THE BUZZ

Westerham Beekeepers'
newsletter

September 2025 | Issue Nine

Welcome:

Welcome to edition nine of The Buzz.

The meteorological autumn began on 1st September, and it certainly felt like it from nature's perspective. Gone are the halcyon guaranteed clear sunny days and gone (thankfully) is the lack of rainfall. Why does this somehow surprise us every year? We have had a season with practically no June gap, although a sharp-ish end to the flow somewhere in mid- to late-July depending on locality, where the bees dived into their hard-earned stores and the lack of rain held back additional forage. I hope you have been successful in carrying forward your best colonies into the autumn.

In this edition, you can read about the roaring success of the summer Fete team, led by Susan and Andrew Smith, peaking with winning best show stand at the Edenbridge and Oxted fair. Any of us with honey to sell are very grateful for our presence at the summer fetes, where good selling prices can be had.

You will also read about the breeding apiary's progress so far. Steve McGrath and his team of helpers have established a number of nucleus and full colonies for over-wintering. Read more below!

Please pay attention to Topsy Rudd's update on Yellow-legged hornet (YLH). We have all seen the incursion maps, and we need to do our bit to help! We are switching to a new app, which is easier to use. Get your monitoring stations in place!

It is also the time of year for subscriptions. Please read the chairman's chat, and Robert Ambroziak gives more details below on how to pay.

Thank you all for your continued support to this newsletter and to the club.

Mark Waddington

In this issue:

Chairman's Chat	page 1
Summer WBK Events	page 2
Winter Meetings & Talks	page 3
Membership	page 4
Things to Do	page 5
Yellow-Legged Hornet	page 5
WBK Event Stand	page 6
Learning Corner	page 8
Book Sale	page 8
Christmas is Coming	page 10
An Inspector Calls	page 10
Journeying to Jersey	page 11
Recipe - Teriyaki Sauce	page 13
Breeding Apiary:	page 14
About Us & Contacts:	page 15
Advice & FAQs:	page 15
Swarm Reporting:	page 15
Last Word	page 15

Chairman's Chat:

You will know already that Jacky Delooze has stood down as manager of the training apiary. Jacky has led and organised the training apiary for eight years, has always

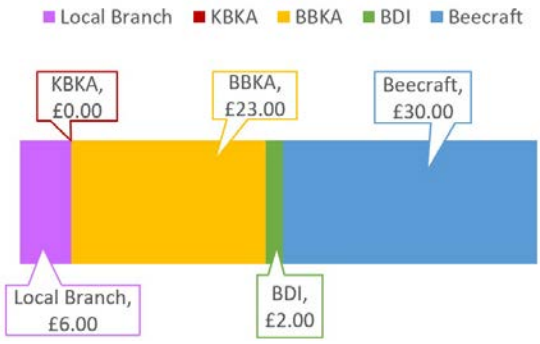
been a super-friendly face of the club and encouraged many of us at the start of our journey in beekeeping. Thank you, Jacky, for all your patience and hard work over the eight years and making the training apiary a fun and friendly place to be.

Jacky is succeeded by Michelle Ernoult, who recently joined Westerham and is also a member of neighbouring Croydon Beekeepers. Michelle has kept her bees without varroa treatment for over 14 years so felt a strong affinity for what Westerham Beekeepers are doing as a club. She is now working with long hives, again with minimal intervention.

Michelle will be assisted by a group of helpers, including John and Karinne Marshall, who have kindly agreed to manage the tea, coffee and cake service.

Subscriptions

Our annual subscriptions have gone up slightly from last year, but what you get for your money is still very good value. Here is the breakdown:



From this, you can see that your subscription covers BBKA membership, bee disease insurance, the Beecraft and BBKA News magazines, as well as contributing to the branch's funds. Note that BeeCraft is compulsory under KBKA rules. What most people do not know is that only £6.00 per member comes to us for running our events, the training apiary, the winter talks and everything else that we do. For friend members, it is only the £5.00 subscription that comes back to Westerham.

It is becoming increasingly challenging to run all the activities we do on this budget. There are many things we do as a club for free, that other clubs charge to their members, such as sessions at the training apiary, winter talks, and commissions on sales of honey at fetes. We are therefore appealing to members to voluntarily increase their annual subscriptions by making a suggested minimum donation of £5.00 per member. We are a charity, and any money that you donate will be channelled into a better service on all that we offer.

Your support is greatly appreciated.

AGM and elections – job vacancies

In late November we will hold the AGM, which includes elections of committee members. Two of our long-standing volunteers are hoping to step back, which would leave two vacancies:

•Education officer (currently held Steve Riley)

•Westerham representative on the Kent Beekeepers' Association (KBKA) council (currently held by James Cash and Peter Cobley – one new representative sought)

If you think you could be interested in either of these roles, please let me or one of the committee members know, and we will provide you with more information about the roles. The remaining committee members are happy to serve for another year but if anyone wants to put themselves forward for any of the other posts we can vote on candidates at the AGM.

