

West Wilts BKA News



News, the planned activities and some advice for members of
West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association



In this issue

Diary of events page 2

**Good to know – interesting items, news,
and reports** page 4 to 25

On the left – Honeybee enjoying the sun,
nectar and pollen on a Rudbeckia flower

Phew, it has been very warm hasn't it! I hope the colonies of bees in your hives have been coping with the heat.

The beekeeping year moves very quickly sometimes doesn't it! Not long ago we were planning for the Royal Bath and West Show – now our minds are drawn towards preparation for our own club show... If you are perhaps new to the club or to beekeeping do please take a look at the entry form and guidelines (pages 7-10 inclusive) and where **WWBKA members** can **enter exhibits through the digital entry link**. Club members will gladly answer any of your questions and will be happy to support you. Some entries for the WWBKA Show might fit categories for the County Show in Devizes, so put them away carefully, you might need them again! On the subject of "time flying" check the club offer on the subject of varroa treatments available to apply after your honey harvest is complete, (details on page 17).

DIARY OF EVENTS



JULY

July 17th Deadline for ordering and payment of varroa treatment via the club (page 17 for details)

July 25th **SAVE THE DATE!** Club Garden Party from noon on Saturday 25th July venue: White Hart in Corsley, more details and the menu (pay and confirm in advance) on page 12

AUGUST

August 1st Taster day WWBKA Apiary based, please contact the education officer for further details.

August 19th and 20th Alongside the North Dorset Beekeeper's Association display in the Bees & Honey Marquee, Turnpike Showground, Motcombe, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 9PL
Entries in this section close on Wednesday 29th July 2026. This date will be strictly adhered to.

SEPTEMBER

September 19th West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association Show, Southwick Village Hall.

OCTOBER

October 10th 10am to 4pm Wiltshire Bee & Honey Day, The Devizes Corn Exchange, Market Place, Devizes SN10 1HS.

October 22nd - 24th The National Honey Show, Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey, UK.

APIARY MEET DATES ON PAGE 5

Good to Know

David Raines, our Swarm Coordinator has kindly produced the following update:

Have the bees finished swarming?

Not unexpectedly, the swarm calls have died right away at this time of the season, but we have been able to provide ten of the fourteen members on the list with swarms. Unfortunately, three of those subsequently appeared to be queenless. All recipients have been grateful, and while none have expressed this view, I do believe this "service" we provide as a Club adds value to our membership offering.

There were two calls involving some levity. One was from a member of the public who asked me to arrange removal of a "large swarm" of bees from her bird box because they were becoming a danger to the wildlife. She assured me that a squirrel which had been getting too inquisitive at the box entrance, got stung on the nose and had died. She claimed there was a red spot on its nose to prove it. Red spot anaphylaxis perhaps ?

The other one was a crie de coeur from a lady with a colony expanding in the cavity wall of her bathroom. As the bees were accessing their home via an entrance above the only toilet in her flat, solving the problem had become rather urgent!

More seriously - while the main swarming season appears to be over, I am still getting a number of calls where our lovely ladies have set up home in very inaccessible places - and as the colonies expand, this is presenting a real (and often expensive) problem for the home owners.

David Raines - Swarm Coordinator

Running short of beekeeping supplies?

Diane Sleigh will be at our **July 4th and 15th August** apiary meet. You can contact Diane to check stock and availability. Take a look at the notice at the end of the newsletter for more details — Diane cannot bring all supplies with her, but if you alert her to your beekeeping requirements she will try to help you out.

Did you miss the June BBKA talk?

("The Hive in July" with Jack Silberrad, NBU Regional Bee Inspector).

For those who missed it, you should be able to access a recording of this talk the BBKA Member Hub.



A BIT LATE IN THE SEASON?

WHO KNOWS.....THEY CAN BE A LITTLE UNPREDICABLE!

DO YOU WANT A SWARM?

