

# the Petersfield Beekeeper

## Diary

EVENT	DATE	VENUE
<p>ALL APIARY MEETINGS ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.            The current situation has led to the cancellation of the summer shows which the association usually attends. Let us spare a thought for the organisers and for the stall holders whose livelihoods are at risk.</p>		

### PDBKA HONEY SHOW 2020

Unfortunately this year's Honey Show has been cancelled as it will not be possible to hold such an event whilst maintaining proper social distancing.

**Please send items for inclusion in the September Newsletter by 25 August to [depeyrecave@gmail.com](mailto:depeyrecave@gmail.com)**

**We urgently need to find a new Treasurer and Membership Secretary. Do you have some spare time and are you comfortable working with numbers?**



**If so, then please volunteer your services.  
 They will be greatly appreciated  
 Email [dzh10@hotmail.com](mailto:dzh10@hotmail.com)**



### Defensive behaviour

This is the time of the year when our normally calm colonies can show defensive behaviour. This may be due to a number of factors.

The primary reason is that they have honey to defend against robbing from other colonies, wasps and beekeepers.....

They can also be stressed by various factors such as odours resembling the chemical make up of the alarm pheromone of the sting chamber such as scents, aftershave lotions and cosmetics - and they don't like garlic or alcohol (very fussy).

Weather is another important influence on their temper and rising pressure, approaching rain, cold temperature and wind affect bees negatively.

Bees are very sensitive to vibrations so jarring frames, rapid movements, squashing bees or banging the hive is definitely going to up the ante!

It may be that the colony isn't actually aggressive at all but, at this stage of the season, although the nest will be reducing in size, the colony can still be very large with lots of flying bees and this can be intimidating.....



There are things the beekeeper can do to make hive inspections at this time of year a pleasanter and calmer experience.

Reduce the size of the entrance with a reducer or grass to make it easy for fewer bees to defend the colony.

Save the beer and spicy food for *after* the colony inspection!

Choose a fine day to check the colony. Since the risk of swarming is reduced by this stage of the year, waiting a day or two for better weather is less risky and additionally, if the weather is bad, bees are not supposed to swarm!

Make sure the smoker is going well and emitting plenty of cool smoke. Give little puffs by the lugs to clear bees before lifting the frames, so that you do not squash any.

Go calmly through the colony checking for the queen or eggs, disease, queen cells (quite possibly supersedure at this time), stores and room.

If the bees get very agitated and fly up at you in spite of gently smoking them down, close the hive up and leave them alone. If they are alright for stores and room, they can be left for a week or so. If you are concerned about stores, there is no harm in just checking the supers. Varroa counts can be done with minimal disturbance to the bees. Next time you do a full inspection maybe do it with another beekeeper, it's always much easier.

A-C Ballard



And finally....beekeeping in your underwear seems like a really bad idea - ED



Yesterday was the perfect weather for the *solar extractor*. The sun shone and the wax cappings melted.

My extractor is a simple wooden box with a single glazed lid, with back legs longer than front to make a slope.



In the early morning I lined it with grease proof paper, making sure the lower level would catch and hold the molten wax and any remaining honey.

The cappings had been stuffed into an old pair of tights to be the first filter. The resulting rather off-putting sausages were pinned onto the slope and the left for a day in the sun.

By the end of the afternoon the tights were a saggy bag and a sheet of beautiful wax remained.

Minimal fuss or effort, achieved by the sun while you relax and enjoy yourself. While the sun shines, get building! *E Eveleigh*





### FORAGE OF THE WEEK

Forage for pollinating insects is an essential component of not only their lives but ours too. Every week we have been posting pictures and a few lines of interest about plants/insects on the PDBKA website. (Under apiary and local forage).

We would be delighted for your contributions. They could be flowers from your garden, walks, pictures from hedgerows, fields, woodland - The possibilities are limitless...

All you need to do is send them to Andy Horton the website coordinator:

[horton\\_a\\_uk@outlook.com](mailto:horton_a_uk@outlook.com) and he will put them onto the website for everyone to enjoy. Have a look what's already been sent.

We would love to hear from you!

Chris Clark



*Lime (Tilia) blossom from Anne-Chantal's garden. Note the long leaf-like bracts which shelter the flowers from the rain*



*And here's one from my garden. It's a cardoon which is a sort of monstrous artichoke (over 2m tall!) much loved by the Victorians and my bees - ED*





*This month's Guest Editor is Holly, the slightly neurotic Muscovy Duck, who has taken up residence in the hen house, much to the consternation of my hens.*

**Your Committee for 2020/1**

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<b>Apiary Custodians: Graham Rowden, Dean Gregory, Rowan Roberts, Peter Reader, Chris Clark</b>		
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