



Photo: Cornflowers and Marigolds by Tim Dale

August 2019

WVBKA Charity Registration  
Number: 517008



### Hoverflies Abound

There are hundreds of varieties of hoverflies about at this time of year, mimicking bumblebees and honeybees. The most common is probably *Eristalis tenax*. Also known as a drone fly because of huge eyes, it is most easily distinguished from our bees by the triangular single wings and different flight pattern.

Click to view a large set of photo collection by [Steven Falk on flickr](#).



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Queen Colour of the Year  
2019 is: **GREEN**

## Worcestershire Beekeepers Association

### Beekeeping Weekend Aug 31<sup>st</sup>/Sept 1<sup>st</sup>

Worcestershire Beekeepers would like to invite you to join them for a beekeeping weekend.

Due to the generous sponsorship from Midcounties Co-op, we are able to offer a reduced rate to those who book for the whole weekend conference. We hope this may encourage people to stay for the Saturday night dinner and entertainment without rushing away, and may tempt you to book B&B as well, so you can enjoy a relaxing evening with us. The college bar will be open.

B&B in college is only £40 pp so the whole weekend with all meals would be just £95. If we ever put on another conference it is unlikely we'll ever be able to match that price.

For non-beekeeping partners and friends, we have incorporated several non-apiary workshops. The college grounds and its plant centre are worth a visit too. Pershore is a pretty little market town with impressive Abbey grounds, ancient bridge and river frontage, its heritage centre is open on Saturday (from 11 – 2 pm) and Croome Court (NT) is a short drive away and will have exhibitions by Grayson Perry and Regional Embroidery guilds.

To take advantage of the reduced rate offer you must book by July 31<sup>st</sup>

For further details follow this link: <http://tiny.cc/loicaz> or contact:

Rob Doran.

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### Latest Apiary Meeting and Tea Party

Approximately 24 members attended an afternoon meeting on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July. The meeting began with a 'Question and Answer' session with an expert panel of Clare, Peter and Dave.

Topics covered included how to identify and manage a hive with a drone-laying queen; how to draw and store honey when combs are not fully sealed and how a simple honey warmer can be made with a light bulb lamp in a disused freezer chest. The latter obviously needing either close monitoring with a

thermometer or a thermostat attached to the lamp.

Peter then demonstrated a varroa counting computer programme to analyse a photo of the debris collected on a removable hive floor.

The highlight of the session was a splendid tea provided by June, Jane and other members.

Dave and Clare then led a group inspection of a couple of hives.

Many thanks go to all those who came and contributed to the success of the event.

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# DAVE'S BLOG

## August Notes

Well here we are again, almost the end of yet another season, any discerning beekeeper will be thinking of what he or she has to do to get their hives ready for winter. In the main you have to have a queen right colony preferably headed by a nice new queen. If she is not a 'this year's queen' please make sure that everything is as it should be, i.e. that she is laying good worker brood and there are plenty of bees in the hive. I know we are not quite at the end of the season yet but remember it does take time for the bees to get settled and it is very late to think about queen rearing.

By the time you read these notes the drones will be about to be thrown out. This usually happens around mid-August. From this point on please be careful not to damage the queen in any way when you are doing manipulations. In fact, most manipulations should have been completed by now. Try to get honey taking completed by the first week in August, especially if you are near an area where the bees can get to heather as you don't want heather mixed with your ordinary flower honey.

The queen will be slowing down so now is a good time to check your brood for disease. **Please mark your supers with a piece of chalk** indicating the hives from which they came. After that, do a proper disease check frame by frame looking very carefully for any abnormal signs. It is possible for any beekeeper to miss the very early signs of disease so examine the frames carefully ensuring they are clean.

What else need you do? Well of course, you will have reduced your entrance blocks before honey taking to prevent robbing. Do not leave supers exposed, remembering to keep them covered when taking honey; a good time to do this is in the evening having put the boards on earlier in the day.

## Repairing colonies which are damaged in some way

If you have a queenless hive, simply uniting colonies with the paper method will suffice most of the time. I always like to place a queen excluder between the two boxes. Usually this works quite well without any problems but there are occasions when whatever you do doesn't work – but this is quite rare. Whenever you unite two stocks together ensure that you have a good laying queen. Feed them well if needed; roughly 40-50 lbs is considered by most to be adequate. This should set them up for winter without any problems.



The Association bees are being very carefully monitored for varroa and in due course we will review how well we are doing. I know a number of beekeepers are moving away from prophylactic treatment with chemical. I would endorse that view as we don't want to be propping our bees up with various chemicals if they aren't needed. However, I'm not against treating when it is properly proven that that approach is needed.

We had a similar thing at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which originally was called the Isle of Wight disease. It took possibly 50 odd years for the bees to manage that pest. It is now called the tracheal mite which does not appear to be too much of a problem these days, especially with old indigenous bees as they have managed to overcome this little pest. I suspect in time the bees will learn to deal with varroa.

Thanks everybody for all your help in delivering our services to the members, it is much appreciated.

*Dave*

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**Treasurer & Membership Secretary:**

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**Hampton Court Castle Bee Festival**

The next public event is the Hampton Court Castle Bee Festival on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> August. This was a very successful debut event last year, as it included several local associations and other stalls. The added bonus is that it takes place in the beautiful castle grounds.

If you are able to help out on our stall, even for a morning or afternoon, then please contact Patricia.

I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

*Rob*

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**Asian Hornet Update**

This year to date, Hampshire has recorded a confirmed sighting of an Asian hornet. There have been no sightings confirmed in Herefordshire or the surrounding counties. But, the latest issue of BBKA magazine reminds us of the need for beekeepers to be especially vigilant around their hives. The end of July onwards will be a key time to spot hornets hawking.

*Malcolm*

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**Beeswax Wanted**

My name is Gwynnan Smith and I have recently become interested in making candles using beeswax. I'm now looking for local sources of beeswax as a good way of making the candles a product of local materials. If any local beekeepers have any spare wax I could use then please email me at [gwynnansmith@gmail.com](mailto:gwynnansmith@gmail.com)

Thank you

*Gwynnan*

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