

Newsletter

October 2014



# Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SCO31754

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## SMALL HIVE BEETLE WARNING

The Press and Journal has reported that Small Hive Beetle has been found for the first time in Italy. Initially spotted last month in the port city of Gioia Tauro, a second outbreak was confirmed in Rosarno, approximately 1 km from the first infested apiary.

This is a wakeup call for British beekeepers. Small Hive Beetle, or SHB, is one of four honeybee pests and diseases that are legally 'notifiable'. If you think you've found them in your hives you are obliged by law to advise the Scottish Government.

The National Bee Unit advises that "urgent measures are now underway to measure the extent of the outbreak, complete tracings (sales and movements of bees from the area), with the intention to eradicate and control spread in line with EU legislation and



Small Hive Beetle (*Aethina tumida*)

safeguards. Measures include that in all apiaries where the beetle is found colonies are destroyed and all soil surrounding the hives in the apiaries is ploughed in and treated with a soil drench."

Read the P&J story at <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/business/farming/362767/beekeepers-hunt-small-hive-beetle-italian-outbreak/>

Download DEFRA's guidance document on SHB from

<http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=125>

If you want a paper copy sent to you, ring the NBU on 01904 462510.

We are sad to announce the death of Miss Christie, who passed away peacefully in her sleep on Tuesday at the Ythan nursing home, Ellon.

John Cooper writes: "Many long standing members will have fond memories of Miss Christie who was an ADBKA member for at least 50 years and probably longer. She gave very generous service to the Association for many years by providing, single handed, most of the refreshments at the Honey Show and the AGM.

"She won the Manson Trophy for most points in the industrial section many times. "She will be sadly missed."

## 2014 HONEY SHOW

SATURDAY 18 OCTOBER 2014 at 1.45PM

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

Remember to deliver your entries to Barbara and Rosie at the Kinellar Hall between 5pm and 6.30pm on Friday 17 October. If necessary, arrangements can be made to accept entries between 8am and 9.30am on the day of the show.

Access to the hall isn't allowed while judging is taking place. After this, the timings will be as follows:

- 1.45pm - show open to members
- 2.00pm - announcement of awards and trophies
- 2.15pm - short talk by Honey Judge, Alan Riach
- 2.30pm - Special General Meeting
- 2.45pm - open to non-members; refreshments served

*Even if you haven't entered this year, do come along and join us and see what it's all about!*

*Don't forget, all trophies must be returned to the secretary before 18 October.*



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**ABERDEEN AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION  
SOCIAL EVENING**

*including the presentation of Honey Show trophies and fun quiz*

Saturday 22 November at 7pm

Dyce Church Hall  
Victoria Street  
Dyce  
Aberdeen

Please note the change of venue from that advertised in your 2014 membership card.

*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.*

This is an informal gathering where we can blether about the beekeeping year that has just passed and look forward to what next season might bring. If you're in danger of becoming a bee bore in the eyes of your family and friends, relax here, you'll be among kindred spirits!

*In correspondence with our secretary, Rosie Crighton, ADBKA members Richard and Pat Hoddinott have shared their experience of using **MAQS Varroa treatment**. Other members may be interested in how things went.*

**July**

The MAQS treatment period for my hives is now over so I thought I'd give you the results so far. The booklet stated that the treatment period was 7 days. I left the strips in for almost 8. During the period of treatment the temperature did not drop below 10C, certainly during the day, and only two days were overcast.

I was mindful of what you said, what Thornes stressed, and was stated in the accompanying leaflet that good hive ventilation was essential. I therefore left fully open the base doors and, during daylight hours, propped up the roofs on one side to leave a 1cm ventilation gap at the top. I have WBC hives.

During the treatment period I did not disturb the colonies, other than to raise the roofs every morning and lower them at night. I removed the strips this morning, and as you would expect all had been firmly fixed in by the bees.