Mark Waddington

Summer WBKA Events:

On Saturday 5th July at Mark Waddington's apiary, Tom Bickerdike of the National Bee Unit (NBU) performed a disease inspection on Mark's colonies. Happily, Tom had very little to show us, as the bees were healthy and very calm.

Thank you to everyone who came along – the cake surplus was taken for consumption at the following day's training apiary demonstration.

Photo: Mark Waddington

Photo: Mark Waddington

On Saturday 26th July a washed-out apiary demonstration took place at David Turner's house near Weald. A quietish session with iffy weather and bees that didn't want to be opened up. We ate cake instead and it was delicious. Thanks to David Turner for hosting.

Photo: Mark Waddington

Mark Waddington

Winter Meetings & Talks:

THURSDAY 25th September 2025 - Social evening at the Carpenter's Arms, Limpsfield Chart, RH8 0TG including a **book sale**

Wednesday 29th October 2025
Joe Ibertson

Joe is a long term non treatment beekeeper currently running a conservation project covering 90 free living colony nest sites in woodland and urban areas local to him. He has developed a simplistic technique to hunt free living colonies and works alongside Prof. Grace McCormack's Galway Honeybee Research Centre for monitoring and research. As part of the Varroaresistant.uk team, he uses his knowledge of free-living colonies to encourage natural selection and natural dynamics alongside colony management in National hives to select for varroa resistance and self-reliant colonies adapted to his location.

Wednesday 26th November 2025
AGM with Honey & Cake Competitions

Wednesday 28th January 2026

Wednesday 25th February 2026

Wednesday 25th March 2026

All meetings and talks (except Thursday 25th September) to be held in Westerham in the evening. Please save these dates for your diaries and let us know if you have any specific requests or ideas for meeting themes.

Mark Waddington

Membership:

The end of the beekeeping year has rolled around again, the honey harvest collected, queen excluders removed, bees fare filling every available space with winter stores, beekeepers can go on holiday, etc.... well, that's what the books suggest.

As is traditional at this point in the year, Membership Secretaries everywhere start asking for next year's subscriptions. We'll be continuing to use the online renewal system ('eR2'), which I hope is now becoming more familiar to everyone.

For newer members who have yet to experience the edge-of-the-seat excitement of online renewal, the main steps are outlined below. Note - there are some cost increases this year; full membership fee is now £61 and partner membership is £20. Friend membership remains at £5.

We are also very strongly encouraging our members to make a minimum voluntary contribution of £5, as discussed by Mark Waddington above.

This voluntary donation would bring your total subscription cost to:

•Full membership - £66
•Partner membership - £25
•Friend membership - £10

Full details of membership and the various classes is on our website, here:

https://westerham.kbka.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Membership-type2025.pdf

Online Membership Renewal 2025/26:

1. During the first week in October you will receive an automated mail from Kent Beekeepers Association - Westerham Branch, with subject 'Membership Renewal Invitation'.

(Please set your mail system to accept such mails and not dump them in the Junk folder.)

2. The email will contain a link to the online renewal system (called 'eR2') and your details within the system. The link is unique to you only and does not allow access to any other members' details in the system.

3. Click on the link in your Renewal Invitation to view your details. The left column shows your current details (i.e. for the 2024/25 year) and the right column shows your new details (for 2025/26 year). Check the details in the right column are still valid and amend if required. There are some explanatory notes in a box on the right side of the screen.

4. Below your personal details there is a box for Renewal Options. Select which options (membership type, insurance, gift aid, etc.) apply to you. The total cost of your selections is shown at the bottom in the Summary of Fees Due box. Note: there is a discount of £10 for only receiving the digital version of Beecraft.

5. Once happy with your selections, click the 'Submit Renewal Application' button.

6. You are now taken to the payment page. Complete your personal details and card details and click the payment button.

7. That's it - your membership is renewed.

8. Shortly after your payment, you will receive a receipt from Stripe. This is the payment system used by KBKA.

9. Once the payment has been confirmed by the Branch Treasurer, you will receive a Membership Certificate.

If you have any queries/concerns, please contact me by email:
members.westerhambeeks@gmail.com
or
phone: 07403 538724

Note: The online system is entirely optional. If you wish to use the original paper-based system or use an alternative payment method (e.g. a cheque), please contact me, as above.

Best wishes for a stress-free (and prompt, please) membership renewal.

Robert Ambroziak

Things to do: Jobs for the months ahead:

Inspections:

You should be close to or have done your finial inspection for the season.

Are your colonies Queenright? Combine any colonies that maybe too weak to overwinter.

Check for pests & Disease.

Honey:

If you haven't already taken a harvest, this is the time to do it but leave the bees with plenty to see them through the winter. Around 14-18Kg (30-40lbs) per hive is recommended.