IF SO PLEASE CONTACT OUR SWARM COORDINATOR DAVID RAINES

david.raines@hna.uk.com or 07711018440

THUS ENSURING YOU ARE ON THE SWARM LIST



Apiary meet dates...

The usual message about members apiary meetings follows below...

Apiary sessions start at 2pm - please arrive slightly earlier so that you can be kitted up and ready to go for the start time.

Please be aware of the following:

1. Apiary sessions are subject to the weather conditions and how the bees are on the day - Apiary Manager Den has the final say on whether or not a session can go ahead. If a session should have to be cancelled, we'll send an email to let you know, so if the weather is looking iffy on the day of a scheduled session, please check your emails and WhatsApp to see if the session is still going ahead.
2. Please park in the lane outside the apiary, not on site.
3. Please remember to bring all your protective kit: suit, wellies, and rubber gloves - no leather gloves - and a mug for the post-inspection cuppa and catch-up.

The dates below are the dates of the club apiary sessions; these are also listed on the club website <http://westwiltsbka.org/> - these are the corrected apiary dates from Geoff Cross. For the avoidance of doubt, all apiary sessions are on a Saturday.

July 4th and 18th

August 1st, 8th and 15th

12th September



Asian Hornet App

It is worth reinforcing the importance of the Asian Hornet Watch App, it is not especially difficult to download onto your phone – I feel sure if you approach a committee member they will be able to help you if you are having problems. Bee keepers and the general public need to remain vigilant – if you can share your knowledge of the Yellow Legged Asian Hornet (YLAH) and educate others that will be a job well done!

in the coming months, as a result of the extreme high temperatures there could be a greater number of Yellow Legged Asian Hornets – spread the word. Are your traps baited and do you check them regularly?



Here's another reminder... Tom Kenyon will be happy to help with a YLAH Awareness presentation, if you know of a gardening club, school, or an area of local government who would benefit please pass on Tom's contact details –

Tom Kenyon ahat@wiltshirebeekeepers.co.uk **07967 552025**



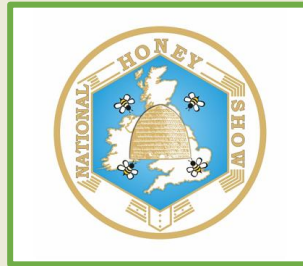
Alongside the North Dorset Beekeeper's Association display in the Bees & Honey Marquee, Turnpike Showground, Motcombe, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 9PL Wednesday 19th & Thursday 20th August 2026 **Entries in this section close on Wednesday 29th July 2026. This date will be strictly adhered to.**

<https://gillinghamandshaftesburyshow.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Bee-Honey-Schedule-Published-Copy.pdf>

Wiltshire Bee & Honey Day 2026

Saturday, 10th October – 10am to 4pm

The Devizes Corn Exchange, Market Place, Devizes SN10 1HS.



Save the date!

THE NATIONAL HONEY SHOW 2026

THURSDAY 22ND TO SATURDAY 24TH OCTOBER

SANDOWN PARK, ESHER, SURREY

West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association Show 2026



Southwick Village Hall.

Saturday 19th September

Doors open at **0900**, judging starts promptly at **1000**

Please read the schedule on the following pages..... entries can be made via the following link..... <https://form.jotform.com/261752432529055>

Details for the West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association Show 2026

CLASSES - see notes on detail at end of the class list (page 9 of this newsletter)

