



Herefordshire Buzzword

Herefordshire Beekeepers Association

July 2023

Registered Charity No:1174917



Events - July

South LAN - Holme Lacy

Meetings are held Tuesdays; 6:00 - 8:00 pm

4th July Normal Weekly Inspection of hives

11th July Clearing Supers Q&A

18th July Normal Weekly Inspection of hives

25th July Extraction and Honey Warming

East LAN

11th July 6.30 pm – Anthony Ravenhall – Bishops Frome

North LAN

Thursdays, Throne Farm Weobley. 6.30 pm

Watch your emails for details

Plus

Hog Roast - Friday July 7th

Mike Healey's barn at Ballingham

See email sent to you on 28th June

Healthy Bee Day

Organised by the NBU and HBKA

Sutton St Nicholas village hall

Sat 8th July 10am to 4:30pm

The day will be led by regional bee inspector Jonathan Axe together with seasonal bee inspectors. They will cover disease recognition with theory and practical workshops.

- Foul Brood – AFB and EFB
- Varroa
- Small Hive Beetle
- Hornets
- Tropilaelaps

Bring CLEAN bee suit, suitable footwear and CLEAN gloves

Limited numbers and more than half the places already taken:

Details and book [here](#)

Three Counties Show 2023



Gloucestershire hosted the honey show on a glorious sunny weekend this year at the Malvern Three Counties Show. Good quality honey entries, some very fine examples of wax and hive products – including a replica microscopic pollen sample made of wax – and well-drawn frames of honeycomb. Cakes and pollinator friendly flowers added to the competition with very high standard entries, which was to be expected, as experience gained from local honey shows leads to greater knowledge of what can be achieved at county level.

Gloucestershire produced an interactive touch screen for the public to learn about bees together with a well-constructed display of forage and the waggle dance.

Herefordshire was kept busy with colourful candle rolling while Mary and Bob both brought observation hives which are always a source of interest for the public. Bob and Cath also had a display of interesting artifacts for people to view and learn about. There were live demonstrations of inspecting the hives behind a netted viewing screen, plus skincare products for sale that contained honey, beeswax and botanicals.

Honey sales were flying off the shelves so if you ever need an outlet then think about entering the competitions, volunteer to do half a day on the stands and you too could have an easy way of earning some honey sales cash to go towards those impulse buys of new equipment.

If you did not go, you missed a good opportunity and hopefully next year you can make it. The summer of 2025 will be Herefordshire's turn to host the Honey and Bees tent so please keep it in mind to give your support.

Many thanks to Steve, Mary, Bob, Cath, Kate, and Ellen for their time on the stands.

Janelle Quitman

Three Counties Show (Continued)



Three Counties Show (continued)

We had a successful time at the show, with plenty of interest from members of the public. We were kept busy rolling candles with the children and explaining some of the intricacies of our craft. Gloucestershire was lead county this year and made a very professional display.

The wheel Mike Hunt had constructed to explain the waggle dance was especially impressive. Luckily the weather stayed fine over the weekend, but the dry conditions made the marquee was very dusty; much of the show honey was covered a fine film of it by the time we got home. Typically, the heavens opened just as we were packing up, but luckily it didn't start earlier. Congratulations to Debbie Smith for her excellent display of products of the hive, and "best in show" award.

Mary Walter



LAN Meetings

North LAN

In the month of June North LAN managed to meet three times. At the beginning of the month we finally extracted spring honey; average was 27kg (59 Lb).

At this point we have two nucs and four full sized hives at varying states of queen rightness. As the month progressed we had to shake out one of the hives as the queen was a drone layer. With all this weather one would have thought there would be no issues with mating.



Luckily we had a nuc with a good queen, so we placed said nuc in the old place of the drone layer and put the colony from it into a full-sized hive, so all bees that were shaken out joined nuc colony. Fast forward to today and this hive will be wanting a third super before long.

We have populated a WBC hive as well, which is... interesting. We either have ill-fitting boxes or we do not know how to assemble it correctly.

At the end of the month we stand with four full sized hives all with laying queens and one WBC which is awaiting its queen to be mated.



Rihards Krauze

South LAN

Bee Basic Assessment tutorial at Holme Lacy apiary.

Everyone who begins beekeeping is at a loss to know what to do. Tuition by experienced beekeepers and visiting an established apiary is a place to start. Textbooks help, but as the saying goes:

“Tell me and I listen, but I may forget, show me and I see, but I may not remember, let me do it and experience it for myself then I will learn.”

Andy Tatchell gave his time during the South LAN apiary meeting on Tuesday 27th June to run through the entire syllabus for the three candidates sitting the Basic Assessment in July, together with other interested beekeepers keen to learn more about the craft but are not yet ready to be assessed. He thoroughly explored the topics and skilfully answered all questions the candidates asked.

