

Newsletter

October 2012

Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SCO31754

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Europe proposes clearer rules on status of pollen in honey

A proposal to amend rules on honey to clarify the true nature of pollen following a European Court of Justice preliminary ruling was adopted today by the European Commission. In line with international WTO standards, the proposal defines pollen as a natural constituent of honey and not as an ingredient.

The Court of Justice based its interpretation on the honey directive dating back to 2001 and qualified pollen as an ingredient in honey arguing that the pollen is found in honey mainly due to intervention by the beekeeper. However, the Commission proposal recognises that pollen is a natural constituent and not an ingredient of honey; it enters into the hive as a result of the activity of the bees and is found in honey regardless of whether the beekeeper intervenes. Consequently, since pollen is considered as a natural constituent of honey, EU labelling rules requiring a list of ingredients would not apply.



Rosie Crighton's prize winning entry in the 'Shop Window Display' category at last Saturday's Honey Show.

More pictures and a full list of winners and awards will be included in next month's newsletter.

BeeBase is the Fera National Bee Unit website. It is designed for beekeepers and supports Defra, WAG and Scotland's Bee Health Programmes and the Healthy Bees Plan, which set out to protect and sustain our valuable national bee stocks

Beekeepers are urged to register on BeeBase, the national bee database. This will give them access to up-to-date information on the control of disease and bee related issues.

To register, visit the BeeBase website at <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/>

Our **planning for 2013** is well underway, with the promise of another stimulating programme of members' events to help us all through another beekeeping season.

We would be interested to hear from anyone who would be willing to host one of our apiary inspections at their own site.

If you can help, contact ADBKA secretary, Rosie Crighton – see contact details in side panel.

For our final members' event of the year, we will be holding a social evening and 'American Supper' at the Kinellar Hall in Blackburn on Saturday 24 November (see p2). The idea is that those attending will bring along something to eat and/or drink and this will be laid out on a buffet table for everyone to share.

The evening will include a short talk by former ADBKA Chair, Jock McGregor, on his beekeeping year. We hope that other members will also contribute their own experience of what, for most it seems, was a particularly challenging season.



See page 3.

AUTUMN LECTURES

Thursdays at 7.30pm

Presenter: Dr Stephen Palmer

AN INTRODUCTION TO BEES AND BEEKEEPING

Aberdeen Grammar School Lecture Theatre, Skene Street, ABERDEEN, AB10 1HT

Remaining Programme

- 1 November: Help – there is something wrong with my bees!
- 8 November: The beekeeping year

SOCIAL EVENING

&

'AMERICAN SUPPER'*

Saturday 24 November at 7.00pm

Including talk:

MY BEEKEEPING YEARThe Kinellar Community Hall
Fintray Road
Blackburn AB21 0SS

**members are invited to bring along something to eat and/or drink as a contribution to a shared buffet*

“Don't force your bees to use their liver as a uterus,” we were urged by Professor Keith Delaplane at the Scottish Beekeepers' Association's recent, sell-out Centenary Celebration Conference in Stirling. In the shadow of the Wallace Monument, beekeepers from across the UK and beyond gathered at the Stirling Management Centre for a weekend of lectures, practical classes, displays, trade stands and ceilidh dancing to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the SBA.

The subject of Professor Delaplane's talk was, *The Superorganism – why it matters to beekeeping*, and the liver/uterus comment referred to the need to replace brood comb before it gets old and black. The day had begun, fittingly enough, with Una Robertson providing a fascinating account of the history of the SBA and the state of Scottish beekeeping in the early years of the last century. In a packed lecture schedule we also heard from Professor Robert Pickard on the evolution and breeding of bees, Dan Basterfield on the wonders of pollen and Professor Robert Paxton on current research in beekeeping management. Looking back over my busy notebook, I can see that we were led by these eminent speakers on a journey from the Big Bang 14 billion years ago (Pickard), onwards to the evolution of altruism, social species and the superorganism (Delaplane), to cutting edge research on the interactions between pesticide use and honey bee parasites (Paxton) and the preposterous struggle of the European Court to come to terms with the notion that honey contains a few pollen grains! (Basterfield).