1. Beginner's class one 454g (1lb) jar of honey, any type, colour, the entrant having no more than two years beekeeping.
2. Young member: one jar of honey any type (see note 2).
3. One 454g (1lb) jar: light run honey.
4. One 454g (1lb) jar: medium run honey.
5. One 454g (1lb) jar: dark run honey.
6. Two (matched) 454g (1 lb) jars of one of the following: light, medium, dark, granulated, or soft set honey.
7. One 454g (1lb) jar: soft set honey.
8. One 454g (1lb) jar: chunk honey.
9. "Black jar": one jar of honey to be judged on taste and aroma alone,(see note 3).
10. One section in case, (round or square).
11. Cut comb: minimum 227g (8ozs), (see note 4).
12. Frame of honey for extraction, shown in bee-proof display case.
13. Bottle of dry mead, (see note 5).
14. Bottle of sweet mead,(see note 5).
15. Bottle of melomel (see note 5).
16. Bottle of metheglin (see note 5).
17. Bottle of cyser (see note 5).
18. Beeswax furniture polish, (see note 6).
19. Beeswax cake, minimum 227g (8oz).
20. Three beeswax blocks, 27g to 30g (1oz) each.
21. Pair of beeswax candles, dipped or moulded one to be lit by the judge, (see note 7).
22. Pair of hand rolled and decorated beeswax candles one to be lit by the judge, (see note 7 and 8).

(Details for the West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association Show 2026 contd...)

23. Display of beeswax flowers, colouring allowed, (see note 9).
24. 1-5 Stems of beeswax flowers. Container will not be judged, (see notes 9 and 10).
25. Two beeswax wraps (300mm x 300mm) square, (see note 11).
26. Display of six bee products on a tray, all different.
27. Any decorative or artistic exhibit, to include needlework this may include lace, knitting or crochet relating to bees or beekeeping, not to exceed 600mm x 600mm (see note 12).
28. Any beeswax model, no colouring permitted.
29. Honey cake (see recipe – NO changes to recipe permitted).
30. Six honey biscuits, recipe to be provided by the exhibitor.
Photograph Classes, (see note 13).
31. Honey bee/s and flower/s.
32. Aspects of beekeeping.

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE OF EXHIBITORS.

Entries open to members of WWBKA only.

Each exhibitor may enter a maximum of two exhibits in a class. However, only one exhibit per exhibitor may receive an award in that class.

All honey and wax exhibited (except classes 22, 23, 24, 29 and 30) must be bona fide produce of bees kept by the exhibitor. All honey to be exhibited in clear glass 454g (1lb) squat jars, labelled 1.25cm (1/2 in) from the bottom of the jar.

1. Gold coloured metal or plastic, screw on lids only. Chrome plated or coloured lids will be disqualified
2. Young member under 16 years of age on the day of the show.
3. Sleeves will be provided on the day. Labels for this class are to be placed on the lid, sleeve and jar.
4. Cut comb to be shown in a white or clear plastic container with a clear lid.

(Notes for the guidance of exhibitors contd...)

5. Mead to be exhibited in standard punted bottles with white plastic topped flanged corks, containing approx. 75cl. Melomel and metheglin to have flavour label on the bottle. Class labels to be placed 1.25cm (1/2 inch) from the bottom.
6. Wax polish to be in a standard round container, metal or plastic, warning labels not required.
7. Candles must stand upright in candle holders. Candle holders to be provided by the exhibitor and be appropriate for purpose.
8. This class is open to any age. All decoration must be beeswax, colouring is permitted.
9. Colouring ,wire and florist's tape may be used , but no plant material
10. Open to anyone who has not won the beeswax flower section at the National Honey Show
11. Pure beeswax only, no other oils or resins to be added.
12. Work exhibited must be completed by the exhibitor.
13. Photographs may not be entered into both classes 32 and 33. Size between 10cm x 15cm (4in x 6in), unframed but may be mounted.

Honey cake recipe

150g butter or margarine	100g light brown sugar
175g clear honey	15ml water
200g self-raising flour	2 eggs (size 2)

Method:

Grease and line a round cake tin 15-20 cm (6-8 inch)

Place sugar, butter, honey and water in a pan and heat gently, stirring until the sugar has dissolved.

Sift the flour over the surface and stir in. Beat well with a wooden spoon to remove lumps.

Beat the eggs lightly then add the mixture, distributing evenly.

Turn the mixture into the prepared tin.

