



Welcome to the autumn and winter edition of the Portsmouth and District Beekeepers Association newsletter

Update from our Chairman

An unusual year for me, losing three hives to wax moth and collapse, however the honey return has been very good so far, even as late as this month I still have supers full of honey which I am happy to leave for the bees to see them through the winter, I have a feeling this winter is going to be a cold one, as the previous years have been mild.

I have found wasps to be prolific this year due to the continued mild autumn, my wasp traps have had to be continually emptied, very rapidly filling up.

The appearance of the Asian hornet is giving some concern, this is a watch and wait situation and hopefully will be contained.

The association attended a lot of shows this year some of which were affected by the weather, but ended successfully, thanks to Karen's efforts in arranging, and the committed members who make the shows a success.

The HBA have gone through a period of uncertainty but things have improved and hopefully the continued efforts of the new committee will ensure its continued place in supporting the associations in Hampshire.

As you all should be aware it is the AGM this month at Portchester, and new committee members are always being sought, the committee will be standing down so any member who would like to stand please submit the interest to Rita our membership secretary and general secretary, or make your interest known at the meeting.

We are having our convention in March and tickets will be available at the AGM from Rita.

I look forward to meeting you all again at the AGM

Mike

Chairman PDBKA

Beware potentially toxic foundation wax

Foundation wax made from paraffin wax, stearin and colourants is available usually at online auction sites. Some of the ingredients have been found to be toxic to young bee larvae. The eggs hatch but then succumb leaving a "pepperpot" brood pattern.

The foundation wax is more yellow in colour and if stearin is included its more pliable.

Courtesy West Sussex BKA and Somerton and District BKA



Dates for the Diary

November	
22nd	Portchester Parish Hall – A.G.M. followed by an “American supper”
January 2017	
24 th	Portchester Parish Hall 7.30pm “Non-lethal removal of honeybees from structures” Speaker: Peter Higgs of Beegone
February	
28 th	Portchester Parish Hall 7.30pm “My visit to Senegal in 2016 for World Vision – development of beekeeping in Senegal” Speaker: Sue Tinney
March	
18th	PDBKA Spring Convention. See article in this newsletter and the Association website
28th	Portchester Parish Hall 7.30pm “Beekeeping for Help for Heros” Speaker: John Geden
April	
25 th	Portchester Parish Hall 7.30pm “Honey bee research at Sussex University” Speaker: Professor F.L.W Ratnieks



Honey and lemon curd recipe

300g runny honey

125g butter diced into cubes

3 medium sized eggs lightly beaten

zest and juice of 1 lemon

Method

Melt the honey and butter in a bowl over a pan of just simmering water.

Add eggs, lemon zest and juice and stir in, keep over the simmering water letting the mixture cook stirring frequently so the mixture cooks evenly and thickens, this may take anything from 20 to 40 minutes.

To check if the curd has thickened sufficiently coat the back of a wooden spoon with the mix and draw your finger across it a straight line should be left.

Strain to remove any strands of egg and zest and pot up in sterilised jars with lids. This curd will keep in the fridge for up to 3 weeks.



Spring Convention 18th March 2017

Rita is coordinating next year's PDBKA Spring Convention and the committee will be helping and supporting her. This has become a regular and successful event in our Association's calendar and involves much work. Please contact Rita if you feel you can help either in the lead up to the event or on the day (or both!)

The Convention will take place at Trafalgar School, London Road, Hilsea, Portsmouth, [PO2 9RJ](#), this is the same venue as previously.

Tickets £10 in advance or £15 on the day (price includes ploughman's lunch, tea, coffee, cake)

Speakers and trade stands have been booked and workshops organised

Tickets are available from Rita Perry Tel: 02392 468609 or email: rlperry@talktalk.net

Please look at our Association website for more information.

Winter beekeeping course

The course is aimed primarily at new beekeepers, novice beekeepers or anyone who has bees and has never done a theory course. Whilst there is a lot of theory in the course there is also practical work as well. The course is based on the British Beekeepers Basic Assessment Syllabus and whilst we do not expect you to take the exam on completion of the course it will ensure that you have all the tools you need to become a competent beekeeper. It will also give you the opportunity to talk to experienced beekeepers and meet like-minded people at the same level as yourselves and share your experiences with them.

If you or anyone you know is interested in attending the course please look at the Association website for contact details. Places will be handed out on a first come first served basis. There is a limit on the number of people we can accommodate and we are usually heavily over-subscribed. You do not need to be a member of the Portsmouth and District Beekeepers Association to attend this course. The charge for members is £30.00 and for non-members £45.00 and £20.00 for juniors (under 18 years old).

The course starts on 27th January 2017 and runs for 8 weeks in the classroom, culminating with one session at the Portsmouth Apiary so you have the chance to handle live bees.

Association shop - "The skep"

Just a reminder that our Association shop is not open routinely during the winter months (October through to March) but if you contact Cliff purchases can be made. Do please make use of it – its closer than Thornes at Stockbridge for most Association members.

E-mail - cliff.mcgaughey@ntlworld.com or Phone - 02392 349047



Stone Age settlers had a sweet tooth

Science correspondent Oliver Moody of *The Times* reported that despite popular belief that the Romans introduced honeybees to Britain honey and beeswax were being used prior to this by the indigenous population. Evidence from Stone Age settlements across Ancient Europe reveals that honey was being extracted from beehives 9,000 years ago. At various sites in Britain including one in Wiltshire traces of beeswax were found on pots.

The transition from taking honey from wild colonies to setting up beehives specifically for honey and beeswax isn't easy to establish.

The Times 12 November 2015

Many of you may already know of this but just in case, here is an extract from BeeBase :

September 2016 - Bee Connected

BeeConnected is an online crop spraying alert system which brings a new way of dealing with a long-standing practice: farmers informing beekeepers of an intention to apply an insecticide. The system operates on a very simple, yet efficient, two-way communication process: with a few simple clicks beekeepers will be able to plot the location of their hives. Similarly, farmers will identify their fields and inform local beekeepers when they intend to spray an insecticide in particular fields.

Beekeepers will get accurate up-to-date information of a spray event happening in their area and can respond to that information rapidly, even if that decision is to do nothing. The system also includes a "BeeMail" facility which enables farmers and beekeepers to communicate anonymously, providing an opportunity for further discussion without revealing personal details, unless either party chooses to do so. Put simply, BeeConnected a new and improved way of doing something farmers and beekeepers have always needed to do: communicate.

The website (<https://www.beeconnected.org.uk/>) will be up and running from the 12th of September, however, beekeepers and farmers can register on the database now. If anyone has any questions or comments, they can contact the site administrator on:

info@beeconnected.org.uk

The project is a joint venture between the BBKA, the Crop Protection Association, the National Farmers' Union and the Voluntary Initiative.

BEE-CRAFT

Please use the link to join in any of the hangouts: www.bee-craft.com/hangout If there is something that is concerning a beekeeper that they would like an answer to, even if it isn't on topic, I am sure we can fit this in, or advise by email after the hangout is over. If you have any specific topics you'd like to suggest for next year please contact Wendy: wendy@bee-craft.com.