

7 March 2019

Dear Fellow Beekeepers,

First, our warm thanks to Georgia (Gigi) Hennessy who spoke to us in February on solitary bees, and drew a very pleasing attendance, and to Robert Ambroziak for laying on the evening's refreshments.

Here are details of our next two topical and significant evening events, each of which will, as usual, be accompanied by light refreshments (50p):

— **Westerham Hall, Wednesday, March 27th, 7.30 pm for 8 pm** —

Di Pickard will lead a hands-on session making Asian Hornet Monitoring Traps. (As a first step, see *BBKA News*, August 2018.)

'A practical session,' Di writes, 'along the lines of "Bee Peter"... Please email me ([westerhambeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:westerhambeekeepers@gmail.com)) by **Sunday, March 17th** to confirm your attendance so we can get in enough materials. There's room for flexibility, but it would help with planning if you can confirm. Instructions and materials will be provided. But, in true Blue Peter fashion, you will have to find something. So...

Please bring a **plastic 2-litre soda or fizzy-water bottle**, preferable one with ridged sides with a bottom section marginally larger than the middle (e.g., a green Waitrose Essential fizzy-water bottle). A **stiff card or thin cardboard** – save that cereal packet (to use as a template). And if you can also bring any of the following tools, that would be useful too: **Sharp knife or scissors; Pliers; Stapler; Pop riveter and rivets; Sheet-metal cutters.**

'This will be a fun session where we can all help each other, so don't panic if you haven't got a Blue Peter badge for craft skills.'

— **Westerham Hall, Wednesday, April 24th, 7.30 pm for 8 pm** —

'Varroa – should you treat the bees or let them adapt to survive?' – a presentation by Steve Riley, the WBKA's education officer.

Steve writes: 'A small group of WBKA beekeepers have decided to take a "chemical free" approach to varroa management. Based on scientific evidence and using brood breaks as a natural means of controlling mite population, we don't use any chemicals. We will share the basis of the techniques, the results so far, and our thoughts for the year ahead. We hope to be joined by Mike Cox, who has been a treatment-free beekeeper in Kent for over five years, having started keeping bees in 1995.'

*Directions for Westerham Hall: From the A25 in the centre of Westerham (by the Green), take the London Road towards Biggin Hill; turn first right into Quebec Avenue; the car park and Westerham Hall is on the right-hand side. OS Ref: 447542.*

Details of our June and July apiary visits will be announced next month, but meanwhile – a renewed appeal – please give me a call (01959 565188) if you would kindly consider opening your open apiary on **Saturday, May 18th.**

And finally, Gigi Hennessy writes with some follow-up information on her talk:

Thank you so much for inviting me, I had a really nice time. I'm glad people enjoyed it – and no problem about the screen, I think it was better without it anyway. The things I mentioned in my talk, so my podcast is called **Planet PhD** and it's a podcast where each week we interview different PhD students or postdocs about their research and their lives in general. This has ranged from how we use big data in urban planning to (more relevant for your members) bees and wildflowers on farms. We also release every two weeks bee-

themed episodes, so far we've done one on honey bees and I think our bumblebee episode will be out on Monday.

'Our website is here: <https://planetphdpod.wixsite.com/planetphd>

'And our podbean page (where you can download our episodes) is here: <https://planetphd.podbean.com/>

'You can also find us on Spotify and Apple podcasts under the name Planet PhD. Our Twitter is @PlanetPhD and email is [planetphdpod@gmail.com](mailto:planetphdpod@gmail.com). Feel free to tweet us or email us any questions!

'I also mentioned some of Dave Goulson's work, I would recommend his book *Sting in the Tail* and his web page on bee-friendly flowers <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/lifesci/goulsonlab/resources/flowers> '

With good wishes,

Johnny

John Pym  
WBKA events organiser