

1923 - 2018



Medway  
Beekeepers  
Association

## Medway Beekeepers Association

Celebrating over 90 years of support for beekeeping  
and beekeepers in and around the Medway Towns



## Newsletter December 2018

**Please note that it is subscription renewal time!** Please find a renewal form for 2019 attached to your monthly newsletter notification email.

### Chairman's Message:

Your committee and I wish you a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year in anticipation of a good beekeeping year in 2019. After a very long cold spell at the start and the "Beast from the east", for most people this eventually turned out to be a good year, with a nice supply of honey. I hope that your colonies are in good heart for the coming cold weather. With your winter preparations now in place, especially as this is written after the first true ground frost of the year, please think about coming along to some of the winter meetings advertised in this newsletter. We try to offer a selection of different events during the year, but we are always open to ideas as sometimes it is difficult to pick topics that we think will appeal.

**John Chapman**

### Past Events:

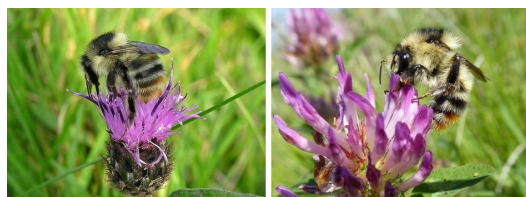


#### Saturday 17th November 2018 Indoor Meeting – Bumble Bee Conservation



#### Making a buzz for the Coast – A talk by Lauren Kennedy

Lauren came to Wainscott to talk to us about the Bumblebee Conservation Project taking place along the North Kent Coast. It stretches from Dartford to Deal and is supported by a wide range of local partners. The Project is mainly focussed on the Shril Carder Bee, but inevitably produces spin-offs such as land management and planting for wildlife issues.



Other than the extinct and re-introduced Short-haired bumblebee, the Shril Carder is perhaps our rarest bumblebee, now known only from a handful of sites in south Wales and southern England and generally scarce even there.

It has a strong association with complex flowers in the families, Lamiaceae (mint or deadnettle family) and Fabaceae (legume, pea, or bean family). It is a distinctive greyish-green, straw-coloured species, with a dull orange tail and clear black band across the thorax.

The Trust is creating and restoring habitats for bees through education. This takes the form of conservation sites and community activities and events. The trust is also involved in 'Gardening for Bees' projects through their partnership with the Kent Wildlife Trust. The main emphasis being plants for pollinators. They are also working with landowners, particularly farmers, providing financial help with things like seeds. They are also helping caravan sites and golf courses of which there are quite a few in the North Kent Area.

Bumblebees thrive on the chalk rich grasslands of the North Downs and the trust is helping landowners develop land management techniques which produce a more favourable habitat.

There are around 270 species of bee in the UK, 1 honeybee and 25 bumblebees of which 19 are social and 6 are cuckoos. The remainder are solitary bees. Researchers are still finding out more about the life cycles of this large group, including how they congregate for breeding etc. 7 bumblebees are really rare, the Moth Bumblebee is one such, as well as the Yellow and Burberry Bumblebee which are no longer found in Kent.

Lauren then went on to talk about the life cycle of the solitary bees which is fundamentally different to the honeybees that we are all so familiar with. She also told us about the pollination of crops such as tomatoes, aubergines and cranberries which contain pollen which is difficult to dislodge. Bumblebees are vital to the successful pollination of these crops and use vibration to dislodge and collect the pollen. Most of these bees are being imported from abroad, mainly Holland, and placed into the massive greenhouses for the sole purpose of pollination.

Finally, she explained that 98% of flower rich grassland has been lost since the 1940's due primarily to changes in farming and cultivation methods. These included the removal of hedgerows, not leaving fields fallow for a season, heavy grazing, increased use of herbicides and pesticides as well as urban sprawl. Through education and help the trust hopes to at least start to arrest this problem and their Project in North Kent seems to be producing some early results as last year was a very good year for Shril Carder numbers

Lauren proved to be an excellent presenter and this event was really interesting and informative to the mere dozen members who turned up. The lack of numbers is of great concern since speakers always try hard to give us all a positive experience. The committee also work hard to put on events that they hope will be of interest to members. If anyone has a topic or area of interest which they would like an event based around please let us know. After all this is your association and it is in all our interests to provide meetings which are well attended.

Our thanks to Lauren Kennedy and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust for an enjoyable afternoon.

If you would like any further information about the work and activities of the Trust go to: <https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org>

Paul Lawrence

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## A Special Report:



I recently attended the **Central Association of Bee Keepers Autumn Conference (CBKA)** in Kenilworth. The CBKA mission is to **'Bring Science to the Beekeeper'** and they put on a full programme in which six scientists from many areas of beekeeping research engaged the conference with their current work and findings.

The seventh speaker, well known beekeeper and author, Celia Davis, stepped up from the audience to fill a gap caused by transport problems and kept us all enthralled with her engaging talk on keeping bees. The other topics included **Neonicotinoids and Bees, B-vitamins and Bees, Mechanisms and Management of Crop Pollination** and a report on the **COLOSS** study to name but a few.



The facilities at the conference centre were very good and we enjoyed excellent food and drink that was on tap all day with a conference drinks and dinner on Saturday.

The program was full but several of us still managed to make good use of the pool and sauna in the comfortable accommodation block. The absence of politics and trade sales and the presence of an engaged group of beekeepers made this a very enjoyable and informative weekend.

