

THE IPSWICH & EAST SUFFOLK BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

First Founded 1880; Registered Charity 1158794



Newsletter for **May - July 2015**

Hon Secretary, I&ESBKA: Malcolm Marchant,
The Orchards, Westerfield Road, Ipswich IP6 9AJ
☎ 01473 289629; secretary.iesbka@suffolkbeekeepers.co.uk

Hon Treasurer, I&ESBKA: Jackie McQueen,
643 Foxhall Road, Ipswich, IP3 8NE
☎ 0473 420187; jackie.mcqueen@ntlworld.com

Newsletter Editor: Jeremy Quinlan,
The Old Rectory, Dallinghoo, Woodbridge IP13 0LA
☎ 01473 737700; Email: JeremyQ@tiscali.co.uk

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily either those of the Editor nor of the Association.

The Suffolk Beekeepers' Association is an Area Association of The British Beekeepers' Association. <http://www.bbka.org.uk/>

<p>Suffolk BKA: www.suffolkbeekeepers.co.uk County Secretary: Ian McQueen, 643 Foxhall Road, Ipswich, IP3 8NE ☎ 01473 420187</p> <p>Leiston & District BKA penn.robertson@me.com Secretary: Penny Robertson, 42 Church Hill, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 1ES ☎ 01728 604388</p> <p>Norwich & District Bee Keeping Club Secretary: Rebecca Vowles, The Ferns, Yarmouth Road, Worstead. NR28 9LX ☎ 07917 206578; secretary@ueabks.com</p>	<p>Stowmarket & District BKA stowmarketbeekeepers@gmail.com Secretary: Sue Haynes, Creeting Hills Farm, Creeting St Mary, Stowmarket, IP6 8PZ. ☎ 01449 722570.</p> <p>Waveney Bee Group www.waveneybeekeepers.co.uk Secretary: Dick Houghton, 288 London Rd South, Lowestoft, NR33 0BG ☎ 01502 518874; 07931714990; waveneybeekeepers@gmx.com</p> <p>West Suffolk BKA wsbka@yahoo.co.uk Secretary: Carol Williamson, Brook Vale House, Stowmarket Rd, Rattlesden, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP30 0RR. ☎ 01449 736362</p>
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The Ipswich & East Suffolk Beekeeping Association

Now that we are a Registered Charity, we have an obligation to demonstrate that what we do is for the public benefit. Our Objects are: Working in Ipswich and East Suffolk, the Association aims to:

WHAT?	Promote and further the craft of beekeeping		Advance the education of the public in the environmental and economic importance of bees
HOW?	Fostering the traditional craft of beekeeping.	Teaching beekeepers how to care for honeybees.	Promoting, sustaining and increasing individual and collective knowledge and understanding of the environmental and economic importance of bees.
DELIVERY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Demonstrate beekeeping whenever possible. b) Encourage individuals to take up the craft. c) Act as a local central provider of beekeeping information. d) Welcome interested people to apiary openings. e) Any other means that meets this Objective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide courses, etc.. b) Provide mentors to support new beekeepers. c) Provide advanced skills, training and proficiency d) Disseminate best practice e) Respond to appeals for help and advice. f) Any other means that meets this Objective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide speakers about bees for meetings private and public. b) Answer questions from the public about bees. c) Offer advice about swarms & a swarm collection service. d) Show honeybees and beekeeping at shows and meetings. e) Initiate, promote, explain and maintain interest in bees in the local media (press, village newsletters, etc.) f) Any other means that meets this Objective.

We have much to do to meet our aims. Anyone who can improve on them, add to them, express them better or think of anything that we may have missed, please get in touch with the Secretary or me and discuss the matter. Comments really are most welcome.

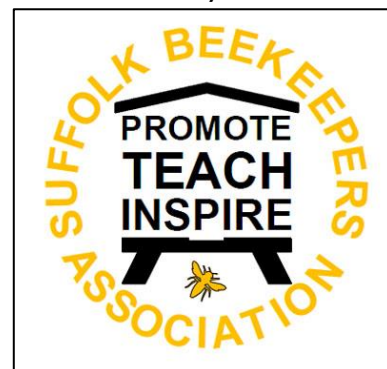
The Suffolk Show 27 & 28 May

Our usual appeal – **please enter something in the Show.** This year the Show is under the new management of Liz Marley and her husband, Lee Smith. They have made several changes, in particular rationalising and expanding the detail of the Schedule - so it won't be quite 'the same as last year'! The competitions are mostly routine beekeeping stuff, truly not that difficult; just read the Schedule and take some care.

Please support the Show this year!

If you don't have your own honey, you can still buy some and enter the cooking classes. Schedules and entry forms are on the website:

<http://www.suffolkbeekeepers.co.uk/>. If you don't have access to the internet, just ask Liz (01473 614114 or 07799 470913) or me and we will help. There's a new logo too. See fuller article on page 6.



