

Newsletter
March 2015



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

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SC031754

President:

Mr R Wood
Forestside Road
Banchory

Chair:

Graham Torrie
Hillcrest
Craigmyle Road
Torphins, AB31 4HN
Tel. 013398 82038
e-mail:
adbkanewsletter@
btinternet.com

Hon. Secretary:

Rosie Crighton
29 Marcus Cres.
Blackburn, AB21 0SZ
Tel. 01224 791181
e-mail:
aberdeenbeekeepers
@gmail.com

Hon. Treasurer:

Louise Forbes
56 Morningfield Rd
Aberdeen, AB15 4AQ
Tel. 01224 313096
e-mail:
forbes.email
@btinternet.com

GO WITH THE FLOW?



The beekeeping world is buzzing about the new *Flow Hive*, which promises honey without the need for an extractor. The Australian inventors say it's just a matter of turning on the tap to "watch as pure, fresh, clean honey flows right out of the hive and into your jar. No mess, no fuss, no expensive processing equipment and without disturbing the bees." You can read all about it at <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/flow-hive-honey-on-tap-directly-from-your-beehive#home>

Important Notice: Subscriptions

Some members still have to renew their subscriptions for 2015. If you are in that position, you will have received a further copy of the subscription renewal form with this newsletter.

Benefits of membership include: Introduction to Beekeeping education programme; monthly newsletter; regular meetings; practical sessions; free loan of honey extraction and other equipment; free loan of beekeeping books and videos; discounts on honey jars and bee healthcare products

Please note that ADBKA membership will lapse for those members who have not renewed their subscription by 31 March.

DISCOUNT ON BEEKEEPING CLOTHING

As a member of Aberdeen and District Beekeeping Association you can claim 20% off all items in BBwear's clothing range.

See page 2 for further details.



There's pollen about. So, given the opportunity, your bees will be out seeing what they can find. Read more about what they get up to on page 3.

NEITHER A BORROWER NOR A LENDER BE

Pah! What did Shakespeare know about beekeeping? Why splash out on expensive beekeeping equipment when you can borrow it free of charge from the association? On page 3 of the newsletter you can see what's currently available for free loan from our Honey Jar Store. And the good news is that this year **ADBKA plans to significantly increase the range of equipment that members can borrow.** Watch out for more news this summer.

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With growing concern over the prospective arrival in the UK of Small Hive Beetle, it seems that the threats to honeybees increase by the day. One issue that has dominated the headlines over recent years is the use of neonicotinoid-based pesticides such as those currently banned under a two-year EU moratorium. As recently as last July, the newsletter was reporting that one big pesticide manufacturer, Syngenta, had applied for a special derogation from the ban in order to sell a coated autumn-sown Oil Seed Rape seed called *Cruiser*. They didn't succeed, but indicated they may try again this year. It's a debate full of controversy, with important players such as the National Farmers' Union arguing for the ban to be lifted.

With all this in mind, we are especially pleased to welcome Gavin Ramsey, The Scottish Beekeepers' Association's Bee Health Convener, who will talk on **BEE HEALTH and PESTICIDES** at our next members' event on

Saturday 28 March at 2.00pm
The Kinellar Community Hall, Fintray Road,
Blackburn AB21 0SS

NB - in anticipation of a large turnout of members for this talk we have arranged to have use of the large meeting room at Kinellar Hall. (See page 2.)

**TALK:
BEE HEALTH AND PESTICIDES**

- Gavin Ramsey, SBA Bee Health
Convener

Saturday 28 March at 2.00pm

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

**PREPARING HONEY AND WAX FOR
SHOWING**

Saturday 11 April at 2.00pm

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

**KIT ASSEMBLY DAY
HANDS-ON MAKING UP FRAMES AND HIVES**

- bring along your own flat-pack kit and
receive expert instruction

Saturday 25 April 1.30pm - 5.00pm

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

The inventors of the Flow Hive (see front page) set out to raise financial backing through the 'crowdfunding' website *Indiegogo*. Their goal was to generate \$70,000. This was achieved in 244 seconds. After 24 hours they had pulled in \$2.18 million. At the time of writing, their fundraising has reached \$5.3 million, a record for this crowdfunding platform. The story is reported by the online magazine *Entrepreneur* at <http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/243760>



BBwear DISCOUNTED CLOTHING OFFER

In order to get the 20% discount, you will need to contact BBwear directly, by email at sales@bbwear.co.uk or by phone on 01872 562731, and place your order. You'll also need to ask the ADBKA Chair or Secretary (see contact details on the front page) to email BBwear to confirm that you are a member of the association. Your order will then be processed.

