

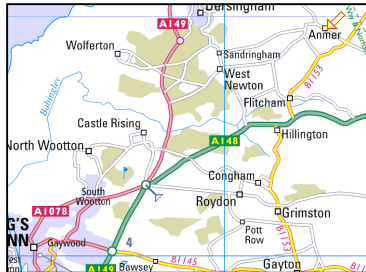


Website : www.wnklba.co.uk

Next Event

"Healthy Bees"

Sunday 17th May 10 am – 4 pm Anmer Village Hall, then Association Apiary, Flitcham, PE31 6RN



Healthy Bees are Happy Bees Theory & Practical Day.

Being aware of the ailments that can beset bees is a part of husbandry that is very helpful to us. Knowing how to recognize problems and what action to take is very much a part of keeping our bees alive and healthy. This day is part a talk & discussion and part a practical apiary session. If there is one meeting you should try and get to,

this is it.

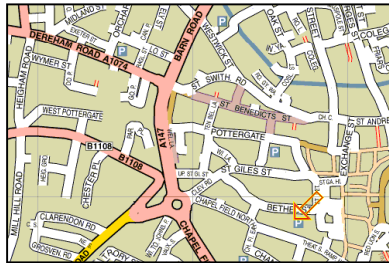
Please bring a packed lunch – liquid refreshments will be available.

Nosema has been in the limelight recently because a new strain Nosema Ceranae has been found in the UK. To set your mind at rest, bring a sample of bees along for a free test. (see next page)



Sustainable Living

Friday 22nd May, Sunday 24th May, Monday 25th May
The Forum, 2 Millennium Plain, Bethel Street. Norwich. NR2 1TF
Tel. 01603 727950



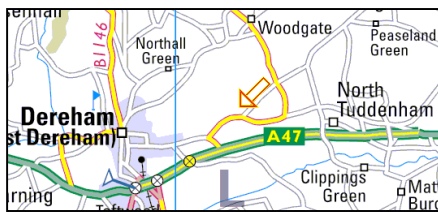
Norwich and Norfolk Sustainable Living Festival

We have a stand at this prestigious festival, An educational display about beekeeping and about bees and their effect on the environment. You can visit us as part of a day out in Norwich.

Volunteers needed for the stand 01553 674051

Learning how to show honey

Saturday 13th June 2.30 pm 1 School Cottages, Etling Green, Dereham NR20 3EU (just off the Dereham Bypass on the A47 to Norwich)



Preparing Honey for Exhibiting

With Jill Tinsey. This is the time to find out about exhibiting in our Honey Show and get some good practical tips from a master at exhibiting, who is happy to share her knowledge and encourage others.

Bring along a jar of honey and get some sympathetic help and advice on how to show it
There will be some light-hearted prizes for participants.

Contacts :

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 Secretary : Lorraine Gibson Tel: 01553 674051 eMail : sec.wnklba@virgin.net
 Bee Inspector : Keith Morgan Tel: 01485 520152 eMail : keith.morgan93@googlemail.com
 Keith's new address is: 14, Hyde Park Cottages (Off Church Road), Little Massingham, Kings Lynn PE32 2JP

We are a member of eBEES – the electronic newsletter exchange for beekeepers



Honey Show



Save your best frame.. and win a prize.

Courtesy of our retiring chairman, Ernie Dix, there will be a new class in our honey show this year – best novice frame.

Last year entries were down and we discussed ways of encouraging every beekeeper (yes, that includes **you** !) to join in the fun.

The honey show is not for a while, so letting you know now gives you a chance to put a frame on one side from any early-season honey you may get.



The only criterion for the Novice Frame entry is that you have not won a prize in our Honey Show before.

On show day you just bring along your frame – we will supply a show case so that the frame can be displayed and look as good as possible at the show.

Have a go. Wouldn't it be good fun if your name was on the 1st prize !