Feeding:

Check stores and feed if required. You can feed syrup up to the middle of October depending upon the weather. However, if you continue feeding syrup too long, you run the risk of this fermenting due to the high-water content, which could then harm the colony.

If stores are low, fondant is a good back up. Place this on top of the hole in the crown board.

Winter Preparation:

Reduce or remove supers as forage is now beginning to dwindle.

Remove the queen excluder.

Fit the entrance with mouse guard.

Check that your hives are weatherproof. Strap down, add insulation and pest protection ready for winter.

Heft to check stores. You should leave around 18Kg per hive of honey.
Note: full brood frames weigh around 2.5kg & super frames weigh around 1.5kg.

Yellow-legged Hornets:

Yellow-legged Hornets are producing drones and Queens right now. Make sure your traps are topped up with Trappit (see below).

Nicola Spreckley

Yellow-Legged Hornet (YLH) Update:

As the map below shows, we are being encircled by YLH, so it is vital to keep monitoring. As of 11 September, the NBU have destroyed 112 nests in 2025.

Over the summer, it has been workers out looking for food to feed the broods in their nests. But in September and October the nests release drones then gynes (virgin queens) - they mate, and the queens will hibernate over winter. So, if you have a trap, put it out alongside your bait station.

We are going to change our monitoring reporting system from eR2 to AHCatch, which is now more widely used. In this system, each beekeeper inputs and updates their own data. You can register here:
http://catch.asianhornetalert.org.uk/

Image: NBU

Yellow-legged Hornet life cycle:

Image: BeeBase

Topsy Rudd

Summer WBK Stand Events:

The Bees were buzzing, and so were crowds of visitors around the WBK Stand at the local summer fetes, fairs and fayres.

We kicked off the season in July with a new venue at Limpsfield Chart which was breezy but brilliant.

Our educational format again focused on Honey Adulteration, YLH Awareness and Varroa Resistant Beekeeping. The common question "What's the difference between a Euro and a YLH?" highlights that people are still unsure of the differences between hornets or even how to report a sighting of YLH.

Photo: Sue Bradshaw-Smith

Photo: Sue Bradshaw-Smith

Photo: Sue Bradshaw-Smith

Honey tasting was again very popular with all ages, reinforcing our Buy Local Honey message. The diversity of flavours surprised a lot of visitors. This made choosing a favourite difficult but boosted our club member's honey sales considerably. Varroa Resistant Beekeeping was applauded and a new banner allowed visitors to read about the key points and benefits to the bees.

Being asked back again to many of these summer community events in 2026, just

shows how important our impact as an educational stand can be. Generally, the event organisers don't charge us to attend, but we do ask our honey sellers for a small donation as a gesture of good will towards the event fundraising.

The Edenbridge & Oxted Agricultural Show invited us back, and this year saw our honey sales doubling on the first day.

The organisers would like us to return in 2026, so if you are free to help and sell honey next August Bank holiday do get in touch.

The Kent AHAT (Asian Hornet Action Team) was on hand again to share our impressive marquee. A laptop presentation, YLH trap kits and useful information including ID sheets attracted lots of attention, keeping their team of three volunteers very busy over both days. Steve Riley's Pink Queen survived 2 days in the observation hive and by all accounts is still going strong, thus proving the hardiness of varroa resistant queens. The VRB banner generated a lot of interest, with insightful questions from the public and an interview from the E&O Show press team.

Monday morning saw a special visit from the new Show President Helen Mahy CBE and Joint Chair Bill Peters. After successfully identifying a recently encountered hornet as a Euro, both left with YLH traps from AHAT and jars of honey from the WBK queen rearing apiary.

To round off two very busy days, we were invited to the show's main arena to receive a special Prize from the Show President. The WBK Stand was awarded The Diana Barnato Walker Trophy for Best Exhibitor in Show 2025.

Congratulations must go to all those who put so much into helping out on the WBK stand throughout the season this year. You all gave up a lot of your time, but I think you will all agree we had a lot of fun on the day.

Photo: Sue Bradshaw-Smith

Our excellent team of helpers who between them covered multiple events and also supplied their bees for the observation hive were:

Topsy Rudd and Family
Robert & Fiona Ambrosiak
Keith Masters
Mark Edwards
Mark Waddington
Di & Simon Pickard
Vicky Tonks & Family
Annie Robinson
Sally Doyle-Linden
Nicola Spreckley & Family
Steve McGrath
Nicola Mcsheehy
Chris Cornthwaite
Steve Riley
Andrew Smith & Sue Bradshaw-Smith - WBK Stand Co-Ordinator

We wouldn't have been able to do any of the 2025 events listed below without your invaluable help. You talked bees, got sticky and smiled throughout. Thank you.