Bee activity appeared to continue as normal. Healthy drones were in evidence in and around both hives. The badly affected colony appears to be stable in numbers (but bees are not as numerous as before the outbreak), and the number of sufferers of Deformed Wing Virus has drastically decreased. There has been little or no honey production in this colony. The healthy colony, which showed little evidence of varroa and was only treated as a matter of expediency, has grown in size and continued to produce honey. The bees in this colony are now far more aggressive than they were, but this is a particular problem with my colonies, and always has been, so may not be linked to the treatment.

That's it so far. I'm going to monitor the mite drop over the weekend, and if it's still excessive will treat with icing sugar as you recommend. The MAQS leaflet says I should check for the presence of queens after one month, so I'll let you know the results then.

**October update**

Further to our recent correspondence re MAQS. Both my colonies do not appear to have been adversely affected by the usage of it. Fortunately the varroa mites were. The recent good weather has seen bees out and about collecting and making honey (ignoring their supplied Ambrosia!). One colony is not as numerous as it used to be, but should be well placed for the spring. I'm now using Apivar to suppress anything that may wish to linger over the winter.

As I lay yonder in tall grass  
A drunken bumble-bee went past  
Delirious with honey toddy.  
The golden sash about his body  
Scarce kept it in his swollen belly  
Distent with honeysuckle jelly.  
Rose liquor and the sweet-pea wine  
Had fill'd his soul with song divine;  
Deep had he drunk the warm night through,  
His hairy thighs were wet with dew.  
Full many an antic he had play'd  
While the world went round through sleep and shade.  
Oft had he lit with thirsty lip  
Some flower-cup's nectar'd sweets to sip,  
When on smooth petals he would slip,  
Or over tangled stamens trip,  
And headlong in the pollen roll'd,  
Crawl out quite dusted o'er with gold;  
Or else his heavy feet would stumble  
Against some bud, and down he'd tumble  
Amongst the grass; there lie and grumble  
In low, soft bass—poor maudlin bumble!

Henry A Beers

Everything you always wanted to know about.....

## WINTER BEES

We know that the final few brood cycles of the season produce worker bees that will live throughout the winter and that during that time the queen virtually ceases to lay. But what's the difference between these winter bees and their summer sisters, whose life span is only around six weeks?

Dispersed throughout the abdomens of adult bees there are conglomerations of cells called *trophocytes* and *oenocytes*, collectively referred to as the 'fat body'. These cells play an important part in the breakdown and synthesis of proteins, carbohydrates and fats - important ingredients in the bee's internal chemical factory.

After emerging from their cells, workers consume large quantities of protein in the form of pollen. During the peak of brood rearing, summer bees convert most of this into brood food. This process takes place within the pair of *hypopharyngeal glands*, which occupy much of a worker's head (queens and drones don't have these glands), and their *mandibular glands*, situated in the sides of the lower part of the face.

The queen's rate of laying slows dramatically towards the end of the season, meaning the late emerging workers don't have much brood rearing to do. They still consume lots of pollen, but their hypopharyngeal glands stay plump and full of protein. Excess protein is diverted to be stored in the cells of the fat body, along with complex sugar molecules called *glycogen*, which is synthesised from the glucose the bees get in nectar. They can afford to create this glycogen energy reserve because they aren't anywhere near as active as their summer siblings.

The thing to take away, here, is that these winter bees aren't born different. Rather, they develop their distinctiveness from summer bees as a result of the easy life they have.

Without much work to do, and therefore with a lower metabolic rate, with energy and protein stored away for future use and plump hypopharyngeal glands, the winter bee is ready to batten down the hatches and wait until the arrival of spring. Come the start of the new season, though, winter bees have to take on the role of both house bees and foragers. The reserves of protein and energy-rich glycogen are soon used up feeding the increasing numbers of hungry larvae and gathering the early nectar and pollen, a demand that soon brings their extended life to an end.

The final part to this story concerns the ability of winter bees to store their metabolic waste products within a rectum that can expand over the winter months to largely fill the abdominal cavity. This is something that has evolved over millions of years in the northern races of *Apis mellifera*, along with other adaptations to cope with long cold spells. If necessary, summer bees could do this too, but they are able to regularly get out for cleansing flights and discharge their waste. Stuck inside the hive by bad weather, the winter bees have to patiently await the opportunity to go. Perhaps this is the explanation for the strained look on the faces of winter bees that some beekeepers claim to observe. (See picture above.)

