

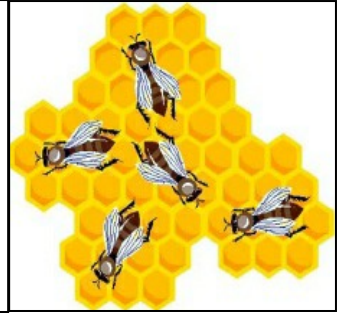
# 'BUZZ' for December

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TORBAY BRANCH,  
DEVON BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION.

Founded in 1875

Registered charity no. No. 270675

Torbay Branch web site: [www.tbbk.co.uk](http://www.tbbk.co.uk)



## FOR YOUR DIARY.

*All meetings are held in  
The Frances Norris Room, St. Paul's Church,,  
19, Locarno Avenue, Preston. TQ3 2DH  
Unless otherwise stated.*

**Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup>. December, Branch Social Evening.**  
*Commencing at 7-30 p.m. Concluding at 9-30 p.m.  
Light refreshments provided. See 'Chairman's Chat'  
for full details.*

**Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup>. January. The South Devon Honey  
Show.** *Commencing at 7-30 p.m. Concluding at 9-30  
p.m. See 'Chairman's Chat below for further details.*

**Monday, 15<sup>th</sup>. January. Introduction to Beekeeping  
Course. Session 1.** *Commencing at 7-30 p.m. See  
'Chairman's Chat' below for details.*

**Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup>. January. Harberton Village Hall, nr.  
Totnes.** *Commencing at 2 p.m. An open meeting to  
discuss a local response to a spring 2018 Asian  
hornet incursion.  
See below for full details.*

**Friday, 26<sup>th</sup>. January. The Paignton Club, The  
Esplanade, Paignton. The Branch Annual Dinner.** *See  
the Chairman's Chat for further details*

**Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup>. January. Unit 8, Hanbury Buildings,  
Bradley Lane, Newton Abbot. TQ12 1LZ. First  
Branch skep-making course tutored by Mick Male  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Refreshments available during the  
day.  
See Sept. BUZZ for full details.**

**Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup>. February. Unit 8, Hanbury  
Buildings, Bradley Lane, Newton Abbot. TQ12 1LZ  
Second Branch skep-making course tutored by Mick  
Male. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Refreshments available  
during the day.  
See Sept. BUZZ for full details.**



## DEVON BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity No 270675

General Secretary - Barry Neal, Badgers  
Barn, Withacott, Langtree,  
Torrington EX38 8NL

01805-601715; 07789-435477;  
[gen.sec.dbka@gmail.com](mailto:gen.sec.dbka@gmail.com)

### Annual General Meeting 2018

The Devon Beekeepers' Association (DBKA)  
Annual General Meeting will be held in the  
**Bridge Suite, the ISCA Centre, Summer Lane,  
Whipton, Exeter EX4 8NT  
at 10.15 am on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2018**

An agenda and further details will be published in  
due course in Beekeeping Magazine  
Proposals for agenda items and nominations for  
election to DBKA County Officer posts (DBKA  
Website refers) must be forwarded to the DBKA  
General Secretary no later than  
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2018

### THE CHAIRMAN'S CHAT.

Summer is well behind us now and although the  
bees are settled in the hive for the winter, there is  
still a lot to be done by the active Beekeeper. Of  
course, there are the jobs around the apiary such as  
cleaning-up supers and equipment. I find it easier to  
scrape wax and Propolis off supers when the  
weather is really cold as the substances are hard and  
brittle and come off easily. But more than that, I  
would hope that beekeepers enjoy the winter  
meetings organised by their local Association.

Our December meeting will be our Christmas  
Social. Hopefully, everyone will bring a plate of  
food to share; there will be a quiz - a section on  
Beekeeping and a section on general knowledge.  
There will be a bring and buy sale of beekeeping  
equipment - an opportunity to both make some  
money from your surplus equipment and possibly  
pick up a bargain. Most of all, I hope it will be a  
very sociable evening when Beekeepers will have  
the opportunity to chat and enjoy each other's  
company.

