



Photograph: Winter Hives in Shenmore by Bee Dale

Winter 2022

WVBKA Charity Registration
Number: 517008

Ulster Beekeepers Association – Winter Webinars 2022

During ‘Covid times’, Ulster Beekeepers Association have been particularly good at hosting webinars to keep the beekeeper informed and actively engaged with their interest in ‘all things bee’. 2022 is no different and we are all invited to a further series of talks by eminent experts. For more information on the seven talks advertised, follow the link to <https://www.ubka.org/latest-news/winter-webinar-2021/>. Having tuned in last year, they come well recommended.

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Diary Dates - Winter 2022

February

- 19th - AGM and speakers.
2pm at the Wellington

March

- 25th - Apiary meeting
- 26th - Welsh Beekeepers Convention

April

- 8th - 10th - BBKA Spring Convention. Harper Adams Univ. Newport, Shropshire
- 22nd - Apiary meeting

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Queen Colour of the Year
2022 is: **YELLOW**

Notes from the Chair

Happy New Year to you all, and let’s hope for a better time than the past two years have brought us.

Winter is a quiet time for the beekeeper, but a stealthy eye kept on any hive activity is a must – with minimal disturbance of course. ‘Heft’ occasionally to check that your bees aren’t going hungry and add fondant as needed.

February brings our first association gathering of the year, our AGM. This year it will be held on 19th February at Wellington village hall. The meeting will commence at 2.00pm and be followed by our first speaker, Katie Hayward at 2.30pm. After a short break for refreshments, there will be a Q&A session where we can pick the brains of our ‘panel of experts’ Val Griffiths, Gareth Baker and our very own Dave.

I look forward to seeing you there

Juliet

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BBKA Annual Delegates Meeting

In mid-January, I represented WVBKA at the BBKA ADM. It was quite a long affair, but a few propositions for BBKA were passed, which I would like to share with association members.

Last year this meeting was held online for the first time, a successful change which made the meeting viable, both in a time of pandemic, but also to more delegates than in the past. This year there was a choice; a hybrid meeting enabled delegates to attend in person or through Zoom. This was again successful, and it was good to note that by using an online platform for the majority of delegates, savings of over £9,000 were made; funding which can valuably be used elsewhere. Of note to members are several propositions which were passed on the day.

That BBKA approach National Trading Standards to enquire:

- What action is being taken to investigate the importation of adulterated and fake honey into the UK?
- Will National Trading Standards assure the BBKA that the methods currently used to analyse and identify honey adulterants are fit for purpose?

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Christmas Lunch

Our association's Christmas lunch at Castlefields was a great success and a good morale booster to actually see everyone after so long online and on WhatsApp.

Dave welcomed us all, a good turnout of over 20 beekeepers, before we tucked into a beautifully cooked and presented lunch.



Andi presented the trophies and with a round of applause, certificates were given to our two newest members, Stephen Poole and Penny Taylor who completed the beekeeping course in 2021.

Dave wound up lunch by letting us know that an exciting full programme was being organised by the committee for 2022, many thanks to them.

Wishing that this year brings lots of buzzing bees for us all.

Ruth Taylor

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- What action is being taken to ensure that consumers are made fully aware that any product sold in the UK as 'pure honey' could in fact contain added ingredients that are not itemised on the label?

That BBKA approach HM Government, The Food Standards Agency and all appropriate Agencies, Authorities and Trade Bodies, to establish:

- What action is being taken to investigate the importation of adulterated and fake honey into the UK?
- Will HM Government assure the BBKA that the methods currently used to analyse and identify honey adulterants are fit for purpose?
- What action is being taken to ensure that consumers are made fully aware that any product sold in the UK as 'pure honey' could in fact contain added ingredients that are not itemised on the label?

Should it be found that the current testing of imported honey is not fit for purpose and adulterated, and fake honey is entering the UK market, we ask the BBKA upon the review of evidence to adopt a timely programme of support and publicity to inhibit and discourage the importation, use and misrepresented sale of

adulterated and fake honey, until satisfied that this risk is averted.