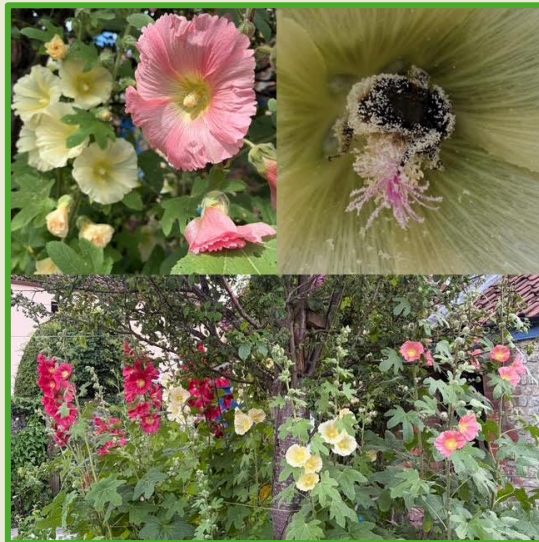
Bake for 40 minutes at 180 c, fan 160 c, gas mark 4.

Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes and then turn out onto a wire rack until cool.

To be displayed on a plain white paper plate, with a doily and a clear polythene bag.

Flower of the month, July: Hollyhock (Alcea)

Hollyhocks, known for their tall, graceful flower spikes are popular cottage garden plants, and bloom from early summer to autumn. They thrive in well-drained, fertile soil, preferably in full sun, though may require staking. Sadly, they are susceptible to hollyhock rust, this can affect older plants. The best way to deal with this is to replace them periodically. It's helpful that hollyhocks are easily grown from seed and will happily self set (don't be too careful with the weeding!) Ideal for mixed borders, they attract pollinators. The hollyhocks are well attended by bumble bees in my garden – in fact, I am amazed they can manage to fly after they are so smothered in the pollen after they have frolicked in it! Hollyhocks do not do well in shade.



Hollyhocks will grow in most soils, in full sun. They are well known for finding cracks in paving and at the base of walls. If your garden is windy, choose a sheltered spot and stake your plants as they begin to grow. Have you got a suitable location in the back of a sunny border or along a wall? Hollyhocks grow in single or double flowers – pollinators prefer single petalled flowers. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/hollyhocks/growing-guide>

SAVE THE DATE - 25th July 2026

A Club Garden Party from noon on Saturday 25th July will be held at the **White Hart in Corsley** and we do hope you'll be able to come - family members are very welcome, too!



Menu options are detailed on the poster above.

Please confirm your food choices by Sunday 12 July, to Liz Gwinnell using the email address education-wwbka@outlook.com - remember to let her know about any food allergies

Payment in advance for your food to Branch account: sort code: 30-98-75 account: 00061511

(please add reference: **your name/GParty**)

July Honey Recipe of the Month: Honey and Orange Ice Cream

If you've got a freezer with a bit of room in it, with the recent temperatures I thought a bit of ice cream might go down well this month – I was reluctant to try this, but it was easier to make than I thought it would be.

Ingredients

355 ml double cream

355 ml whole milk

118 ml honey of your choice

0.5 tsp salt, reduce to 1/4 tsp if desired

1.5 tsp vanilla extract (I only used one teaspoon)

4 large egg yolks



Method

1. Whisk the egg yolks until smooth. Set aside.
2. (At this point I peeled a large orange very thinly and added it to the cream, milk, honey, and salt in a medium saucepan, you can omit the orange rind if you like).
3. Heat the mixture slowly over medium-to-medium high heat, stirring occasionally, until it is just barely starting to simmer.
4. Remove from the stovetop. Add a little of the hot mixture very slowly to the beaten egg yolks, whisking it in as you pour it.
5. Add the egg yolk mixture to the saucepan and return to the stovetop, again whisking the mixture together as you pour.
6. Cook over medium or medium-low heat for 10-12 more minutes, stirring frequently, until slightly thickened. If you are used to making custard-based ice creams, this recipe does not thicken quite as much as others, as the honey keeps it relatively thin, but it should thicken a bit.

(Recipe of the month: July Contd.)

