



December 2018

Welcome to the December 2018 newsletter. Any contributions or ideas for future editions please email to: newsletter@gwentbeekeepers.co.uk

Things to Think About

This Month's Meeting

This month's meeting is our annual December social (see below). Have some fun with our annual quiz. There will be a raffle - all prizes donated will be most welcome. Bring your honey along for all our annual honey competition. Enjoy cake, mince pies and refreshments

The image is a promotional poster for the Gwent Beekeepers CIO - December Social. It has a yellow background with a red border. At the top, the text 'Gwent Beekeepers CIO - December Social' is written in a yellow font. Below this, the date and time 'December 13th at 7.30pm' is written in a large, bold, red font. The poster lists several activities: 'Have some fun with our annual quiz', 'There will be a raffle - all prizes donated will be most welcome.', 'Bring your honey along for all our annual honey competition.', and 'And enjoy cake, mince pies and refreshments'. At the bottom, it says 'We look forward to seeing you there'. The event address is 'Event Address: Goytre Village Hall, Penperlleni, Pontypool, NP4 0AW'. The poster is decorated with yellow Christmas ornaments and a holly leaf in the bottom right corner.

Membership Fees 2019

Our aim is to encourage, improve and advance beekeeping through membership of our group.

Advantages of membership include:

- Talks by invited speakers on a wide range of beekeeping topics
- Workshops e.g. checking for Nosema apis and N.ceranae
- Association apiary meetings
- Monthly newsletters
- Third party and product liability insurance
- Insurance against loss from bee diseases
- Equipment hire
- Association library
- Discounted subscriptions for Beekeepers Quarterly and Bee Craft
- Theoretical and practical course for beginners

Possibly the most important benefit is the opportunity to exchange views and learn from the experience of other beekeepers.

Full Membership :- includes British Beekeepers Association capitation fee, giving benefit of BBKA membership and third party insurance; and £2 Bee Disease Insurance for 3 hives (additional payment required for more than 3 hives). Full members are encouraged to register with The National Bee Unit on BeeBase www.nationalbeeunit.com

Associate Membership :- for beginners without bees and those embarking on the Beginner's Course; beekeepers who are a full member of another beekeeping association; spouse/partner of full member; retired beekeepers; anyone who wishes to support beekeeping.

Membership year runs from January 1st to December 31st of each year so don't forget to complete a 2019 Membership Application / Renewal Form and pay the appropriate fees which this year are again:

Full membership Adult £33.00 Junior: Under 18 years £17 and Associate membership £12.00

Don't forget that if you have more than 3 colonies an additional colonies Bee Disease Insurance. All Your Colonies Must Be Covered for the insurance to be valid

You can also download a copy of the application from our website or apply online using our Google Docs membership form.

In the News

National Hive Count

A reminder from the National Bee Unit, Animal & Plant Health Agency

Don't forget we need you to update your colony records on your BeeBase record by 31st December 2017. You can do this by clicking on the following link and submitting your response.:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/secure/beekeeper/hiveCensus.cfm>

If you have any further questions, please visit the Hive Count page on BeeBase or contact us at Hive.Count@apha.gov.uk

Thank you for your co-operation.

New Committee 2019

At the November AGM the following were elected to serve on the committee for 2019:

Chair: Ceri Joyner chair.gbkcio@gmail.com

Winter lecture programme: Ceri Joyner

Correspondence Secretary: Daniel Baxter dbaxter410@gmail.com

Vice Chair: Daniel Baxter

Events co-ordinator: Daniel Baxter

Treasurer: Russell Flynn treasurer@gwentbeekeepers.co.uk

Membership Secretary: Russell Flynn membership@gwentbeekeepers.co.uk

Exam Secretary: Janet Bromley bromleyjan@hotmail.com

Social Media Secretary: Peter Maloney pwlmaloney@gmail.com

Events Logistics co-ordinator: Peter Maloney

Minutes Secretary: Matt Williams canrikka@hotmail.com

Newsletter secretary: Graham Bent newsletter@gwentbeekeepers.co.uk

Apiary Manager: Miriam Knight beekeepingknight@gmail.com

Education: John Holden johnholden142@yahoo.co.uk

Swarm liaison officer: Ken Key kenkey@btinternet.com

Librarian: Carol Jobling joseph.jobling2118@gmail.com

Other committee members:

Eric Long caeffynnon@tiscali.co.uk

Mike Rossiter rossiter@btinternet.com

Rosemary Rossiter rossiter@btinternet.com

Joe Jobling joseph.jobling2118@gmail.com

Rhys Edwards rhysedwards999@gmail.com

Dave Ashford Daveashford10@googlemail.com

Non committee member Swarm liaison

Chris Taylor cntaylor1981@gmail.com

This Month's Articles

Could bee vaccination become a possibility?

