

THE IPSWICH & EAST SUFFOLK BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

First Founded 1880; Registered Charity 1158794



Newsletter for January - April 2015

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

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We are now also Registered Charity 1158794

Steven Carter's second application on our behalf was accepted - so The Ipswich & East Suffolk Beekeepers' Association is now a Registered Charity. Thank you, Steven, for all your hard work.

The premier advantage of this is status. While, clearly, we are not in the same league as Oxfam or the Wellcome Trust we now have a status and one to live up to.

The second advantage is financial. For those members who pay Income or Capital Gains Tax, we can claim back the tax they have paid on those parts of their subscriptions which have not given a direct benefit - so not the Bee Disease Insurance premium nor, if taken, Bee Craft magazine. That still leaves a decent sum and for every £1 of it, we get back 25p from HM Treasury.

Little in life is free so we have an obligation. What we do must be of benefit to the public. This is the test. While some may worry that our new status could be a burden, I think it is much better seen as a clarification of what we have always done anyway. Here there has only been the very slightest change.

Working in Ipswich and East Suffolk, the charity's Objects are to:

- 1) Promote and further the craft of beekeeping.
- 2) Advance the education of the public in the environmental and economic importance of bees.

I shall expand on this in our next newsletter.

Your Committee, your Charity's Trustees, wish you an excellently happy and successful 2015.

Jeremy Quinlan

Some really excellent lectures from the National Honey Shows

may be seen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiOtJebcpY0Zqqma0H5wLYQ>

The National Pollinator Strategy

This was published on 4th November, 2014. For details, see: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/370199/pb14221-national-pollinator-strategy.pdf. I wholeheartedly recommend all those sympathetic to bees read this - it isn't long, only 36 pages and in large print with pictures.

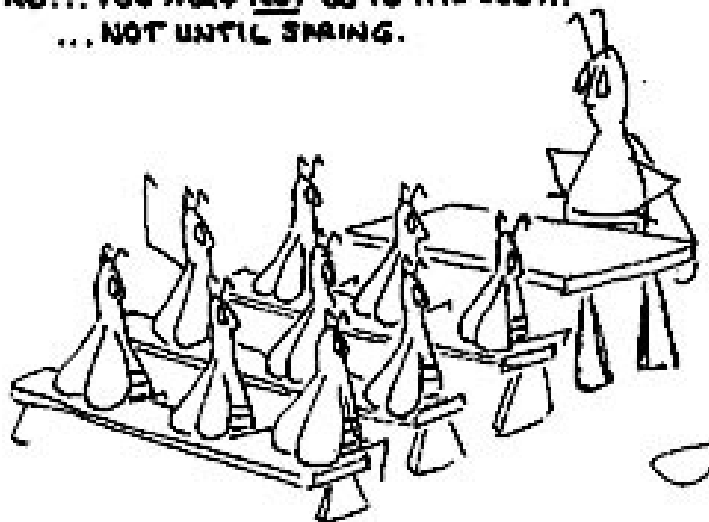
See also: *Bees' Needs: Food and a Home:*

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/Bees-needs>. This is illustrated by a short cartoon making the points that bees need us to:

1. Grow more flowers, shrubs and trees.
2. Let it grow wild.
3. Cut grass less often.
4. Don't disturb insect nests and hibernation spots.
5. Think carefully about whether to use pesticides.

You might like to compare the UK version with the US one [here](#).

NO... YOU MAY NOT GO TO THE LOG...
... NOT UNTIL SPRING.



With thanks to Paget Sound BKA

Subscription Rates For 2015

Registered (Ordinary) Member	£25.00
Partner Member	£16.00
Country Member (No bees)	£12.00
Junior Member	£15.00

These rates reflect the increase in the BBKA Capitation fee. As Partner Members do not pay the £2 basic Bee Disease Insurance (BDI) premium, if a Registered and a Partner Member work together, only three colonies will be covered by disease insurance and any extra colonies will need to be paid for under the “additional colonies” section of the subscription form.

You may still subscribe to the paper copy of Bee Craft at the same rate as last year, £24.30. However, if you would like only the digital copy, this will be £16.00. Both offers are conditional on **you paying before 15th February 2015.**

The subscription form can be found on the website, www.suffolkbeekeepers.co.uk under the Ipswich button. As usual, if you have not paid your subscription by 31st March 2015, there will be a 40 day delay on the start of your BDI insurance cover.

Do not forget to tick the swarm box if you are willing to collect swarms – this is for the list that goes to the police, pest control companies, environmental health departments, etc. in Suffolk. If you wish to be on the BBKA website for swarm collection, please contact Ian McQueen, the County Secretary, on jackie.mcqueen@ntlworld.com.

