

# Leiston Beekeepers' Newsletter

January 2014

Laurie Wiseman Editor

**Leiston & District Beekeepers' Association**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
2:30pm United Reform Church  
Chapel Road Saxmundham IP17 1BH  
on  
Saturday 15 February 2014

## WOODWORKING SESSION

2-5pm. United Reformed Church  
Chapel Road Saxmundham IP17 1BH

Come & learn how to put beehive parts  
together  
Bring your own hive parts  
Saturday 1 March 2014

## Suffolk Beekeepers' Association **AGM**

7:30pm at Hawstead Village Hall  
The Green IP29 5NP  
on  
Wednesday 5 March 2014

## Cambridgeshire Beekeepers' Association **One-Day Seminar** **Saturday 8 March 2014**

**Eleanor Whitter:** "What is honey?" What we should expect to find in honey.

**Ray Vidler:** Commercial honey processing and packaging.

**Dr Falko Drijfhout:** True realistic levels of neonicotinoids; are they a threat to the honey bee survival?

**Norman Carrek:** "How far do honey bees travel to forage?"

Tickets £24. David J Abson, 6 Ascham Lane, Whittlesford CB22 4NT (01223 834620 or davidjabson@gmail.com).

## The 2013 National Honey Show

The two lectures at the National Honey Show were recorded and the link is below:

1. Lecture No 1 given by Mike Palmer entitled "The Sustainable Apiary"
  2. Lecture No 2 given by Robert Paxton entitled "Origins and Evolutionary History of the Honey Bee".
- [www.honeyshow.co.uk/lectures.shtml](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/lectures.shtml)

## The New Season Starts

The L&DBKA apiary opens again for the season on 5 April but ahead of that we will have a **Working Party** on 29 March 2014 to get everything tidy and ready. Volunteers welcome. Time to be confirmed.

## Do your bees have enough food?

Late February can be a dangerous time for bees if they do not have enough food. The bees may starve! If your hives are light they probably do not have enough food. Place a 1kg of 'baker's fondant' directly over the hole in the crown board. If it is 'extremely cold' you can take the crown board off and place the fondant directly over the cluster of bees. Before you do this please seek advice from the Secretary.

Watch this inspirational bee video - only 16 mins  
[www.ted.com/talks/marla\\_spivak\\_why\\_bees\\_are\\_disappearing.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/marla_spivak_why_bees_are_disappearing.html)

## 2-day Microscopy Course - Designed for Beekeepers by Beekeepers

The ICENI MICROSCOPY STUDY GROUP is presenting a 2-day microscopy course, over a weekend, on Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 April 2014 at

Bergh Apton Village Hall

Cooke's Road

Bergh Apton

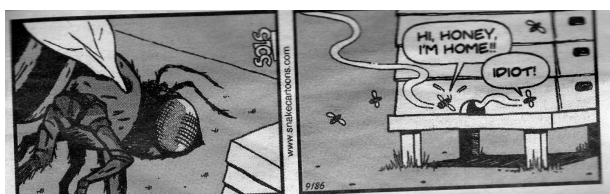
NORWICH

NR15 1AA

Come along to learn how to use a microscope for the study of bees, bee diseases and pollens. Equipment provided as necessary. If you have a microscope you are welcome to bring it along.

COST £70 for the 2 days, to include mid morning and afternoon refreshments and light lunch, and a basic microscopy kit. Booking essential, as we have limited places.

Enquiries to; Brian Norman,  
[brian@ftfarm.co.uk](mailto:brian@ftfarm.co.uk) or 01502 712364

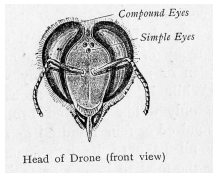


## The article below comes from a book "The Bee People" and is written by a bee.

(Founded on Margaret Warner Morley's work - first published by A C McClurg and Co. in 1907)

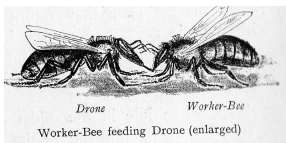
"My brothers you call drones. They are very different from my sisters, and for some reasons it is a very good thing there are not so many of them, for they never gather any pollen of nectar, or do any work in the hive. While I have several thousand sisters, I have only a few hundred brothers, about three hundred or four hundred as a rule; and as they all have to be fed, sometimes even wanting the food to be put in their mouths, it is fortunate that we workers outnumber the drones.

They are rather bigger than we are, and very handsome fellows. You would think they have on great helmets of glittering black pearls; this is because they have very large round heads, and their compound eyes are enormous; these meet on the top and crowd the other smaller eyes down between them. They are wonderful eyes, with more than double the amount of facets than ours have. Then their antennae, which in the sunlight look light glittering plumes, are longer than ours, and have more 'smell-hollows' in them. They wear coats of soft brown down, like velvet, very pretty to look at; and they are borne along in the air by large wings, spread out like a stiff glittering, half-transparent mantle.



But, in spite of their glittering appearance, they are very helpless, though that is not their fault. In the first place, they have no honey-bags, so we cannot expect them to go out and collect honey for the hive. Even if they had honey-bags in which to put in, they could not get it, because their tongues are so short and weak. All that their tongues are fit for is to help them eat honey from the honeycomb in the hive, or any other place in which it is easy to find. Neither can we expect our brothers to collect pollen, for they have no baskets to carry it in as we have. Then, as to working in the hive, they have no tools - in fact, they are made to stay at home and be taken care of.

We workers know it is not their fault if they do nothing, so we let them sleep in the snuggest corners of the hive, and, when they like, go to the open cells where the honey smells sweetest, and take as much as they want. Sometimes they even like us to feed them, and this we do by allowing them to put their tongues into our mouths.



On warm sunny days in summer, when the country is all a-quiver in the heat, from noon till three o'clock in the afternoon, the drones appear on the threshold of the hive. They look splendid in their glittering helmets and velvety coats, and their broad, glassy wings. As they go out they make a great stir, never minding if they run up against the quiet, busy little cleaners, brush aside the guards at the door, and jostle the nectar and pollen bearers, as they return with their loads.

Off they sail into the hot, glorious summer air, and make their way to the nearest flowers, where they sleep till the freshness of the afternoon rouses them. Then they return home, tired with their journey, and plunge in their heads up to the neck in the cells of honey to refresh themselves before again sinking to rest.

Sometimes, when idle in the midst of the flowers, they see rising into the air the young queen of the hive. Then they follow her, but only the strongest can rise with her up and up into the still air; the feeble, the old, the ill fed- these all give up the pursuit, and only the fittest can at last keep up with her. The one which can rise highest she chooses as her mate, but she only stays with him an instant, and then goes back to the hive and leaves him. That minute he dies.

Handsome and helpless are my brothers; they cannot even sting; so you can pick one up of them up without any fear. Basketless, stingless, with no honey-bag and no serviceable tongue, they are born to be idlers. But they are happy and contented and enjoy the warmth, the sunshine, and the flowers."

**Who does that remind me of I wonder . . . . Editor.**



Ken MacDonald, one of our long-standing members, had his 90th birthday recently. Ken spent many years as Treasurer of the association and was a valued and active member. May I, on behalf of the L&DBKA, wish him many happy returns.