Bee declines driven by combined stress from parasites, pesticides and lack of flowers

BACKGROUND

The species richness of wild bees and other pollinators has declined over the past 50 years, with some species undergoing major declines and a few going extinct. Evidence of the causes of these losses is patchy and incomplete, owing to inadequate monitoring systems. Managed honey bee stocks have also declined in North America and many European countries, although they have increased substantially in China. During this same period, the demand for insect pollination of crops has approximately tripled, and the importance of wild pollinators in providing such services has become increasingly apparent, leading to concern that we may be nearing a “pollination crisis” in which crop yields begin to fall. This has stimulated much-needed research into the causes of bee declines. Habitat loss, which has reduced the abundance and diversity of floral resources and nesting opportunities, has undoubtedly been a major long-term driver through the 20th century and still continues today. In addition, both wild and managed bees have been exposed to a succession of emerging parasites and pathogens that have been accidentally moved around the world by human action. The intensification of agriculture and increasing reliance on pesticides means that pollinators are also chronically exposed to cocktails of agrochemicals. Predicted changes in global climate are likely to further exacerbate such problems in the future.

ADVANCES

It has lately become clear that stressors do not act in isolation and that their interactions may be difficult to predict; for example, some pesticides act synergistically rather than additively. Both pesticide exposure and food stress can impair immune responses, rendering bees more susceptible to parasites. It seems certain that chronic exposure to multiple interacting stressors is driving honey bee colony losses and declines of wild pollinators, but the precise combination apparently differs from place to place.

Although the causes of pollinator decline may be complex and subject to disagreement, solutions need not be; taking steps to reduce or remove any of these stresses is likely to benefit pollinator health. Several techniques are available that have been demonstrated to effectively increase floral availability in farmland. Similarly, encouraging gardeners to grow appropriate bee-friendly flowers and to improve management of amenity grasslands can also reduce dietary stress. Retaining or restoring areas of seminatural habitat within farmland will improve nest site availability. A return to the principles of integrated pest management and avoidance of prophylactic use of agrochemicals could greatly decrease exposure of bees to pesticides.

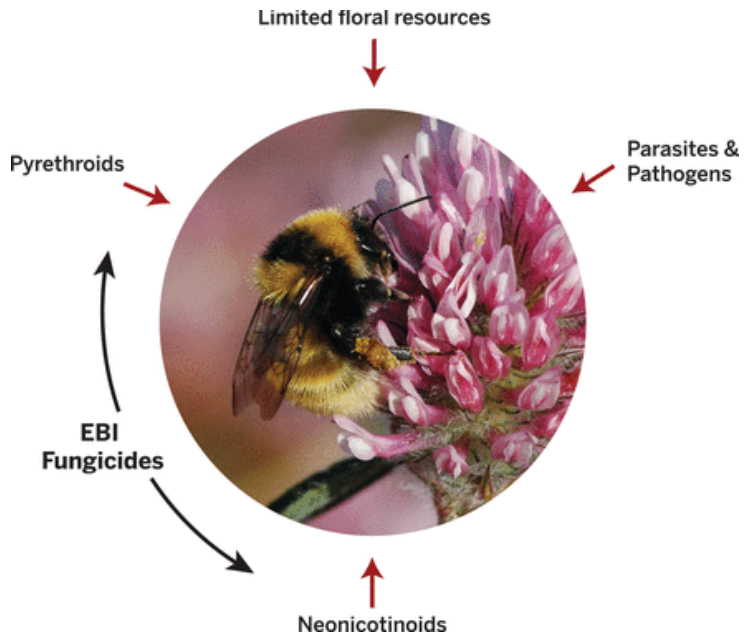
OUTLOOK

Interactions among agrochemicals and stressors are not addressed by current regulatory procedures, which typically expose well-fed, parasite-free bees to a single pesticide for a short period of time. Devising approaches to study these interactions and incorporating them into the regulatory process poses a major challenge. In the meantime, providing support and advice for farmers in more sustainable farming methods with reduced pesticide use is likely to have broad benefits for farmland biodiversity. Enforcing effective quarantine measures on bee movements to prevent further spread of bee parasites is also vital. Finally, effective monitoring of wild pollinator populations is urgently needed to inform management strategies. Without this, we have no early warning system to tell us how close we may be to a pollination crisis. With a growing human

population and rapid growth in global demand for pollination services, we cannot afford to see crop yields begin to fall, and we would be well advised to take pre-emptive action to ensure that we have adequate pollination services into the future.

Multiple interacting stressors drive bee declines.

Both wild and managed bees are subject to a number of important and interacting stressors. For example, exposure to some fungicides can greatly increase the toxicity of insecticides, whereas exposure to insecticides reduces resistance to diseases. Dietary stresses are likely to reduce the ability of bees to cope with both toxins and pathogens.



Dave Goulson, Elizabeth Nicholls, Cristina Botías, and Ellen L. Rotheray *Science*. 2015; 347:1255957

BBKA Examinations & Assessments

Understanding leads to fuller enjoyment - educate yourself!

If anyone who has been keeping bees for a year or more & would like to take ‘the Basic’ in 2015, the window of opportunity is narrow; the annual deadline for assessments to be completed is 31st August; applications should be in a month before that. Apply to Adrian Howard, the BBKA County Examinations Officer, [Adrian](#); 01394 411561.

The results of the Module exams in November were published in the April 2015 BBKA News. They are:

Module	Name	BKA	Grade
1	Thomas Lucking	Ipswich & ES	Distinction
1	Elizabeth Poupard	Leiston & D	Pass
1	Elizabeth Marley	Ipswich & ES	Credit
2	Richard Watson	Norwich & D	Distinction
2	John Wright	Waveney	Distinction
2	James Ferguson	Ipswich & ES	Pass
5	Gerda Gibbs	Waveney	Pass
5	Richard Allen	Ipswich & ES	Pass
6	Mark Butt	Waveney	Distinction

We now await the results of the March Module examinations.