Other figures for honey and hive products (candles, wax wraps etc) sales are:

Total sales for each event [All Sellers did multiple shifts on the stand]

Limpsfield Chart Fair £454.00
Limpsfield Village Fete £508.00
Four Elms Fete £174.00
Westerham Country Fayre £853.50
The Edenbridge & Oxted Show £2,735.00

Honey produced locally to the event really does sell. By offering tastings of all the honeys on sale (on average 5 at each venue) we were able to optimise the message of "Buy Local Honey", one of our main educational focus topics on the WBK stand.

Thank you all again and if any of you would like to join our Award-Winning Team next year, please email me:

susan.bradshaw.smith@gmail.com

Sue Bradshaw-Smith & Andrew Smith

Learning Corner:

The BBKA Basic Assessment for a strong group of students took place over the summer, and their results will be released soon. Fingers crossed that you all did well. The assessment and exam results will be announced at the AGM on 26 November 2025 before the Honey prizes.

We are now onto the next round of Modules. For the 15 November 2025 exam sitting, applications are due in by 30 September. So those considering entering do not have long to apply. Please contact Sue Payne, the Kent Exam Secretary, by email on suepayne614@gmail.com for an application link. There is a small fee, and rather surprisingly, this is returned if you pass.

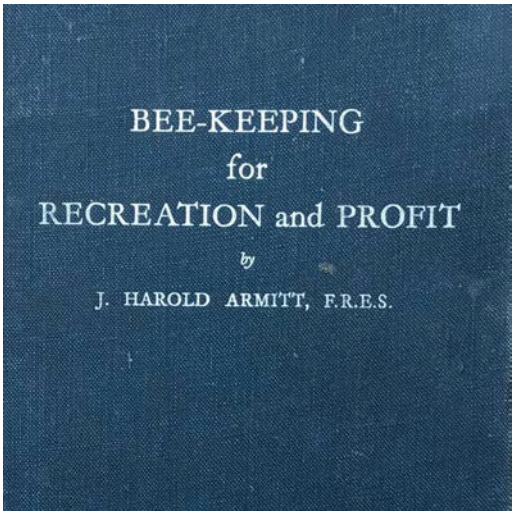
I have joined a group led by Diane Drinkwater, BBKA Chair, for Module 3 – Honey Bee Pests, Diseases and Poisoning. We began our weekly Zoom sessions in early September – for this module we meet at 7.30 pm on a Sunday evenings, for 90 minutes. Diane makes it very clear she welcomes all members and does not expect everyone to be taking the exam. It is all about learning different aspects of beekeeping and sharing experiences with the other students, who are often very experienced beekeepers. After 5 years, I still consider myself a new beekeeper and have much to learn.

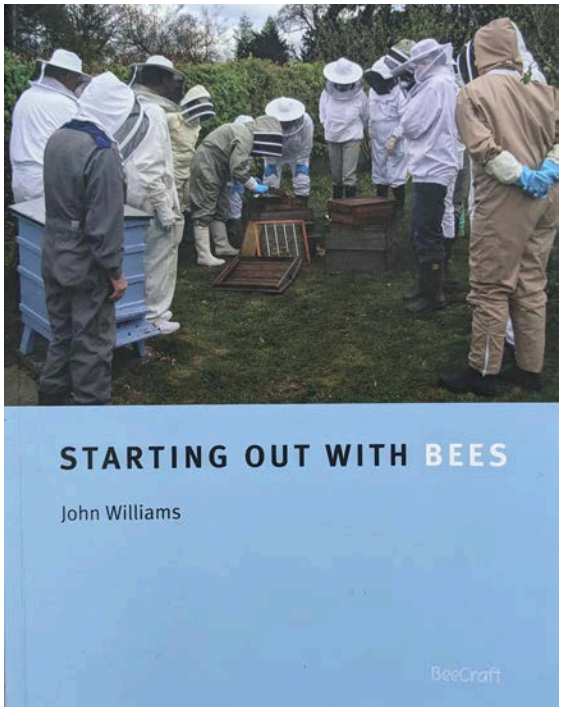
I also note that the correspondence courses for the March 2026 exam sitting are now open and they start in October. This can be a more relaxed timeline for those who prefer to study at their own pace. When I did my first module, I signed up to a correspondence course in December and found it very helpful. Doing the exams in March gives you an excuse to buy or borrow some interesting books on beekeeping for winter reading. I am happy to share my reading list to date.