Collecting a Sample of Bees to bring along on Sunday 17th May



To collect a sample of 30 bees, you can choose one of two methods :

- Close the entrance to the hive by inserting something in the entrance (foam rubber, grass)
- After ten minutes, draw an open match box across the entrance to collect the 30 or so bees inside it.
- Close the matchbox and remove the entrance block.
- Label the box with your name, contact number and hive number

OR

- Cover the entrance to the hive by hanging a cloth or sack across the front of the hive.
- After ten minutes, drag an empty honey jar across the cloth, trapping 30 or so bees.
- Put a lid on the Jar and remove the cloth.
- Label the jar with your name, contact number and hive number

Test your Bees for free



Nosema can be treated by the use of Fumidil-B. Fumidil has been around many years but is currently under a 'hanging licence' meaning the manufacturers have not renewed the licence (which involves undertaking a number of stringent tests) but neither has the government withdrawn the licence, so it can continue to be sold for now.

BBC2
Friday 15th
May 7p.m.

Introduced by Martha Kearney, this documentary explores the reasons behind the decline of bee colonies across the globe, investigating what might be at the root of this devastation.



Raffle

You can help please

Gift Aid

Fund Raising

Last year we invested heavily in Education. To raise funds we are selling raffle tickets before the Sandringham Show. **We will be sending members several books of raffle tickets.** It is vitally important for us that we sell as many of the raffle tickets as possible so please do help us by making sure you don't have any remaining. Prior to the Sandringham Show (when the draw will be made) you will need to return any cash and unused tickets by 22nd July.



Gift Aid and Charity Status



Whilst on the subject of fund raising, we have found that with relatively little effort we can get tax relief on subscriptions. If the scheme gets approved we will be asking you to sign a 'gift-aid' form. More in due course.

Swarming



Swarming usually starts in May. A colony will not usually swarm until sexually mature drones are present. The drone life cycle is 24 days from egg to adult, of which 13 days are sealed in the cell. On emerging the drone takes 2 weeks to become sexually mature. Hence the first possible swarm can emerge about 4 weeks after the first drone cells are sealed.

Golden rules to prevent swarming:

- Don't let the bees feel congested – inspect regularly and act decisively.
- Keep young queens – no more than 2 years old.
- Keep stocks of a low swarming strain – don't raise queens from colonies that have swarmed with a young queen.



The Apiary

The apiary is dry at the moment so there is a potential risk from smokers setting fire to grass. There are buckets provided – please empty your smoker into these at the end of an apiary session and be particularly vigilant about setting fire to the grass. There will also be beaters provided so that any small-scale incident can be beaten out. If you could familiarize yourself with these when you visit the apiary it could prevent an unfortunate accident. So far we have been lucky thanks to your care.



Varroa

On the whole bees have come through the winter in reasonable shape but our resident Bee Inspector, Keith Morgan, reports that he has come across several instances of heavy varroa infestation – often just an odd hive in an apiary.

You do need to monitor varroa levels and take action if high. Keith suggests drone brood removal and also the use of Apiguard during the June gap (when supers can be put above the crown board during treatment with little likelihood of tainting honey).



Recent Events

Apiary Opening

Apiary Opening by Henry Bellingham M.P.

On 4th April 2009, our new apiary at Blackborough End was officially opened by Henry Bellingham. Behind the scenes, Brian Gemmell and a cast of thousands had worked hard at clearing the site, erecting facilities, transferring hives and getting the place ship shape. On the day 63 members arrived and heard Henry make an impassioned speech, highlighting the problems with bees and pledging support for the fight for more research funding.

The Eastern Daily press was in attendance and carried the story on Monday. Member John Woodford also appeared on Radio Norfolk on the preceding Friday, doing sterling work highlighting the issues for beekeepers and the hard work being done by WNKLBA in raising awareness and funds for research.

Henry Bellingham addresses the members

Henry Bellingham M.P.



With president Don Cooper at hand, our M.P. declares the new apiary...



Open ...



and finally, a wonderful picture of hives being opened up in the new apiary.



Well done to everyone involved for getting us this far...