BEEKEEPING WITHOUT SWARM CONTROL!

Ged Marshall's talk reported by Judith Rowbottom [via eBees].

Wow! What a title - The Holy Grail of beekeeping - no more weekly inspections in the spring. Too good to be true?

This most interesting, entertaining and informative lecture by Ged Marshall was an account of how he has developed his system over many years, so that now he does no active swarm control as we understand the term. It was soon obvious that he has a terrific depth and understanding of practical beekeeping which came across clearly and with great humour.

Ged is a commercial beekeeper from near Milton Keynes who runs some 250 colonies, though he has had many more in the past. As well as producing honey, he also rears many hundreds of quality queens each year. He used to practice traditional swarm control techniques, but found that the extremely busy life of a commercial beekeeper simply did not allow enough time for all the required inspections. This led to the development of his own personal system of management. In describing this to us, he made quite clear that, as in all things bee related, nothing is 100% fool-proof, and sometimes he comes a cropper, just like the rest of us!

Swarms produce swarms! If you rely on swarms for your bees, either collecting or keeping your own swarms or those from other areas, you are perpetuating and selecting for swarming. A hundred or more years ago this was [skep beekeepers'] standard practice and it seems those genes are still with us. However, not all colonies swarm every year, and it is from the non-swarmers that you should try to rear some queens. At the same time, any swarmy queens should be ruthlessly got rid of, and their colonies re-queened with a low-swarmers.

Ged rears queens in an isolated mating apiary, flooded with drones from a low-swarming line. These are used to requeen any colony that swarms and also any swarms that he collects from elsewhere. As he over-winters young queens, he always has spares available to requeen any colony that swarms early in the year.

As open mating is the norm, for us 'lesser beekeepers' it takes time and dedication to weed out undesirables and the swarm genes can reappear quickly. It is not something that most of us can accomplish quickly and any amateur with only one or two colonies really has no option in the short term but to buy in a queen from a reputable low-swarming line.

Ged re-queens in August/September, when he is less busy with the honey, and the weather is still warm enough to open the hives.

Although regular weekly swarm control inspections are not carried out, obviously others are, particularly to avoid overcrowding. When the colonies are taken to the rape, or to pollinate orchards, they consist only of four 14 x 12 in. frames of bees. This is to stop them building up too quickly - any that do so have frames of sealed brood removed and foundation substituted to give more space. The brood is used to provide nurse bees for his queen rearing operations.

As well as space in the brood box, supers are given unstintingly - new ones are put on when the last one is half full of bees and honey. A good tip is to put a 'spare' super over the crown board (feed holes open). This will only be used if the bees really need it, and will help to avoid half-filled supers, all too common when all of them are readily available.

Another tip was that if you have, say, three colonies, one strong, one medium and one weak, when taking a brood frame/s from the strong one to give space, don't give it to the weak colony, assuming that you will end up with three colonies all of the same strength. The weak one is weak for a reason and may die anyway.

Give the brood to the medium colony and end up with two strong ones, which will be much more productive.

Ged is a great believer in bait hives. He finds these work best with some old comb in to attract swarms if placed as high as practicable. He puts his on top of a shipping container.

All swarms collected are re-queened, although Ged did not mention what he did about monitoring them for disease. He did in fact emphasise continually that when moving frames and bees around between colonies, it is vital to know the disease status of all of them.

[Almost as an afterthought, he did tell us what his swarm control method used to be about twenty years ago! On first finding queen cells, all of them were removed and foundation substituted for some sealed brood frames. If swarming preparations persisted, he removed the queen and either re-queened, or, as the queen cells were nearly always sealed by the time he looked at them, he left only two queen cells. (One cell might be a dud.) Importantly, these should be close to each other, so that the first queen to hatch would quickly encounter and kill the other queen in her cell. If the cells were at opposite ends of the hive, swarming is much more likely.]

To sum up his system:

- Requeen swarms and swarming colonies with young queens from a low-swarming line.
- Give space before it is needed.
- Use bait hives to catch swarms and requeen them.

As can be seen, his success is predicated on having bred a low swarming line of bees and on having queens readily available for all the requeening necessary.

As amateurs, we might think this is all beyond our scope, but it is not difficult to raise a few queens - finding the low swarming breeder queen might be trickier!

I was hoping to learn a method of beekeeping that bypassed swarm control, and that could be adopted easily and quickly by everyone, but alas, that was too good to be true!

Halting the decline of the honey bee

A Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust report by Andrew Scarlett http://nuffieldinternational.org/rep_pdf/1334486301Andrew_Scarlett_edited_report.pdf

Andrew is a former Metropolitan policeman, now a Scottish bee farmer running 1,000 colonies. The scholarship took him to Australia, New Zealand & Sussex.

His principal conclusions were that In the UK we need to:

1. Control disease through better bio-security to stop the spread of disease between hives with better hive management and sterilising of equipment.
2. Improve nutrition by working with government agencies and landowners to improve the forage available for bees.
3. Use AI to improve the genetic characteristics of our stocks to help combat disease and improve honey yields.
4. More frequently re-queen hives to ensure strong colonies.

There is much more - this report well worth reading.

