

NEWSLETTER 228 – August 2017

**Next meeting: 28 September 2017.** Rhu Church hall, from 7.15pm:

**Member's season.** As the first of the autumn meetings this will be an opportunity to catch up with other members and discuss how the season went.

### **What's happening in the hive?**

In the SBA magazine this month you might have seen a mention of *varroa* levels rocketing in August and September. This is yet another reminder of how important it is to get on top of *varroa* as soon as possible once the honey is off. Queens will begin to lay the long lived-bees that will last the winter. If *varroa* – and by extension deformed wing virus – are at high levels now then the viability of these workers, and therefore the viability of the colony, through the winter will drop. Basically, now is the time to strike. Once again, a big thank you to Mike Thornley for arranging the supply of Apivar.

### **Honey competition**

The Honey Competition was held as part of the Helensburgh and Gareloch Horticultural Society's Flower and Vegetable Show. Here are the results and some comments from the judge, Mike Thornley, as pointers for future showing.

#### **Class 115 Set Honey**

3<sup>rd</sup>: Nikki and Eddie Monaghan

Unfortunately, this was the only entry, and while the colour was nicely uniform a 3<sup>rd</sup> place was awarded as the honey was not quite sufficiently set.

#### **Class 116 Clear Honey**

1<sup>st</sup>: Nikki and Eddie Monaghan

2<sup>nd</sup>: Dawn Stalker

3<sup>rd</sup>: Kerry Hird

There was nothing between first and second, which were very difficult to separate. Both entries were beautiful presented and would have held their own in a national honey competition.

The third could have been improved by removing the small area of bubbles in order to leave a clean and clear surface: essential for a good result.

#### **Class 117 A frame ready for extraction**

1<sup>st</sup>: Nikki and Eddie Monaghan

2<sup>nd</sup>: Kerry Hird

3<sup>rd</sup>: John Penniston

First place was a well filled, clean frame, with very little pollen, which would have been improved by a more even surface.

Second place had a clean frame with nice white, smooth cappings, but just a bit too skimpy on size to win.

Third place was a less good frame, having been previously used for brood and hence dark coloured. This class really demands comb drawn on new foundation in a new frame. In addition, the face of the comb had been damaged in transit: something to avoid.



Nikki and Eddie Monaghan won the Buchanan Challenge Cup for most points in classes 115-117 and Kerry Hird shared the Ladies Cup for the most points for a new entrant in classes 105-125. Well done to everyone who entered, including Jackie Theaker who might have been forgiven for ducking out of anything to do with honey and bees after her life threatening incident earlier this year.

Many thanks to Tim Syddall for acting as steward and to Graham Greenwell, the Show Convenor, for the exemplary arrangements for receiving our entries.

Finally, despite the disappointing number of entries, the Horticultural Society are interested in working with us on new categories within the show, including for instance wax products and cosmetics. It would be good to respond positively but before doing so we should find out if members will be interested enough to put in entries, and will be prepared to meet that commitment. We don't want empty spaces on the show benches.

### **Members' colony survey and**

Once again the Association will be collecting information regarding their experiences over the season. Please also send photos to [andrew.shaw24@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.shaw24@gmail.com) ahead of the first meeting so that we can put together a season's slideshow of the season.

## Pollinator decline symposium

### **Tackling the Decline in Pollinating Insects:**

Boosting Community Partnerships and Engagement Nationwide

Park Plaza, Westminster Bridge, London

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

**Philip Turvil**

Programme Director, Grow Wild  
Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

**Simon Goff**

Head of Green Spaces and Amenities  
Burnley Borough Council

**Dr Chris Hartfield**

Acting Chief Science and Regulatory Affairs Adviser  
NFU Plant Health

**Dr Michael Rose**

Head of Nature Strategy and Programme Team  
Unit DEFRA

**Link of the month:** <https://player.fm/featured/beekeeping>

If you like listening to podcasts (there's thousands out there – something for everyone) there are many on beekeeping to search through. One discussion between HDBA member (Andrew Shaw) and Professor David Evans of St Andrew's university can be found here: <http://cvr.academicblogs.co.uk/viruses-in-the-apiary-an-interview-with-dave-evans/>.