Winter is with us again and some of you might have already had or be considering having a vaccination against the possibility of winter flu. Have you ever wondered why it not possible to vaccinate our bees against some of the diseases that they encounter? The answer to this question is that the insect immune system, although rather similar to the mammalian system, lacks one of the central mechanisms for immunological memory – antibodies.

In 2015 researchers from Arizona State University, University of Helsinki, University of Jyväskylä and Norwegian University of Life Sciences made a new discovery after studying a bee blood protein called vitellogenin. The scientists found that this protein plays a critical, but previously unknown role in providing bees with protection against disease. When it comes to vaccination bees naturally immunize their offspring against specific diseases found in their environments. The basis of the innovation is quite simple. When the queen bee eats something with pathogens in it, the pathogen signature molecules are bound by vitellogenin protein. Vitellogenin then carries these signature molecules into the queen's eggs, where they work as inducers for future immune responses.

Now researchers from University of Helsinki have reported that they have developed the first vaccine that inoculates bees against American foulbrood (AFB). This notifiable infectious disease devastates hives and can spread at a calamitous rate. Often introduced by nurse bees, the disease works by bacteria feeding on larvae — and then generating more spores, to spread further. AFB is a globally spread disease that can kill entire colonies and whose spores can remain viable for more than 50 years.

The research team calls their vaccine PrimeBEE, and they say it can be delivered to the queen via a sugar patty. Another plan would call for beekeepers to simply order a queen

that's already been vaccinated. The vaccine is administered via an edible sugar patty that's suspended in the hive for the queen to consume over seven to 10 days. After she ingests the pathogens, she is able to spark an immune response in her offspring, eventually generating an inoculated hive.

The vaccine still needs a lot of work before it can become commercially available. Scientists must ensure it's safe for the environment, the bees themselves and humans who consume the honey. Regulatory hurdles usually take years to clear and so it's too early to estimate when it will be commercially available or how much we beekeepers will have to shell out to buy inoculated hives.

The scientists involved are working on developing a vaccination against other infections, such as European foulbrood (EFB) and fungal diseases. Initial testing has started, and the research team hope that in future it might be possible to vaccinate against any microbe.

Lost to Beekeeping

By Pam Ayres

I miss my lovely wife, she's gone, I've lost her that's for sure,
Bees have tampered with her brain; she is besotted, she's a bore,
She talks a different language; it's all gibberish to me,
With her Modified Commercial and her WBC.



She's working in the shed, I am a very lonely chap,
She's making up the frames, going tappy-tappy-tap,
I get no smile of greeting as she nails another batch,
Her mouth is full of gimpy pins. They might go down the hatch!

Every time I see my wife I think I'm going to choke,
She is permanently trapped in an engulfing cloud of smoke,
We'd apples on the branches once, that's how it used to be,
Now great swarms of honey bees are swinging from the tree.



I see a stealthy creature in the dingy undergrowth!
I catch a flash of metal and I swear a mighty oath,
"A terrorist!" I cry and leap up brandishing the poker,
To see my wife emerging with a hive tool and a smoker.

My spouse was cool and fragrant; once we cuddled and we kissed,
Before she took the veil and called herself an apiarist,
She drops her suit and doesn't care what anybody thinks,
It may be smoke or sweatiness, but either way she stinks!



I miss her company; we don't do anything together,
She takes her bees to Scotland; they go camping in the heather,
Then, when they come back again, her one and only topic,
Is honey Caledonian and glories thixotropic.

When buying birthday presents I am overwhelmed with gloom,
She's not a gal contented with a bottle of perfume,
Her needs are very complex. Can I find? Can I afford?
A solar wax extractor, straining tank and Snelgrove board?

Autumn is upon us; bleakly now the leaves are lost,
The hives are cosy in the cold no matter what the cost,
Varroa has been taken on with remedies assorted,
Mice are disappointed; Woody Woodpecker is thwarted.

My wife's on the extractor and the house looks like a slum
She makes me wind the handle which in turn rotates the drum,
Thickly in the warming tank we watch the honey pour,
With hands stuck to the table and with feet stuck to the floor!

Now from our endeavour, see the product, see the fruits,
Of summer days spent sweltering in reeking gloves and boots,
By tanks of golden honey we are richly reimbursed,
I'd give my wife a cuddle ... if she had a shower first!"

Courtesy Reigate Beekeepers BeeNews

Have a joyous Christmas and a prosperous New Year - Ed

2019 Events for Your Calendar

Beetradex
9th March 2019
Stoneleigh Park
Warwickshire

WBKA
Spring Convention
30th March 2019
Royal Welsh Showground,
Builth Wells

BBKA
Spring Convention
12-14 April 2019
Harper Adams University