Biocide free paint

I have sourced some biocide-free paint that can be used on beehives. It's called Country Colour by a company called Osmo. They do some good colours and the hives I painted last year still look fantastic. I get it c/o a company near Bungay called Paint & Interiors <http://www.paintsandinteriors.co.uk>. They guy there is very helpful. I think it's better than the paint Thorne's sell which hasn't worn half as well. Penny Robertson, Leiston BKA

What have I been doing for the last 50 years?

by David Adams

It was some time before 1964 that I saw an abandoned hive in the garden of an empty farmhouse on the farm where I worked. On looking inquisitively in the front I was greeted by a bee in the usual manner! That did not alarm me but I went straight to the farmer and asked if I could look after them - "Yes you may - if you keep them out of my way". It was a double national that had not been touched for years! The association chairman was Mr. Drake who came and helped me sort out the tangled hive. I remember him saying as he picked off the stings from his bare hands "these are stingy bees"! I was still not put off and I think I still have some of their progeny! He gave me what he called my bee bible by Digges.

I didn't ever take a course or have a mentor as such but all my knowledge has been from books, beekeepers, meetings and conferences and trial and error.

Numbers soon grew 2 then 4 then 6 and that was all till I retired. I usually used brood and a half - but with those feisty bees it was quite a battle and often had to shelter in the bushes till they settled! I was so grateful to John Blakesley for advising me to change to Commercial hives.

We used to go on holiday at Easter with the family. So, as it was swarming time, I would make artificial swarms before I went. Oh dear, what a lot of work when I returned! I never have been good at rearing my own queens so I begun to buy queens. Yellow ones, black ones, good local bred ones all had good and bad traits, then I went to professionally bred Buckfast from BHP Ltd and they are marvellous.

Swarms - how many stories to tell! The ones I chased across the field and still did not get or the ones from the top of a ladder the H & S would lock me up for! The three from the hollow walls of houses, and the ones I smoked out of a pair of chimneys that settled in the hedge in the garden bush below.

For about 20 years I have taken bees to the local heather, it is so weather dependant giving variable reward.

In the last ten years the focus on bees has prompted many people to enter the craft and it has been my great pleasure to help several people set up in beekeeping.

I am still making mistakes, hopefully still learning but certainly still enjoying my beekeeping.

At the County AGM, David received the Martin Rosebowl - the award for being a really "good egg". He is currently our President.

"Guide to buying ethical honey" Friends of the Earth and Ethical Consumer have produced this free download: <http://www.foe.co.uk/living/articles/honey-ethical-guide>. I admire their principles though I certainly don't agree with everything they say! Clearly they haven't met many real beekeepers... Sandy Sutch is the only entry under Suffolk. I've submitted an entry which is waiting for approval. Would anyone else like to do the same?
Chris Stephens



Box House Beekeeping Supplies

Box House Beekeeping Supplies - Located in East Bergholt, Suffolk - for the local supply of hives, frames and foundation, tools and other equipment for keeping bees. Open by arrangement - please email or telephone Paul White to discuss your requirements. 01206 299658 or 07768 634038. www.box-bees.co.uk; email: sales@box-bees.co.uk.

Emma Bradford, our EARS2 student

I am the new EARS and BBSRC EASTBIO PhD student based at the University of Aberdeen, looking at interactions between Deformed Wing Virus, *Varroa* mites and European honeybees.

I graduated in 2011 from the University of Stirling with a BSc (Hons) in Biology, with the data from my final year project being published in the journal *Aquaculture*. During my final year I realised how much I enjoyed research and wanted to continue studying Biology. I completed my MSc in Biodiversity and Conservation from the University of Leeds in 2012. Here I pursued my interest in host-parasite interactions, by study these in Bees for my final project. This was focused on investigating the potential for immune priming in the European Honeybee following *Nosema ceranae* infection. Before starting my PhD at Aberdeen, I worked as a volunteer research assistant at Cardiff University for 16 months, working mainly on parasite infections in the German cockroach.

Since starting at Aberdeen in October 2014, I have been getting to grips with the vast literature on deformed wing virus and also learning some molecular biology techniques I'll be using during my PhD project. I attended a beginners' beekeeping course run by Aberdeen & District Beekeepers' Association in winter 2014 and I've now had the opportunity to visit the lab's hives. At the end of 2014, I met another of my supervisors, Dr Giles Budge from the National Bee Unit, to discuss my project. In spring 2015, I will be spending 2-3 months at the government's Pirbright Institute (formerly Institute for Animal Health) in Surrey to develop methods for culturing deformed wing virus in cell culture. This will be a great opportunity to learn some important techniques at the world's leading institute for research on some of the most devastating viruses of farmed animals. If I am successful, this will be a great "tool" for bee researchers across the world and I'll use this in my project back in Aberdeen.

MAQS (Mite Away Quick Strips - a control for Varroa mites)

The active ingredient is formic acid. The big attraction is that they do their work in only 7 days. There have, however, been awful stories of queen loss, etc. Sandra Gray, our SBI, has kindly forwarded the following: Use only on colonies of a minimum of 10,000 bees / 6 frames. Do not disturb the colony 24 hours prior to treatment. Use over solid floors with the hive entrance fully open, a minimum of 13 mm high. Do not remove the 'ecoflex' paper - it is this which controls the acid release rate. Leave for 7 days. A super on with empty frames increases the efficacy. The manufacturer would like any problems reported - the toll free telephone number is 00800-67226633.

