



Herefordshire Buzzword

Herefordshire Beekeepers Association

April 2023

Registered Charity No:1174917



Events

Monday 3rd April 7.30 pm - Buckfast
online talk

“The how, when and why of feeding”.

This deals with the fundamentals of feeding, is it natural and right to feed bees, what to feed and when, and what do the bees do with the food.

Tuesday 11th April 6pm, Holme Lacy
Preparing the Hives

Tuesday 18th April 6pm, Holme Lacy
Swarm Collecting

Saturday 22nd April 2.30pm, Cradley
Sorting out hives, amalgamation

Tuesday 25th April 6pm Holme Lacy
Hooper's Five Inspection Points

.and don't forget:

April 21st-23rd BBKA Spring Convention
Harper Adams, Newport TF10 8NB
www.bbka.org.uk/spring-convention-2023



Two bites of the cherry,
or at least of the *tulipa*
clusiana

Clean up day at Holme Lacy

It was cold on clean up day in early March at the Association apiary when enthusiastic smiles beamed beside the lake with a plan. Armed with gloves and hive tools and a blowtorch they set to work.



Nine warmly dressed volunteers gave their time to help with the operation of hauling out the equipment, scraping, cleaning, sterilising, and returning it neatly back in the shed. A few hours, lots of laughter, hot drinks and biscuits saw the job done before lunch. The weather

held off, giving everyone enough time to stand back and admire all the useful parts tidily organised, packed and stacked ready for the season ahead. Many hands truly do make light work.



I would like to thank each of those volunteers who came along for the March clean up and to those of you who attend and help at apiary meetings and the other events that the Association organises.

Beekeeping can be a solitary hobby but it is these gatherings, at which we can meet and exchange news, ideas, and experience over a cup of tea at the end of a task, that unites us. The craft of caring for Herefordshire's managed honeybees needs a continuous thread of volunteers.

If you would like to join the volunteers who keep our association thriving, please contact one of our committee members, or simply turn up on apiary meeting evenings and say 'Hello'.

You will be made most welcome.



Steve Utley and Janelle Quitman

AGM – and Prizes

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on Tuesday 23rd March 2023 at the Belmont Community Centre. Colin Pavey took the chair.

As you will have seen from the papers that were emailed to all members ahead of the AGM, the number of meetings held in 2022 was significantly higher than in the previous year, as we all emerged from the Covid 19 lockdowns. Membership numbers in 2022 were slightly up at 243 and the total number of hives insured with the BDI through the Association was 1089. The current assets of the Association were slightly up, despite the loss of cash at the Three Counties' Show, offset by the depreciation of the tangible assets.

Three trustees have resigned during the year, but we welcomed Janelle Quitman as a new trustee.

One theme that was emphasised at the meeting was the opportunity for more members to become actively involved, beyond just reading the newsletter and turning up to LAN meetings. The Association has the financial resources to do much more, and there are many opportunities for the Association to do much more, but it needs people to implement those opportunities.

Immediately following the AGM, awards achieved at the Honey Show last Autumn were given out.

Bob Cross, who has done so much for the Association over many years, was presented with a hand forged hive tool mounted on a cherrywood plinth as a small token of thanks.

Once all this was over, participants had a quick cup of tea and then were able to listen to a fascinating, as always, and thoroughly well informed and informative presentation by Marin Anastasov on the defensive behaviour of bees, how it arises and how it is best handled.



Mary Walter receiving one of her several awards



Janelle Quitman receiving the LAN cup on behalf of the South LAN



Bob Cross with the personal award for all his help over the years



Val Lilwall: joint winner, with Chris Wright, of the Eaves Perpetual Challenge Cup



Chris Wright: winner of the Novice Cup (Home Guard Cup)

Hive Types – Warré

(pronounced: War-ray)

Also known as 'The People's Hive' this hive was created in the early 1900s by a French monk, Abbe Emile Warré (1867-1951). He designed this hive after studying around 300 different hive designs, his goal was to make beekeeping as simple and natural as possible, whilst keeping it accessible to the normal working class person. It became very popular in France followed very quickly by Belgium and Switzerland. It wasn't until 2006 it was available to be used in Germany & Russia followed a year later by the UK and then Canada and the US. By late 2009 it was available in many countries around the world.



The Warré hive consists of three main components, the base, the boxes and the roof with quilt box.

- The base is a very simple square that can be solid or mesh with a small entrance and alighting board. Legs can be added to lift it away from the ground and make it easier to add boxes.
- The boxes, smaller than the National boxes, are usually 30cm around each side, this size is similar to what the bees look for in the wild, inside trees or more annoyingly chimneys! These boxes have handles and eight bars laid across the top (frameless). Bars must have the correct spacing. Because of the smaller size they are better for heating in the winter.