.....but were afraid to ask



Summer Bee



Winter Bee

(Note the expression on its face.)

### 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 card when you visit the store, so remember to take it along

**For the loan items, a returnable £10 deposit is required, with the maximum length of loan being two weeks. As other members may be waiting to borrow extractors, etc. these must be returned on time and in a clean condition.**

The store is open between 6.30pm and 8pm on Wednesday evenings and at other times by arrangement with Sandy Gordon (Tel: 01224 484540)

## Notice Board



**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

### Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment.

Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail:

[AberdeenBeeSupplies@hotmail.com](mailto:AberdeenBeeSupplies@hotmail.com)

### Honeybee health: a mitey problem

Seminar

14 October 2014, 4pm : Free

at the James Hutton Institute,  
Aberdeen AB15 8QH

- for scientists, researchers and other  
interested parties

See

<http://www.hutton.ac.uk/events/honeybee-health-mitey-problem>

I have **bee outfits** to get rid of:

- bee outfit with hat
- 1 large boiler suit
- 1 pair man's bee gloves  
and 1 pair lady's bee  
gloves

All are old.

Contact Sheila Hendry on  
01339885618 or e-mail  
[ichendry@btinternet.com](mailto:ichendry@btinternet.com)

### WANTED

Colony of bees wanted, with or  
without hive. Please contact Rosie  
Crighton on 01224 791181  
or e-mail:

[aberdeenbeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:aberdeenbeekeepers@gmail.com)

### Our area SBA Representative is

Stephen Palmer

Stephen can be contacted on  
01888 551367, or by e-mail at  
[palmers@fintry.plus.com](mailto:palmers@fintry.plus.com)

It's not only in Europe that the use of neonicotinoid pesticides is causing great controversy. In Canada, two big beekeeping companies have filed a class action lawsuit against pesticide manufacturers Bayer and Syngenta, seeking \$450 million from the companies. They claim that neonicotinoid pesticides have caused the deaths of many of their bees.

And just as is the case on this side of the Atlantic, opposing views aren't difficult to find. One major bee farmer in Alberta has criticised the legal move, saying that the number of his colonies has more than doubled in the past eight years.

Read how the story is being reported by the Washington Examiner at  
<http://washingtonexaminer.com/canadian-honeybee-lawsuit-quickly-attracts-critics/article/feed/2162207>

Meanwhile, the Scottish Government has announced that a Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GEAC) forming part of the new Common Agricultural Policy means that farmers in Scotland must not plough or apply fertiliser or pesticides (except for spot-treatment for injurious weeds) within two metres of the centre line of a hedge or the top of the bank of a watercourse/ water body.

See <http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Greening-update-10fb.aspx>



## According to.....

.....H Malcolm Fraser in his book *History of Beekeeping in Britain*, "To this list of Scots beekeeping authors and authorities, with whom England had few to compare, must be added the names of two very remarkable men. Dr JN Tennent (1951) drew attention to a book written by the Reverend James Playfair, who died in 1812. The book, which was never published, was entitled *Of the care and knowledge of bees*, and describes the observations and discoveries of the author who, working alone and with a comparatively small microscope, had rediscovered many of Réaumur's results. It was a remarkable manuscript, which also contained advice about practical beekeeping and a description of a hive invented by the author.

"One other author is equally noteworthy. In 1822 and 1834 two tiny editions of a book entitled *Rara liber [sic]* were produced by a certain Raoul or Robert Russell, about whom we know only that he lived in Elgin. The writer seems to have read all the bee books which were then current, and the facts contained in his work are well judged and carefully selected. The most remarkable feature about the book, however, is its making. The author found about a hundred old pieces of type; he cut out more by hand as required, set the type, printed the book, made the plates for the illustrations, and finally bound it himself. It is an interesting example of Scottish energy and self-reliance."