Hive cleaning & sterilisation - see:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/downloadDocument.cfm?id=1062>. Polystyrene hives may be sterilised with 'Virkon S' so don't have to be held under in a washing soda solution for 20 minutes!

Plan Bee (Protecting Pollinators)

The government has made an agreement with landowners including Network Rail and the Highways Agency to restore bee-friendly habitat throughout England. It is part of a ten year National Pollinator Strategy and includes country-wide stewardship schemes, worth a total of £900M, to provide financial incentives for farmers to plant wild flowers, grow pollinator friendly crops and to carry out their activities in a pollinator friendly way. The plan was announced in early November by Environment Secretary Elizabeth Truss. She said in her keynote speech that "our health, our jobs, and our future prosperity and security depend on nature". Source: BBC News

Le Frelon Viendra

In December we decided that we would take a trip over the Channel and do some timely purchasing of wine, and seasonal comestibles. The French have a different slant on the festive season and do not involve themselves in the frenetic charge to the shops and the mad internet race to get 'stuff' delivered four weeks ahead of Christmas. On Saturday December 20th, the roads, shops and markets of Brittany were functioning like any other Saturday in the year. If anything, the roads were quieter.

We landed at St. Malo and went to two street markets, one in Paramé and the other in Dinan. At both I chatted to local beekeepers selling honey, pollen, royal jelly, various lozenges and beeswax products. I noticed that their prices were higher than in previous years and were now very much closer to British prices, at €11.50 (£9.20) per kg for general floral honey. When we got onto the subject of how good a season the summer of 2014 had been, their faces dropped. It seems that they had the same good weather that we enjoyed here in the UK, but they had suffered terribly at the hands of 'le frelon'. *Le frelon* is French for the hornet. We have been told, for two or three years now, that the Asian Hornet is just waiting to cross the channel, and although I heard it too, it didn't really hit home until then.

Remember that it was just one shipment of garden pots from China to the Bordeaux region of France that brought the Asian hornet (*Vespa velutina nigrithorax*) to Europe. It is now present in the entirety of France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal and Italy. It really will not take much for it to make the short hop onto one of the twenty, or so, ferries that come over from France every single day of the year.

Beekeeping in France is different, in many ways, from British beekeeping. The most obvious difference is that the population of France is almost identical to that of England, but France is much, much bigger. This means that the available forage for bees tends to be sparser and most beekeepers only have one harvest each year, unless they involve themselves in migratory beekeeping to areas like chestnut plantations, which they do, but the annual harvest per hive is generally not as high as in the UK and chestnut honey commands a premium, selling for €14.50 (£11.60) per kg. When I mentioned harvests of 36kg (80 lbs) per hive this year, these French beekeepers were 'gob claquer' (*gob smacked*). They had the same weather as we did last season, but less available forage. This could mean that colonies were more susceptible to predation from hornets, but that is pure speculation. Regardless of the reasons and rationale, be prepared, because I, for one, am convinced that 'le frelon viendra' (*The hornet will come*). It's just a matter of when.

Stewart Gould, Somerton via eBees

See the Asian Hornet's progress across Europe

https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?msa=0&mid=zQZZvCfj_cXQo.k0cLRXyow4C0



How do belowground organisms influence plant-pollinator interactions?

Nicholas Barber & Nicole Soper Gordon, Northern Illinois University; J Plant Ecol. 2015; 8:1-11.

Summary The majority of angiosperms are pollinated by animals, and this interaction is of enormous importance in both agricultural and natural systems. Pollinator behaviour is influenced by plants' floral traits, and these traits may be modified by interactions with other community members. In recent years, knowledge of ecological linkages between above and belowground organisms has grown tremendously. Soil communities are extremely diverse, and when their interactions with plants influence floral characteristics, they have the potential to alter pollinator attraction and visitation, but plant-pollinator interactions have been neglected in studies of the direct and indirect effects of soil organism-root interactions. Here, we review these belowground interactions, focusing on the effects of nitrogen-fixing bacteria, arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi and root-feeding herbivores, and their effects on floral traits and pollinators. Further, we identify gaps in our knowledge of these indirect effects and recommend promising directions and topics that should be addressed by future research.

Important Findings Belowground organisms can influence a wide variety of floral traits that are important mediators of pollinator attraction, including the number and size of flowers and nectar and pollen production. Other traits that are known to influence pollinators in some plant species, such as floral volatiles, colour and nectar composition, have rarely or never been examined in the context of belowground plant interactions. Despite clear effects on flowers, relatively few studies have measured pollinator responses to belowground interactions. When these indirect effects have been studied, both arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi and root herbivores were found to shift pollinator visitation patterns. Depending on the interaction, these changes may either increase or decrease pollinator attraction. Finally, we discuss future directions for ecological studies that will more fully integrate belowground ecology with pollination biology. We advocate a multilevel approach to these questions to not only document indirect effect pathways between soil interactions and pollination but also identify the mechanisms driving changes in pollinator impacts and the resultant effects on plant fitness.

Microscopy Training

The Icen Microscopy Study Group is holding an intensive two day training course for people interested in obtaining the BBKA's Microscopy Certificate or to improve their skills to this level.

The course will be held at Burgh Apton village hall near Norwich, Norfolk NR15 1AA.

First day: Saturday July 4th, second day September 12th 2015. The cost will be £50 for the 2 days; this will include a light lunch.

