

West Wilts BKA News

News, the planned activities, and some advice for members of West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association



Hasn't the weather been hot and dry – perplexing for both the beekeepers and the bees I suspect – and having made plans about the winter, now we are really getting into our winter preparations with varroa treatment and feeding.

What are the bees in your hives bringing in? I have watched a fascinating kaleidoscope of pollen colours going into my hives; purple, orange, yellow and brown –not sure where the bees have been, maybe rose bay willow herb.

The other important thing this time of year is the Honey shows - are you taking part? New bee keepers, please join in, it's great fun and the shows are fantastic social events as well as being learning opportunities. Good luck with all your preparations.

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Need to know **page 2**

This is your 'go to' section that will describe the things that you need to know about.

Good to know **page 3**

The 'fun bits': news and reports.

The photo on the left is of a honeybee on *Trachelospermum Jasminoides* "Star of Toscana" in a garden on the Isle of Wight. I have never managed to get a photo the honey bee on this plant. They don't seem to visit it, I had always thought it was because the honey bee couldn't reach the nectar at the base of the flower, caught one helping itself this August though!

DIARY OF EVENTS

September 2025

Beeswax Candles Masterclass Saturday 6th and 20th September. Free to WBKA members. For more information, email Sophie Butcher at chair@wiltshirebeekeepers.co.uk

West Wiltshire Branch Honey Show Saturday 27th September. Bratton Jubilee Hall, Melbourne Street, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 4RW – more information on page 11

October 2025

Wiltshire Bee & Honey Day 2025: Saturday 11th October 2025. 10am to 4pm [Wiltshire Beekeepers Association Wiltshire Bee & Honey Day 2025 - Wiltshire Beekeepers Association](#) at The Devizes Corn Exchange, Market Place, Devizes SN10 1HS (incorporates the County Honey Show).

BBKA National Honey Day: on 21st October, each year **The British Beekeepers' Association** celebrates **National Honey Day**

National Honey Show 2025: Thursday 23rd to Saturday 25th October 2025 at Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey, UK [National Honey Show homepage - National Honey Show](#)

Need to know

FORTHCOMING LECTURES

Preparation for Showing' with Liz Westcott on Tuesday, 16th September 2025 at 7 pm. More information on page 7. A recording of this talk will be available on YouTube for those unable to watch live. More information on page <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81233819992?pwd=DYMZxTImJjpRCLJjYjbIxgybQQdSZ.1>

Meeting ID: 812 3381 9992 Passcode: 527929

PAST LECTURES

Foraging is my happy place' (August) with Tom Radford. If you missed this lecture, you could view it by using the following link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMd_TLZJ2nc

'Beekeepers' Question Time' (July) Can now be viewed on YouTube [Beekeepers' Question Time July 2025](#)

GOOD TO KNOW

Apiary News

Are you coming to the next apiary meet? Come and join us,
(Don't forget to bring your cup for a drink!)

We're looking forward to welcoming you to the apiary, finding out how your bees are faring, and working with our bees together.

The remaining date for this year is 13th September

Amanda Leworthy invites members to contact her about taking on the role she is relinquishing as County Secretary at the WBKA AGM in February 2026.

Secretary Job Description

The Secretary of Wiltshire Beekeepers' Association becomes a Trustee and Officer of the charity (WBKA became a charity in April 2022). The standard term of office is 3 years.

An overview of the key tasks follows:

1. Organisation of quarterly Trustees meetings (currently held in March, June, September, and November) to include:

Booking the venue

Preparation of the agenda in consultation with the Chair

Collation and circulation of papers to the Trustees before the meeting

Writing and circulation of the minutes to the Trustees after the meeting

2. Organisation of the AGM held in January/ February to include:

As above, plus responsibility for counting any votes on the night.

3. Being the point of contact for the Charity Commission and updating details .

4. Monitoring the WBKA Secretary's Inbox regularly.

5. Liaison with the Trustees between meetings as required.

Amanda reassures us that the responsibilities listed above could be fitted into evenings and weekends.

Amanda is happy to discuss any aspects of the role in greater detail with interested parties.
Please contact Amanda at leworthyam@gmail.com to arrange a phone call.

