

Gwent Beekeepers

Gwent Beekeepers CIO

THE ENCOURAGEMENT, IMPROVEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE CRAFT OF BEEKEEPING FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT.

MARCH 2020

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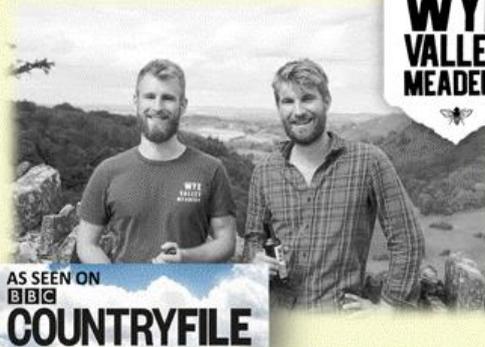
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This months meeting



March Lecture

Wye Valley Meadery
"The Apiary & Mead making"



March 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Thursday, Mar 12th 2020

7.30pm
Goytre Village Hall

Please note the Hall is being used prior to our evening session so Members are respectfully asked to arrive from 7.15pm onwards when we will have access to the hall.

We look forward to seeing you there and sharing refreshments afterwards.

This month's meeting is on Thursday 12th March at Goytre Village Hall at 7.30. This should be a great night - the boys from Wye Valley Meadery (as seen on Countryfile) are going to talk about their beekeeping and their mead business (See this month's short articles below for more information)

We are in luck as there will be samples for us to try and if you enjoy their mead there will be an opportunity to buy too.

Please note the Hall is being used prior to our evening session so Members are respectfully asked to arrive from 7.15pm onwards when we will have access to the hall.

We look forward to seeing you there and sharing refreshments afterwards.

Next April Lecture - "Hive Originals by Claire Barker" —9th April 2020

New Apiary & Study Centre – Help Required



A big thank you for all who came to help plant a hedge at the new apiary site on 22nd February. Graham Evans and helpers have done a good job and the hedging is in place on 2 sides. Graham has plans for a tidy up on the western side of the apiary. So, if you can help please contact him.

The ground contractor and all his equipment have now left the site.

Fencing contact and the fencer will start in a few weeks' time.

Although this was mentioned in the February newsletter, just a reminder that the building itself will be delivered on Tuesday, 17th March in 'flat pack' and we need 'all hands-on deck' to put up the building, under the direction of our carpenter in the weeks that follow.



There's going to be quite a bit to do but many hands make light work and it promises to be great fun - it will mean that we can all contribute to providing a lasting legacy for future generations of beekeepers.

In an attempt to coordinate the number of people on site at any time, could you please click on the link at the bottom of the email to indicate which days you are able help.



This particular request is for assembling the actual building (in just the two weeks commencing 17th and 23rd March) and will necessitate some heavy lifting - we'll put out other similar calls for help for planting, painting, tiling etc in due course.

Please indicate as many dates as you could be available, and we'll try and share out the load so that no one person is overburdened. It could be that you're not needed on a day you've indicated (for reasons of inclement weather, too many available to accommodate on site, rapid (hopefully) or stalled prior progress etc. etc.) and if this is the case I (or someone else on the committee) will let you know the day before.

You will need to bring decent boots (preferably steel-toe-capped but not trainers) a pair of work gloves and a hard hat if you have one.

If you have any particular skills (plumbing, wiring, tiling etc.) that you think we could use, please let us know on the form.

Here's the link: <https://forms.gle/CU9gcBZQY3CoKWf66>

Flooding at Rhadyr Apiary: *under-supering saved the day*

The recent flooding was devastating news for Miriam Knight, since she was almost 5000 miles away in the foothills of the Himalayas and could do nothing about it! She had a camera on the Ochrana bees which had been moved to her property in December and was able to watch how the storm was progressing. Messages were sent to check them, but unfortunately two blown over nucs were missed and one of them was lost.



The flooding at Rhadyr was even more severe, as can be seen from the pictures taken the next day when the water had gone down substantially. Amazingly all the colonies have survived, and it appears that under-supering had saved the day by giving the bees enough height to escape most of the water. Even more surprising was that two colonies which may have been totally submerged were both alive and well. Nothing had washed away either, thanks to Shaun's diligent weighing down of anything poly the week before Miriam travelled.