As we have achieved charitable status, we will be able to claim Gift Aid, so, if you are a tax payer, please tick the appropriate box on the on-line form or attach a form if you are sending your subscription to me by post. For those who use a paper form, there is a Gift Aid declaration form on the back.

Hoping you all have a good beekeeping year.

Jackie McQueen, Treasurer

What? Nasty Bees?

Going back a few years, a certain gentleman from the north east of the county phoned me and asked if I had any bees for sale. He said he had lost all his colonies over winter. I was a little reluctant to strike any deal with him because he was not a member of the Association, if he had been then he would not have lost any of his colonies. He would have treated for varroa as all Associations were urging their members to do so as part of their winter preparation. In the end I sold him a particular colony that I wanted to get rid of, because it was nasty. It was one of those colonies that on a routine inspection you leave to the last. Anyway he dropped £180 in twenty pound notes into my hand and seemed quite happy with the deal.

My wife immediately gave me some stick and said, “You rotten bugger fancy selling him that colony”. Well, I was glad to get rid of it. For weeks after I was expecting a phone call from this guy asking for his money back. Yes sure enough the phone rang and it was this guy but he was not complaining about the bees being aggressive but just the opposite. Every time he went into the colony they were always calm and gentle bees and they were prolific honey gatherers and he asked if I had any more colonies like that for sale. So the only conclusion I can come to is that the bees are particular to where they are located and could object violently if they are moved out off or into a habitat they don't like.

Mike Cross

The Derbyshire Beekeeper, September 2014

The Suffolk Beekeepers' Association

The Suffolk Beekeepers' Association:



- We are a group of six Associations, five across the county of Suffolk and one in Norfolk
- Total membership is now 712. This is an extraordinary increase from 250 members over the past five years.
- The County Committee meets four times a year and is accountable to the members at its Annual General Meeting.
- The County Association's aims are to further and promote the craft of beekeeping and to advance the education of the public in the importance of bees in the environment.
- It arranges the Honey Show at the Suffolk Show. This event is the shop window of the County Association at the kind invitation of the Suffolk Agricultural Association.
- It is also the conduit through which Associations can influence the policies and activities of the British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA).
- The County officers are elected at the AGM.
- The Delegate representing the County at the BBKA's ADM is elected by the County Committee at the AGM. Reports from the officers and ADM delegate are presented to the membership at the AGM which is open to all members.
- The County Committee discusses any propositions from the associations and decides whether these should be sent the BBKA for discussion at the ADM and possible implementation by the BBKA Executive Committee.

The Suffolk Associations. Each association is a self-governing body that complies with the Constitution of the BBKA. They are:

- Ipswich and East Suffolk Beekeepers' Association
- Leiston and District Beekeepers' Association
- Norwich and District Bee Keeping Club (This Association is in Norfolk but has joined the Suffolk Beekeepers' Association).
- Stowmarket and District Beekeepers' Association
- Waveney Beekeepers' Group
- West Suffolk Beekeepers' Association

- **The British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA)**
- The British Beekeepers Association was founded in 1874. It represents, at national level, the interests of 24,000 amateur beekeeper members and is the registered charity No. 212025.
- It publishes monthly a newsletter the “BBKA News” which is sent to all members.
- Its charitable objectives are ‘to further and promote the craft of beekeeping and to advance the education of the public in the importance of bees in the environment’.
- It is governed by elected Trustees in accordance with the Constitution.
- Funding is through membership fees, donations from companies, charitable trusts and individuals.
- The officers of the BBKA are held accountable to the membership for carrying out policy decisions at the Annual Delegates' Meeting (ADM) held once a year.
- The Officers, Trustees and Executive members are elected by the Area Associations at the ADM.

Laurie Wiseman, Suffolk Delegate to the BBKA ADM

Stewarding at the BBKA Spring Convention

Every year since becoming a beekeeper I have looked with interest at the advertisements for the BBKA Spring Convention. The programmes stirred my curiosity but I couldn't contemplate travelling to Stoneleigh and back in one day and, without knowing what the Convention was like, staying overnight seemed rather indulgent.

I could hardly believe my luck when it moved to Harper Adams University, a mere 20 miles from my childhood home and a stone's throw from a very good friend who lives in nearby Newport. So in January when the BBKA News carried a "Wanted" notice asking for volunteer stewards for the Spring Convention 2014, I thought I would give it a go. Pausing only to phone my friend in Newport to book accommodation, I sent an e-mail off to Norman Hughes, the Chief Steward, to volunteer my services. I was delighted to be accepted on the understanding that I would attend all three days and that I would provide a white coat to wear when on duty. I readily agreed.