7. Pour the custard over a fine mesh strainer, to catch any bits of egg and orange peel, into a container for chilling. Add the vanilla extract and stir to combine.
8. Cover and chill for at least 6 hours or overnight.
9. Churn ice cream in an ice cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions.
10. Smooth the ice cream into a freezer safe container and freeze for at least a few hours before enjoying. Best within a couple days.

Please note – I don't have an ice cream maker – I poured the mixture into a bread tin and put it into the freezer and stirred it at regular intervals. The orange flavouring was my addition, my family thought this turned out very well. The original recipe can be found on the link below.

<https://theviewfromgreatisland.com/honey-ice-cream-recipe/#wprm-recipe-container-104649>



Many thanks to WWBKA members who volunteered to help at the Bishopstrow Fete Saturday 13th June and the Ecofest in Chippenham on Sunday 14th June.



Additionally, a special vote of thanks to those who turned out on Monday 29th June to help to fix the clubhouse roof, (photo above) namely Jon and Andrea Stickells, Bruce and Amanda Leworthy, David Raines and Chris Rawlings. What a fantastic job they have done!

The “Taster Day Experience” – an article from Nina Wilton, our Education officer and two of her past “Taster Day attendees....” Great to hear of first-hand experiences...thank you all

As a registered charity, one of our club's charitable objectives is to provide information to the general public about beekeeping and the environmental importance of pollinators. The taster sessions we run are one of the things that we do to meet that objective - they provide an opportunity for non-beekeepers and prospective beekeepers to come along to our apiary where they can find out more about the craft of beekeeping and the vital role that honeybees and other pollinators play in our environment

We ran our first taster session 3 years ago - it was a bit of an experiment because we hadn't really done anything like it before and didn't know whether it would be useful. The first taster day went really well, so we decided to run one every year.

The taster sessions are not an attempt to persuade people to take up beekeeping - it's important for people to be able to make an informed decision rather than starting and then giving up, having possibly invested time and money before realising that beekeeping isn't for them. All those having attended them will agree that I try really hard to persuade them not to take up beekeeping. However, many people who have attended the taster sessions have then gone on to do our Beginners Course (which runs for 6 weeks in February/March each year), so I clearly need to do some more work on my powers of dissuasion!

Howard and Julie Newmarch attended last year's taster day and then went on to do the 2026 Beginners Course. They're now both fully fledged beekeepers. Howard says:

We learned about the Taster Day on the website. We had been mulling getting involved in beekeeping for some time and had recently had a swarm collected from our driveway.

("Taster Day Experience contd...)

The Taster Day was an ideal way to learn more about beekeeping. We learnt so much about the joys complexities and challenges that would await us and left us with a desire to get involved in the activity. Everyone was very welcoming and happy to share their knowledge with us. The opportunity to open up hives and see what's involved was very motivating and we felt it is an activity we could enjoy doing together. All in all, a very worthwhile event and experience.

The taster sessions, led by WWBKA members who are experienced beekeepers - are enthusiastic about the craft, love our bees, but have been doing it for long enough to have experienced the lows as well as the highs of beekeeping, so we hope that we can provide a balanced view, as well as answer most of the questions we might get asked. We start the session in the club house and talk about what's really involved in being a beekeeper; it's definitely not just a matter of tucking a hive down at the bottom of the garden and collecting some honey once a year. We explain the costs involved, the space needed, the time commitment, and suitable locations for a hive. We also learn about what plants we can use to attract a range of pollinators to our gardens, and how a colony of honeybees works as a kind of super-organism.

If the weather is good, attendees are given the opportunity to get safely kitted out in a bee suit and we'll open up a hive. This allows people to get a feel for whether they are comfortable being close up and personal with a colony of up to 60,000 bees. That idea can be a bit daunting, so we try to keep things calm, controlled and stress free for the benefit of the humans and for the bees.

This year's taster day will on Saturday 1st August. Want to join us? Please e-mail me on education-wwbka@outlook.com to book.

