



October 2011

BEE ADVISED

the
AVON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION NEWS SHEET

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Another year has gone by. Mixed fortunes seems to be the word but optimism (beekeepers must be optimists) says that somehow, sometime, I will get it right and, then, get it right every time! It may have been the weather, of course.

At Avon we are blessed in that we have a strong education "team" whose dedication has spread throughout the BBKA. It has been disappointing, therefore, to have to say that it has been reported to the BBKA that some candidates for the Basic Beekeeping Assessment have been ill prepared. Taking the exam should be the first step on the ladder to becoming a better beekeeper not simply a means of satisfying the regulations of the Council Allotment Department to enable you to keep bees on an allotment. Some examiners have even felt pressurised into awarding the certificate. We cannot allow this to continue as things will go wrong and the whole scheme will be brought into disrepute. Imagine the furore if there was an incident involving bees on an allotment.

In order to take the assessment the BBKA requires that "The Candidate shall have managed at least one colony of bees for a minimum of 12 months". The Avon committee has decided that in addition candidates must have had some experience with the local association and shown some keenness to learn. With this in mind, future candidates will only be accepted if a member of their local ABKA branch committee signs their application form. The committee member concerned should have personal knowledge of the applicants' beekeeping knowledge and expertise.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
- Peter Clements - Chairman ABKA

AGMs

It is the season of Branch AGMs so please make very effort to attend your local branch AGM. Guests are also invited to all Branch AGMs, please advise the relevant secretary should you wish to attend an AGM of another branch. The known dates and venues are as follows:

Bath - Saturday November 12th at 1430, St Lukes Church Hall, Wellsway. Ken Basterfield will talk on "The Beekeepers' Year".

Blagdon & Clevedon - Saturday 26th November at 1400, Churchill Memorial Hall. Speaker's subject is "Pollen in Forensics"

Bristol - Saturday 19th November at 1000, Good Shepherd Hall, Brislington. The AGM will include the Branch Honey Show and a short talk by Brian Clark entitled "Amateur Photography of Bees".

Keynsham - Monday 28th November at Oldland village hall, Oldland common, guest speaker is David Maslen.

Weston - Wednesday 16th November at 1930, 2 Leewood Road, Weston Super Mare. Business of the AGM only.

BRISTOL OPEN HONEY FESTIVAL

The Honey Festival held on the 3rd and 4th of September was again a great success with more entries from outside Bristol Branch this year. Tom Salter MBE from Blagdon and Clevedon Branch judged the exhibits. The results were:

Silver Queen - John McEntee (Bristol)	Bronze Queen - Gwilym Edwards (Bristol)
Best Wax - John McEntee (Bristol)	Best Mead - Sue Carter (Bristol-)
Best in Show - David Hounsell (Blagdon & Clevedon)	

Contributions can be sent to the editor electronically – n.r.redman@btinternet.com or by post - 51 Sandyleaze, Bristol, BS9 3PZ

<p>BRANCH SECS</p> <p>Bath Glenys Lunt 01225 866400</p> <p>Blagdon & Clevedon David Welham 01934 852361</p> <p>Bristol Rachel McEntee 0117 9594245</p> <p>Keynsham Eileen Keating 0117 3003612</p> <p>Weston Ann Westwood 01934 624092</p>
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TRAINING COURSES

There will no longer be a central "Introduction to beekeeping" course run by Avon. The following Introductory courses are being run by the various branches

Bath Branch Introduction to Beekeeping Course for Beginners will be held at the Teaching Apiary classroom on the campus of Bath Spa University at Newton Park on February 11th, 18th & 25th 2012. Cost expected to be £60.00 and times expected to be 1000-1630, though yet to be finalised. Drinks and snacks are provided, please bring a packed lunch. For further details please contact Pete & Monica Davis Email: megbirddog@aol.com Telephone: 01225 852 159

Bristol Branch Introduction to Beekeeping Course for Beginners will be held at Horseworld on 28th January, 4th and 11th February 2012 from 1000-1700. The course fee of £65 includes a buffet lunch, tea and biscuits. For further details please contact: Brian Steadman Tel.: Evenings/weekend 01179 445741. email: treasurer@bristolbeekeepers.org.uk

Blagdon & Clevedon Branch Introduction to Beekeeping Course for Beginners will be held at Churchill Memorial Hall on 10 consecutive Monday evenings from 16 January – 19 March 2012 from 1930–2130. The course fee is £90. For further details please contact the Course Secretary, Wendy Welham Tel: 01934 852361 email: w.welham@talktalk.net

As previous courses have been fully booked, prior booking is essential.

BATH & WEST SHOW

The ABKA Committee are looking to form a Sub-Committee with a remit to re-design the stand and format of information provided at the 2012 Bath and West Show. Phil Clemente has run the stand for the last few years and is looking for an injection of new ideas to make the stand more successful. We are looking for one volunteer per branch to help Phil with this task. Contact Phil Clemente (by E-mail: nerja5@hotmail.com or phone 01275 879697 or 0795 785841)

EXAM SUCCESSES

Congratulations to the following Avon members on their exam successes in 2011:

BBKA Modules - Modules 1 & 2 Rod Thomas (Bath); **Modules 1 & 3** Anne Rowberry (Bath); **Module 3** Steve Fletcher (Bath) Neil Seymour (Bristol) David Welham (Clevedon); **Module 6** Pat Pegrum (Bath), Brian Downes (Bath).

Basic Assessment: Rebecca Adams (Bath): Andrew Archer, David Avery, Amanda banks, John Banks, Peter Carter, Sheila Monks, Alison Wilson (Blagdon & Clevedon): Andrew Wathen (Bristol): Dave Hardy, Paule Pimble, Cheri Seddon, Clive Shipley, Jeremy Watkins (Keynsham).

The certificates (and badges) will all be awarded at the Avon AGM in March 2011.

To apply for any BBKA exams, complete the relevant Application Form (available on the BBKA website); get it countersigned by a branch committee member; include the appropriate fee; and send it, via your branch Education Officer, to the Avon Education Secretary Allen Coates. Allen will coordinate all the applications and will subsequently contact applicants with a schedule and any further information.

SWINDON HONEY BEE CONSERVATION GROUP.

Following the presentation by Ron Hoskins at the Avon 2010 Spring Day School your committee decided that we would make a donation to support the ongoing work that Ron and his colleagues are doing. Our donation enabled them to provide a nucleus, hive and equipment to further their studies. In 2007 the SHCG made a new discovery after carrying out significant research to help control the Varroa mite. SHGG are now confident that they are able to selectively breed bees which mostly are able to fend for themselves against the Varroa Mite without mans' chemical interventions. For further information visit www.swindonhoneybeeconservation.org.uk

