

**NEWSLETTER #220 – October 2016**

**Next meeting: 27<sup>th</sup> October: Alan Riach: “Beekeeping and Flowers, the best of friends”**  
Rhu Church hall, from 7.15pm.

**What’s happening in the hive?**

Hopefully any feeding has gone/is going well; hives should feel good and heavy when hefted (or when using your [honey hefter!](#)). Varroa treatments should be winding up now - make sure that mite drop-rates have been recorded. If they aren’t already, now is an opportune time to reduce the entrances and ensure hives are ready for any impending storms. **Please return any oxalic acid bottles from last year at the meeting so that they can be refilled.**

**The September meeting: group discussion on the summer season and honey judging**



It seems to have been a bit of a mixed summer. Various members gave a brief run-down on how things had gone. Some had bumper years, but several members have had issues with queens disappearing or failing to mate properly. It will be interesting to see what happens next season. Hopefully those queens that have mated have done so well and continue to lay well.

Thankyou to Mike Thornley for providing a fantastic talk on the intricacies of honey judging. Plenty of tips were provided – take spare lids to put on at the show for instance – as well

as a whole list of things that superficially seem of relative insignificance – say a smudge on the jar. As Mike pointed out, however, it is a good lesson in maintaining standards that we should all aspire to when selling produce.

**Winter fair**

The Association intends to have a stall at the winter fair to help promote ourselves and beekeeping in general. Members are welcome to sell their produce, but in return please spend some time manning the stall.

**Members’ colony survey**

Thanks to everyone who has provided details of their colonies for this year. For anybody who hasn’t done so the link should be included with this email.

**Club Apiary**

Once more, I make no apology for making this a regular post until fulfilled. We need to find a replacement for Neil as apiary manager. Neil has done a fantastic job and it is completely right that a successor takes up the reins. Please think about whether you can take over the apiary management and, if so, please contact one of the committee. It will probably make most sense if the duties are shared between two people.

**Link of the month:** <http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/283/1835/20160506.long>

To engage everyone's scientific minds ready for next month's talk by Professor David Evans, here's a scientific study looking at a side of neonicotinoids that may have been overlooked: "Neonicotinoid insecticides can serve as inadvertent insect contraceptives".