The assessment is not an examination – but you do receive a beautifully illustrated ornate certificate together with a badge for your bee suit. The assessment is a practical observation of a hive inspection backed by theoretical knowledge learned in a methodical way. What is learned from the syllabus is good beekeeping practice and a helpful foundation for the years to come.

It is what the title suggests: basic and an assessment. A very necessary and helpful tool if you want to be a good beekeeper. Honeybees don't need more beekeepers. They need better beekeepers. This is your first step to helping you become a better beekeeper.



Herefordshire is world famous for its beef cattle. It could also be well-known for its excellent beekeepers.

Janelle Quitman

South LAN

Forage Communication.

The continuing heatwave is ripening strawberries to their brightest red and South LAN attendees were generously treated with a surprise of the juiciest home-grown samples of Andy's harvest on Tuesday. The bowl was big enough to share round, several times over, for us to taste each individual berry's flavour – no trophallaxis needed between us – as we listened to Chris Wright give her talk on forage communication.

Unlike humans, who frequently misuse their hearing sense for gossip, bees don't have ears, which is probably a good thing. Imagine coming home to your family of 60,000 members with your load of shopping and sweaty socks and hearing "guess what I heard today?" from each of them!

For relaying important information, bees make use of other senses such as taste, touch, sound, smell, and sight. Food sharing (trophallaxis = nourishment exchange), sound waves detected on the pedicel of the antennae (Johnston's organ), smelly feet and body odour (pheromones), foot vibrations on the honeycomb, shaking of wings and muscles, the figure of 8 directional waggle dance (to denote the sources of pollen, nectar, water and propolis in relation to the distance and angle of the hive location to the sun, taking into account the passage of time – aren't they clever little engineers!) and the close-circled round dance, indicating the proximity of sources close to the hive. All of this done in the dark on vertical framed hives, inside tree trunks or empty spaces of your roof loft if you haven't managed swarm control.



Historically, when seasons were predictable, trees and shrubs exuded nectar, and flowered with pollen, at specific times between spring and summer. There was a rest period between the spring and the summer flowering of a couple of weeks which became known to beekeepers as the June gap. This had an impact on hived honeybees finding sufficient forage for a short period in June. A wise beekeeper would estimate how much spring honey to extract, leaving enough for the bees to compensate for the stolen honey.

Chris constructed an interesting Venn diagram of plants currently in flower; denoting which produced nectar, pollen, or both. Wildflowers and meadows contribute a food source for all insects but for the honeybee, with its short tongue, most trees, shrubs, and perennials are preferable. Chris brought a sample of flowers to discuss the location of the nectaries in each plant. Certain umbels e.g., cow parsley, achillea etc are good for hoverflies. Foxgloves, red clover, and bluebells are better for long tongued bees such as bumble bees. White clover and herbs for honeybees.

Today, monoculture of e.g., *Napus brassica* (Canola, oil seed rape) and acres of *Vicia fava* (field beans) impacts not only the honeybee but all our biodiverse range of insects. So, knowing what is in flower in our hives' environment is important if we don't want them going hungry in June. We didn't go hungry. Val baked a cake.

Janelle Quitman

Honey Show 14th – 15th October

If you are thinking of entering the class for complete frames of honey, we have the competition frames available, priced at £2 each. Contact:

North LAN [Mary Walter](#)

South LAN [Steve Utley](#)

East LAN [Roger Gill](#)

East LAN

15th June - At Great Catley, Bosbury

On a beautiful summer evening Nicki Whitaker hosted her first apiary meeting with some trepidation as beekeeping is a relatively new hobby for her.

Nicki has four hives, two that have swarmed this season and have been slow to get going and two working well. There were also two nucs with small swarms in them.

Hive 1 - This hive was thought to have no queen and Nicki was hoping to get advice on amalgamating it with a small queen right nuc, but the presence of a few eggs and larvae suggested that a queen was present. A watching brief was recommended with the option of adding the swarm into the mix if the hive does not start building up quickly.

Hive 2 - This hive was a bit tetchy on the last opening but a lot of nice looking brood suggested that the new queen is getting into her stride.

Hive 3 - A very busy hive with lots of brood and more drones than we had seen in the other hives. Housekeeping tips were passed on about removing propolis from brood frames and putting empty supers under full ones. Keeping only two supers on a hive was also discussed as it is so much more manageable.

We had a quick look at the two nucs and discussed practical ways to amalgamate them, one is still queenless and so it is just a question of assimilating the bees into another hive.

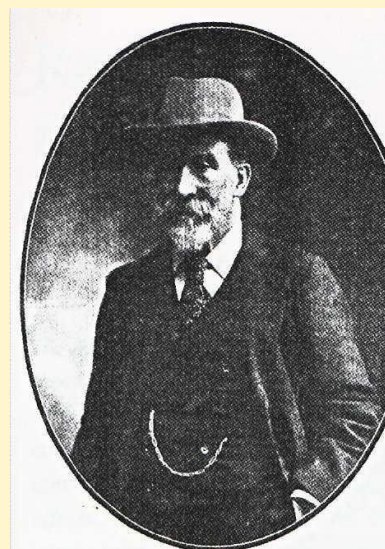
We then moved on to tea and cake in the garden with interesting chat about queen rearing and the value of quality drones.