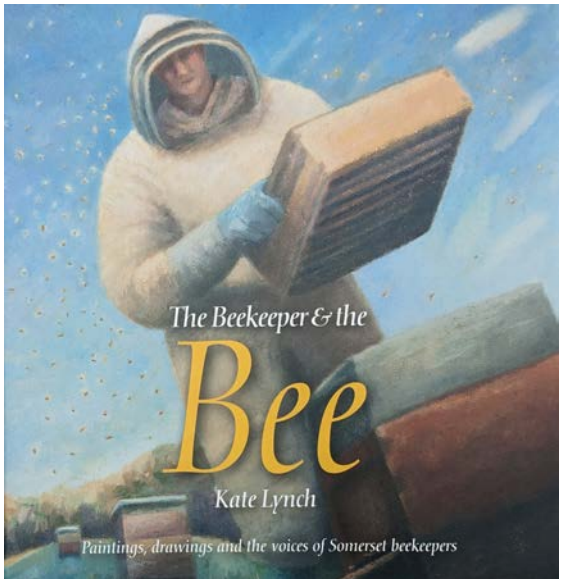
Sally Doyle-Linden

Book Sale:

Due to an increase in the number of books we store and a notable decrease of books being taken out on loan, the Librarians will be holding a BOOK SALE at the first Winter meeting at The Carpenters Arms on 25th September.

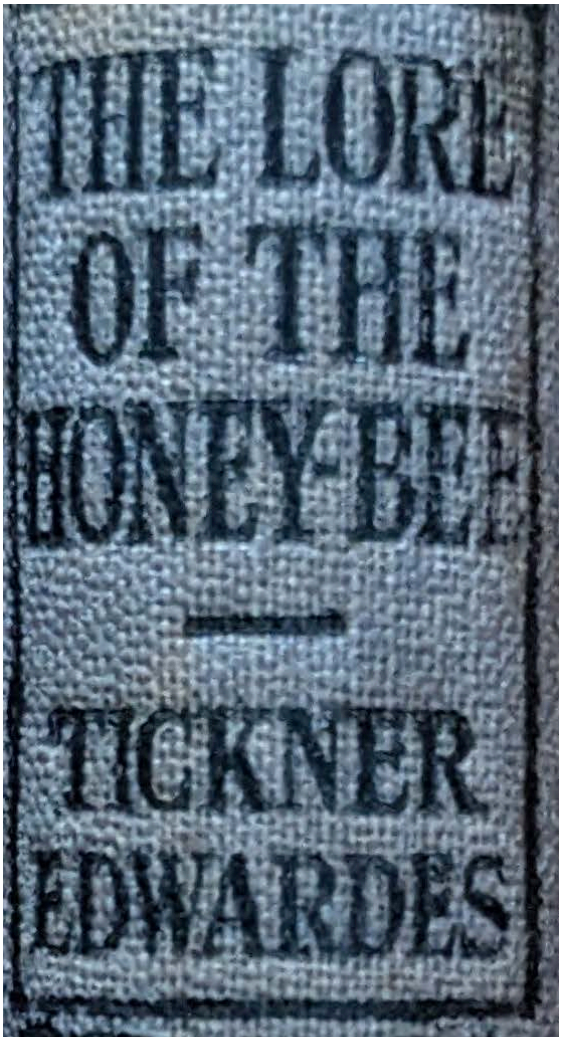


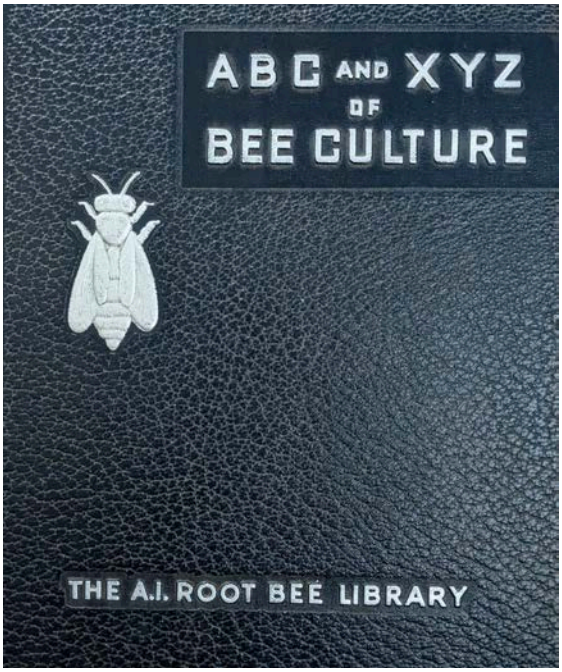




A full catalogue of books for sale is available to view on the club website.

If you would like to reserve any copies, please contact The Librarians prior to the sale. All proceeds will be donated to the winter talks fund. The book sale is aimed to help the library books find new beekeeping homes within the club where possible. Any books left over from the sale will either be sold on or donated unless anyone else would like to keep them.





Sue Bradshaw-Smith

Christmas is Coming:

We are not going to mention how many days to go, but we do have two special invitations to Christmas Events in Westerham coming up in November 2025.

If you are interested to sell local honey / hive products at either:

The St Marys Christmas Market 11am-4pm Friday 22nd November 2025
or
The Westerham Christmas Lights Shopping Event 4pm-7pm Thursday 27th November 2025

Please contact me at susan.bradshaw.smith@gmail.com for further details.