Apiary News



Honey is still available by the bucket (£6/lb) through Den Pictor our Apiary Manager. Please liaise with the Treasurer to pay before collection and contact Den via his WhatsApp account to arrange for collection from the apiary

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP YOUR CLUB?



There are **two** roles available on the committee.

Dan Young has worked hard to establish Asian Hornet Coordination and Liz Gwinnell picked up the Membership Secretary role. Unfortunately, both committee members need to relinquish these roles due to other demands upon them.

We thank them both for the time and effort they have spent developing these roles.

If you can help, don't hesitate to get in touch with the club secretary in the first instance for information- WWBKA Secretary: Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com

BBKA September Talk: 'Preparation for Showing'

Information from Jane Medwell (BBKA Trustee)

The next in the BBKA series of Zoom talks will be 'Preparation for Showing' with Liz Westcott on Tuesday 16th September 2025 at 7pm. A recording of this talk will be available on YouTube for those unable to watch live.

Liz will give an overview of how to prepare honey and beeswax for the Show table. She will be looking at processing wax to a good standard, so it is then possible to use it for making candles, one-ounce blocks, or a cake of wax. She understands that everyone's approach to wax processing differs depending on the facilities and resources available to them. There are several different methods of doing this. Liz will show you the method that works best for her, but you might choose to do it differently, and as long as clean wax is the end product, then all is well. Liz will also talk about preparing honey for the Show table.

Liz has been keeping bees in Brixham, South Devon, for twenty years. She started showing about fifteen years ago and has enjoyed a certain amount of success at local honey shows. She is President of Devon BKA, Chair of Torbay BKA, and for the last eight years has been the Chair and Show Secretary for the Bees and Honey Marquee at Devon County Show where the Devon Honey Show is held each year.

Zoom link follows:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81233819992?pwd=DYMZxTImJjpRCLJjYjbIxgybQQdSZ.1>

Meeting ID: 812 3381 9992 Passcode: 527929

Enjoy!

Please read this important information...

In view of recent events in the local area with outbreaks of European Foul Brood, the following is a reminder of the legal obligation for records to be kept regarding treatment used on hives. Whether you have treated one hive or fifty, it is necessary to keep a record of the date the treatment was purchased, the batch number, the expiry date, how long the treatment lasted, when the treatment started, and the date the treatment was completed. This can be kept in a small record book. If you prefer, you can print a form from the BBKA website. A MAFF (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) representative can request to see this at any time.

Are you signed up to BeeBase? Are you using the materials available on the site? This time of the beekeeping year beekeepers are thinking about getting their colonies into the best shape they can possibly be to get them through the winter. You can follow the link below to take you to the BeeBase page on the internet where you will find many useful and informative documents to help you deal with varroa mites

[How do I manage Varroa? » APHA - National Bee Unit - BeeBase](#)

APHA have a variety of fact sheets that provide information on how to:

- [monitor for Varroa in hives;](#)
- [use drone brood removal for mite control;](#)
- [use artificial swarming for mite control;](#)
- [use queen trapping for mite control;](#)
- [monitor for resistance to varroacides in mites.](#)
- you can click on the links to take you directly to the page



Are you ready?

It's SHOWTIME (well – nearly!) there is plenty of time to get show ready if you are planning to exhibit.... Haven't done it before? Do have a go, it's addictive!

WW HONEY SHOW 2025

Saturday 27th September. Bratton Jubilee Hall, Melbourne Street, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 4RW

CLASSES – please see notes on detail at the end of the class list

1. Beginner's class: one 454g (1lb) jar of honey, any type, colour, the entrant having no more than two year's beekeeping
2. Young member: one jar of honey any type (see note 5)
3. One 454g (1lb) jar: light run honey
4. One 454g (1lb) jar: medium run honey
5. One 454g (1lb) jar: dark run honey
6. Two (matched) 454g (1lb) jars of one of the following: light, medium, dark, granulated, or soft set honey
7. One 454g (1lb) jar: soft set honey
8. One 454g (1lb) jar: chunk honey
9. 'Black jar': one jar of honey to be judged on taste and aroma alone (See note 6)
10. One section in case (round or square)
11. Cut comb: minimum 227g (8ozs) (see note 7)
12. Frame of honey for extraction, shown in bee-proof display case
13. Bottle of dry mead (see note 8)
14. Bottle of sweet mead (see note 8)
15. Bottle of melomel (see note 8)
16. Bottle of metheglin (see note 8)
17. Bottle of cyser
18. Beeswax furniture polish (see note 9)