Now I only had to wait and wonder what lay ahead, for, to paraphrase Forrest Gump's mother: "Volunteering is like a box of chocolates – you never know what you're going to get."

So I was very nervous when I arrived early on Friday April 4th 2014 at Harper Adams University. This was my first view of the University. In a previous life it was an Agricultural College and so its location in the midst of the beautiful Shropshire countryside was no surprise, however, the collegiate layout of the buildings, many of them recently built, was a very pleasant surprise. The BBKA lectures, workshops, exhibitions and trade stands were dispersed among these various buildings, each of which required a team of stewards.

After registration I was assigned to The Regional Food Academy Building under the direction of lead Steward Tony Bamberger. This is a light and airy modern building with a large concourse and a lecture theatre which was used by some of the Speakers at the Convention. Any latecomers to the lectures were not allowed into the lecture hall once the speaker had started but could view the lecture on TV in an overspill room upstairs.

Tony Bamberger led a team of 6-8 volunteer stewards. He briefed us on what our duties were: issuing tickets for the various lectures; manning entrances and exits before and after each lecture, ensuring that no-one entered the lecture hall once the speaker had begun and escorting latecomers to the overspill room. On the face of it, the tasks were straightforward but dealing with "The Public" always throws up unforeseen complications which we handled as best we could and anything we couldn't we referred back to Norman Hughes' team in Reception.

Volunteer Stewards are only on duty for approximately half of each day, the rest of the time they are free to attend lectures, demonstrations (apart from pre-booked, pre-paid events), visit the trade stands or meet up with friends. Tony was very generous in allocating our duties and, where possible, accommodating anyone who wanted to go to a specific lecture or event and making sure that we all had lunch and coffee breaks. So as well as being able to watch all the lectures of interest to me in the overspill room, I was free to see other exhibitions, the trade stands and to buy some equipment at reduced prices.

As a team, we all got on extremely well, had lots of laughs and shared many enlightening beekeeping experiences. By the close of the Convention we had all resolved to volunteer again next year-as long as we can be in Tony's team. So, come next January, it will be another phone call to my friend and an e-mail to Norman Hughes.

At the Spring Convention I discovered that volunteering is a very enjoyable and fulfilling way of learning new things and making new friends. I recommend it to you. Go on, have a go!

Linda Wood

BBKA Examinations & Assessments

"Education is the path from cocky ignorance to miserable uncertainty" - Mark Twain

If anyone 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. Apply to Adrian Howard, the BBKA County Examinations Officer, [Adrian](mailto:Adrian@bbka.co.uk); 01394 411561.

In addition to those we have already congratulated, Karen Best (Basic) and Eloise Best (Junior) were also successful in 2014:

Quite a number sat Module exams in November but we have not yet heard the results; these are expected shortly.

Bee Improvement for All; 1st March 2015

The Suffolk BKA has arranged for Roger Patterson of the Bee Improvement & Bee Breeders' Association (BIBBA) to run this course. It will be held in the Old Newton Village Hall, Church Road, Stowmarket,, IP14 4ED at 9.00 for 9.30 - 4.30 approx.

[Details](mailto:JeremyQ@tiscali.co.uk) Book a place with Jeremy Quinlan JeremyQ@tiscali.co.uk or 01473 737700. Cost £10.

The General Husbandry Assessment

After taking the Basic, the next step, after at least five years keeping bees, is the General Husbandry Assessment. This is the only BBKA assessment that takes place in your own apiary.

The syllabus is downloadable from the BBKA website so, if you are thinking of taking it, read that. Those who fail usually haven't!

A knowledge of disease, queen raising and honey processing is required but nothing really difficult beyond normal beekeeping.

Once qualified, you may be asked to become a Basic assessor - it is really good to meet the up-and-coming beekeepers.

A preparation course has been arranged for Sat 25th April at Dallinghoo & 16th May at Easton. Book with Jeremy Quinlan JeremyQ@tiscali.co.uk or 01473 737700. Cost c.£5-10.



Box House Beekeeping Supplies

[Box House Beekeeping Supplies](http://www.box-bees.co.uk) - 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.

A Video Well Worth Watching

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FtKqic69xVo>

NOVA chronicles a year in the life of a bee colony with wonderful images that show the innermost secrets of the hive. The documentary team spent a year developing special macro lenses and a bee studio to deliver the film's astonishing sequences. These include the "wedding flight" of the colony's virgin queen as she mates in mid-air with a drone; the life-and-death battle between two rival queens, the defeat and death of a thieving wasp at the entrance to the hive and the famous "waggle dance" in which scout bees signal the exact direction and distance of food sources to the foragers.