Horticulture Development. HDC News



A dearth of suitable forage may be at the heart of bee decline claims a beekeeper and researcher

Beekeeper Robin Dean says the evidence points to lack of habitat and food sources, rather than use of crop protection chemicals, as a key factor in falling bee numbers - and there is much that growers can do to help retain their crucial pollinators

There's no doubt bee populations are falling but it is difficult to measure the impact on pollination - upon which so much depends. An EU-sponsored project on biodiversity risks (the ALARM project) suggests the number of pollinators has reduced by 30% over the last 10 years. But data is patchy and there is real concern that the rate of decline is accelerating.

Only honeybees and bumblebees are regularly mentioned in media coverage of bee decline but there are around 240 bee species resident in the UK. Honeybees are virtually a domestic animal and supplies would be imported if UK populations sank critically low. By focusing only on honeybees, there is a real danger of losing the specialized pollinators of particular plants, and the knock-on effect is possible extinction of multiple species.

The commercial impact of a decline in pollinators is exceedingly hard to estimate but one estimate puts the global value of pollinators in agriculture at approximately \$200 billion. Fruit crops are particularly vulnerable along with vegetables such as courgettes and beans - not forgetting production of seed for most crops.

Agricultural chemicals have been blamed as major drivers of bee decline but attempting to pin all current ills in the bee world on farmers and growers is unfair. A recent study in the USA into honeybee decline found residues of 170 agricultural chemicals in beehives - but the most significant were pesticides used by beekeepers to control varroa mite. Crop protection products were found in much smaller amounts and neonicotinoids, on which so much attention has been focused, hardly showed up.

France banned the neonicotinoid pesticide Gaucho (imidacloprid) in 2001, followed by several others in subsequent years: bee decline continued and there is still no conclusive study to show that neonicotinoids are solely responsible, though there may be a link.

There have been isolated bee poisoning incidents but they usually involve specific circumstances, One example was the poisoning of thousands of bees in the Rhine Valley that led to a clothianidin seed treatment ban in Germany. Investigation found the bonding agent holding the neonicotinoid insecticide to the seed was faulty and excessive air pressure was being used in seed drills in very dry soil conditions, allowing a clothianidin-laden dust to drift over neighbouring fields of flowering plants: the ban was lifted.

Defra statistics show a decline in the number of investigated bee poisonings in the UK, from 48 in 2000 to 19 in 2007 (the latest year from which statistics are available) indicating how seriously farmers take their environmental stewardship. So if not pesticides, what is to blame for bee decline? **There's mounting evidence that a restricted diet caused by large-scale cultivation of a small range of flowering crops may be a significant factor.** That suggests growers can help by ensuring there is a diversity of flowering species alongside the crop to supplement a diet deficient in vitamins, amino acids and trace elements.

Remember that bees are active for around nine months of the year. There may be a glut of food during the eight or nine weeks of orchard bloom, but bees also need sustenance during the other seven months of the year, which could be provided by encouraging nectar-rich, low growing plants such as clovers in between the trees.

One area that has to receive research attention in the near future is the fragile relationship between pollinators and the wider farming and growing environment. If you provide food sources, bees arrive from the wild but how do you retain them? Are there other potential managed pollinators besides honeybees and, if so, how do we harness their particular qualities? Defra's Higher and Entry Level Stewardship programmes currently encourage creation of pollen- and nectar-rich areas, although the rules evolve constantly and specialist advice should be sought. But, grant-aid aside, the environmental and agricultural benefits of encouraging diverse pollinator communities will also be reflected in better yields and quality of insect-pollinated fruit and vegetable crops.



