

WEST SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Annual Convention
Saturday 25th February 2023

At Lodge Hill Centre, Watersfield, Pulborough – 9.30am to 4.30pm

The West Sussex Beekeepers' Association is pleased to invite beekeepers and those interested in bees and beekeeping to the WSBKA Annual Convention. The event is designed to suit beekeepers of all standards. As well as the main lectures, the seminars offer a choice of more specialised topics. We hope you will be joining us.

Reception open from 9.00am. Introduction and Welcome at 9.30am

Main Lectures

Even healthy bees have to eat – Professor Francis Ratnieks

Varroa Control 2023 – Bob Smith NDB

The Colony Mind – Graham Royle NDB

In addition there is a choice of seminars

Seminar 1 (You can attend one of these)

- 1) What the Heck is That? – Graham Royle
- 2) All things Queens – Christine Coulsting
- 3) The Diverse World of Honeybee Communication – Dr Elli Leadbetter

Seminar 2 (You can attend one of these)

- 4) Pollen, Propolis, Water – the other things bees collect – Bob Smith NDB
- 5) Instructions for building the Honeycomb – Vince Gallo
- 6) Adult Bee Diseases – Christine Coulsting

Advance booking per person, WSBKA members £25
Members of other Associations and non-members £30
On the day if space allows £30

Full details and booking form are on the following pages.

In addition, they are on the WSBKA website www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk
or contact Viv Sallows on 01293 871092 or 07749265944 or email wsbkaconvention@gmail.com

West Sussex Beekeepers' Association Annual Convention – 25th February 2023

Details of the Day and Speakers' Profiles

The West Sussex Beekeepers' Annual Convention has again attracted top speakers to cover a wide range of topics throughout the day. As well as the main lectures, you can attend two additional seminars on different subjects. Please indicate your choices in order of preference as spaces on some seminars will be limited. We will, of course, do our very best to meet your individual wishes. **Please apply as soon as possible to have the best chance of attending your preferred seminars.** We hope there will be plenty to interest you.

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Professor Francis Ratnieks

Francis is Professor of Apiculture, School of Life Sciences at the University of Sussex and Head of the Laboratory Apiculture and Social Insects (LASI). He has considerable practical experience with honey bees having kept them in several countries and owned up to 180 bee hives when he lived in California.

He lectures on several modules under the subject of biology and environmental science and is also involved with outreach/extension to beekeepers and others, and with undergraduate teaching and the supervision of graduate students. He has written numerous scientific journals, articles, research documents and publications focussed on social insects, honey bees, beekeeping, honey bee breeding and diseases, animal behaviour, behavioural ecology, bee foraging ecology, bee conservation, and social evolution.

Francis will be giving a main talk on 'Even healthy bees have to eat: Studying the honey bee food supply and how to improve it'.

Bob Smith NDB

Bob has been keeping bees since the late 1970s, currently managing 10 colonies in 14x12 WBCs in North Kent. He was a Seasonal Bee Inspector for 6 years and a member of the Defra Bee Health Advisory Forum. He is a holder of the National Diploma in Beekeeping (NDB) and the current Chairman of the Central Association of Beekeepers (CABK) whose aim is to *"bring science to the beekeeper"*.

His main talk is entitled 'Varroa Control 2023' – an attempt to guide beekeepers through the maze of potential approaches to varroa control; looking both at non-chemical methods and the 15 currently Defra-approved miticides.

He will also be running a seminar on 'Pollen, Propolis, Water – the other things bees collect'.

Graham Royle NDB

Graham started beekeeping in 1988 and started to study for the BBKA examinations in 1995 when he decided he wanted to know a lot more about the bees he was keeping. His studies resulted in achieving the BBKA Master Beekeeper certificate in 2002 and the National Diploma in Beekeeping in 2004. He was also awarded the Wax Chandler's prize in 2002.

Graham currently manages 24 colonies in three apiaries. His main interests in beekeeping are queen rearing and stock improvement having had some terrible tempered bees in his early years. He has been heavily involved with the education of beekeepers at all levels from encouraging beginners to take up the craft to preparing more experienced beekeepers to take the BBKA modular and practical assessments. He developed and delivered microscopy courses for the NDB as part of their short course programme and is author of the microscopy book "Apis through the Looking Glass".

In recent years he was the Regional Bee Inspector for the North of England and the Seasonal Bee Inspector for Cheshire. In that role he was one of the team that dealt with the first UK Asian Hornet sighting in Tetbury, Gloucestershire in 2016. Graham will be giving a main talk on 'The Colony Mind' and also running a seminar on 'What the Heck is That?'

In the talk 'The Colony Mind' Graham will take a look at colony decision making. What decisions does a colony make and how does it make them? Honeybee colonies are sometimes referred to as 'superorganisms'. Although made up of thousands of individuals, the colony behaves like a single living entity. How does such a superorganism adapt and respond to its environment? Does the superorganism have a mind of its own?

The 'What the Heck is that?' seminar will investigate things you may see in and around your hives. As beekeepers we need to be observant and aware of what is happening within and around our colonies. This seminar focusses on what you may see, what is the likely cause and what, if anything, do you need to do about it.