The January meeting will be our winter Honey  
Show. This year we are combining forces with  
Totnes and Kingsbridge Beekeepers and Newton

Abbot Beekeepers to form the South Devon Honey Show. Jack Mummery who has just qualified as a National Honey Judge will be judging. There will be no entry fee and no prize money in order to streamline administration as I am hoping there will be a good number of entries. If we can achieve one hundred and one entries we will be entitled to award a Best in Show rosette. Please look at the schedule and see which classes you would like to enter. I have written it especially to appeal to everyone - including those who have no honey! There will be a panel of experts to answer your questions on bees and beekeeping so please come along and enjoy inspecting the entries which, I'm sure, will be of the highest quality!

Last week we had the Torbay BKA AGM. We enjoyed a wonderful talk by John Risdon on the Singer family and Oldway Mansion. We all found the history of Paignton quite intriguing and wondered if we might ask John to lead a historical walk around Paignton town centre for us in the spring. Everyone brought a plate of food to share and it was a sociable and friendly occasion. All Officers were returned to their positions - thank you for your support - and we are pleased to welcome new members to our committee - Colin Lodge, Angela Hexham and returning committee member, Wendy Ashley. Your Committee has worked steadfastly throughout the last year to try to ensure that members have a positive beekeeping experience where they learn new techniques, improve performance and enjoy finding-out how to ensure that honey bees live long and prosper.

On Friday, 26<sup>th</sup>. January we are holding our annual dinner at the Paignton Club. The menu is excellent and at only \$22.95 for three courses, extremely good value for money. Please e-mail me your choice of menu before 18<sup>th</sup>. January as it is much more efficient to make our order beforehand. Partners and friends are most welcome to join us.

Our Introduction to Beekeeping course begins on the 15<sup>th</sup>. January and a study group for Module One will also be starting in the New Year. If you did the Beginners' Course last year and missed any sessions then you are welcome to catch them this year. If you did the course and would like to repeat it then it will be half price - £60. Please contact me if you wish to join us. ([lizwestcott@me.com](mailto:lizwestcott@me.com) or telephone 01803 855420)

I look forward to seeing you all over the course of the winter.

*Liz Westcott (Chair)*

## **CONTAINING THE ASIAN HORNET - AN INITIATIVE.**

The discovery and - hopefully - successful elimination - of an Asian hornet's nest at Woolacombe, in N. Devon in the late summer has set alarm bells ringing throughout the UK. If a fertile queen could establish a nest at Woolacombe it is clear that, next summer, further Asian hornet nests may become established at any locality throughout the country - including in the vicinity of YOUR apiary. With this in mind, the need to develop a local plan-of-action to counter the threat is self-evident.

It is, therefore, proposed to hold a meeting at the Harberton Village Hall at 2 p.m. on Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup>. January to decide on local initiatives aimed at containing any Asian hornets incursions as soon as any are identified next spring.

*Doug Westaway.*

## **ASIAN HORNET; OPEN MEETING.**

We are beekeepers near Totnes who are responding to the fact that Asian hornets were found in N. Devon this autumn as well as in Tetbury and North Somerset in 2016.

Having read Martyn Hocking's article published in both the November editions of 'Bee Craft' and 'Beekeeping' about the experience of finding Asian hornets in his apiary near Woolacombe in North Devon this autumn, we have been in touch with him. As a result we have called an:

### **OPEN MEETING ON ASIAN HORNETS.**

at

2 p.m. to 5p.m.

On

Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup>. January, 2018

in

Harberton Parish Hall TQ9 7SD

(afternoon tea and cakes provided)

at which Martyn Hocking will be the guest speaker and where there will be an opportunity to discuss a range of issues that have arisen.

Beekeepers from across SW England and representatives with a special interest in the Asian hornet have been invited. Parking is available, though to help reduce numbers of cars, if possible, please share cars.