Honey will be sold at the standard club prices for 1lb, 12oz & 8oz jars. Please note there will be a small charge for all sellers to cover costs associated with attending either of these venues. It will be a great way to end a very productive year with some Christmas cheer.

Sue Bradshaw-Smith

An Inspector Calls: A (very enjoyable) day with the Bee Inspector

It was a daunting start when a very official email arrived in my inbox titled "National Bee Unit Statutory Inspection Programme" and asking for my assistance and co-operation in inspecting all the colonies listed under me on BeeBase. After gulping and a nervous moment, I decided to reach out to Helen Hadley, our area seasonal bee inspector who sent the email, as the suggested dates weren't convenient and I wanted to be there for the inspections (they can inspect without you there). From that moment on, it was nothing but a pleasant experience.

The first thing I learned is just how busy the inspectors still are, split between chasing yellow-legged hornets and disease inspections. One postponement and then a decision to inspect about half my apiaries over one day rather than all of them over two. The ones selected covered a good geographic spread.

I can't deny I wasn't a little nervous ahead of the inspection. I keep varroa resistant bees and don't treat with miticides and the National Bee Unit have a line they stick to that beekeepers should be treating. But at the same time, I knew my colonies were healthy and strong and so saw it as an opportunity to show that VR bees are as healthy, if not more so, than treated 'mite breeding' hives.

Helen arrived with a smile, and we got straight into talking about bees and beekeeping as two beekeepers would. I first provided a honey sample that will be sent off to be tested for residues of banned substances, treatment residues and contaminants. I don't expect to hear back from them.

We then went off inspecting my colonies, with me opening the hives down to the brood chamber and then letting Helen go in and go through the brood frames. You can do it in different ways - you pulling the frames and handing them over to be checked for example. Whatever you're comfortable with.

The inspections are about disease, and the inspectors are not there to comment on your beekeeping. I was happy that Helen was complimentary though.

In total, we went through 16 colonies across four apiary sites. And the result? Three (yes three, not a typo) individual cells with sac brood. Nothing else. All the colonies were healthy and thriving. Helen recorded her findings for each colony, and I was particularly impressed that she was in each case recording "signs of varroa sensitive hygiene" because each one was uncapping and chewing out. I showed her the bottom boards with the low mite counts and exoskeleton parts in each case, and she wasn't finding any DWV Deformed Wing Virus), CBPV (Chronic

Bee Paralysis Virus) or even mites attached to the adult bees.

In one nuc, we found a few small insects that neither of us had seen before on the frames. I took a photo and asked the app "Seek", which identified them as Birch Catkin Bugs. The nuc was underneath a silver birch tree. Who knew that the Birch Catkin Bugs can co-exist with bees in a colony? We might have discovered something completely new.

Birch Catkin Bug - Photo: Steve McGrath

For me, the inspection day turned out to be thoroughly enjoyable and Helen is great company. Having confirmation that my colonies are healthy is great to have.

So, if the inspector comes calling, I suggest engaging and seeing it as another opportunity to learn and enjoy your beekeeping! It's not something to be feared.

I'm also secretly hoping that the rest of the NBU might hear about the inspection results, and it will go some way to further convince them that varroa resistance is real and varroa resistant bees are healthy bees.

Steve McGrath

Journeying to Jersey

Earlier this year, I saw a request from the Jersey based Yellow-legged Hornet Facebook page, asking for volunteers. I contacted the group, and they agreed to accept my offer to help. The one condition was that I had to read Dr Sarah Bunker's book on Yellow-legged Asian Hornets.

I discussed this with the WBKA committee, and they generously agreed to part sponsor my trip on the understanding I shared the benefit of the experience with the branch members. I presented my photos and video to the group by Zoom in August and am happy to answer any questions about my trip.

My trip was planned for 6 nights in July. My mistake was to camp – it rained every night I was there.

I was asked to bring a marking kit comprising marking pens, a compass, timer and binoculars. No bee suit was required (or allowed). I was given a bag including all the other things required to track and trace the Yellow-Legged Hornets. Special suits and protective gear were provided for nest removal.

Special Tool Kit - Photo: Mark Edwards

My days were organised by Alastair Christie, the senior scientific officer for invasive species for the Government of Jersey, the Jersey government's invasive

species head. Alistar was supported by a small team.