The British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) recommends two crucial windows for treating

Varroa destructor: Late Summer/Autumn (August–September): Immediately after your honey harvest is removed. This is the most critical treatment period to protect the "winter bees" that will survive until spring. Mid-Winter (November–January): During a naturally broodless period, which is the most effective time to use oxalic acid. Take a look at the document online through the following link to refresh your memory –

[https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/assets/PDFs/3_Resources_for_beekeepers/Advisory leaflets/APHA_Managing Varroa 2020 ELECTRONIC ONLY-1.pdf](https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/assets/PDFs/3_Resources_for_beekeepers/Advisory_leaflets/APHA_Managing_Varroa_2020_ELECTRONIC_ONLY-1.pdf)

and take advantage of purchasing bee treatments through the club....

A message from the Apiary Manager and Club Treasurer:

Following the positive responses from the previous years, we are offering members a chance to purchase Apivar Varroa treatment through the club at an excellent price. The price per treatment is £5, order as many as you need.

In addition to Apivar, for members who are looking to rotate treatment, we are also ordering Api-Bioxal (35g) at £14. A 35g pack treats up to 10 hives.

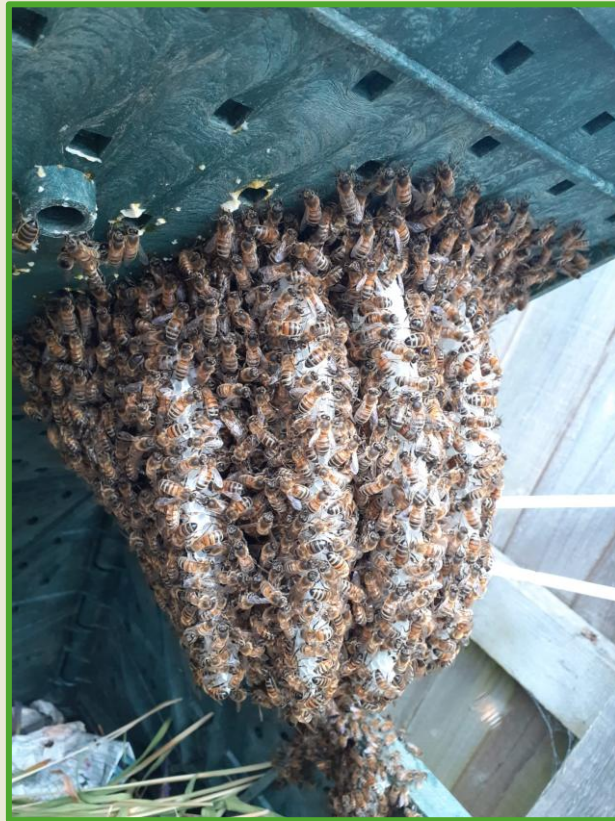
Please follow manufacturer's instructions when using treatments.

Pickup is from the Apiary. Orders subject to availability. Please send your order requests to treasurer-wwbka@outlook.com

To avoid financial risks to our Branch, your order will not be processed if payment has not been received by the payment deadline to our Branch accounts.

Many thanks to **Alex Sparke** for the photo below

“Bees in the compost bin”!



If you have any interesting photos and captions to accompany them please send them in, I'm sure members would like to see them – send them to newsletter-WWBKA@outlook.com

A REMINDER

HAVE YOU JOINED BEEBASE?

<https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/#>

The National Bee Unit is vital in the control of infection and sharing of resources. Registration with the National Bee unit means if there is an outbreak of disease in your area you will be alerted.

The National Bee Unit run an apiary inspection programme; the NBU inspectorate is made up of a network of fully trained Bee Inspectors.

BeeBase is full of useful information on many topics of bee husbandry including how to manage pests and diseases and the best practices that should be observed for successful beekeeping.

The NBU is a recognised centre of excellence in the provision of advice and research in bee health.

I urge you to follow the link to the National Bee Unit to find out more

Inspired by a past speaker, **Alan Ridout** offers us “**An Alternative Method of Feeding Honeybees**” – read on to find out more.

