

# NORTHERN LIGHTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH DEVON BRANCH  
OF THE DEVON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

**AUGUST 2015**

[www.northdevonbees.org](http://www.northdevonbees.org)



## Chair Chat

Some of you will be preparing to extract honey so please plan ahead for our Honey Show on Saturday and Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> at St John's Garden Centre. We need plenty of exhibits. As not everyone will have a honey harvest nor wax for candle making, there are plenty of cookery, photographic and craft sections for you to enter. Please take a good look at the Show schedule which will be sent to you. In the past, the men have excelled in the cookery section and we have had some amazing photographs so do not feel that you cannot submit anything. See Sylvie's article on the next page for more details.

The agricultural show season is coming to an end with the North Devon Show on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August. Organising and running these events is a great responsibility and hard work. We have Sylvie to thank for holding very successful events with the help of the members. Our stands at these shows generate a lot of interest especially with the observation hive and the samples under the microscopes. The information given also encourages the visitors to consider taking next year's beginners course.

Horestone Apiary is buzzing with hives of various sizes and heights so do come and join us on Tuesdays at lunchtime.

*Mave*

## Events 2015

<b>5 August</b>	<b>North Devon Show, Umberleigh</b>
<b>12 -13 September</b>	<b>*Branch Honey Show, St Johns Garden Centre, Barnstaple</b>

## Bee Quotes

Therefore doth heaven divide  
The state of man in divers functions,  
Setting endeavour in continual motion;  
To which is fixed as an aim or butt  
Obedience; for so work the honeybees,  
Creatures that by a rule in nature teach  
The act of order to a peopled kingdom.  
They have a king, and officers of sorts,  
Where some like magistrates correct at home,  
Others like merchants venture trade abroad,  
Others like soldiers armed in their stings  
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds,  
Which pillage they with merry march bring home  
To the tent-royal of their emperor,  
Who, busied in his majesties, surveys  
The singing masons building roofs of gold,  
The civil citizens kneading up the honey,  
The poor mechanic porters crowding in  
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate,  
The sad-eyed justice with his surly hum  
Delivering o'er to executors pale  
The lazy yawning drone.

*William Shakespeare, 'The Life of King Henry the Fifth'*

**\*SEE THE BRANCH HONEY SHOW SCHEDULE**

## Flower of the Month - *Sedums*



*Sedum spectabile*

*Sedum spectabile*, Ice plant and its close relations the Stonecrops can be good nectar sources for bees and butterflies during August. The low growing, yellow flowered Biting Stonecrop or Wall Pepper growing on walls, roofs, shingle beaches and dunes are the best known wild members of the huge succulent family of Crassulaceae. There are a number of garden Sedums, some flowering earlier in the year but not all are equally attractive to bees so look carefully before buying and planting any of these beautiful succulents.

The very best one for bees and butterflies is *Sedum spectabile* 'Joy' a large fleshy plant with huge flat heads of rose pink made up of hundreds of little florets oozing nectar. It is inclined to splay out from the centre and flop, a nuisance over paths and a bit of support is useful. Lifting, dividing and re planting every 3 years keeps it more compact. Don't be tempted to give it the 'Chelsea chop; a television gardener once persuaded me that mine would look better with this treatment (tidier?) so I tried it! It looked awful, all the smaller heads had completely taken away the charm and attractiveness of those great plates of flowers. *Spectabile* is a very easy going plant, not fussy about soils provided it isn't waterlogged in winter and has plenty of sun and in the winter it's russet coloured seed heads are really beautiful, definitely a plant for all seasons.



*Biting stonecrop*

*Julie*

## **Get your entries ready for the 2015 BRANCH HONEY SHOW, St Johns Garden Centre, 12 & 13 September**



Our annual Honey Show at St Johns Garden Centre, Barnstaple will soon be here. The Schedule should arrive at the same time as the newsletter – to give you plenty of time to look through it and choose what classes you would like to enter.

We have made a few changes to the Schedule this year, with a couple of new recipes and the addition of a Gift Class.