Peter Edwards. Courtesy of Stratford on Avon BKA and ebees.

Suffolk Beekeepers' Association AGM

Wednesday 4th March 2015 in the Martlesham Community Centre IP12 4PB (behind Tesco's at Martlesham Heath); from 7:30pm. The I&ES BKA will be hosting this; please support us.

Beekeeping Through The Camera Lens Simon Croson - Beekeeper and Photographer

Simon Croson, an eminent bee photographer (winner of two gold medals at Apimondia) came to talk to us about photographing bees. He has been keeping bees for ten years (the result he says of a mid-life crisis!) and is now a commercial beekeeper in Lincolnshire with 250 colonies and his own business 'The Artisan Honey Company'.

When Simon was a boy he had a Box Brownie camera (and later an SLR) with which he attempted to photograph birds; this proved tricky (birds don't keep still) so he decided to photograph flowers instead. Somewhat prophetically, his first cherished photograph is of a bee orchid!

Simon first began to photograph his bees in order to remember what he had seen during routine inspections – much quicker than writing everything down and, he says, a fantastic way to learn as taking photographs can lead to a better understanding of why and how bees do what they do. He uses an Olympus DSLR with various lenses, flash and support. His first real bee photo shows a close-up view of varroa mites on bees, which he says he was able to use as evidence when the person who supplied the bees denied they had any varroa! Simon showed us some beautiful photographs he has taken, including some of the Fortnum & Mason gold medal winning garden complete with bee hives at the 2009 Chelsea Flower Show.

The basic principles of bee photography are, Simon advises, first to understand how your bees react to the camera; secondly, never take chances with strange bees; thirdly, get as close as possible (but safely) to avoid using the zoom function. Be careful, if you are wearing a veil and you have the camera to your eye – the bees may sting your face!

A good opportunity to photograph bees is when they are foraging in the countryside. Simon's advice is to approach slowly and gently so bees don't fly off, then to remain as still as possible so as not to disturb them. Use a monopod to avoid the shakes and stabilize the camera. Control depth of field (f-stops) to isolate the subject or increase the area in focus; the higher the f-stop, the more of the picture will be in focus. Throw the background out of focus to concentrate focus on your subject. Use flash for extra detail; more light = greater f-stop = more of the photo in focus. Open ground behind the subject can be dark because the flash is unable to light it up, so use this to your advantage. A tripod is difficult to use with moving insects unless you use it to aim at a particular point and wait for a bee to arrive, so he doesn't tend to use one much.

Simon also explained about shutter speed; this is the amount of time the shutter of the camera is 'open'. A very short shutter speed of 1/2000 of a second is good for fast moving subjects such as bees whereas a long shutter speed is good for slow pictures such as the stars at night. A short shutter speed requires lots of light so use the flash. Auto-focus is not fast enough to photograph flying bees. In order to photograph bees at the hive entrance, Simon suggests pre-focusing on the hive entrance and then following the bees. He also suggests having some fun and being creative with your photographs, for example taking black and white pictures of foraging bees and then highlighting the pollen with bright orange (he showed us some stunning examples of this technique). Play with different lenses, such as a 'fish eye lens' which allows a wide angle but looks rounded at the edges. Practice and take lots of pictures. Listen to feedback and, if entering photographs in a competition, listen to the judges.

To photograph comb Simon suggests asking someone to hold the frame up for you, then use flash into the light. Take the opportunity to attend disease study days and take pictures. Build up a photographic teaching resource library and share your pictures using social media such as Facebook. Simon also discussed positioning your camera over your microscope and photographing subjects such as nosema and pollen.

Simon showed us one of his photographs (of borage) on the front cover of 'Bee Culture' magazine and explained that in order for a photograph to be suitable for a front cover it must be taken in portrait not landscape, with a gap at the top for the magazine title and a gap at the bottom for more writing.

Some of Simon's photographs beautifully capture bee behaviour. For example, how worker bees clean their antennae before setting off on their foraging flights and drones clean both their antennae and eyes before flight.

If you would like to see some of Simon's photographs you can find him on Facebook – Simon Croson – and on his website

www.sicroson.com

Gillian Leung

The Bees by Laline Paull - a review

There is a great deal of beauty and poetry in the world which we miss if we are too scientific. This book gave me an empathy for honey bees which 3 seasons of beekeeping had not.