So why were we under-supering? Miriam recalls that:

“Under-supering has been a bit of a puzzle to me over the years. Eric Long first drew my attention to the idea years ago, but he moves supers after a couple of weeks. John Holden argued leaving them above the brood till spring. So, having had AFB in a colony last season and not wanting to move kit from this site, the usual practice of storing the supers over winter with some honey in was an issue. This was therefore an opportunity to test winter under-supering and last autumn I decided to experiment at Rhadyr”



Thankfully Miriam's experiment saved the day and now all the bees are dry, well, fed and ready for a full inspection when the weather warms up



This Month's Article:

Help bees by not mowing dandelions

Gardeners should avoid mowing over dandelions on their lawn if they want to help bees, according to the new president of the British Ecological Society. Dandelions – which will start flowering in the UK this month – provide a valuable food source for early pollinators coming out of hibernation, including solitary bees, honeybees and hoverflies. Each dandelion head contains up to 100 individual flowers, known as florets, which contain nectar and pollen. There are 240 species of dandelion in the UK.

Prof Jane Memmott said: "If dandelions were rare, people would be fighting over them. Because they're common, people pull them out and spray them off and all sorts of horrible things. Just let them flower. Memmott, who took over as president of the BES at the start of this year, is also a professor of ecology at the University of Bristol. She said gardeners should avoid planting too many "pompom shaped" flowers, such as old English roses and dahlia, because they focus so much of their energy on producing petals and have very little nectar and pollen. "As a rule, if you can see the pollen and nectar parts of a flower without pulling back petals, then it's OK for pollinators," she said.

Carrots that have flowered, or "bolted", and onions in unkempt vegetable gardens are also some of the best plants for pollinators. "People are a lot tidier than they used to be. This whole business of keeping your lawn clipped and pulling the weeds out is part of some British obsession with tidiness," Memmott said. "If you look back at old pictures, people weren't as tidy. I think bohemian untidiness is what we're aiming for – you don't want it to look like neglect."

Leaving the grass to grow 8-10cm (3-4in) tall means clovers, daisies, self-heal and creeping buttercup can also flower. "You can't personally help tigers, whales and elephants but you really can do something for the insects, birds and plants that are local to you," said Memmott, who encouraged gardeners to halve the amount of mowing they do.

The global mass of insects is falling by 2.5% a year and many could be extinct within a century, according to a global scientific review last year.

Reproduced courtesy of Lune Valley Community Beekeepers

Other articles:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/feb/01/help-bees-not-mowing-dandelions-gardeners-told-aoe>

Wye Valley Meadery

This month's lecture on Thursday 12th March is by the boys from Wye Valley Meadery. Here is a bit more information on the Meadery to wet your appetite.

"We are a small, family run company founded by two brothers and based in the beautiful Wye Valley, in the Welsh borders.

We take pride in crafting the very best mead, and from the hive to your hand, we care for it tenderly until we release it into the world.

Combining our love of nature with our interest in brewing. We set out to create something as original as possible by taking a very traditional drink that has been around for over 8000 years, and give it a modern twist. What we have created is light, refreshing, rich in flavour and innovative, but also steeped in history. A true blend of old and new.

We could go on about passion, pride and perfection, but that should come over on the first sip. We aim to be different. Many think mead is sweet and strong and something drunk by druids and monks. Well that was then (and occasionally now during the summer solstice...).

With mounting quantities of honey from our own bees and a desire to drink something more like craft beer, we began creating session strength meads made with great ingredients and killer flavours. Our mead is a marriage of modern brewing techniques applied to the most ancient beverage.

So please take what preconceptions you have and refresh them.

We bring you sparkling, medium dry, flavourful mead. We start with the best quality ingredients we can lay our hands on, add yeast and time, and leave the product to do the talking.

What makes our mead different?

The UK makes some of the best honey in the world. We know this as beekeepers. Because of the great biodiversity we enjoy in the Wye Valley, we get a really varied honey, site to site, hive to hive and week to week. Depending on the season, we get a spring wildflower blend from the hawthorn, a light clear lime honey or a rich pungent ivy honey. This means the mead would vary hugely, in flavour and in fermentation. To provide a consistent product, we ferment with a blend of blossom honey and local honeys, always adding some golden local product from our own hives but relying on the blossom honey to create a stable product to work with.