For details of the BBKA assessment prospectus go to http://www.bbka.org.uk/files/library/microscopy_2015_1419845467.pdf. For more information on the Icen group go to www.icenimsg.co.uk Hall location www.berhaptionvillagehall.org.uk

Please contact John Blakesley at jandblakesley@gmail.com or 01502 478538 for further information and to register your interest.

There was an old man of St. Bees,
Who was stung in the arm by a wasp,
When asked, "Does it hurt?"
He replied, "No, it doesn't,
I'm so glad that it wasn't a hornet." W S Gilbert

Pam Ayres - "The Beekeeper"

I miss my lovely wife - she's gone - I've lost her, that's for sure.
I'm afraid she's caught Beekeeping and there isn't any cure.
I can hear her clattering from deep inside the shed.
Carrying enormous boxes so you cannot see 'er 'ead.
My wife is in the barn; I am a very lonely chap.
She's out there making frames and going tappy, tappy, tap.
I get no smile of greeting as she makes another batch.
Her mouth is full of gimpy pins - they might go down the 'atch!

She talks a different language. It's all gibberish to me.
A hive is a 'Commercial' or a 'WBC'.
She's fiddling with fondant or she's placing pollen traps.
Or she wakes up screaming: "Oh my God, it's colony collapse!"
I miss our holidays; we don't do anything together.
She took her bees to Scotland; they went camping on the heather.
Oh, she cannot spend the time - the bees need treating for Varroa.
Then she's going on a conference: "Beekeeping in Samoa".

Christmas is a-coming. I am sitting in my room,
Wishing that my wife would like a bottle of perfume.
I know what she prefers - and they are things I can afford -
But where to find a rhombus or locate a Snelgrove Board?
Every time I see her, I'm convinced I'm going to choke.
She is permanently trapped in an engulfing cloud of smoke.
We had apples upon the branches once; that's how it used to be.
But now it's swarms of bees that are suspended up the tree.

Last night I saw a figure moving in the undergrowth.
I saw the flash of metal and I swore a mighty oath.
"A terrorist!" I cried and leapt up brandishing the poker.
But then me wife came forward with a hive tool and a smoker.
She was once so shy and fragrant. Then, we cuddled and we kissed.
But that was long before my wife became an apiarist.
Now she drops her suit and doesn't care what anybody thinks.
It may be smoke or sweatiness - but, either way, she stinks!

She's been extracting honey and the house looks like a slum.
She makes me wind the handle which in turn rotates the drum.
Thickly in a warming tank we stand and watch it pour.
And our hands stick to the table and our feet stick to the floor.
But now from our endeavour - see the product - see the fruits
Of summer days spent sweltering in rubber gloves and boots.
Light our golden beeswax candles, now let love and romance burst,
Sipping honey by the bucketful - but 'ave a shower first!

Some queens lay multiple eggs in cells

Last year we found two queens laying multiple eggs.
Within a couple of weeks, the workers had removed the extras leaving perfect capped brood.
Over the weekend, we held our first inspection and found some they had not yet fixed.



Sarah Assis Sah'Non

Suffolk BKA at the Suffolk Show

The Suffolk Show is the Suffolk Beekeepers' Association's "Big Day Out". The SBKA appoints a Show Secretary who is responsible for liaising with the Suffolk Agricultural Association to ensure we have a tent, tables, electricity and enough day passes for the army of volunteer stewards who man the tent for two days.

Inside the tent we try to represent all aspects of beekeeping but pride of place must go to the beautiful and impressive honey show. The competition has numerous classes, some open to all and some only open to SBKA members. All the entries must be in on the Tuesday before the Show. If people find this deadline hard to meet, they can arrange for delivery of entries by the branch secretary or the show representative for their branch. The entries are laid out taking up a whole side of the tent. It is a sight to behold. On the Wednesday morning, two judges spend the morning, assisted by volunteer stewards, assessing and tasting all the entries of honey, mead, cakes, preserves and hive products. The various trophies and awards are presented on Thursday afternoon. This year, Bob Flowerdew, Britain's most well-known organic gardener and a beekeeper himself, will be presenting the awards and giving a short talk on the importance of organic gardening to bees.

The Suffolk Show is an opportunity for SBKA members to engage with the public and spread the word about beekeeping. We have a children's table, touch table, wax rolling, observation hives and microscopy – all with the aim of educating the public and helping them to understand how beautiful and amazing bees are, and how important they are to nature.

This year we will be introducing a new logo for the Suffolk Beekeepers tent at the Suffolk Show which was selected by a competition which many SBKA members entered. The new logo coincides with introducing new signs and decoration within the tent. If you have been before you will notice some changes and if you have never been, maybe 2015 should be your first year. Find out what the SBKA does at the Suffolk Show, admire the Honey Show and think about entering next year!

Liz Marley



"Bees, flies and flowers: the ecology of pollination and why it matters"

At Cambridge University Institute of Continuing Education's home, Madingley Hall, over the weekend of the 26 – 28 June. The course costs £250 which includes lunch & dinner over the weekend, refreshments and tuition. It is also possible to stay at Madingley Hall's B&B over the weekend at an additional cost from £50 per night, subject to availability. If you would like to sign up or would like more information about the course, please visit www.ice.cam.ac.uk/bees.

Swift mating!

Per Kryger, a Danish scientist investigating deformed wing virus, released a queen from a mating hive. She returned 8 minutes later and was found to have mated with 23 drones in that time!