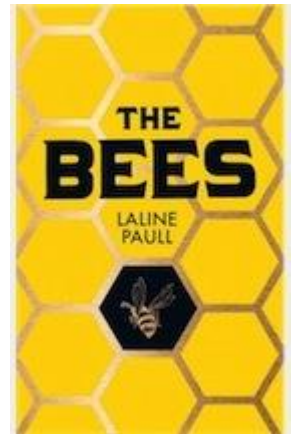
The book's heroine is a worker bee called Flora 717 and follows her life through different hive events from the nursery through to foraging. It is beautifully written and conveyed the amazing phenomenon of the 'hive mind' (how a colony of bees exists as a single minded entity) in human terms which I could understand.

I know bees don't give each other names and experience human emotions of fear and longing, nostalgia and hope but who has not seen a hive panic when it is queenless, be calm when it is healthy and the queen laying? Paull has expressed the collective feelings of the hive in a way which for me was entirely plausible and extremely powerful. The narrative never flags as events unfurl and you have a (human) bee's eye insight into cell-cleaning, nursing, foraging, wax producing, egg laying, feeding drones and worshipping the queen. This delighted me as a literary beekeeper because the writing is superb and not scientific at all. As a beekeeper however, you feel like an insider, you already have an inkling of what is about to happen because of your own understanding of bee behaviour. It is a beautiful, lyrical book and will especially appeal to people who already have glimpsed the secrets of the hive.

I looked up the writer and find that she is not a beekeeper herself but was inspired by a beekeeper friend's stories of bee antics – she could not resist the drama of the hive! However, she has obviously done a lot of research and I did not have any problem suspending disbelief for the entire novel.

I found the foraging passages particularly wonderful and it made me vow to plant even more nectar producing plants – I can't bear the thought that a little Flora might come out, desperately hungry, and be unable to find any nectar! In fact the book made me vow to be a better beekeeper generally and that can't be a bad thing!

Liz Marley



Speakers at Ipswich meetings

Wednesday, 28th January: *Strains & Stings*

Marian Stephens has been a physiotherapist for 40 years, initially in the NHS and now 25 years in private practice, treating a wide range of conditions including spinal and musculoskeletal pain, neurological problems and care of the elderly. She aims to tell us how to avoid joint, spinal and muscular pain caused by beekeeping and life in general, give us tips on equipment and design of apiaries and what to do if you get a strain and how to self-treat.

Jon Tuppen has been a GP for 30 years with a special interest in diabetes and 15 years of involvement in NHS commissioning and management - before sense eventually percolated through! He will review why some people develop allergy and anaphylaxis to stings, what it is in the poison that provokes this cascading immune reaction and most importantly what to do if faced with the situation.

Wednesday 25th March

David Blower: *Learning with the Bees* - A look at how beekeepers at all levels, can build upon their skills and knowledge.

David is the BBKA's Education Coordinator. His job is to help BBKA member associations provide or get access to beekeeper training for their members beyond the introductory level.

Introduced to beekeeping by his wife Margery 10 years ago, they currently manage 30 colonies in South Warwickshire, including an apiary at a local National Trust property, and have worked on Bees Abroad projects in Tanzania.

Wednesday, 22nd April

Celia Davis: *The Ins and Outs of the Honey Bee*

Celia began a lifelong interest in insects as a child and has been keeping bees for more than 30 years. During that time she was Secretary of Warwickshire Beekeepers Association for 11 years and President for 5. She holds a degree in Agriculture and a National Diploma in Beekeeping and worked as a teacher/lecturer in pure and applied biology. She has written many articles, had 2 books published, on bees, runs courses on aspects of beekeeping and lectures widely throughout the British Isles and Ireland. She lives at Berkswell and when she is not involved with bees she enjoys gardening, particularly growing vegetables, and birdwatching.

Can Wax Moths Hear?

Strangely, wax moths do have a tympanum - Spangler used to demonstrate this by shaking a ring of keys several feet from a flying moth in the lab. The moth usually folds its wings and drops to the floor. He surmised it was to avoid bats' echo-location. Try it. He also built a small device on a rotating stand to broadcast this wave, with the hope of keeping wax moths off stored comb.

Posted to Bee-L by John Edwards

POSCA pens for marking queens

Thorne's sells exactly the same pen at £4.50! Buy 3 @ £2.40 and get 1 extra free so they are £1.80 each. 5 or more attract an extra 5% discount. See <http://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/UNI-POSCA-MARKER-PENS-PC5M-BUY-3-GET-ANOTHER-1-FREE-/291102792989>. I've just bought a dozen pens for the Felixstowe group - blue for next season. These pens don't dry out so I'm also buying white ones for 2016.

Chris Stephens

CSI Pollen

A new research project by the International Bee Research Association. Can you help?



Full details of the project can be found at www.ibra.org.uk/articles/CSI-Pollen. This is research into the diversity of pollens collected by honey bees. They need more beekeepers to help.