You can see the range of clothing on offer at <http://www.bbwear.co.uk/> or you can request a catalogue by calling the above number.

Please note that you will not get the discount if you place your order online via BBwear's website, and discounts cannot be refunded after the order has been placed through the website.

(NB. Free gloves are not included with the full suits, however, a 50% discount is offered on washable leather gloves or spats.)



Part of the clothing range available at 20% discount to ADBKA members



Slovakian designer Tomáš Gabzdil Libertíny produces amazing beeswax vases and pots with the assistance of Dutch beekeeper Johan Beckers and, of course, his honeybees. You can see a lovely film of the process - in this case, the making of a giant teapot - at <http://inhabitat.com/an-army-of-60000-bees-built-this-giant-teapot-shaped-hive/>

A TESTING TIME

Eight ADBKA members will be sitting written beekeeping exams on the 21st of March as part of the Scottish Beekeepers' Association's modular examination system. We wish them the very best of luck!

The entry point for the exams is the Basic Beemaster Assessment, a practical/oral "over the hive" assessment. A pass is obtained at 50% but to progress to the rest of the education system a pass with distinction (75%) is required.

The options for the written papers cover the whole range of beekeeping subjects, from pests and diseases to biology and queen rearing. It's a great way of enriching your beekeeping knowledge and expertise.

Find out more about the SBA examination system by visiting <http://www.scottishbeekeepers.org.uk/education.html>

GATHERING DUST

With meteorological spring having begun on 1 March, it's time to look out for pollen being taken into our hives. If it is, there's a fair chance that the colony is queen-right and that the queen is starting to lay. This is because a pheromone given off by newly hatched brood triggers the pollen-gathering response in the workers.

Early sources of pollen include snowdrop, crocus, and the catkins of alder, willow and hazel. Sandy Gordon grows butterbur near his hives to provide spring pollen as well as nectar.

Pollen is held in the anthers of the male part of a flower called the stamen. When the anther is mature, it splits in a process known as dehiscence, exposing the pollen to the wind or the insects that an individual species of plant has evolved a partnership with to facilitate its reproduction.

As the bee busies itself amongst the open anthers, it can't help but gather the dusty pollen grains, which are so small they are measured in micrometres or 'microns' (μm) - one micrometre is a millionth of a metre, or one thousandth of a millimetre. One apple blossom flower will hold more than 100,000 pollen grains, each $35\mu\text{m}$ in diameter. The bee is covered in branched or 'plumose' hairs that trap the pollen grains that it comes into contact with. In its flight it will have generated an electrostatic charge that will cause more pollen to jump across a gap of half a millimetre to add to the harvest. The bee is a pollen magnet.

The bee uses its forelegs to clean its antennae and gather the pollen from its head. The middle legs then brush the pollen off the thorax, and the hind legs clear the abdomen. In the course of this brush down, the bee adds a little nectar to the pollen load, turning it into a paste. Next, the collected pollen is all passed to the hind legs and, while in flight, the final manipulation takes place to form two loads of pollen pressed into small patties around hairs on the outside of each hind leg that we call the pollen baskets.

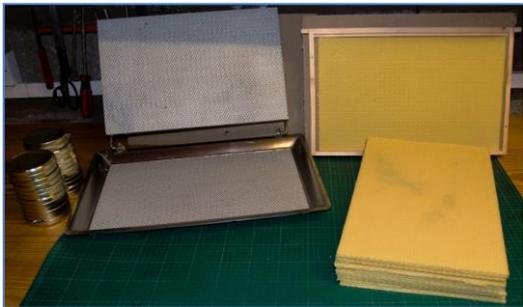
Typically, each pollen forager will return with between 10 and 30 milligrams of this precious, protein-rich food. With an average honeybee colony consuming around 30kg of pollen each year, that means 1.5 million trips. *Better get back out there!*



In January and February we published Stephen Palmer's account of how he made the most of the beeswax he had been gathering over the previous few seasons. Here, Stephen brings things to a conclusion by laying the foundation for the season to come:

This is the final stage of my winter 'wax working.'