19. Beeswax cake, minimum 227g (8oz)
20. Three beeswax blocks, 27g to 30g (1oz) each
21. Pair of beeswax candles, dipped or moulded, one to be lit by the judge (see note 10)
22. Pair of hand rolled and decorated beeswax candles, one to be lit by the judge (see note 11)
23. Display of beeswax flowers, colouring allowed (see note 12)
24. 1-5 Stems of beeswax flowers. Container will not be judged (see notes 12 & 13)
25. Two beeswax wraps (300m x 300m) square (see note 14)
26. Display of six bee products on a tray, all different
27. Any decorative or artistic exhibit, to include needlework this may include lace, knitting or crochet relating to bees or beekeeping, not to exceed 600mm x 600mm (see note 15)
28. Any beeswax model, no colouring permitted
29. Honey cake (see recipe – NO changes to recipe permitted)
30. Six honey biscuits, recipe to be provided by the exhibitor

Photograph Classes (see note 16)

31. Honey bee/s and flower/s
32. Aspects of beekeeping

Notes

1. Only one entry per class per person is to be entered.
2. All honey and wax (except class 20, 21, 22 and 23) exhibited must be Bonafide produce of bees kept by the exhibitor.
3. All honey to be exhibited in clear glass 454g (1lb) squat jars, labelled 1.25cm (1/2 in) from the bottom of the jar.
4. Gold coloured metal or plastic, screw on lids only. Chrome plated or coloured lids will be disqualified.
5. Young member under 16 years of age on the day of the show.
6. Sleeves will be provided on the day. Labels for this class are to be placed on the lid, sleeve, and jar.

7. Cut comb to be shown in a white or clear plastic container with a clear lid.
8. Mead to be exhibited in standard punted bottles with white plastic topped flanged corks, containing approx. 75cl. Melomel and metheglin, to have flavour label on the bottle. Class labels to be placed 1.25cm (1/2 in) from the bottom.
9. Wax polish to be in a standard round container, metal or plastic, warning labels not required.
10. Candles must stand upright in candle holders. Candle holders to be provided by the exhibitor and be appropriate for purpose.
11. This class is open to any age. All decoration must be beeswax, colouring is permitted.
12. Colouring, wire, and florist's tape may be used, but no plant material.
13. Open to anyone who has not won the beeswax flower section at the national honey show
14. Pure beeswax only, no other oils or resins to be added.
15. Work exhibited must be completed by the exhibitor.
16. Photographs may not be entered into both classes 31 and 32. Size between 10cm x 15cm (4in x 6in) and 25cm x 33cm (10in x 14in), unframed but may be mounted.

And some more important information about this show.....

Members may bring their exhibits into the hall and book them in with Kelly from 0830 on the morning of the show. Kelly will take entries (preferably over the internet) one week before the show. However, it will be possible to enter on the morning of the show. Judging will start at 1000 sharp.

Honey recipe of the month: August

Almond, olive oil, and raspberry loaf cake

3 sprigs of lemon thyme (1g leaves)

120g (4oz) caster (superfine) sugar, plus an extra 1 tbsp for topping

Grated zest of ½ orange and ½ lemon

100g (3½oz) raspberries

125g (4½oz) plain (all-purpose) flour + a pinch of sea salt +1tsp baking powder

2 eggs

75g (2½oz) plain yogurt

75g (2½oz) extra virgin olive oil

2 tbsp honey (recipe book suggests thyme – I used from my own hives)

75g (2½oz) ground almonds

Small handful of flaked (slivered) almonds, toasted

Makes 1 loaf cake - preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.