Ipswich & East Suffolk BKA Matters

SBKA Nosema Afternoon, Sunday 10th May Dallinghoo Jubilee Hall IP13 0JX form 2 - 4 pm

This really ought to have been earlier - but better late than never!
If you want us to check for this disease, bring a sample of no fewer than 30 bees. Details of ways to catch them and kill them and a reference form from Jeremy Quinlan: JeremyQ@tiscali.co.uk.

Bee Tea & Skep Making: Sunday 28th June

At Walk Farm, Martlesham, IP12 4PE; just off the road from the Martlesham Red Lion to Waldringfield (courtesy John & Jackie Naylor).

This is primarily a social event for members; do come!

It is also an opportunity for those interested in taking up beekeeping to see bees, handle them & talk to members; apiary tours at 2.15 & 3.00; booking essential.

Skep making with John Fairhurst & Annette Whittaker from 10:00 - limited to the first twelve who apply.

Please email JeremyQ@tiscali.co.uk or phone **Jeremy 01473 737700** to book a place, a tour or to say that you are just coming for the tea.



Apiary Safari: Saturday 11th July.

Conducted by Keith Morgan, our Regional Bee Inspector, we will visit several garden apiaries of new and established beekeepers. This will be a joint Safari with the Stowmarket & District BKA so will probably be to the west of Ipswich. Details follow.

RSVP by 30 June to JeremyQ@tiscali.co.uk / 01473-737700.

We welcome our new members

Peter Barber, Phil Bennett, Heather Carter, Mike Carter, Robert Clare, Nick Clements, Charles Currie, Dena Darling, Radoslaw Darmochwal, Nerida Draper, Maureen Howard, Julie Kristensen, Peter Lewis, Colin Low, Chris Nunn, Andy Smuk, Cara Warner, Shaun Warner, Yvonne Westley, Sam Williams, David Wilson & Helen Wilson.

When last I checked, our membership was up to 195.

Your Committee

At the Ipswich & East Suffolk BKA AGM the members elected:

President: David Adams

Chairman: Jeremy Quinlan

Treasurer: Jackie McQueen

Secretary: Malcolm Marchant

Committee:

Charlie Dansey, Betsy Reid, Steven Carter & Stephen Bambridge. Gillian Leung continues as our Librarian (and so continues on our Committee). Stephen B has become our Suffolk Show rep, Betsy is our speaker finder & Jeremy our Education Sec.

Please feel free to contact any member of the committee if you have a point to make - praise or criticism - we really do want to hear from you! Silence is just depressing!

Association honey extractors

The Association has two extractors – one electrical and the other mechanical. We ask that, if you do borrow one, you keep it no longer than 3 days.

Please contact me on 01473 420187 if you want one.

Jackie McQueen, 643 Foxhall Road, Ipswich IP3 8NE

Beekeeper Training

Emily Adams of Lancaster University reported the results of her investigation in *Bee World* 91(4) 2014. A key statement was:

... there are some important mismatches between what policy-makers do for beekeepers, what beekeepers need help with, and how beekeepers understand and manage their bees. Critically, there is a need to link beekeeping training (currently focused on skill acquisition) with honey bee ecology and the role of the environment in bee health. This is important both within hives, for example understanding how pests and diseases are influenced by colony condition, itself a result of foraging, weather, etc., and with the wider environment such as the availability of forage, agricultural practices, etc. This requires a more holistic approach, both within bee groups such as the British Beekeepers Association, but also within government policy of the wider environment.

James Ferguson comments:

A very interesting and insightful piece of research, I think I find myself in full agreement. It highlights issue in society and education as a whole and the problems described are wide spread across all human activity. We live in a very complex world and we all have a desire to simplify it, in order to comprehend it to any meaningful degree. This is true from the stock markets to pig framing. Biological systems are particularly complex and the increased understanding of quantum theory is shedding new light on them. Exciting times!

There are two fundamental and in many way opposing forces at play here. Science works by testing a hypothesis and providing evidence to support it. All the variables apart for the one you are testing are controlled and every effort is made to find an exact causal link.

If I do A to my bees, B will happen. This is relatively easy to teach and learn. BUT Stockmanship (craft) address the whole system be that the ecosystem, hive, organism or more likely all of these! These systems are too complicated for simple science and quantum theory is starting to explain why this is. Having an understanding for a system and how it works (not just simple elements of it) is a different mental process altogether it requires, lots of thinking and empathy. Explaining and teaching this understanding is fiendishly difficult if not downright impossible. We aim for true understanding and mastery in a craft that requires much more than passing exams and learning stuff. Only experience can do it but even experience alone is nowhere near enough. For example some people work with animals (including bees) for years and never really develop that understanding of what is going on. They just do A and hope B happens - well, it did last time.

So in the real world it is more like if I do A it will increase B which will effect C, D, E, F and G which will in turn effect H, J, I,..... which may result in X, Y, Z or not depending on Y, O, P..... The craft comes in when you understand the system intuitively well enough to know that a small intervention here is likely to have a positive effect there and any negative effects are in all probability going to be acceptable and therefore the overall position we be better than if you do nothing.

Science gives us small modules of known effect that we can use to tweak the system, hopefully in a positive way. e.g. Using oxalic acid in winter.

I like to think of myself as a stockman and a scientist. I try to understand the whole system and when I intervene I like to think I do it scientifically knowing the immediate effects and the likely implications on the whole system. I like to think that, but like all people I'm very self-delusional and often I'm sure I work on preconceived ideas and hunches.