Buy/Sell

Do you want bees? Do you want to sell equipment? Terry Gibson is operating an informal "information exchange" for the association. He can be contacted on **01553-674051** eMail : bee-aware@gmx.com

Margaret Rickard
30th/31st
May
28th June



Clear View Gardens will be open on **30th and 31st May** for the National Garden Scheme, and **28th June** for MAGPAS, from 10am-5pm .
The June opening will have John Crocker playing with the Muddy Boots Jazz.
The entry fee is £3 (Children under 16 free). This, and the refreshment (homemade cakes) money, will all go to these Charities. We'd love to see you, your families & friends.
Margaret and Graham Rickard 01945 410724. (5 minutes from Wisbech centre)
Cross Lane, off Bevis Lane or Lords Lane, Wisbech St Mary, Cambs PE13 4TX

A small 'Hum' of beekeepers to man the Bee Stall on 28th June would be welcome – please phone Margaret on 01945 410724 if you can help.

ASSOCIATION APIARY - BEEKEEPER

If you are able to help out at the association apiary, looking after the bees for a week or two in the season, please call Brian Gemmell, our apiary coordinator on 01945 880837. Anyone with a year or more experience can help and experts will be on call if needed.

Help !

Topical Tip
May 2009



Fermented Honey

Ripe honey should be about 82% sugars and 18% water. If the honey falls below 80% sugar, natural yeasts can grow in the honey making alcohol. The honey cannot be sold and the surface layers may bubble up out of its jar. You can still use it in cookery or making mead.

I bought a honey refractometer online from Hong Kong for about £20 that is an easy way of measuring the strength of honey.

Surprisingly solid honey like oilseed rape is more likely to ferment than liquid honey.

Rape honey has a high proportion of glucose. When the glucose crystallises out of solution the water left behind dilutes down the remaining fructose solution making it more likely to ferment.

Heating honey to above 70oC kills yeasts and stops fermentation but overheating honey creates more problems.

The honey darkens because a harmless chemical HMF (hydroxymethyl-furfural) is formed.

The enzymes sucrase and diastase in the honey being proteins are denatured by heating. The subtle aromas can evaporate away.

There are limits to the amount of HMF allowed in honey and diastase enzyme must also be present. These are not normally a concern of hobbyists.

Moral :

Try not to extract unripe honey i.e. honey from unsealed cells that is easily shaken out of its cells.

John Everett 01508 538231



**Disease Alerts
May 2009**

If you have or have had bees in these areas please contact a Bee Inspector to make sure yours are not affected.

*Andy Wattam
Regional Bee Inspector:
01522
789726*

Disease: European Foulbrood (EFB) at the following locations :

NORFOLK:

Ordnance Survey Map Square: TG20	NORWICH SOUTH
Ordnance Survey Map Square: TM29	HEMPNALL
Ordnance Survey Map Square: TF94	WELLS NEXT THE SEA
Ordnance Survey Map Square: TM39	KIRBY CANE
Ordnance Survey Map Square: TM19	HAPTON
Ordnance Survey Map Square: TM18	GISSING
Ordnance Survey Map Square: TG00	COSTON
Ordnance Survey Map Square: TM09	ATTLEBOROUGH

LINCOLNSHIRE

Ordnance Survey Map Square: TF18	MARKET RASEN
Ordnance Survey Map Square: TF11	MARKET DEEPING

Disease: American Foulbrood (AFB) at the following locations :

LINCOLNSHIRE

Ordnance Survey Map Square: TF00	BARNACK
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Beekeepers and Bee farmers in this area should be vigilant and advise us of any colonies which they are concerned about.

Priority Inspection Visits of all known apiaries and beekeepers within a 5km radial sweep of the affected apiary(s) have already commenced.

If you have moved colonies into, or out of this area since your last visit from the Bee Inspector - please advise us at your earliest convenience.

Your help and cooperation is, as always greatly appreciated in completing our visits as swiftly as possible.

Useful Contact Details:

Andy Wattam - Regional Bee Inspector: 01522 789726

E-Mail: andy.wattam@fera.gsi.gov.uk

National Bee Unit: 01904 462510 - E-Mail: Nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk

Contact for Seasonal Bee Inspectors:

<https://secure.csl.gov.uk/beebase/public/Contacts/contacts.cfm>

Andy Wattam
Regional Bee Inspector.