1. Line a loaf tin) measuring about 24 x 12cm (9 x 5in) with baking parchment or, preferably, a light buttering and (caster/superfine) sugaring.
2. Strip the leaves from the lemon thyme and add to a mixing bowl with the sugar and citrus zest. Mix with your hands, working the leaves and zest into the sugar to release the essential oils. It will take on colour and become aromatic.
3. Lightly dust the raspberries in 1 tablespoon of the flour and set aside.
4. In a bowl, whisk the eggs into the yogurt, then whisk in the oil and honey.
5. Sift over the remaining flour, the baking powder and salt, and add the ground almonds and fragrant sugar. Mix quickly then pour two-thirds into the loaf tin.
6. Arrange the raspberries over the top, then add the remaining batter and sprinkle over the flaked almonds and extra tablespoon of sugar.
7. Bake in the oven for 25-35 minutes until a thin metal skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean.

(Honey recipe of the month: August contd.)

Almond, olive oil and raspberry loaf cake.



The recipe for the Almond, olive oil and raspberry loaf cake is taken from the recipe book entitled "Honey" - Recipes from a Beekeeper's kitchen, author Amy Newsome, Hardy Grante, Quadrille

I mentioned that I am still trying to make friends with my new oven. If I made this cake again, I don't think I would grease the tin with butter and then sprinkle it with caster sugar before baking as the recipe suggested. The resulting cake was a bit dark on the outside.

I didn't have quite enough raspberries for the recipe, so I used a few blueberries mixed with the raspberries. I think the final cake might have been a little moist in the centre – it still tasted good though and was enjoyed by visitors at teatime – and yes, I would certainly make this one again!



(P.S. I've found a cracking recipe for honey ginger cake – can't wait to try that one – it will be in the October newsletter if all goes according to plan).

Plant (s) of the month: August – How about Ivy and Rudbeckia?



Rudbeckia (otherwise known as **Coneflower** or **Black-eyed Susan**). Rudbeckia is a common garden plant sporting yellow daisy like flowers – pollinators seem to love it. Perennials tend to be yellow flowered, whereas those grown as annuals are available in a wider colour range, with shades of yellow, orange, dark red or brown. The foliage can be hairy or smooth and may be green or grey. Rudbeckias grow well in moderately fertile, moisture retentive but not soggy soil. They flower best in full sun. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/rudbeckia>

Common Ivy (Hedera Hedera) is just coming into flower in our hedgerows and on garden walls. Bees, hornets, and other pollinators will be grateful for its presence, as it provides both nectar and pollen. Although tolerant of a range of soils and conditions, ivy prefers an alkaline soil and a well-drained spot. This tough plant with a tendency to become unruly is not always welcome.



However, ivy is useful as a cover for buildings and walls or to mask fencing. Ivy is easily propagated and is suitable for a wide range of planting locations and garden types (e.g. coastal, wildlife gardens, low maintenance, banks and slopes and ground cover).

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/43091/hedera-helix/details>



HAVE YOU GOT YOURS YET?

Did you know members wanting to buy WWBKA clothing can order directly from the suppliers - the link to ordering clothing is “live” on the shop website.



Any of the four Beekeeper Products (Fleece, Sweatshirt, Polo Shirt and Cap) are available to order from the OHM website using the following link:

<https://ohmclothing.co.uk/shop/workwear/wiltshire-beekeepers/>

Alternatively, you can go onto the OHM website, click ‘Workwear,’ then ‘Wiltshire Beekeepers’ and you will find all the items listed there.

Please note that all queries will be handled by the shop.

Customer Support - Devizes | OHM Clothing Ltd and OHM Charities

01380 825355

Opening times: 10-5 Tuesday-Friday, 10-2 Saturdays.

Shop: 31 Sheep Street, Devizes, SN10 1DJ

Workshop: Unit 6, Axis Business Centre, Westmead Ind Est, Swindon, SN5 7YS



Wiltshire Beekeepers
West Wiltshire
Beekeepers Association
Unisex Polo Top

£16.19



Wiltshire Beekeepers
West Wiltshire
Beekeepers Association
Unisex Sweatshirt

£25.79



Wiltshire Beekeepers
West Wiltshire
Beekeepers Association
Cap

£10.19



Wiltshire Beekeepers
West Wiltshire
Beekeepers Association
Unisex Fleece

£33.79

An ideal birthday gift for your nearest and dearest? (I dare not suggest you buy them as a Christmas gift – If I do, I will be told December is a very long way away).