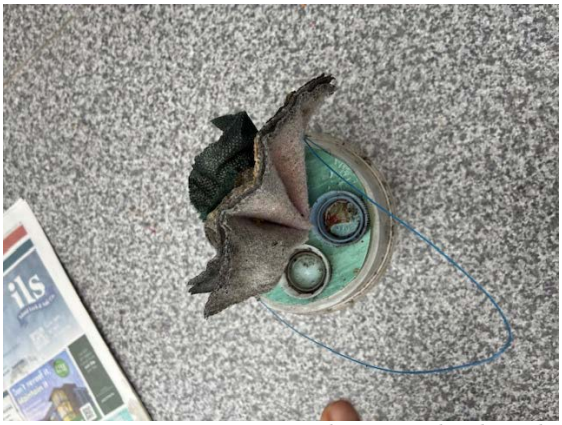
The team relies heavily on volunteers, who are a mix of beekeepers and members of the general public. The team works hard to keep the public on board with their activities, and they rely on the public being their eyes and ears, and to report any nest sightings. For tracking and tracing, the island is split into north, west, east and south.

Each day was arranged with a mixture of track and trace in the morning and removing nests in the afternoon.

After a few days I became quite adept at chasing hornets which involved marking either free style with acrylic paint on a tiny paint brush or marking a queen captured in a tube with a cylinder. This latter method is illegal in the UK as we are not permitted to release an invasive species.

Bait Station - Photo: Mark Edwards

As you monitor the feeding station you'll see the hornets doing an orientation flight and that will include you and the surrounding area, in order to understand where to return. Each time the hornet gets quicker at returning to the feed station. We watched and timed the marked hornets return at least three times. If the return is within one minute; we knew its nest was very close. We would then glue foil on the hornet to get a better idea of nest location.



Bait Station - Photo: Mark Edwards

Interestingly, when tracking, no special suits or protection was required as the hornets are not threatened and will allow you to mark their backs while feeding on the bait station. The YL hornets love the Trappit feed, as do all the local European hornets and wasps.

I was also shown another method which involved taking a GPS co-ordinates of the feeding station and direction of flights. With the co-ordinates and a map, the flight lines, where the lines crossed gave an indication of where a nest might be present.

The glory job is probably the nest removal as the public are relieved. In July you are looking for a football-sized nest, and by the end of August the nest is the size of a beachball.

Special Suits - Photo: Mark Edwards

When removing a nest, we wore special suits, boots and long gloves. The suits are thick and made specially for the 6mm Yellow-legged Hornet stinger. We were also given special visor/googles to protect us from the spit or excreta that might be discharged into your eyes. This spit is very uncomfortable and can give you conjunctivitis type symptoms.

Alistar estimates that his team spend 10% of their time on the initial reporting of sightings, 70% on track and trace, 10% on nest location and 10% on nest removal.

Visor/Goggles - Photo: Mark Edwards

Nest removal – Photo: Mark Edwards

Jersey is only 14 miles from France where there is no control on the spread of Yellow-legged Hornets. Many Yellow-legged Hornets fly across the water between France and Jersey, resulting in a high number of colonies. This coupled with the challenging terrain (bogs, brambles and uneven landscape) means that the Jersey team has a significant challenge on their hands. I came away thinking this is not easy and is very time consuming.

Mark Edwards

Recipe: Easy Teriyaki Sauce

An easy to make Teriyaki sauce.

Photo: Mark Edwards

Ingredients:

50ml Soy Sauce
A generous Tbsp. honey
2 bay leaves
A few chilli flakes (to taste)
Tsp. fennel seeds
Small piece of fresh ginger, peeled and sliced
Clove of garlic, peeled and sliced
4 Star anise (optional)

Method:

Place all ingredients in a pan and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes over a gentle heat. The strong flavours should be released and the liquor reduced to a thickened syrup.

Allow to cool, then sieve to remove the whole spices.

Store the thickened syrup in a sealed container in the fridge until ready to use. The sauce may be kept for about a week or so.

Use:

Photo: Mark Edwards

Use in cooking a steak, or in baking salmon - simply sprinkle with sesame seeds and drizzle some of the syrup over the meat or fish to flavour.

Enjoy

Mark Edwards

Breeding Apiary: Update & Winter Preparation

August was a busy month preparing for winter in the breeding apiary. Excess honey was re-distributed or extracted and then sold at the late summer fetes, raising funds to cover expenses such as new frames we'd bought as our colony numbers expanded.

We didn't need to combine any colonies, and all of our hives look strong with a full super above them while our nucs are also strong and full of stores. Wasps thankfully weren't a major problem in this apiary. The wet supers were given back to the bees to clean before being frozen for 48 hours and then stored for winter. Obviously, no treatments were applied to the hives as they don't need them.

Over the autumn, we'll be taking stock of how the first year of breeding went, going through the detailed notes we've made and pictures we took. This will help us develop our plan for the 2026 season. We'll be focusing in on the best-performing breeding methods (best for the bees, that is). Stay tuned for details towards the end of the year.

We went into last winter with two hives and three nucs. We lost one hive headed by a three-year old queen over winter, while one of the nuc queens turned drone layer, meaning we started the season with three queens. Going into this winter, we have eight hives and six nucs, with four different queen lines after another queen line was introduced this summer. All of them are demonstrating strong varroa resistant traits, uncapping cells, chewing out infected pupae, and keeping varroa mite counts on the insert boards very low.

