



Newsletter

October 2016



Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association (SCIO)

- promoting the study and development of apiculture, and advancing the heritage, culture and science of beekeeping amongst its membership and throughout the wider community

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2016 HONEY SHOW

NEXT SATURDAY: 22 OCTOBER 2016 from 1.30PM

The Kinellar Community Hall, Fintray Road, Blackburn AB21 0SS

If you haven't organised your entries for the Honey Show yet, get moving! There's a wide range of classes and entry categories, all set out in the schedule that was distributed with last month's newsletter.

Here's what you need to do:

Fill in the entry form on page 2 of the schedule (another copy of the form is distributed along with this newsletter); drop off the form and your entries at the venue between 9.00 and 11.30am on the day of the show; come back to the hall for 1.30pm and collect your receipt showing your entry numbers; settle down at 2.00pm to listen to Willie Robson of Chainbridge Honey Farm as he sorts the wheat from the chaff.

Don't forget to put something on the Gift Table. All Gift Table entries are donated to a good cause following the show.

HOUSE BEES

The American indoor 'BEEcosystem' mounts on your living room wall and comes complete with bees and a tube to allow them to come and go through a hole in the wall or window. This two-unit model will cost you \$1,000.

We know what you're thinking.

Thanks to Donald Morrison for this item.



Meanwhile, other entrepreneurs are maximising the opportunities presented by a raised public awareness of the plight of honeybees. A BBC News report highlights the increasing number of high tech approaches to beekeeping, including a Scottish initiative called Plan Bee. The company provides the hive, the bees and 28 visits per year, with the state of the colony being constantly monitored through a hive-mounted computer.

Read more at
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-37386490>

Thanks to Jim Beattie for this item.

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A personal memory of the late David (Davie) Brand:

Davie was brought up to keep bees, his father and grandfather kept bees before him. He was a member of the Association for many years – the older members will remember him. He died 21/08/16 in his 90th year. Davie stayed in a cottage a few hundred yards up the road from our cottage at Bridge of Canny. We moved here 37 years ago and we bought our annual stock of honey from Davie until 2003 when ill-health forced him to give up his bees. The next year a swarm moved into a chimney of this house and Davie came down to smoke them out for me.

He captured the swarm, I managed to get an old hive from Karl Revel in Banchory the following week, and with Davie as an initial mentor I have been keeping bees ever since, with Hugh Donohoe getting me out of the occasional pickle.

Ken Gow



*Make sure you
return your 2015
trophies to the
secretary **before**
22 October.*

2016 HONEY SHOW

See front page and Honey Show
Schedule

Saturday 22 October 2016

Drop off entries from 9.00 to 11.30am; show
open from 1.30pm; judging starts at 2.00pm

**SKEP-MAKING WORKSHOP
with BRYCE REYNARD**

Saturday 19 November 2016 10AM - 4.30PM

Kinellar Community Hall
Blackburn AB21 0SS

Now fully
subscribed!

ADBKA SOCIAL EVENING

- A BEE...TLE DRIVE!

- plus the presentation of Honey Show trophies

Saturday 26 November 2016 at 7.15pm

Kingswells Village Hall, Kingswells, Aberdeen AB21 0SS

This is the last members' event of 2016. As with previous years, this evening will be organised along the lines of an "American Supper". Members are invited to bring along some food and drink which will be laid out for all to share.

BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES AND FREE EQUIPMENT LOAN FOR ADBKA MEMBERS ACROSS THE NORTH EAST

Honey extractors; Mini-melters; Heather honey
press; Wax extractor; Wax foundation press

Contact: Sandy Gordon 01224 484540

DANESTONE AB22 8AJ

Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife;
Heather honey press;
Wax melter; Universal lightweight 9 frame radial
extractor

Contact: Joan Gilbert-Stevens

019755 81369

craigmill@btinternet.com

MUIR OF FOWLIS AB33 8NX

Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife;
Heather honey press; Wax melter; Unimel stainless
steel 3 frame tangential extractor

Contact: Erling Watt 074294 54572

watterlingg@aol.com

LONGSIDE AB42 4XQ

Combimel stainless steel radial 9 frame extractor;
Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife;
Refractometer; Candle-making kit

Contact: Graham Torrie 013398 82038

adbkanewsletter@btinternet.com

CRATHES AB31 5QJ

DISCOUNTED SUPPLIES

- contact Erling, Joan or Graham

PRICE LIST

RAGUS Bee Candy 2.5kg	£5.50
Box of 4	£22
Fondant 2.5kg	£3
Box of 5	£15
Syrup 14kg	£15
Jars (1 lb and ½ lb, incl. lids)	
Gross (144)	£50
½ Gross (72)	£25
Bag of 25 lids	£3
Hessian: 2m length	£2

Notes on **THE THREATS TO BEES**: a lecture by **DR. ALAN BOWMAN** of the University of Aberdeen
MacRobert Hall, Tarland, 21st Sept 2016

The importance of bees:

Every third forkful we put into our mouths is, to some extent, reliant upon insect pollinators. Of the 115 major crops worldwide, bees are important to 75 of these crops. If there were no bees the world could survive on adequate calories but it would be a very boring diet.

Taking almonds as one example, these are found in all sorts of processed foods; the bees are vital to the pollination of this crop and, to ensure that the almond plants are pollinated all other plants in the orchard are removed. The cost of bees to pollinate almonds has increased year on year and the yield is totally dependent on pollination such that one hive now rents out at \$150/month.

The situation with bees now:

25% of hives do not make it through the winter in the UK and this can be up to 40% in parts of Europe. This is an unsustainable situation.