As enjoyable beekeeping is, one of the jobs that I find boring is feeding; and when one has 30 hives it becomes a chore. My mind goes back quite a number of years when our club had a guest speaker (a full-time beekeeper) who explained the method of feeding he used and I thought it is about time I tried it. So, you may wish to ask the question, “if there is an alternative method to mixing sugar syrup and then putting it in a feeder, only to return a few days later to top up the feeder, then repeat process, then collect the empty feeder to wash it and kill any black mould; why did I not try it earlier?” The answer I would have to give is, “I was comfortable in the method I was taught and surely this speaker could not be right!”

So, after all these years I decided to give the new feeding method a try, and I have done it for the last three years to ensure it works before I went into print. No doubt there will be critics of this feeding method, as indeed some people have already expressed reservations, but all I can say is that it certainly works for me and I will continue to use this method in the future.

The method is:

1. Go to the apiary with bags of sugar, a bucket of water and an empty super to use as an eke.
2. Place the empty super above the crown board and place four or five bags of sugar in the bucket of water for a short time. The number of bags will depend upon the amount of stores the bees already have.

(An Alternative Method of Feeding Honeybees cont...)

3. Place the wet bags of sugar on the crown board and if needed, make an incision in the bag with a hive tool; replace the roof.

4. Revisit the hives a week or so later and if all the sugar has gone put on more 'wet bags' of sugar.

5. When it appears that the bees have taken down all they want, remove the eke and open one more (dry) bag of sugar and evenly distribute the sugar over the crown board, replace the roof.

Step 5 will be insurance in case the bees need it, but it also has the additional benefit of absorbing any moisture that may collect in the hive over the winter.

In the months of January/February the hive can be inspected, and fondant can then be fed if required. As already stated, I have tried this method for the last three years and have lost no colonies due to starvation; I have even successfully fed swarms using this method. Goodbye to mixing many gallons of 1:1 ratio of water and sugar for the winter feed and 2:1 ratio for any spring feeding.

Interesting reading! Thank you for your contribution Alan.

The Royal Bath and West Show 2026

Last month the newsletter contained details of the Royal Bath and West Show – the editor invited comments with regard to any omissions or errors in that report, none have been received. If you would like amendments added to the August issue, please email your corrections to Newsletter-WWBKA@outlook.com

Heatwave!

Our UK honeybees have had a lot to put up with these last couple of weeks - and if the weather forecast for July is right, we could all be in for another hot spell. To protect our colonies of honeybees we need to be mindful of the threat of potential dehydration and hive overheating. Trying to site our hives in partial shade and close to a water source may alleviate those problems to some extent.

With regard to water, bees are said to use increased amounts of water to cool their hive through evaporation, so providing a water station in a shady spot near your hives is a good idea. Last year I saved the moss from scarifying the lawn and put it into a large bucket and topped it up with water to leave by the hives, making it easier for the bees to negotiate the water without drowning. In hot weather shallow water bowls topped up with pebbles evaporate quickly and may need frequent replenishment.

So far as hive overheating is concerned, it may be useful to open up the hive entrance to improve the air flow through the hive, that may depend on whether you have a "wasp issue" at the moment - although I have heard reports from other beekeepers of increased wasp sightings, until last week I had not seen any around my hives. I have read that if thought to be essential, you can prop open the crown board with a coin or a matchstick - has anyone tried that?

In some cases, beekeepers have provided temporary shade for the hives by erecting an umbrella over them. A sheet of reflective insulation (as you might place behind a radiator), placed over the crown board, can act to reflect the heat of the sun upwards out of the hive. A reduction in inspection of hives can give both the bees and the beekeepers

(Heatwave contd...)

a break in the hotter times. Whilst on your apiaries don't forget to keep yourselves well hydrated - applying sunscreen under your veil is sensible. If you must inspect, try a cooler time of day and make those inspections as brief as possible.