So what does the "citizen scientist" have to do? Volunteers need to have three colonies of honey bees, three pollen traps (currently, there are some available on loan), three honey jars with lids, an email address and a little time. Every 3 weeks over the season they will receive an automated email giving them a target date for collecting a sample, and containing a unique web-link. They should then run the pollen traps for several days. A sub sample of pollen from each trap, sufficient to fill a honey jar lid is then taken, sorted into different colours and the pellets counted. The data from each colony is then reported. Ideally, the samples are then stored in a freezer for possible detailed analysis later.

The volunteer also needs to find the location of their hives on Google Earth and list the landscape characteristic (such as urban, arable, grassland etc.) nearby. This is the end of the "first level" of the project. Subject to funding being available, the intention is that the bee scientists will be then be able to undertake various "second level" analyses on a subset of samples to provide further information and several laboratories have already offered facilities.

So far, coordinators from 16 countries have decided to take part, with others to follow. Norman Carreck is our co-ordinator for England and Wales. If you are interested in joining the project or have any queries, please contact him on: norman.carreck@btinternet.com

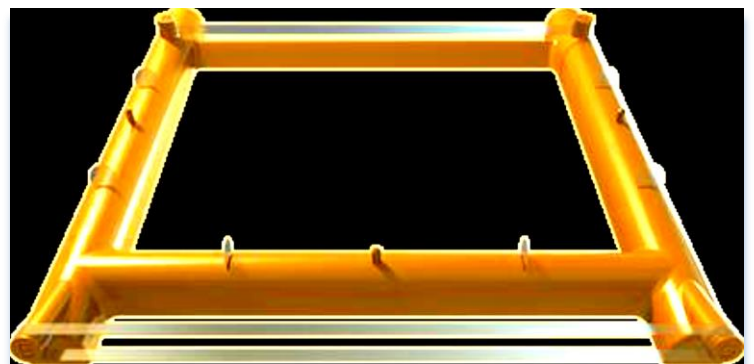
The Bee Gym.

(No, it's not 1st April and it seems to be quite effective.)

This gizmo, which costs £15.00 lies on the hive floor and the bees push past it and so remove mites.

The bees then seem to get the idea and visit it regularly to scrape against its various parts to remove phoretic mites.

The web site <http://www.beegym.co.uk/index.html> has a detailed



description of the kit, a film of how it works and statistics which show it to be very effective.

If it does work, it's a 365 days a year, non-invasive, non-chemical treatment which, in some monitored hives, apparently reduced the mite drop to zero. Perhaps we should try it.

With thanks to Bournemouth and Dorset South BKA.

Highlights from Clive de Bruyn's talk

Clive spoke to The Ipswich & E Suffolk BKA on 22nd October 2014. He travels widely, mostly in the English winter - a good way of keeping heating bills down! His talk: *Learning from beekeepers in foreign parts* focussed on the southern hemisphere.

Pollination is the purpose of bees and pollination must be at the heart of any discussion about them.

The Fynbos is a unique area of plants at the south of South Africa. He is from that area himself and returns periodically to visit relations in Cape Town. There are more than twice as many species of plants in the Fynbos as there are in the whole UK. It is also very windy; this is probably why the local honey bee, *Apis mellifera capensis*, workers have the ability to produce viable queens. While other honey bees may also very occasionally do the same, it is rare for them but common for *A.m. capensis*. That works well in the Fynbos, since deserts and mountains keep them separated from the honey bee sub species next to the north, *A. m. scutellata*. Migration for pollination puts these bees in contact; should Capensis workers drift and start laying in a Scutellata colony, that wrecks it since factions arise and fighting ensues.

Clive recalled how he had been invited to speak at a conference there. When his hosts met him, it was immediately apparent to them that he was not the white man that were expecting from his Boer name so he had to be granted the status of 'honorary white'! He was invited to meet the owner of an apiary who didn't actually work the bees himself; this was done by 'boys' whose ages ranged from 40 to 60. They were provided with no protective clothing since "they don't feel the stings!" At some point, control of the bees was lost and their owner fled.

In many parts of South Africa, apiaries have to be defended and hives chained because the honey is attractive to the poor for making "beer". Twelve foot fencing and a guard armed with a shotgun have been found necessary in some areas.

Another problem can be elephants since nothing much stops them from following their ancient paths. They are, however, frightened of bees which know just where to attack them. Hives, some occupied, some empty, are strung up and the elephants stay away.

For the cognoscenti, the best coffee beans are those that have been through an elephant's digestive system. Clive produced a tub of elephant dung that he had collected in Colchester Zoo and passed it around; the smell was inoffensive.