Jen Ferry

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## December's Events and Meetings:

### Monday 3rd December 2018

#### Winter Study Group 4

Time: 7.00pm (7.30pm start)

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4L

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### Saturday 15th December 2018

#### Indoor Meeting – Showing Products plus a Christmas tea.

Time: 2 – 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4L

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### Monday 17th December 2018

#### Winter Study Group 5

Time: 7.00pm (7.30pm start)

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4L

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## Future Events:

### Saturday 19th January 2019

#### Indoor Meeting – Spring Preparation for the coming Season. Bob Smith

Time: 2 – 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4L

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### Saturday 16th February 2019

#### MBKA Annual General Meeting

Time: 2pm to 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4LG

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### Monday 11th March 2019

#### Introduction to Beekeeping 1

Time: 7.00pm (7.30pm start)

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4L

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**Saturday 16th March 2019**  
**Pre-owned Equipment Sale**  
**plus a Practical Session making Asian Hornet Traps.**

Time: 2 – 5pm

Venue: Wainscott Community Hall, 16 – 18 Holly Road, Wainscott, ME2 4L

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**12, 13, 14th April 2019**

Harper Adams University  
Newport, Shropshire, TF10 8NB

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### **Notes from The Apiary:**

We currently have 5 hives on site and all appear to be well prepared for winter.

Hive 1. Ordinary National with 1 super. Fed and mouse guard on.

Hive 2. Deep (jumbo) National. Fed and mouse guard on.

Hive 3. WBC 14 x 12 brood. Fed and mouse guard on.

Hive 4. Deep (jumbo) National. Fed and mouse guard on.

Hive 5. WBC 14x 12 brood. Fed and mouse guard on.

I am gradually working through the dirty brood boxes / supers and frames and cleaning them. Scraping and scorching brood and supers, boiling frames. Some of the frames have seen better days and will be destroyed.

I will visit the Apiary occasionally over winter to check fences / sheds etc. Hopefully grass will not need cutting until next year! Mower will go in for a service over winter.

We will need volunteers for the Apiary tidy up next spring – date to be confirmed.

I have ordered and picked up:

3 x 14 x 12 WBC brood boxes – in the flat

2 x 14 x 12 National brood boxes – in the flat

50 x S.N.5 frames

50 x 14 x 12 frames.

Mark Ballard

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### **Beekeeper's Bazaar:**

We still have a dozen 1lb jars of honey from the Apiary, they are available to members at £5 each. Contact Mark on 07802762121. They will also be available to buy at the next meeting on 15th December 2018.

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### **Asian Hornet Update:**



Visit: [www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com) for the latest updates.

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## Winter Meetings:

Please note that we now go inside for our meetings.

3rd December 2018	Study Group 4	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
				Showing Hive Products & Christmas Tea with Mark Ballard and John Chapman.
15th December 2018	Indoor Meeting	Wainscott Comm, Hall	2-5pm	
17th December 2018	Study Group 5	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
7th January 2019	Study Group 6	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
				Spring Prep. For the Season with Bob Smith
19th January 2019	Indoor Meeting	Wainscott Comm, Hall	2-5pm	
21st January 2019	Study Group 7	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
23rd January 2019	Bee Chat	The Pier, Upnor	7.30pm	
4th February 2018	Study Group 8	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
16th February 2019	Indoor Meeting	Wainscott Comm, Hall	2-5pm	A.G.M.
18th February 2019	Study Group 9	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
26th February 2019	Bee Chat	The Pier, Upnor	7.30pm	
4th March 2019	Study Group 10	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
11th March 2019	Beginners Course 1	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
				Pre-owned Equipment sale and Practical Hornet Trap Making Session.
16th March 2019	Indoor Meeting	Wainscott Comm, Hall	2-5pm	
18th March 2019	Beginners Course 2	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
25th March 2019	Beginners Course 3	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
27th March 2019	Bee Chat	The Pier, Upnor	7.30pm	
1st April 2019	Beginners Course 4	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
8th April 2019	Beginners Course 5	Wainscott Comm, Hall	7.00pm	7.30pm start.
12th - 14th April 2019	Event	Spring Convention	3 day	Harper Adam University

We look forward to seeing you at the meetings. A list of the meetings can also be viewed by going to: [www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/events](http://www.medwaybeekeepers.co.uk/events)

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## And Finally:

Thank you to all who have contributed to this month edition and remember if anyone has any news, ideas, amusing stories or comments or indeed suggestions about the website or for any future newsletter, please get in touch with me, Paul Lawrence at the address shown below, we really do appreciate your input.

## Contact Details:

### Chairman

John Chapman  
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### Newsletter and Website Enquiries

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# Xmas Beekeeping Wordsearch



R E T L I F S L E B K H S B C M P B D S  
Y Q N N I N N E R V N T D P A E V I I S  
P D W L O H B L N E I O G W R A P L W T  
R U D W R E E D N I E R Y N N D O E C N  
K S M U L E X T R A C T O R I P T A K E  
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APIARY  
BEEBUDDY  
BEESUIT  
BUCKET  
BUMBLEBEE  
CANDLE  
CARNIOLAN  
CAUCASIAN  
CONGREGATION  
DRONE  
ENZYME  
EXCLUDER  
EXTRACTOR  
FEEDER  
FILTER  
FONDANT  
GLOVES  
GRAFTING

HONEY  
HORNET  
LANGSTROTH  
MEAD  
POLLEN  
PRESENTS  
PROPOLIS  
PUDDING  
QUEEN  
REINDEER  
SIEVE  
SKEP  
SLEIGH  
SNOWMAN  
STING  
STOCKINGS  
SUPER  
THYMOL

VARROA  
VEIL  
WASP  
WAXMOTH  
WORKER