To encourage BBKA membership support, via Area Associations, for national events such as Asian Hornet week and Bees' Needs Week, the BBKA shall distribute relevant promotional material to County Associations at least two months before each event, in addition to including all forthcoming events in the calendar on the BBKA website.

In light of the great threat to the UK's honey bees from the potential importation of non-native pests and diseases, BBKA re-affirms its complete opposition to the import of honey bees, including individual queens, from overseas countries and the ADM mandates the EC to lobby Government to introduce a complete ban on the import of honey bees.

BBKA should continue to support the eradication of Asian Hornet incursions. BBKA calls on the Government to prepare a comprehensive plan before June 2022 for the implementation of a wide scale monitoring and control programme to counter the spread of the Asian Hornet across the UK, should the National Bee Unit resources be overwhelmed by Asian Hornet incursions.

Juliet

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Wasp Reduction Experiment

The year before last after a period of mid-summer rain, there was a rapid growth of bracken and nettles around two of my hives in the local cider orchard.

I noticed whilst this greenery surrounded them they were not bothered by wasps. However after I cut it back, thousands of wasps appeared en masse covering the outside of the hives. Both were strong colonies and full of honey which I could smell. Obviously the unwanted foragers were attracted to it. The smaller colonies which I was building up were left alone.

This past year I decided to experiment and left the hives surrounded by growth and just moved the greenery carefully to work with the bees, repositioning it afterwards. The idea being to mask or reduce the smell of hive contents.

It was successful for the most part, although I did get quite a few unwanted attackers late one evening after harvesting a super from one of the hives. This I dealt with by leaving a bottle half filled with cider and a good dollop of marmalade, with a wasp trap fixed inside its neck in the hedge beside the hive. I returned to find the bottle almost full of dead wasps which gave me a great feeling of satisfaction.

Interestingly the wasp traps I bought from Maisemore were completely ignored by them, but I returned to find two field mice inside it.

For the past three years my WBC has been shared by several hundred ladybirds. I wonder if anyone else has hosted these useful little beetles?

Jane Matthews

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WVBKA Officers for 2022

Chair:

- Juliet Parker-Smith 07387 080380
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Vice Chair:

- Patricia Ronan: 07903 054699

Secretary:

- Bob North: 07715 483862

Honey Show Secretary:

- Karen Pritchard

Treasurer & Membership Secretary:

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- Dave Williams
- Duncan & Clare Penkey
- Geoff Dutson

Newsletter Editing:

- Tim & Belinda Dale beedale@outlook.com

Committee:

- Geoff Dutson
- Duncan Penkey
- Andy Strangeway
- June Williams
- Peter Woodward

Catering Committee:

- Jane Matthews
- June Williams

Mentoring Team & Technical Advisors:

- Peter Woodward 01432 839251
- Duncan & Clare Penkey
- Julie Crickmore
- Juliet & Andi Parker-Smith
- Cliff Rose
- Fletcher Barker
- Andy Strangeway

Website Editor:

- Roger Jenner

Honorary Auditor:

- Mike Price

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Sweet and Sour Consciousness

An article by Mike McInnes –
Credible or Crank?

Last year I received, by email an article by beekeeper and retired pharmacist Mike McInnes, entitled [Sweet-and-Sour-Consciousness](#).

His message extolled the virtues of honey as a super food, which binds, integrates and encodes the sensory information that forms the foundation of intellectual consciousness. The accompanying email also claimed honey to be a potent antidiabetic food and a powerful remedy for the sugar driven diseases common to the western world.

Now I'm all in favour of unrefined food and would definitely choose honey over refined sugar (although with my preference for savoury food, I actually eat little of either), but really?

Intrigued and suspicious of the authenticity of the article, I decided to Google Mike. I found that he is the author of a book, The Honey Diet, and that he has spent decades researching cerebral energy metabolism and modern sugar driven human impairments. I also found forums ridiculing his claims and questioning his sanity – so I make no judgement and draw no conclusions. However, I have hyperlinked his article above, and below is a link to a further article which he references

[Honey - A Novel Antidiabetic Agent \(nih.gov\)](#)

Happy reading

Juliet

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