Christine Coulsting

Christine is an executive member of the Hampshire Beekeepers Association, representing Southampton and District. She achieved Master Beekeeper in 2019, and is an examiner and assessor for the BBKA. She is a speaker on a number of beekeeping topics and has recently contributed to the paperback book "Pollen Grains & Honeydew: A guide for identifying the plant sources in honey" published by Northern Bee Books in 2021.

Christine will be running two seminars, 'Adult Bee Diseases' and 'All things Queens' looking at the life of the queen, her effect on the colony and practical applications for the beekeeper.

Dr Elli Leadbetter

Dr Elli Leadbetter is an ecologist and evolutionary biologist. In 2019 she was appointed Professor of Ecology and Evolution at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Based in the Insect Cognition Lab, her research team look at how bees learn about the world around them, how they communicate with others in the colony to share this information. She also works on the impacts of anthropogenic stressors such as land-use change and agrochemical exposure on wild bee populations, and on interactions between honeybees and wild bees. Elli will be taking a seminar on 'The Diverse World of Honeybee Communication' and sharing the findings of her research team.

Honeybee dances provide directions to useful resources traced out on the surface of the comb via a figure-of-eight that indicates direction and distance. How is it that bee brains process this complex information, and why have they evolved to do so?

"The honeybee waggle dance is one of the most celebrated examples of animal communication in the animal kingdom, but we are still learning about its evolutionary history and function in the present day. In this talk, I will discuss the controversy that surrounded its discovery, its distribution across honeybee species and its role in the hive relative to other communication signals. I will describe how combinations of these signals allow the colony to behave as a collective entity in the context of swarming, when thousands of individuals must decide on a single new target nest site. Finally, I will show how we can use the waggle dance to survey the quality of landscapes for honeybees on a scale that would be impossible through traditional ecological surveying".

Vince Gallo

Vince has recently completed a PhD at the School of Biological and Behavioural Sciences at Queen Mary University of London. His studies were pursued after a career as a software engineer specialising in the design, development and testing of secure systems and he now passes the time continuing his research, and as an amateur beekeeper and member of Reigate Beekeepers Association.

Vince wanted to discover more about how honey bees function in order to progress a virtual beehive simulation. This endeavour developed into his current research, setting tasks for the bees and analysing their efforts to understand how they accomplish and co-ordinate comb construction. He also continues to employ his software skills in support of his own research and that of others within the department.

Vince will be presenting a seminar 'Instructions for building the Honeycomb' and will explain how bees make individual decisions regarding the placement of each speck of wax combine to produce well-formed comb. Comb that is a masterpiece of animal architecture and a near-optimal solution to storing food and housing larvae. Comb that is beautiful, but not perfect, and much is revealed by these imperfections. Irregularities are introduced through construction errors, compelled by surface irregularities, or may result from purposeful distortion. Individual efforts of many bees somehow combine to overcome these distortions and result in well-formed comb. How? – that is the subject of this talk.

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The Convention fee for West Sussex Beekeepers Association members is £25 for the whole day if paid in advance (received by Monday 20th February 2023) and £30 for non-members or on the day (subject to space being available - choice of seminars may be limited). Tea and coffee during the day are included and also a simple lunch. Venue details: Lodge Hill Centre, Watersfield, Near Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1LZ.

Should you require further details, please contact Viv Sallows on 01293 871092 or 07749265944 or email at wsbkaconvention@gmail.com or see the website www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk.

The following Booking Form can be used for up to two delegates. This can be completed and returned with your cheque (made payable to 'WSBKA') to Viv Sallows as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can book and receive confirmation and map by email with payment made by bank transfer (see Booking Form below). If you wish to receive confirmation and map by post, a stamped addressed envelope should be sent with your booking.

West Sussex Beekeepers' Association Annual Convention – 25th February 2023

To: Viv Sallows, 2, Normans Cottages, High Street, Rusper, West Sussex RH12 4PX

Email: wsbkaconvention@gmail.com

Please book me places for the WSBKA Convention to be held on Saturday 25th February 2023 at a cost of £ (Ticket price is £25 each for WSBKA members and £30 each for non-WSBKA members.)

You can either enclose a cheque made payable to 'WSBKA' along with this form **OR** you can make payment by Bank Transfer and return this registration form by email. For Bank Transfer, the account name is "WEST SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION", Sort Code: 09-01-29, Account Number: 64253347. Please put the first delegate's surname in the Reference Field.

In both cases, you will receive your confirmation number(s) and a map by email. If you do not have email or require a physical ticket/map, **a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed.**

DELEGATE 1

Name (please print) Telephone No

Address

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Post Code Email

I am a member of Beekeepers' Association (if any).

Seminars - In case your first choice is over-subscribed, please indicate your order of preference

Seminar 1 (You can attend one of these)

- 1) What the Heck is That?– Graham Royle
- 2) All things Queens – Christine Coulsting
- 3) The Diverse World of Honeybee Communication – Dr Elli Leadbetter

Preference

First / Second / Third
First / Second / Third
First / Second / Third

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