In Australia, there were no honey bees when Europeans began to settle the country. When they began to grow crops that needed pollination, they brought some bees from 'home'. They had to come by ship and only the fittest survived the voyage so their stock is generally good. They do not yet have Varroa there and are doing their best to make sure it stays that way. They do, however, have Small Hive Beetle. He showed pictures of Large Hive Beetle, *Oplostomus fuliginus*, and possibly, a Medium one. Clive said whenever he went somewhere new, he was careful to avoid expressing an opinion and preferred to wait until the reason for apparently odd behaviour and practice became clear. In England, comb for extraction can be kept until the beekeeper has time to deal with it. When we do extract, the room is warmed so the honey flows freely. There honey taken from the bees must be extracted straight away; if it can't be, it is cooled to prevent attack by Small Hive Beetle which would quickly reduce it to an unappetising slush.

In Australia, one of the flowers sought by bees has stiff stamens that the bees have to push aside to reach the nectaries.

When Dr Warwick Kerr, a scientist, introduced *A. m. scutellata* into Brazil, this was not a 'release by accident' and the story of the Africanised honey bee began. While some may regard them as "Kill*r bees", that is because those they previously worked were so docile. Africanised honey bees are just better honey bees, better at nearly everything a honey bee wants to do. The local beekeepers have had much better honey crops since then, taking Brazil from number 47 in world production, when Kerr introduced his improved bee for the tropics, to 7 in world-wide honey output today.

Clive brought out a plastic frame with what appeared to be integral plastic foundation. In many parts of the world these Langstroth brood frames sell for about £1. British folk-lore is that the bees will not draw them - he turned the frame over to show that they most certainly do draw them and well. He said the secret is to apply a very thin film of beeswax using a hot sponge.

One aspect of beekeeping that he really enjoyed was queen rearing. Saying that some like plastic queen cups, he produced a rack of them, but went on to say he preferred to make them of beeswax himself. Grafting is the way to move young larvae to the cells; it usually isn't very difficult to get the larva onto the grafting tool, the problem is getting it off again. While the Chinese tool catered for this, it is just too large and he produced an American Master model #130 which performed better. [Post meeting note: Dadant currently offer these @ \$54. If you want to import one, don't forget that import duty will be levied!]

Clive produced the biggest smoker anyone had seen. Two feet high, in stainless steel with a combustion chamber nine inches across, it was operated by a bellows, would definitely need a "smoker-boy" and presumably is designed for the Africanised honey bee. He also produced a Dutch smoker pipe - the smallest his audience had ever seen.

Speaking of his attendances at the Apimondia conferences over many years, he said that in addition to all the information available from all over the world, such meetings are good fun. Always there were visits to local beekeepers from whom much could be learned. The next one will be in South Korea in September 2015 and the 2017 one in Turkey. If people didn't want to travel so far, he wholeheartedly recommended the annual Irish Summer School at Gormanston, just north of Dublin - courses run every day at three levels: Beginner, Improver and Expert. Every night there is a ceilidh!

In reply to a question about sowing a wildflower meadow, he said he had heard the Tubingen Bee forage seed mix was good but later commented that it might not be the optimum mix for bees. It is designed to offer nectar and pollen throughout the year and [post meeting email] made up of:

40% Phacelia tanacetifolia	5% sunflower
20% Buckwheat	3% radish
7% white mustard	3% cornflower
6% coriander	3% mallow
5% marigold	2% anethium
5% caraway	1% borage

NBU moves agency. The NBU has been moved from FERA to The Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA). All the bee inspectors' email addresses have changed so, if anyone wants to send them an email, substitute "apha" for "fera" in their old email address and it will get to them. No physical move took place.

Insect food for people



Fried crickets and pandanus leaf. In Thailand this is a very common snack, and one of our favourite edible cricket recipes.

The first time Shami Radia tried eating insects was in March 2009 in Malawi, where he was working for the charity WaterAid. 'It was the beginning of the rainy season and all of a sudden the kids got really excited and ran outside,' he says. 'That evening they brought in a plate of flying ants, all fried up. I tried them with a bit of home brew and they were actually quite nice.'

This inspired Radia, 32, to quit his job and set off on a six-month tour of the countries where entomophagy – insect eating – is commonplace, trying everything he could. 'You know how people chuck Maltesers into each other's mouths? In Laos I saw kids doing it with grasshoppers. In Japan, they eat them with sake as a starter.'

As an arachnophobe, he faced his biggest challenge in Cambodia, when he travelled to a village well known for a particular local delicacy. 'There were about 100 burnt-looking tarantulas on a tray. You snap off the legs and the head. The legs are fine; they taste like the crispy bit on a chicken wing. The texture of the abdomen is the problem – it's like a profiterole. It sags and then some creamy stuff comes out. I have to admit – I struggled with it. But it's all about perception. The abdomen was the bit the locals enjoyed the most.'