The 10lb block of rendered and filtered wax has produced twenty tins of beeswax polish (on sale for £5 per tin) and twenty sheets of Dadant-sized sheets of foundation.



It was a slightly messy operation – and I know that it might be more efficient to exchange the block of wax for foundation from the suppliers – but it is not as much fun and it has given me much pleasure.

My sheets of foundation are approx. 25% thicker than those supplied by the commercial companies; this is because they use a roller press, whereas I use a hand press (This is identical to the wax press that is available for use for ADBKA members.)

Stephen

Visit the ADBKA Honey Jar Store for:

- Ragus Candy
- Apistan (10 strips, sufficient for 5 hives)
- Ambrosia Syrup
- Honey Jars and Lids
- Mesh Floors – National size (wire only)
- Hessian Squares for smoker fuel



- Free loan of:**
- Honey extractors
 - Mini-melters
 - Heather honey press
 - Wax extractor
 - Wax foundation press

Approximately half a mile along Laurel Drive, turn into Laurel Place on your right - it's a semi-circle so take the second entrance into this street. Now turn left into Laurel Avenue. Danestone Market Garden is signposted, on the left, about 100 yards along.

**Danestone
Market
Garden
AB22 8AJ**

You may be asked to show your ADBKA membership when you visit the store, so remember to bring your membership card.

For the loan items, a returnable £10 deposit is required, with the maximum loan period of 14 days. All members may be waiting to borrow extractors, etc. these must be returned to the store.

The store is open between 6.30pm and 8pm on Wednesday evenings and on the first Wednesday of each month. Contact Sandy Gordon (Tel: 01224 484540)

While Lilian recovers from a nasty fall, Sandy is looking after things on his own. To get in touch, best use Sandy's mobile number: 0759 165 8409

We wish Lilian a full and speedy recovery.

Notice Board



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

BEES WANTED

If you are planning on selling bees this season, the following ADBKA members are very keen to hear from you:

Amy Smith: tel. 07956451888; email - amy_s89@hotmail.com

Jim Moynagh: tel. 07940516461; email - j_moynagh@yahoo.co.uk

Ian Mathers: tel. 01771 653344

Peter Whitaker: tel. 01330 823596; email - peterandkath@tinyworld.co.uk

Graham Orr: tel. 07885 906662; email - gorr@me.com

BEE PACKAGES, INCLUDING MATED QUEEN

£130 for one, but more than 20 would be £85 each. Telephone Sebastian Bacz on 07543270350 for details

WANTED: BEESWAX POLISH

Local woodworker, Mike Bruce, is trying to source home produced beeswax polish. If you have any to sell, contact Mike on 01651 843290, or email mbruce7@btinternet.com

As we wait with bated breath for the seemingly inevitable arrival in the UK of the predatory **Asian Hornet**, *Vespa velutina*, researchers at the University of Arizona have discovered that the wasp hunts out honeybees using its sense of smell. And though their target is the bees themselves, it seems that it's the odour of honey and pollen from the bees' nest that draws the hornets in. You can find the details of the study at <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0115943#authcontrib>



According to.....

.....Charles Butler in his groundbreaking 1609 book on beekeeping, *The Feminine Monarchie*: "A certain simple woman having some stalls of Bees which yielded not unto her hir desired profit, but did consume and die of the murraine; made her mone to another woman more simple than herself: who gave her counsel to get a consecrated Host, and put it among them. According to whose advice she went to the Priest to receive the Host: which when she had done, she kept it in her mouth, and being come home again she took it out, and put it into one of her Hives. Whereupon the murraine ceased, and the Honie abounded. The woman therefore lifted up the Hive at the due time to take out the Honie, saw there (most strange to be seen) a Chappell built by the Bees, with an alter in it, the walls adorned by marvellous skill of Architecture, with windows conveniently set in their places: also a door and a steeple with bells. And the Host being laid upon the alter, the Bees making a sweet noise, flew round about it."