Pollinators of the month – August: – **Ivy Bee** and **Hoverfly (Volutella Pelluscens)**



Around this time of year, you might see Ivy Bees flying. I have read that the ivy bee is a 'new bee', first described as a distinct species in 1993. Present in the Channel Isles in the 1970's (where it is abundant), it was not then recognised as a separate species. It was first reported in the U.K., in Dorset (at Worth Matravers) in 2001.

Since then, it has been found along the coastline from Kent to Cornwall, and in Wiltshire, Somerset, Surrey, and Essex. It is spreading northwards and reached the north Norfolk coast (in 2014) and Shropshire. The presence of the ivy bee may be an aspect of climate change. The **Ivy Bee** is a species of mining bee that likes to form a nest in loose sandy soil - often on south facing banks or cliffs, with sparse or limited vegetation (though nesting sites have been reported at allotment plots and the lawns of public parks). Although "solitary bees" (as opposed to bees with queens, drones, workers living in colonies), there may be hundreds or thousands at one nesting 'site.'

The Ivy Bee is the last of the solitary bees to emerge each year - the females are said to emerge in mid to late September (Ivy tends to flower in October (slight adjustment this year!)). The Ivy Bee may still be found flying in November - truly an autumnal bee. The thorax of the bee is covered with orange/brown hair, and the abdominal segments also have an 'orangey hair band'. As the name of the bee suggests, it is dependent on the ivy *Hedera Helix* and its flowers for pollen and a source of nectar. However, the bees will also gather pollen from other late-flowering species if the ivy is not in flower.

<https://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/flora-and-fauna/an-autumnal-bee-the-ivy-bee-colletes-hederae/>

(Pollinators of the month: August contd.)

Volucella pellucens, the pellucid fly, is a hoverfly, sometimes known as the Great Pied Hoverfly. I took the photo of this hoverfly as it was resting on one of my beehives. *Volucella pellucens* is about 13–17 mm in length, with a wing length of about 10–15.5 mm.



This hoverfly has a broad, mainly black body, but the front part of the abdomen has a broad, yellow band, giving it the appearance of a bee or wasp. The two wings are transparent, as with most flies, but the leading edge is amber, with a brown patch on each wing. This species occurs in much of Europe. The adult *V. pellucens* is usually found in woodlands and wooded hedgerows but can be found in gardens.

The mimicry of bees or wasps in shape and colouration is shown by other hoverflies, which is thought to protect against falling prey to birds and other insectivores that avoid eating true wasps because of their stings. However, the difference between hoverflies and wasps or bees is that hoverflies have two wings, and the Hymenoptera species have four. As a pollinator, the Great Pied Hoverfly plays a crucial role in ecosystem dynamics by facilitating the transfer of pollen between flowers. While not as efficient as bees, hoverflies contribute to pollination in a variety of habitats, including gardens, meadows, and woodland edges. Their visitation to flowers helps support plant reproduction and ensures the continuation of diverse plant communities.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volucella_pellucens

<https://www.sidmouth-nature.uk/node/971>

Taster Day photos (2nd August 2025)

Below are photos taken on our apiary Taster day by Chris Rawlings, sent via Nina Wilton. The afternoon was well enjoyed and there was an excellent atmosphere. Apparently, one of the people from the taster session has contacted Nina, saying how much they enjoyed the session and requesting a firm booking for the 2026 beginners' study course.



More Apiary Photos – haven't we had some sunshine!



Above – August 16th, 2025

Below - August 30th, 2025

...and then some much-needed rain!



September in the Apiary – Time to wind down, but not quite yet. Strong, healthy, and well-fed colonies overwinter best say the BBKA

🐝 Get colonies ready for Winter, FERA do a leaflet titled "Preparing Honeybee Colonies for Winter," it's well worth a read

<https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/resources-for-beekeepers/leaflets-guides-and-videos/fact-sheets>

🐝 Colony inspection frequency can be reduced

🐝 Health - during inspections, do check for signs any of disease.

🐝 Harvest any remaining honey.

🐝 Varroa - Have you monitored your Varroa drop & if high (10+ per day) consider an autumn treatment urgently?