For our dedicated fans, we will offer a small run of mead fermented with seasonal honey to really showcase what the area offers."



Reproduced from <https://www.wyevalleymeadery.co.uk/about>

Events for Your Calendar

Date = YY-MM-DD HH:MM, Click on the headings to sort data, Click on the magnifying glass to search

Date-Time ▲	Day	LOCATION	EVENT	DETAIL
20-03-12 19:30	Thu 7:30 PM	Goytre Village Hall	Lecture "Wye Valley Meadery"	Wye Valley Meadery
20-04-09 19:30	Thu 7:30 PM	Goytre Village Hall	Lecture "Hive Originals"	Claire Barker
20-05-03 10:00	Sun 10:00 AM	Monmouth	Monmouth Bee Festival	Celebrating World Bee Day on Chippenham Fields, Monmouth
20-05-10 14:15	Sun 2:15 PM	TBC	Apiary	
20-06-14 14:15	Sun 2:15 PM	TBC	Apiary	
20-06-27 10:00	Sat 10:00 AM	Usk	Usk Open Gardens	Talking about bees and forage
20-06-28 10:00	Sun 10:00 AM	Usk	Usk Open Gardens	Talking about bees and forage
20-07-12 14:15	Sun 2:15 PM	TBC	Apiary	
20-08-01 08:30	Sat 8:30 AM	Llanthony	Llanthony & District Show, Court Farm Llanthony NP7 7NN Abergavenny	Talking about Bees and selling GBK Honey
20-08-09 14:15	Sun 2:15 PM	TBC	Apiary	

<https://www.gwentbeekeepers.co.uk/calendar.php>

Other Events:



Cymdeithas Gwenynwyr Cymru
Welsh Beekeepers' Association

Convention 2020

Saturday 28th March at 08:30

Tea and Coffee available from 08:00

Old Food Hall, Royal Welsh Agricultural Showground

Builth Wells, Powys, LD2 3SY

Mynediad/Admission: Oedolion/Adults - £9.00,

Advance Payment - £7.00 (see below)

Ieuenctid/Juniors (under 17) - am ddim / free admission

Guest Speakers:

Paul O'Brien

President of The Federation of Irish Beekeepers Associations
(FIBKA)

BDI Sponsored Lecture

Professor Stephen Martin

Understand the evolution of natural Varroa-tolerance mechanisms in various
beekeeping populations

Laura Jones

Investigating the foraging preferences of honeybees using DNA metabarcoding

Filipe Salby

Upstairs, downstairs hive

Kevin Williams

The History and Traditions of the beekeeping in Wales

“Beekeepers’ Question Time”

your chance to ask the experts....

Trade stands and exhibitions.

Bargain beekeeping supplies. All day refreshments.

Free Parking.

Earlybird tickets (£7.00): Forms available on WBKA website
(www.WBKA.com)

Return completed forms plus payment to
Convention Secretary by March 21st
Address and payment details on form.



Friday 3, Saturday 4, Sunday 5 April 2020

Harper Adams University, Newport, Shropshire TF10 8NB

The Beekeeping Event of the Year!

- 20+ Lectures; 50+ Workshops & Seminars for all levels of beekeeping experience including BBKA Funded Research Session Friday
- Large Trade Show Saturday
- Not for Profit Exhibitors Friday and Saturday
- Excellent facilities; great value catering and accommodation available

Click on the **BLUE** links below for more information

Download the [Full Programme](#) or [FAQS](#)

Read [How to Book](#) using the web-based system.

Further information available at: <https://www.bbka.org.uk/event/bbka-spring-conv>



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beesfordevelopment.org

Bees for Development
1 Agincourt Street
Monmouth
NP25 3DZ

Events for Your Calendar

THORNE™



Show	Date	Last day for ordering
Bee Tradex	<u>Saturday 14th March</u>	5pm, Wednesday, 11th March
Welsh Spring Convention	<u>Saturday 28th March</u>	5pm, Wednesday 25th March
BBKA Spring Convention	<u>Saturday 4th April</u>	5pm, Wednesday 1st April
Yorkshire BKA Conference	<u>Saturday 18th April</u>	5pm, Thursday 16th April