Please contact Jill and Ken Beagley and state which BKA association you represent on:  
[Jill@armchairpuppets.co.uk](mailto:Jill@armchairpuppets.co.uk)

**As we are expecting much interest in this meeting we would appreciate being contacted by anyone wishing to attend so we can have sufficient**

refreshments available at the hall during the meeting. We can put anyone needing accommodation in touch with the local B&B in the area.

A follow-up article has since been written by Martyn in which he makes various suggestions about how beekeepers can be given better support should they find themselves in his situation. This is in the December / January edition of 'Beekeeping'. Martyn feels that there is only a short time in which to get organised and prepared for the arrival of the next Asian hornet queen if we are to have any chance of keeping this invasive, non-native species out of the UK.

*Jill & Ken Beagley.*

### **WINTER VARROA TREATMENT.**

Until the advent of the varroa mite, well-provisioned colonies were traditionally left to their own devices through the winter until the first inspection in mid-spring. Now, however, mid-winter provides the beekeeper with an opportunity to deal an effective blow against the inevitable residual mite population.

The current cold spell of weather will both make the bees cluster together and also persuade the queens to cease - or at least minimise - egg-laying. With the resultant consequent of a near-absence of brood within the brood-nest those varroa mites which survived the late-summer treatments and have subsequently bred, will be forced to exist upon the bodies of the clustered adult bees where they are vulnerable to oxalic acid treatment.

Oxalic acid is a naturally-occurring organic acid normally found at low levels in honey. The acid treatment works by making direct physical contact with the varroa present on the adult bees thus preventing them from sucking hemolymph. The acid does not penetrate any capped brood that may still be present but may kill any open brood. The combination of close-clustered bees, exposed varroa mites and a minimum of brood makes a period of about a month around the New Year the ideal time to treat colonies with an oxalic acid solution.

It must be remembered that honey bees are classed as food-producing animals and, as such, beekeepers are required to keep an up-to-date record of ALL veterinary medicines applied. If necessary, a suitable record 'card' may be downloaded from BeeBase.

Currently the approved oxalic acid treatments are Api-Bioxal, Oxuvar and VarroMed. These treatments plus instructions and application syringes are available from the several well-known bee equipment suppliers which advertise in the various beekeeping publications and on-line.

It is advisable to purchase, in December, sufficient treatment to treat all of the hives in early January. The dosage is 5ml per 'seam' of bees so an estimate will need to be made based upon the number of hives to be treated and the estimated strength of each colony. Be generous in making the estimate. Too much treatment to hand is better than too little!

Treat your colonies and so ensure that they enter spring with a minimal varroa mite load.

*Doug Westaway.*

### **YOUR TORBAY BRANCH COMMITTEE FOR THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS.**

#### **Branch Officers.**

President: Jim Mogridge.

Chair: Liz Westcott.

Vice Chair: Gerry Stuart.

Treasurer: Lynette Taylor.

Secretary: Di Hatherley.

DBKA delegate: Gerry Stuart.

#### **General committee members.**

Wendy Ashley.

Alan Barrett.

Maureen Brown.

Glyn Davies. Angela Huxham.

Colin Lodge.

James Schindler-Ord.

Mike Ticehurst.

Doug Westaway.

*Di Hatherley (Secretary)*

#### **REMINDERS:**

##### **SOCIAL EVENING.**

To come along to our Branch Social Evening on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>. December. Bring along some refreshments to share with fellow members.

##### **SOUTH DEVON HONEY SHOW.**

To prepare your entries for our combined honey show on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup>. January. Send in your entry form to our Show Secretary, Liz Westcott, in good time. This year Torbay will be competing with Totnes and Newton Abbot Branches so we need to put on a good show!!

##### **BRANCH ANNUAL DINNER.**

Earmark the day in your diary (Friday, 26<sup>th</sup>. January and decide upon your menu choice. Let Liz know your requirements before 18<sup>th</sup>. January. Yes, Christmas and New Year celebrations will be but a distant memory by then and you will be feeling the pangs of hunger once more.