Ensuring your colonies have enough space inside the hive by providing enough "super" space is advisable. Increasing empty space above the crown board is unlikely to help and may give the bees incentive to build brace comb. You may notice bees clustering outside the hives, "bearding" in very hot weather in an attempt to improve the hive climate - in respect of internal hive temperature, humidity and overcrowding.

A study (January 2026) undertaken by the University of Chicago, "Extreme heat waves disrupt honey bee thermoregulation and threaten colony survival", found

"excessive heat, with maximal temperatures exceeding 40°C, can reduce colony populations by impairing the thermoregulation of brood or by exposing adults to temperatures that shorten their lifespans".

(<https://www.preventionweb.net/news/extreme-heat-waves-disrupt-honey-bee-thermoregulation-and-threaten-colony-survival> accessed 30/06/26)

Although recent temperatures in UK were not quite as high as that, there seem potential for lessons to be learned. Some beekeepers have noticed a drop in egg laying and brood emergence (possibly due to the difficulty in maintaining equilibrium of appropriate hive temperature), life expectancy of bees emerging in hot periods may be reduced from what is usually expected. We can offer short term solutions to some of the problems faced by honeybees in times of intense heat - but maybe we should be looking to plan ahead

(Heatwave contd...)

for the general increase in UK temperatures. With increasing heat and sunlight borne in mind, we might be encouraged to consider more seriously, the placement of our beehives in shade in the future.

Other future plans might include the planting of drought tolerant plants more suitable for dryer climates, garden plants such as echinacea, lavender, allium and borage for example. Encouraging the practise of growing wildflower patches for improved foraging is also a good idea. In recent times, many local councils resist cutting grass verges and some leave wild areas to cultivate forage for bees and pollinators: gardens and hedgerows offer shelter and forage.

Has this little discussion left you with food for thought? I am off to order more easily fitted hive entrances my hives, so that I can vary hive entrance size and ventilation more effectively. I am certainly thinking seriously about the plants I put into my garden. The thing is, we can all do our bit – don't underestimate your influence – youngsters are often already environmentally aware - use every opportunity to encourage them by talking about the problems that pollinators face, by talking about our gardens and the plants we put into them - as one of the major supermarkets says, "every little helps"!

Elaine Mairis

July Pollinator of the month: The Black and Yellow Longhorn beetle.



I was lucky to spot this interesting beetle feeding on flowers of ground elder. It is quite large and colourful, a common sight across most of Europe and widespread in the U.K. - black and yellow with very long antennae and no actual horns!

Often found in areas close to woodland, where there is plenty of dead wood for their larvae to feed on, the adult beetles can be spotted between May and August. Most active in warm weather, when they visit a wide range of flowers to feed on pollen and nectar. They're particularly fond of umbellifers.

This beetle is apparently widespread and common in England and Wales (confess I think this is the first I have seen), more patchily distributed in northern England. Found in southwest Scotland, with scattered records from further north.

This species is sometimes called the spotted longhorn beetle, or more rarely the harlequin longhorn beetle.



Beekeeping supplies.



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Diane Sleigh

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[what3words poetry.unto.driveway](http://what3words.poetry.unto.driveway)

Contact details for committee and officers

WWBKA President: President-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Chair: Chair-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Treasurer: Treasurer-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Secretary: Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Apiary Manager: Apiary-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Honey Show Secretary: HoneyShow-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Membership Secretary: Membership-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Asian Hornet Action Team Coordinator: AHAT-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Newsletter Editor: Newsletter-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Social Secretary: Social-wwbka@outlook.com

Services available to members

The following services are provided by West Wilts BKA to members:

Bee Bank (for sale or purchase of queens, nucs and colonies). Contact the Branch Secretary at Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com

Equipment loan (microscopes, extractors, etc.): Contact the Branch Secretary at Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com

Swarm Collection Register: Contact Branch Swarm Coordinator (David Raines 07711 018440 1373-825560 or David.Raines@hna.uk.com)

Find us on  :West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association