🐝 If using thymol based Varroa treatments bees can stop taking syrup whilst they are on

🐝 Varroa treatments are often temperature dependent

🐝 Remove honey supers before treatment unless leaving honey for the bees.

🐝 Check colonies are queenright.

🐝 Weak colonies - Maybe unite any colonies that are too weak to overwinter. Take your losses now, not in spring.

🐝 Stores - Inspect stores and consider feeding with thick syrup 2:1 mix in Autumn. 2kg sugar to 1.25 litres of water

🐝 Give bees time to get stores sealed before it gets too cold.

🐝 Aim to complete syrup feeding by the end of September

🐝 Fondant is a popular winter choices from October onwards if required.

🐝 Once feeding has begun remember to keep feeders topped up you'd be surprised how quickly they can store it

🐝 18 - 20kg of stores is an average to get a colony through winter. Heft the hive to get a feel for the weight so you can compare later

🐝 Good time to put entrance block in especially if feeding syrup to minimise any robbing

🐝 Strap down hive & weigh down hives, Autumn storms often start this month

🐝 Supers are often removed by now as forage is likely to be dwindling

🐝 Some like a super with stores underneath the brood box over winter (nadir), it lifts the bees off open and floors. If you do this remove queen excluders

🐝 Clean, repair and store equipment

🐝 Wooden equipment can be scraped and scorched

🐝 Poly kit can be dipped into a tank of diluted bleach

🐝 NBU leaflet - Hive Cleaning and Sterilisation may be useful

<https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/resources-for-beekeepers/leaflets-guides-and-videos/fact-sheets>

🐝 To avoid wax moth damage to combs (especially brood combs), freezing, 80% acetic acid or stacking boxes with frames a sheet of newspaper between each can help

IMPORTANT MESSAGE **Dan Young** (our current AHAT leader) has asked me to share the following message from Luke Whyatt, BBKA (Trustee and Chair, Yellow-legged Asian Hornet Committee)

Yellow-legged Asian Hornet 'Call to Arms' for Associations in affected areas.....

Given the current situation with increasing numbers, we would ask that all associations within the area indicated on the map (from Bournemouth up around London to Colchester) double down their efforts on monitoring for Yellow-legged Asian Hornets as well as encouraging any additional monitoring that can be undertaken by the public through other personal and club connections.



We have a small window of opportunity now before queens begin to emerge and disperse, which could be anywhere from mid-August through to the end of October. Nest numbers are already at a record high for this time of year, and colonies are now approaching their maximum size and activity levels. If we can get mobilised quickly, we will have the best chance of making an impact before dispersal begins.

Please be mindful of potential by-catch and, as a reminder, there are copies of previously issued documents which give useful advice about monitoring on BBKA Learning Online:

(Yellow-legged Asian Hornet 'Call to Arms' for Associations in affected areas.....contd.)

<https://learning.bbka.org.uk/> (Yellow-legged Asian Hornet > YLAH Tracking & Monitoring > Monitoring & Trapping).

Also, a reminder that ID posters are available to download from the NNSS website or you can request free copies by emailing: nsss@apha.gov.uk

Thank you for your continued hard work - we do have the tools, knowledge, and determination to slow the spread and minimise the impact of this invasive species, but it will require our continued vigilance and collaboration.

Please do not hesitate to contact the office if you need any additional support at any time:
outreach.officer@bbka.org.uk



Beekeepers - does this sound familiar?

Sometimes I see something unusual in the hives and decide to go away and think about what to do to deal with the so called "problem."

By the time I get back to the hives with a definite plan and the right equipment everything has changed! 😊

Below you will see fabulous photos of the **Leaf Cutter Bee** and its' nest, provided by Mr Chris Rawlings. I often see the neatly cut out leaves in my garden but never see the culprits or their nests – fascinating, thanks for sharing Chris.



Beeswax in Sport.

Ever searching for a different subject to include in the newsletter I hit upon the idea of looking at “if” and “how” beeswax is used in sport. This made for interesting reading on the internet. One of the remarkable things about beeswax its’ highly stable chemical makeup, which essentially remains constant over time and never goes bad, so a reliable ingredient.