Sue Garrett

Hive Types – WBC

The WBC beehive is an iconic type of beehive that was invented by **William Broughton Carr** (1836 to 1909) in 1890. It was later modified in 1899 by James Lee, who introduced the white painted telescopic lifts that cover the inner boxes, giving it a pagoda-like appearance. The WBC hive became more common in the UK after this modification.



It is made of two layers of wooden boxes: the inner boxes that hold the frames and the outer lifts that provide insulation and protection.

The WBC hive is the only hive with double walls that is still commercially produced, it has a pitched roof, sloping sides, short legs and a porch-like entrance. The brood chamber is considered to be too small, careful attention is required during the season to avoid the colony swarming!



Pros:

- Attractive, it can enhance the beauty of any garden, apiary or orchard with its traditional look.
- Entrance has slides that can close or adjust the size of the opening very quickly
- Uses Standard British brood frames, compatible with other common hives such as the National Hive
- Insulated with two layers it can help the bees maintain a stable temperature inside
- Can be customised with different options such as copper roofs, painted or oiled lifts, and various sizes of boxes

Cons:

- Heavy and bulky, more difficult to transport and manipulate
- Brood box is small compared to many other hive types
- More maintenance and more parts than other hives, such as cleaning and painting the outer lifts
- More expensive than other hives, owing to the extra materials and labour involved in its construction



The WBC beehive is a classic and charming type of beehive that has some advantages over other hives, especially in terms of insulation and aesthetics. However, it also has some drawbacks, such as weight, complexity and cost. Therefore, beekeepers should consider their needs, preferences and budget before choosing a WBC hive for their bees. We do have a WBC in the Holme Lacy apiary if anyone is interested in having a look.

Steve Utley

Topical tip-July

This has been a very strange season-and it doesn't seem to be getting any easier. The long cold spring seemed to lead to a build up of young bees with time on their hands, and an early swarming season. Unfortunately the weather was not good for queens to go out and mate, and there seem to be a lot of drone layers. I had one develop overwinter, and one since then. The best thing to do is take the hive out and shake the bees well away from your other colonies. Flying bees will beg their way into another colony. If you started beekeeping recently and only have one colony you probably have no option but to let them die out. Drone layers tend to be small and difficult to spot and the colony very difficult to rescue. By the time you realise the queen failed to mate successfully the workers will be old and well past their prime.

Each LAN group should have an extractor available to hire for a minimal fee. Please let your co-ordinator know if you wish to borrow one.

Please do not forget the Healthy Bee Day on Saturday July 8th at Sutton St Nicholas village hall. We arrange these dates for the benefit of our members and it is important to recognise when something is wrong. You need to bring a clean beesuit and a packed lunch.



Our meadow is looking particularly good this year and there are a pleasing number of bumbles and meadow brown butterflies using its resources.

If anyone would like to PYO yellow-rattle seeds let me know a time and you will be welcome to come and help yourself.

Mary Walter

Bob's Beelines



What has happened to our seasons? Everything seems to be two weeks early. Clover and blackberries are out in mid-June which should be out in July. Owing to this hot weather the nectar and pollen will dry up as it did in 2022. But hopefully we may get some rain to put the matter right I think the season will finish by the third week in July

As the colonies are very strong make sure they have plenty of food. The lack of nectar and pollen in 2022 could be the reason for some of the losses this past winter. The early honey harvest has been very good.

Next month start thinking about treating your bees for varroa. We have treatment in stock.

That's all for now

Bob and Kath Cross - 01886 880 554

Of Honey, Heaven Sent. An Illustrated History of Bees

Online course – 90 minutes each session - 18th, 20th, 25th, 27th July

This short course offers an introduction to an illustrated history of bees and their cultural significance, from antiquity through to the present day. Considered to be *'the most honoured of animals'* by John Chrysostom, on account of their selflessness, bees have been a constant source of inspiration to writers, artists, theologians, and scientists.



Over the course of four sessions, we will examine visual and textual material pertaining to bees, honey and wax, and trace their history and relevance to contemporary society. We will explore visual depictions of myths associated with bees, illustrations of biblical references, scientific as well as artistic projects and commissions.

Warburg Institute: <https://warburg.sas.ac.uk/events/illustrated-history-of-bees>

Committee Members

Chairman : Tony Ravenhall

Vice Chairman : Deborah Smith

Secretary : Mary Walter

Treasurer : Roger Gill

Membership Sec. : Steve Utleby

Committee:, Rob Williams, Janelle Quitman, and Val Lilwall,

LAN CO-ORDINATORS

North LAN: Mary Walter

East LAN: Sue Garrett - Retiring, so new co-ordinator sought

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