Who said keeping bees was easy?

Calendar		Members of the six Associations which form the Suffolk Beekeepers' Association are welcome to attend any or all these meetings. There will be other meetings but details were not available at the time we went to press.
Ipswich & ES BKA winter meetings are held in the Scout Hall, Kesgrave IP5 1JF from 7:30pm.		
Thu 7 May	Current state of colonies - a discussion	Norwich & District Jason Coward 07907 898336
Sun 10 May	Nosema Afternoon 2 – 4pm Dallinghoo Jubilee Hall IP13 0JX	Suffolk BKA Jeremy Quinlan 01473 737700
Sun 10 May	Club Apiary opens (& every other Sunday), Nowton Park, Bury St E	West Suffolk BKA
Thu 14 May	Preparing honey for show: Jill Tinsey Creeping St Mary Village Hall 7:30	Stowmarket BKA Alan Seager 07766 443400
Wed 27 & Thu 28 May	The Suffolk Show	Suffolk BKA Liz Marley 01473 614114 07799 470913
Thu 4 Jun	Seasonal Bee Inspector Stewart Spinks	Norwich & District Jason Coward 07907 898336
Tue 9 Jun	Bee Diseases Creeping St Mary Village Hall 7:30	Stowmarket BKA Alan Seager 07766 443400
Sun 28 Jun	Bee Tea & Skep Making at Walk Farm, Martlesham Details on page 7.	Ipswich & ES Jeremy Quinlan 01473 737700
Thu 2 Jul	Harvesting honey Winter preparations	Norwich & District Jason Coward 07907 898336
Sat 11 Jul	Apiary Safari With Stowmarket & District BKA Details to follow	Jeremy Quinlan 01473 737700

A request from the BBKA

At the 2015 ADM, the Executive agreed to determine the regulatory agency responsible for the prevention of the contamination of honey with sugar and other residues [left accessible to bees] and to seek ways in which such contamination could be stopped. Initial contacts made with the Environment Agency resulted in a request from them for more information and examples of such contamination. Please inform me of any such occurrences which have happened to you and / or to your members.

Dr David Aston, Chair, BBKA Technical & Environmental Cttee

Collecting swarms and insurance

It's easy to assume that, because we are covered by third party public liability insurance through the BBKA, collecting swarms is a relatively risk-free business. However, we need to be aware that the insurance we have through the BBKA carries an excess of £500 for third party property damage claims. Since this is more likely to occur than damage to people (hopefully at any rate!!), collecting that swarm might turn out to be a costly exercise. Be warned!

Details of the excess on the BBKA website (under FAQ's) are currently incorrect but the above has been confirmed by the BBKA. *Courtesy Wedmore & Cheddar via eBees*

The I&ES BKA has been offered the tenancy of an apiary site, but we would love to buy our own - do you know of a suitable corner somewhere? If you do, or think you might, please tell us.

The Buzz Club hopes to transform the way people learn and interact with the natural world, giving them an opportunity to become active participants in scientific research, while generating vital data on pollinators and the pollination they provide.

We have previously run a number "citizen science" projects, including Beans & Bees and the Pollination Abundance Network (P.A.N.), which over 600 people took part in last year. Both were a great success, giving us valuable up-to-date information on pollination and pollinator abundance across the UK. Really to understand changes in pollinator populations, however, continuous year-on year monitoring is desperately needed.

The projects would be suitable for children and adults alike, and will provide a fun way for the whole family to participate in science. We would also send quarterly newsletters with updates on what we have found so far, so that we can all see how the projects are helping to generate usable data.

There is of course a catch; we ask members to pay a small subscription fee to help cover the costs of running these projects, a monthly fee of a minimum of £2. As a not-for-profit organisation, 100% of this money will go to supporting this work.

If you would be interested in joining and supporting The Buzz Club, please fill out this form, so we can gauge interest in this project. There is no obligation to sign-up after completing the form here (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BuzzClubInterest>). If we gain enough interest, we will contact you again once we are underway.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely

Professor Dave Goulson

Honey cake (Naomi Spencer's recipe)

Ingredients

225g\8oz unsalted butter
250g\9oz clear honey, plus 2tbsp extra to glaze
100g\4oz light Muscovado sugar
3 large eggs beaten
300g\10oz self-raising flour

Method

1. Pre heat oven to 160°C\gas 3 \ fan oven 140°C.
Butter and line a 20cm\8in round loose bottomed cake tin
Cut butter into pieces and drop into a medium pan with the honey and sugar. Melt slowly over a low heat.
When liquid, increase the heat under the pan and boil for about 1 minute. Leave to cool
2. Beat the eggs into the cooled honey mixture using a wooden spoon.
Sift the flour into a large bowl and pour in the egg and honey mixture, beating until you have a smooth batter.
3. Pour the mixture into the tin and bake for 50mins to 1 hour until the cake is well risen, golden brown and springs back when pressed.
4. Turn the cake out onto a wire rack.
5. Warm 2 tbsps of honey in a small pan and brush over the top of the cake to glaze and leave to cool.

Bitter sweet nectar: Why some flowers poison bees

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22630180.500-bitter-sweet-nectar-why-some-flowers-poison-bees.html>

Swarms & catch hives

We took a swarm call a week ago! I have my catch hive on the oil tank. The higher they are, the better they work.