
10. Turn out the cakes onto a wire rack to cool.
11. Cream 2oz of margarine with 2 oz sugar and beat in one tablespoon of honey.
12. Sandwich the cakes with this filling.
13. Decorate and present appropriately.

The ReViVe project - Rolling out Evolution of Resistance to Varroat and Deformed Wing Virus.

At the BBKA Spring convention I attended one of the lectures given by Dr. Stephen Martin about the project that our association is helping to fund. Here are some notes that I took.

Researchers have found that most bee colonies in the southern hemisphere, including southern Europe, have massive varroa infestation (many thousands - in some hives every bee has a mite attached), but they don't use any varroa control (often unavailable or too expensive), their bees seem unaffected by varroa, and they have no associated colony losses.

Their bees have been found to be infected with type-B Deformed Wing Virus, which appears to be harmless.

In the northern hemisphere we have type-A DWV, and it is this that is thought to be the big problem throughout the year.

Another strain, type-C has been found and is thought to be responsible for Winter losses in particular.

There are thousands of other strains too, but it is the predominance of A and C in individual colonies that seems to be the problem.

Varroa itself is simply a vector, injecting the virus into the bees in huge amounts, but varroa is not thought to be particularly harmful in itself, neither is the small amount of virus that is present in all bees in varroa-controlled colonies.

Reports of hygienic bees coping with varroa in an isolated apiary in Swindon have now been attributed to the absence of type-A DWV and presence of type-B, rather than hygienic behaviour. It seems that during the early treatment-free days all but one or two of the Swindon colonies was lost. These colonies happened to have type-B, which was passed on to the other colonies which were subsequently raised from it (they were tested for this project). When moved out of the area the bees unfortunately re-acquire type-A and become susceptible to the virus again. This was a great first-step in showing that the protection conferred by type-B in other parts of the world is also applicable in the UK, but rather a setback for the theory that hygienic behaviour was the cause of the bees survival.

Although hygienic behaviour is important for colony health (eg. for detecting and cleaning out dead and diseased larvae), it has been found that within 3 hours of attaching itself to a bee, the varroa mite matches it's scent to that of the bee and therefore becomes undetectable to other bees.

The project is a joint venture between Prof. Stephen Martin, Biologist at Salford University, and Dr. Declan Schroeder, Virologist at Plymouth Marine Biological Association.

Bees throughout the UK will be sampled and analysed to determine which strains of DWV they contain, hopefully establishing a clear relationship between losses, locality and variants of DWV, and leading to an understanding of the mechanisms which contribute to DWV resistance in colonies that are managed and unmanaged for Varroa.

The eventual aim is to find a practical use for this knowledge. The first step though is to gather evidence to test the theory.

£120,000 has been raised, from BDI, BKAs & the C B Dennis Trust, in roughly equal parts. Aberystwyth are contributing £100 per year for 3 years. Other larger associations are giving up to £300/year.

The money will pay for the equipment and testing costs. The salaries are paid by the universities.

All contributing associations have been supplied with collection tubes, and have been asked to collect 30 bees from each of 5 colonies, from the same apiary, during April, and again after the honey crop in Aug/Sept. We have sampled Richard's and Ann's bees at the IBER's woods.

It was a very interesting lecture, and the scientists are cautiously optimistic that this could be a major breakthrough in understanding the pathological interactions between varroa, viruses and honeybees.

The following quotes and photograph were taken from a BDI press release:

<http://www.beediseasesinsurance.co.uk/research/revive>

Dr Declan Schroeder said 'At The MBA in Plymouth we access to state-of-the-art facilities to enable us to undertake this work. As a leading virology research centre we are ideally placed to continue this ground breaking work. Our initial research has provided us with a new mechanism of disease resistance in honey bees and it is great to be able to take this to the next stage'

Prof Stephen Martin commented 'I was fortunate to lead a team of researchers that looked at the way varroa spread through the honey bee populations as it arrived in Hawaii. In particular we were able to monitor the way that the virus loads changed in bees as they were newly colonised by the mite. Comparing these viral loads with the isolated colonies that have survived may well lead us to apply the DWV / varroa resistance mechanisms to other honey bee populations.



Larvae with varroa

For Sale

Starter kit, fully assembled and includes bees.

- 1x mesh floor with varroa inspection tray
- 1x brood box with 11 frames already made up with wax
- 1x bee friendly queen excluder
- 1x super with castellated spacers + 10 frames and foundation
- 1x crown board with centre vent
- 1x roof

PRICE FOR THE ABOVE £ 290

Jim also sells any of the above hive equipment without bees as well.

Nucleus colonies (bees and/or equipment):

5 frame nuc of dark bees, i.e. 3 frames of brood and 2 frames with stores and pollen, complete with correx travel box

£ 160

The nucleus equipment (box and roof) is retailing at

£35

If buying bees, the colonies will be made up mid April onwards and allowed to establish for several weeks before moving to their new homes.

Assembled red cedar hive components also available at very competitive rates. e.g.

Assembled red cedar hive - (mesh floor, brood box, super , crown board, 6" deep roof)

£ 120.00

Jim from Melindwr Valley Bees will be happy to provide you with a bit of support to get your new colony settled in.

Jim Palmer Tel: 01970 880534

Mob: 07711 321246

email: jjpalmer1@hotmail.com

Web: <http://www.melindwrvalleybees.co.uk>

Nucs for Sales

5 Frame nuclei for Sale

Bill Rushden

01970 624570

FROM £150



Supplies

The Association buys hive treatments in bulk, and owns processing equipment that is available for members to rent. Please contact Ann.

Treatments

Apiguard	Thymol varroa treatment	£ 2.00 per tray
MAQS	Formic acid varroa treatment	Price on Request
Acetic acid	Hive disinfectant	£ 1.64 per 100ml

Feed

Fondanbee	Bee Fondant	£11 per 12.5kg
Invertbee syrup	Inverted sugar syrup	
	Price dependent on bulk buy	£13 per 14kg can

Jars

1lb glass jars	Lids included	29p each
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Equipment

Honey extractor	Please return clean	£5 for 3 days
Heather honey press	Please return clean	£5 for 3 days
Steam Electric Wax Extractor		£5 for 3 days *

*Plus £5 deposit, refunded if extractor is returned clean.

Muslin liners	For use in steam wax extractor	£1
Electric Wash Boiler	For cleaning frames	£5 for 3 days

ABKA Beekeeping Library

Guide to bees and honey 5th edition	Ted Hooper
Keeping bees and making honey	Alison Benjamin
Beekeeping up to date	Joseph Tinsley
Beekeeping self-sufficiency	Joanna Rye
The Honey bee inside out	Celia F Davis
A world without bees	Alison Benjamin and Brian McCallum
Haynes Manual	Claire Waring
Splitting hives as part of varroa control	William Hesbach
Practical beekeeping	Clive De Bruyn
Beekeeping study notes 2012	JD & BD Yates

DVD - Beekeeping of a bygone era

DVD - The Mysterious Bee: a documentary bee behaviour and basic beekeeping

DVD - An introduction to keeping bees

Video - The monk and the honeybee

If you would like to borrow anything, please contact Vicky at vicky.j.davies@btinternet.com

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