Despite the toll taken by the previous evening's dinner and ceilidh, the hall was again packed on

Sunday morning with Professor Paxton talking on the importance and conservation of Scotland's wild bees, which, many of us were surprised to hear, amounted to some 103 species. Next was Professor Delaplane, challenging us to think again about popularly held beliefs concerning the worldwide decline in honey bees. Not so, he revealed. Evidence indicates that the 'decline' seems restricted mainly to the USA and Russia, with the rest of the world's honey bee population actually on the increase. After lunch, Professor Pickard was back to tell us about the wonders of honey bee behaviour and to present – for me at least – the most startling fact of the weekend: alongside human beings, honey bees are the only other animals on the planet that can communicate to other members of their species the geographical details of where they have been. Finally, in a fitting conclusion to an event billed as celebrating the past, present and future, Dan Basterfield gave a thought-provoking presentation on the future of beekeeping, including a challenge to rethink received wisdom on such things as the use of neonicotinoid pesticides and the importation of queens.

Disappointed that I would be missing Monday morning's excursion to visit a commercial beekeeping enterprise, I headed home on the Sunday evening, better informed and lighter in pocket, having fallen to the temptations of the many trade stands. SBA President, Phil McAnespie, and his organising committee can feel justly proud in producing a thoroughly enjoyable and successful weekend conference that did justice to this significant milestone in the history of the association.

GT

To join the SBA, visit:
www.scottishbeekeepers.org.uk

Hi there

I thought you might like to know that the Woodland Trust is offering community groups, youth groups and schools the chance to apply for packs of free trees for delivery in March 2013. Whether groups are interested in helping wildlife; creating a faith, or inter-faith, green space; a community garden or allotment; or just want to enhance their local area - any community groups are very welcome to apply for our free trees and I'd be very happy to speak to any representatives about the packs and how to apply.

We have 1250 to give away and the tree packs come in three sizes - 30 saplings, 105 saplings and 420 saplings in various themes (wildlife, wild harvest, year-round colour, future firewood and wetland) and you can find out more about them at www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/communitytrees. The packs are due to be delivered week commencing 5 March 2013 (the deadline for applications is Christmas 2012).

This year we're trying to help bees by encouraging groups to plant species that are beneficial through their nectar or pollen and I've attached a leaflet that details the relevant packs. I've also attached our current community tree packs leaflet. Please feel free to forward them to any group who might be interested, add them to your website or include them in your newsletter. If you have any questions at all please do get in touch.

Kind regards

Beverley Gormley

Community Tree Packs Project Manager

<mailto:namesurname@woodlandtrust.org.uk>

0845 293 5861



Our free trees are good for bees

Everyone knows that some bees make honey, but did you know that they are also important pollinators? **Without bees, around a third of the food we eat would not be available.**

Can you imagine a world without cups of tea, crunchy apples and blackberry jam? No more carrots, parsnips, mustard or onion gravy with your Sunday roast? No more garlic bread with your pizza, or even... chocolate?

Bees are in decline. Plant a free Woodland Trust tree pack and you will help these fascinating creatures thrive.

These packs include great species for nectar and pollen:

 Short hedge pack (30 saplings)	 Wildlife pack (105 or 420 saplings)	 Year-round colour pack (105 or 420 saplings)	 Wild harvest pack (105 or 420 saplings)	 Wetland pack (105 or 420 saplings)
Hawthorn hazel holly dog rose dogwood	Hawthorn blackthorn hazel sier birch rowan common oak	Hawthorn hawthorn hazel sier birch wild cherry dogwood	Hazel blackthorn crab apple elder dog rose	Downy birch goat willow osier hazel hawthorn rowan

woodlandtrust.org.uk/communitytrees

Thanks to all our members who flagged up the story of the **multicoloured French honey**, which hit the headlines around the world. The bees have apparently been feeding on dyed sugar waste from a biogas plant close to Ribeauville in Alsace, which processes material from a Mars' factory producing the brightly coloured chocolate sweets, M&Ms.