When searching for information about the subject I found out that tennis racket strings are sometimes coated with beeswax to help them last longer and reduce fraying. Beeswax is used in bow making too, I also discovered that it is used on bowstrings, (happy to receive more information from any accomplished archers lurking around in bee suits). Scouring some of the blog discussions revealed that some archers have their own preferred recipes that had evolved or been passed down to them..

Regarding the use of beeswax in sports, I am not sure whether this could be broadened out a bit to include hikers and rock climbers? (Is hiking a sport, I think rock climbing is considered to be). Beeswax is used to strengthen and preserve sewing thread and shoe laces of said hardy hikers and climbers! Other uses of beeswax for climbers include the proofing of clothing against weather and for conditioning their boots to make them supple and waterproof. I do not know the full details of this procedure, but I expect that beeswax is combined with other oils that act as a leather softener and water repellent. Rock climbers are said to use beeswax in balms to condition their skin. Being an humectant beeswax is good for dry skin and keeping moisture in.

In ball sports, it seems that when a rugby ball is made, it is stitched with polyester thread waxed to further strengthen it. One website I read explained that new rugby balls are coated with a thin layer of beeswax to ensure their durability – and of course, if you use

(Beeswax in Sport contd.)

beeswax on a leather rugby ball, to hear that beeswax treatment is used for rugby boots will not surprise you because beeswax is a frequent ingredient in leather balm. I thought it was possible that beeswax was used in the preparation of cricket bats – my husband disagreed and said that linseed oil was used. I agreed upon the use of linseed oil but was pleased to see when I used a trusty search engine, that yes both linseed oil and beeswax were used when making cricket bats, (I enjoy being right occasionally).

I read that swimmers, along with beeswax based balms which act as a barrier to protect their skin, use beeswax earplugs, Did you know that divers use beeswax on their hands and lower limbs to give them a good grip when they perform complicated dives – I could see the logic in that, though I do not know whether this is common practice with professional divers or just personal preference. On the subject of water again, There is a lot written about how to make your own surfboard wax and how to apply it – far too much for me to sift my way through – suffice to say that yes, beeswax is used on surfboards and Wikipedia will tell you all about it. (My beach babe days are over, so I skimmed over that bit!)

There comes a point when you start glazing over when exploring a subject that you thought was a good idea but have limited knowledge of! I got to the point when AI was taking advantage of me. Did you know that skateboarders use beeswax on their boards, but apparently, as with other sports, the beeswax is combined with another oil or wax. In my ignorance I suspected that gymnasts might use beeswax –they don't – but apparently they use honey for it's property of stickiness (a topic for future consideration?). On that point I think I will draw this little discussion to a close.

Elaine Mairis

Beekeeping supplies.



For Your Beekeeping Supplies

Your local supplier providing a service for:

- All Thorne's supplies
- BBWear suits – try before you buy
- Second hand kit bought and sold
- Available to attend your association, apiary meetings
 - Supporting Trainers, Improvers, Newbies
 - Payment by BACS, card, cash, cheque
 - Deliveries – subject to distance, order size

Please email your order or phone so we can arrange an appointment for you to visit to discuss what you need.

sales@thebeedepot.com

07879 811967

01373 430458

Diane Sleigh

The Apple Garden, Buckland Dinham, Frome, Somerset, BA11 2QP
what3words poetry.unto.driveway

Contacts and services

Contact details for committee and officers

WWBKA President: President-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Chair: Chair-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Treasurer: Treasurer-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Secretary: Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Apiary Manager: Apiary-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Honey Show Secretary: HoneyShow-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Membership Secretary: Membership-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Asian Hornet Action Team Coordinator: AHAT-WWBKA@outlook.com

WWBKA Newsletter Editor: Newsletter-WWBKA@outlook.com

Services available to members

The following services are provided by West Wilts BKA to members:

Bee Bank (for sale or purchase of queens, nucs and colonies). Contact the Branch Secretary at Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com

Bookers Wholesale Customer Card. Contact the WWBKA Secretary: Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com

Equipment loan (microscopes, extractors, etc.): Contact the Branch Secretary at Secretary-WWBKA@outlook.com

Library: Contact our Librarian (either direct or through the Secretary)

Swarm Collection Register: Contact Branch Swarm Coordinator (David Raines on 07711 018440 and david.raines@hna.uk.com).

Find us on  :West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association