That all puts us in a very strong position going into winter, and I'm very hopeful we'll be moving on to the next stage of our breeding project next season. I'll update you with our plans over the winter.

Please join me to thank everyone who has given up time or made donations on behalf of the project this year. In particular, John and Karinne Marshall, Robert Ambrosiak, Mark Waddington and Topsy Rudd for their help in the apiary over the season. And also John Williams, Topsy Rudd, James Cash, Di Pickard and the Marshalls for kind donations of equipment, materials or bees. Thanks must also go to our club committee for supporting the project, and to Kent Beekeepers Association for matching that support.

Steve McGrath

About Westerham Beekeepers:

Westerham Beekeepers is a branch of the Kent Beekeepers Association. Our aim is to promote the craft of beekeeping by helping to educate both beekeepers and the public. While we are mostly practising amateur beekeepers, membership is open to interested members of the public. We meet during the winter months in Westerham, usually for lectures by visiting specialists and our own members. During the active beekeeping season, we meet for demonstrations by experienced beekeepers in our members' apiaries.
Website: https://westerham.kbka.org.uk

Contact Information:

Mark Waddington – Chairman & Events Programme - contributions for newsletters and ideas for winter talks & summer visits
wbka.events@gmail.com

Steve Riley – Education
steveriley91@gmail.com

Robert Ambroziak – Membership
members.westerhambeeks@gmail.com

Michelle Ernoult – Training Apiary Manager wbkatrainingapiary@gmail.com

Topsy Rudd - Branch Secretary & YLH Co-ordinator
westerhambeekeepers@gmail.com

Andrew Smith & Sue Bradshaw-Smith – Librarians & Fete Team Organisers
wbkalibrarian@gmail.com

Keith Masters – Treasurer
masterskeithmasters@hotmail.com

To join the **Westerham Beekeepers' WhatsApp group**, please contact Mark Waddington as above

To join the **Training Apiary's Facebook group**, please contact Michelle Ernoult as above

To join the **Swarm WhatsApp group**, please contact Alban Brindle
agbrindle@hotmail.com

Committee Members:

Mark Waddington – Chairman & Events Programme

Topsy Rudd – Branch Secretary & YLH Co-ordinator

Keith Masters - Treasurer

Michelle Ernoult - Training Apiary Manager

Steve Riley - Education Officer

Robert Ambroziak - Membership Secretary

Alban Brindle - Swarm Co-ordinator

Peter Cobley – Branch representative on KBKA Council

James Cash - Branch representative on KBKA Council

Advice for Beginners & FAQs: on our website

Swarm Reporting: Please contact our swarm co-ordinator, Alban Brindle on 07919 843 546, or the nearest contact from the BBKA website if Alban is not available.

National Bee Unit Inspectors:

Seasonal Inspector Southern Westerham Area: Helen Hadley – 07741 168555

Seasonal Inspector Northern Westerham Area: Danyal Conn – 07584 202700

Regional Inspector: Thomas Bickerdike thomas.bickerdike@apha.gov.uk or 07775 119464

Last Word: Melissopalynology – the study of the pollen contained in honey by which it is possible to identify the location and genus of plants visited by the bees. The technique is used to combat fraud and inaccurate labelling of honey because mono-floral honey, and honey from particular regions, is usually more valuable. However, it is not entirely foolproof since the honey may also contain airborne pollen, spores and dust caused by the electrostatic charge of bees.

beebay

Retiring Beekeeper's items for sale:

All in one bee suit XL high protection £100.

National cedar wood Beehive - with brood box, 6 supers, crown board, queen excluder £300.

Nuke/bait hive - cedar wood with space for 4 brood or super frames £50.

Various items from £10-20: smokers, hive tools, crown boards, brood & super frames, unused brood foundation, large plastic honey container with lid and tap, fine mesh metal sieves, mouse guards, bee clearing brush, metal frame rests.

Contact: Christine Jackson on:
Mobile 07905619739,
cmpjackson1@gmail.com

Honey Extractor:

High-quality SAF Natural stainless-steel honey extractor. Four-frame radial operation, with two careful previous owners (your current and former chairs). I have had seven years' trouble-free use from this extractor.

It has the advantage of a large stainless steel settling tank with filter above so that frames can be extracted on a continuous basis without having to drain off the honey into collection buckets.

One of the cover screens is slightly damaged (see photo) but it still perfectly safe to use. The other cover screen is a hand-built replacement.

Photo: Mark Waddington

Photo: Mark Waddington

Offers around £150 contact Mark Waddington

If you would like to list items for sale in future newsletters, please let Sally Doyle-Linden know at:

sdoylelinden@outlook.com

Please note: all items should be in good useable condition and of sufficient standard for proper use in beekeeping. Items likely to cross contaminate hives will not be accepted for listing and nor will items of de-minimus value.