A French beekeeper is reported as saying that the honey is unsalable. What do you think?

Read how the BBC reported the story at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-19835847>



Subscriptions

Look out for your copy of the subscription renewal form, which will be issued with January's newsletter. With your renewed membership you will get a copy of the ADBKA Events Planner, giving details of the great programme of talks, demonstrations and other members' activities throughout 2013.

Following an enquiry from one of our new members, we are keen to hear from anyone in or around the Stonehaven area who might be prepared to co-ordinate a local circle.



Beekeeping Circles

If you would like to join an existing beekeeping circle in the following areas, contact -

Helen Anderson, based in **Inverurie**, on 01467 620750, e-mail: sh.and@gmx.com

Graham Torrie, based in **Torphins**, on 013398 82038, e-mail: grahamtorrie002@btinternet.com

The initiative relies on individual members volunteering to compile and share (with permission) a list of names and contact numbers of other beekeepers in their local area, then to take things forward as the members of the circle deem fit. If you would be prepared to co-ordinate a beekeeping circle in your own area, please contact Graham Torrie.

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

New research aimed at tackling that scourge of honey bees, Varroa destructor, has found that specific proteins released by damaged larvae and in the antennae of adult honey bees can drive hygienic behaviour of the adults and promote the removal of infected larvae from the hive.

Read more at:

<http://phys.org/news/2012-09-honey-bees-varroa.html#jCp>

Thanks to Justin Walter for this item. (Justin recommends this website as a source of information.)



For Sale

Sandy Shand is selling beekeeping equipment on behalf of his brother:

- 300 honey jars
- various queen excluders
- new frames
- honey probe
- two bellows
- some new wax - shallow and brood
- various odds and ends

Call 01340831442 or 01542882781

Good luck to those ADBKA members sitting Scottish Beekeeping Association examinations on the 10th of November.

Another entry category for next year's honey show?



ADBKA Equipment

The Association has the following items of equipment available for free borrow: 2 honey extractors, 2 mini-melters, 2 heather honey presses, 1 wax extractor and 1 wax foundation press. These are available from the honey jar store at Danestone Market Garden (directions below) on payment of a returnable £10 deposit.

The maximum length of loan should be two weeks.

We also have supplies of Apistan, Jars, Ragus, Ambrosia Bee Syrup and Hessian for smoker fuel. The store is open between 6.30pm and 8pm on Wednesday evenings and at other times by arrangement with Sandy Gordon (Tel: 01224 484540).

Directions: At Persley Bridge (Tesco) roundabout turn onto Laurel Drive. Continue for about ½ mile. Look for Laurel Place on your right (it is 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.

According to.....

.....Hilda Ransome in her 1937 book *The Sacred Bee in Ancient Times and Folklore*, 'Honey was sometimes used for preserving the dead. Herodotus states, "They [the Babylonians] bury their dead in honey and have funeral lamentations like the Egyptians"; and Strabo says that, "The Assyrians bury the body in honey, first smearing it with wax." It is recorded that Alexander the Great on his death-bed commanded that he should be buried in honey and that his orders were obeyed; his body was placed in "white honey which had not been melted".'

Distributing the newsletter by e-mail realises significant savings for the association. If you do not currently receive the newsletter by e-mail and wish to do so, contact Graham Torrie on 013398 82038, or by e-mail at: grahamtorrie002@btinternet.com

We urge as many members as possible to do so.

Why not think about contributing to the newsletter yourself? We have a wealth of experience and expertise in the association, and it would be great if we could do more to share this around our members. If you have any tips, advice, or experiences to pass on, why don't you jot them down and forward them to the above e-mail address? I would be happy to assist with drafting and formatting, so feel free to call me if I can help.

Graham Torrie