Problems

Essentially multi factorial including:

- a). Pesticides (including household and domestic use of pesticides). Agriculturally the controls are much tighter nowadays and applications much more precise.
- b) General pollution
- c) Far fewer hedgerows
- d) Use of fertilisers
- e) Mobile phone masts
- f) Sterile fields (monoculture). Towns and cities are now more bee friendly than agriculture
- g) Climate change: In the UK it is getting wetter and the climate is very changeable
- h) Unnatural movement of bees: as in the forced, migration of huge numbers of bees in the almond cycle. Potential for disease to be transmitted catastrophically

And Varroa: Originates in Asia but arrived in 1992 in Cornwall and is now everywhere except Australia. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Iceland is also free of Varroa and parts of remote Scotland. Varroa, left untreated will kill a hive within 2-3 years. There are now no feral bees left in the UK/Europe.

Deformed Wing Virus: DWV has been with us since Victorian times and on its own is not a major problem but it is the addition of Varroa to the equation that makes the DWV virus so highly pathogenic.

Giant Asian Hornet: Now prevalent in NW France and the Asian hornet recently arrived in Gloucestershire. Very severe stings, described as incredibly painful. Dr Bowman showed a videoclip of a lady in the UK who captured one, and rather than harm it, took it outside in a wine glass and released it. The beast was making the wine glass move across the counter. He also showed the video clip of hornets in action massacring a hive which made grim watching.

Lack of slow co evolution: The normal pace of evolution has been by-passed by mans' frantic pace and the normal balance of parasite versus host which evolves over thousands of years has gone. Thus the European honey bee has had no time to develop a defence against the Asian hornets. The Asian honey bee, on the other hand, has evolved a defence mechanism whereby the scout hornet is enveloped in a mass of bees and is effectively cooked. Similarly Varroa in Asia will only survive on the male bee, not the female and there is no DFW virus in Asia. In Europe the Varroa Destructor lives off both male and female bees.

Previous Crises:

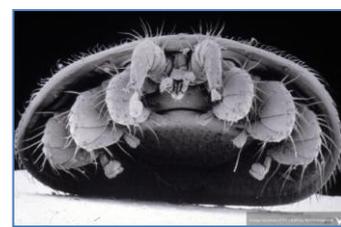
The Isle of Wight disease at the beginning of the 20th century. Finally solved by Craibstone with funding from a garage owning beekeeper in Deeside.

Solutions

Gene knockdown ie "Smartbees". Has 6M Euros funding in a 4 year programme. Can target precise genome sequences. Selective breeding, on the other hand, is limited in its application and results in a smaller gene pool. "Hygienic" bees may not be the most prolific honey suppliers and are also often "grumpy".

Finally: Educating the Public

The public needs to be educated on how to help. For example, don't mow the lawn so often and allow flowers in the lawn, including dandelions and daisies. What flowers to plant and where. Rigorous cleaning of shop bought honey jars, not just a quick rinse, all evidence of honey must be removed as it is often the imported honeys that contain viruses.



Varroa - a vector for DWV



Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment. Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail: aberdeenbeesupplies@hotmail.com

9-FRAME RADIAL EXTRACTOR (electric) – FOR HIRE £10 per hire period

STEAM WAX MELTER – available ON LOAN £10 deposit

Both items available from: Jock McGregor, 11 Marcus Road, Blackburn. Tel. 01224 790468



Back in 2011, a study by Japanese scientist Masaki Kamakura published in the journal Nature convinced everyone that a single protein in royal jelly was responsible for the differentiation between workers and queens. The protein, named 'royalactin', was fed to queens from the moment they hatched, then on throughout their lives.

Now researchers working at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg have decisively disproved the theory. This effectively restores the pre-2011 consensus that it is the combined effect of the mixed components in royal jelly that give rise to queen determination.

Read more about this new research at http://pressemitteilungen.pr.uni-halle.de/index.php?modus=pmanzeige&pm_id=2628



With the arrival of the first overnight frosts, your local mice will be looking out for a warm, dry site to nest over the winter months. Wood mice don't hibernate, but in the coldest weather go into a state of very low metabolism called torpor.

Given the opportunity, they will build a winter nest inside a beehive, benefiting not only from the weatherproofing but also from the warmth generated by a cluster of bees above them, as well as a ready supply of energy-rich honey and honeybees.

It's a high risk strategy for the mouse. If the bees become active on warmer days, they will kill the intruder and, being unable to remove the corpse, will embalm it in propolis.

Avoid all this drama by fitting a mouse-guard, now.

According to.....

.....E.W. Alexander, quoted in H.H. Root's compilation of 'Alexander's Writings on Practical Bee Culture': "In speaking of moisture in our cellar I often think of a bit of experience I had many years ago. I put 250 colonies in the driest cellar I ever saw. It was under a dwelling-house where two fires were kept burning all the time. A short time after we put the bees in they became very uneasy, many leaving their hives and flying about the room. I had made a large tight room inside the cellar, of matched lumber, and put a plank floor in it. I kept the temperature about 45 degrees, but still the bees became more and more restless, and, when taken out in the spring, I shovelled up 14½ bushels of dead bees. That was the worst wintering I ever had, and it was a sight to see those that lived through the winter go to wet places after water as soon as they had a chance to fly. It seemed as if every bee went for water before it returned to its hive. Their honey was so dry and gummy that the bees could hardly eat it until it had been moistened with the water they got outside. The dead bees on the floor were so dry that, if you gave a handful a squeeze, they would crumble up almost as fine as cornmeal.

"Since my experience that winter I have changed my mind very much in regard to wintering bees in dry cellars."

January 1907