There are classes for everyone – so don't hold back – have fun and enjoy cleaning your wax, taking photographs and extracting your honey. And if your bees haven't brought in much honey, well you could always try your hand at the cookery classes or the craft section.

The Honey Show gives us a chance to show off our products - to each other and to the public. It also gives us the chance to get to know our fellow beekeepers a little better. We look forward to receiving your entry forms.

**Your Show Team this year is Sylvia – Show Secretary, assisted by Barbara Carlyle, and Jack Mummery as the Entries Secretary.**



## What the Microscopist Saw . . .

At present we are trying to understand why queens are failing by dissecting out their ovaries and spermatheca and by building up a picture data base nationally. An article appeared in the BBKA magazine in May 2015. Sylvia has very kindly donated 5 frozen queens, the images below are from a fertile queen.

If any one has any spare queens please could they let me know.



Spermatheca surrounded by a tracheal net which provides oxygen for the stored sperms.



The spermatheca is about 1 mm in diameter with the tracheal net removed, showing a yellowish granular surface indicating a fertile queen, a virgin would be smaller and transparent.



An ovary.

*Graham Kingham*

## Committee Summary for July

This week we looked through Chris Utting's list of talks and other event which fall during the coming year. Chris has identified several speakers who may give talks during the winter.

The DBKA has proposed awarding a Green ribbon for the best entry in the branches' Honey Shows. This does not apply only to hive products.

We have been holding our monthly Committee Meetings on a Monday evening. This is time-consuming and as most of us will be returning to Horestone the following morning it seems only sensible to hold the meetings on a Tuesday morning. We propose holding the meeting at 10:00 monthly on a Tuesday. If members arrive before the meeting has finished, we advise them to gather in Albert's shed where, I'm sure, much beekeeping information will be mulled over.

The Committee would like our apiary to hold a Disease Recognition Day next year.

*Mave on behalf of the Committee*

## Horestone News



*Peter and Barbara removing honey at Horestone*

made up 4 nucs so far - and they seem as gentle as the stock they came from.

Despite the consistently rainy weather over the last few weeks, the bees have managed to produce some honey. Barbara and Linda spent last Tuesday afternoon extracting the frames. The frames are back on the colonies in the hope that the weather changes and the bees fill them again.

Another downside to plenty of rain is the speed the grass grows, so we have had to have a few strimming sessions to keep the grass down.

We are continuing with the 3 weekly pollen traps on 3 colonies - the last collection was barely enough to submit the results. So different from early in the year when the traps contained over half a lb jar. Presumably the bees concentrate on nectar this time of the year.

We have done some queen rearing, using our Ged Marshall stock and grafting larvae. The grafting went well - getting the queens mated was not so easy - weather again - but we have

*Peter and Sylvia*

*Our stand at the Mid Devon Show*



*Julie came home on 11 July to this swarm - anybody have any photographs of later swarms?*



## Raspberry & Walnut Swirl

8oz raspberries  
2 tbls honey  
8oz natural yogurt  
8oz fromage frais  
2oz walnuts, roughly chopped  
Mint and raspberries for decoration

### Method

Lightly mash the raspberries with a fork and mix with half each of the following ingredients: honey, yogurt and fromage frais. In a separate bowl mix the remaining yogurt, honey, fromage frais and the walnuts. Spoon half of the raspberry mixture into the base of four individual dishes. Spoon over 3/4 of the walnut mixture and then the remaining raspberry mixture. Top with the walnut mixture and swirl mixtures together with a cocktail stick. Decorate with whole raspberries and sprigs of mint.

## National Honey Show Newsletter July 2015

Preparations for the show are well underway and we look forward to seeing you all there again this year, plus all newcomers, and we hope you'll all find something among the over 240 entry classes to inspire you to try your hand at one of those gleaming trophies (and give the staging team another finding-enough-space-challenge as last year!).

We're pleased to announce the *NEW* National Honey Show website [www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk) is now up and running, so you'll be able to find all the information you need about the show there.