- The roof + quilt box, A coarse cloth is placed over the bars in the top box, the quilt box, placed in top will contain sawdust, wood shavings, straw etc. held in place by a hessian cloth. The idea is that the shavings etc. act as a wick to pull moisture from the hive and to insulate in the winter. The roof which is peaked to allow rain water to run away easily sits on the quilt box covering the sides.

As always, no hive type is perfect and the Warré hive has pros and cons like any other.

Pros:

- Fairly simple design can be constructed DIY.
- Less maintenance – managed by box not frame (this can also be classed as a disadvantage, see cons). Inspections tend to be quicker as they are less involved



- Liked by the 'Natural Beekeepers' it differs from the Top Bar hive as this hive can be expanded to incorporate more space for the colony.
- Uses top bars, no foundation or frames needed so the bees can build their choice of comb.
- Doesn't require queen excluders, uncapping equipment or expensive extractors.
- Comb never gets old – colony moves down into new boxes, older boxes are removed from the top

Cons:

- Help – If there are particular issues with the hive, it is more difficult to find help from an experienced beekeeper who is an expert with Warré hives.
- Adding boxes – new boxes are added to the bottom, so the whole hive needs lifting which is really a job for more than one person.
- Removing boxes for harvesting – The top boxes will be removed but they need to be eased apart and cut with something like cheese wire.

- Harvesting – less honey, extracting the honey is ‘crush and strain’.
- Sharing – although many say this shouldn’t be done anyway, comb cannot be moved to supplement another hive.
- Problems in the colony – no monitoring of brood means if disease, queen problems or even swarming occurs, finding a solution would probably be too late.

Management is different in that these were originally planned so that two new boxes were added to the bottom at the beginning of the season and two of the top boxes would be removed for harvesting at the end of the season. The harvesting would usually begin in the second season in order to give the bees a good start. An alternative method is to add a new box when the bottom box gets to 80% full. In the winter months, it is a good idea to fit a mouse-guard and periodically check the quilt box contents are not damp.

We do have a Warré hive, occupied by a nice sized colony in the Holme Lacy apiary. As usual with beekeeping, you may have some different views from the above points!

Steve Utley

Steve runs the Warré hive, and various other hives, at the HBKA training apiary at Holme Lacy



BL Add 42130 f. 204r

The Luttrell Psalter

This image is one of the many illuminations in the Luttrell Psalter in the British Library, and dates from the first half of the 14th century. This psalter is very richly, and often funnily, illustrated. There are wrestlers, hawkers, bear baiters, dancers, and a mock bishop with a dog that jumps through a hoop. Perhaps the image of a wife beating her husband with her distaff would not be acceptable these days.

Somebody has even made a short film of this psalter, showing farming in a mediaeval English village through the year. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=myRNKk0-63A>

Bob's Beelines



It seems we had our spring in February and our winter in March. I do hope the weather will start to pick up now.

There have been reports that colonies have been lost in some places. Up to date I have not lost any most of my colonies are very strong for this time of year, possibly owing to the mild winter and keeping a check on the food stores and feeding candy where needed.

DO NOT open up your hives till the temperatures around 15C to 16C then only for a quick look just to see all is ok.

Get your bait hives ready for when the weather warms up, I think there maybe early swarms around this season.

We have frames and foundation etc. in stock if you need any.

We can be contacted on 01886 880 554 or mobile 07891 038 774.

We would like to say a big thank you for the presentation gift that we received at the AGM for all the work we have done over the years

We do enjoy doing shows and talking to people about beekeeping and do so as long as we are able to. Thank you again.

Bob and Kath Cross



Committee Members

Chairman : vacant

Vice Chairman : vacant

Secretary : Mary Walter

Treasurer : Roger Gill

Membership Sec. : Steve Utle

Committee:, Rob Williams, Deborah Smith, Janelle Quitman, Tony Ravenhall, Val Lilwall, and Kate Nieveen

LAN CO-ORDINATORS

North LAN: Mary Walter

East LAN: Sue Garrett

South LAN: Val Lilwall

PATRON: Councillor Ellie Chowns

To contact a member of the committee please look on our website for the appropriate email address: <https://www.herefordshirebeekeepers.org.uk/>

The Herefordshire Beekeepers Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Members of the committee are also trustees.

Further details at: <https://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=1174917&subid=0>

If you have contributions to propose for this newsletter, please contact **Kirsten Ellerby** at: news@herefordshirebeekeepers.org.uk



If foul brood is suspected, contact our Regional Bee Inspector (RBI),

- Jonathan Axe - Tel: 07867 151 641
jonathan.axe@apha.gov.uk

Or, during the season, a Seasonal Bee Inspector (SBI)

- Liz Gardner Tel: 07867 351610
elizabeth.gardner@apha.gov.uk

or

- Bronwen Hopkins - Tel: 07796 433 626
bronwen.hopkins@apha.gov.uk