

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

The main speakers are Professor Francis Ratnieks, Bob Smith NDB and Graham Royle NDB:

- 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 has been keeping bees since the late 1970's, currently managing 10 colonies in 14x12 WBC's 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 started beekeeping in 1988. 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. He currently manages 24 colonies in three apiaries and 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. 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?'*

There will be a variety of seminars to choose from:

- 'What the Heck is That?' – Graham Royle
- 'All things Queens' – Christine Coulsting
- 'The Diverse World of Honeybee Communication' – Dr Elli Leadbetter
- 'Pollen, Propolis, Water – the other things bees collect' – Bob Smith NDB
- 'Instructions for building the Honeycomb' – Vince Gallo
- 'Adult Bee Diseases' – Christine Coulsting