Newly available to download as PDFs from our new web shop at £2.50 each are the updated NHS leaflets:

- Preparation of Liquid Honey & Judging Honey in the Jar
- Mead and Mead making
- Wax for Show
- Granulated or Crystallised Honey
- Production and Exhibition of Comb Honey & Comb Honey for Show
- Management, Production and Exhibition of Heather Honey
- The study of Pollen
- Showing Honey Products
- Candles for Show
- History of The National Honey Show

Printed booklets will, of course, be available all three days at the show itself at £3.50 each.

Speakers and trainers among you may be interested our services via the Virtual Classroom <https://www.honeyshow.co.uk/virtual-classroom.php> and its link to <http://www.bee-educated.org.uk/> where, amongst other goodies, notes from Andrew Beer's 'Bees and the Law' workshop are hosted.

The 2015 Schedule is now at the printers, so by the time you read this it should be on the National Honey Show website and for Members, if it has not yet landed on your doormat, it will very shortly.

### Our speakers for this year are:

**Deborah Delaney**, University of Delaware in Newark, where she mentors four graduate students working on various aspects of pollinator health and productivity

**Juliana Rangel**, Department of Entomology at Texas A&M University. Her research program focuses on (1) the bio-

logical and environmental factors that affect the reproductive health of honey bee queens and drones, (2) the genetic diversity of feral honey bees in unmanaged habitats across the US, and (3) the identification and nutritional value of floral sources collected by honey bees in urban environments.

**Ben Harden NDB** from Ireland will talk about Bees in Winter

**Professor Dave Goulson**, Professor of Biology (Evolution, Behaviour and Environment) at the University of Sussex, specialising in the ecology and conservation of bumblebees.

**Professor Robert Pickard** is Emeritus Professor of Neurobiology at the University of Cardiff will talk about Queens he has known.

As well as our usual programme of lectures, there will be the additional Bee Craft lectures on Friday, and lectures for those fairly new to beekeeping on Saturday.

We're delighted to be able to continue for 2015 the tradition of the lecture videos being available on the National Honey Show YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiOtIebcpY0Zqqma0H5wLYQ> where you can still view many of the lectures from the last two years. To maintain this superb educational facility at such good quality has been a major funding challenge. All support from viewing and appreciating the videos, to buying our National Honey Show raffle tickets, to any ideas for charities we can approach for funding are much appreciated. We'd like to thank The National Lottery, The Garfield Weston Foundation and The Nineveh Charitable Trust for their support over the last three years.

Whilst we are still at St Georges College this year, the layout of the Show and buildings we are using will be different as we need more space. So we will be using as our main car park the overflow car park further round the site, and the main entrance and competitive exhibition will be in Henderson Building. Lectures, workshops and main canteen will stay in the same place as before, and there will be additional trade space. We will be putting a map of the new layout on the website nearer the time.

If you can spare some time, doesn't have to be for the whole show or indeed even as much as half a day, we are ALWAYS very grateful for help with stewarding, for lectures, workshops, and the competitive exhibits. Stewarding for the judging (Thursday morning) - in addition to entering your own produce of course - is an excellent way to build up experience if you are interested in becoming a honey judge. Do contact us, even if just to find out more: [steward@honeyshow.co.uk](mailto:steward@honeyshow.co.uk)

As usual booking for workshops will open on 1<sup>st</sup> September. Our on line booking system can be accessed at <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/workshop-booking.php>

If you don't have access to the internet, ask at your local library, most libraries now have internet facilities.

If you would like National Honey Show leaflets for your local meeting, county show or other event in the lead up to the National Honey Show at end of October, please e-mail [nationalhoneyshownews@gmail.com](mailto:nationalhoneyshownews@gmail.com) and let us know how many leaflets, and raffle (in support of the lecture videos) ticket booklets you can display, and the address to send them to.

Many thanks,

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Edited by Jeff Orr, e-mail [jeffjorr@aol.com](mailto:jeffjorr@aol.com). The views expressed in the articles are the author's and not necessarily those of the North Devon Branch of the Devon Beekeepers' Association.

***Member's contributions are extremely welcome: by 23rd of the month prior to publication please***