Convinced about the culinary possibilities of insects, Radia returned home to Harrow, determined to introduce them to the British public. He teamed up with his old friend Neil Whippey, 32, who had been working in post-production on television programmes including Jamie's 30-Minute Meals and Nigella's Kitchen. In January the pair joined forces with an insect farm in Holland, whose grasshoppers, crickets, mealworms and buffalo worms are fed on carrots, potatoes and grain, and became its British distributor. Their company, Grub, is the only supplier of edible and cookable insects in Britain. The startup costs of £20,000, raised with a combination of their own money and the help of family and friends, covered their website, branding, events, packaging and produce. They hope to break even by the end of the year.

Insects are high in protein and sustainable to farm, requiring a lot less water, land and feed than other animals. 'It would have been too easy to be worthy about it and get caught up in the sustainability and nutrition,' Radia says. 'People aren't going to eat insects unless they taste good.' They enlisted Seb Holmes, the sous-chef at the Begging Bowl, a Thai restaurant in Peckham, south

London, who came up with the concept of Thai-inspired street food, designing 21 insect-based recipes.

The team selected seven of the recipes to form a tasting menu for a pop-up restaurant, with sponsorship from Chang Beer, in a former schoolroom on Hoxton Square, east London. 'It was good for educating people,' Whippey says. 'We've had two pop-ups now, both sold out and with brilliant reviews. They have driven traffic to our website and made people want to cook insects at home.' Since January sales have increased 100 per cent each month – Grub's total online sales revenue for July was £1,500. 'The best thing is, we're having repeat orders. People are coming back.'

Radia is evangelical about insects as a 'future food' and sees their appeal widening further in years to come. 'Before long people will be growing their own grasshoppers in tanks on their windowsills,' he assures me. Radia and Whippey aim to go full-time as soon as they can and hope to open a tapas-style bar. In the meantime, with Holmes's help, they are developing new ready-to-eat products including an insect fudge. 'It's good fun coming up with the recipes - like being Willy Wonka'.

www.eatgrub.co.uk; D Telegraph Magazine, 20 Sep 14.

Laying workers

If you have laying workers and more than one colony in the apiary then the long established advice is to move the hive several metres and to shake the bees into the bottom of a hedge. The flying bees are said then to return to their stand and finding no hive, drift to other colonies. The laying workers perish. This is best done during a honey flow. I have, however, tried two other solutions to this problem this year.

The first was to requeen a colony that was strong coming out of winter but then had laying workers. In this case I had in another colony an undesirable queen which was to be culled as I needed gloves to manage them and they were followers. On finding the queen I caged her without food or attendants and put her in the laying worker colony. I left her enclosed for two to three days reasoning that if the bees wanted her they would feed her and if not she would perish. On returning to see what had happened, she was found in good health and so I released her into the colony. She is still there and has eight combs of brood plus a super on top. This was an experiment and I would not advise you use this method with a high value purchased queen! This queen was low value and is destined to be replaced soon as her bees are still undesirable.

The second experiment was to run a swarm into a colony of laying workers. The idea here was that the swarm would be accepted as it was carrying food and the swarm bees would look after their own queen and remove the laying workers. This also worked successfully. So be patient in establishing the condition of your colonies and, when you have the confidence, try something different.

David Buckley, Cheshire Beekeeper September 2014

"Beehind Bars"

These are the would-be beekeepers of HM Prison Warren Hill at Hollesley, Suffolk. They are currently, if optimistically, designing a honey label and plan to start learning about bees and beekeeping in the New Year. As their area is currently something of a 'green desert' (with plenty of grass but not many flowering plants), they are being advised what to plant by Suffolk FWAG and the Suffolk Traditional Orchards Group.

<h1>Calendar</h1>	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 & East Suffolk BKA meetings are held in the Scout Hall, Kesgrave IP5 1JF from 7:30pm.		
Sat, 3 Jan	Thorne's on-line winter sale	Thorne's
Thu 8 Jan	Lewis Woolnough: <i>Microscopy</i> Hawstead Village Hall IP29 5NP at 7:30	West Suffolk
Thu 15 Jan	Beekeeping Crafts Evening Creeeting St Mary Village Hall	Stowmarket BKA Alan Seager 07766 443400
Wed 28 Jan	Marion Stephens & Dr Jon Tuppen: <i>Strains and Stings</i>	Ipswich & ES Malcolm Marchant
Thu 12 Feb	AGM, Anaphylactic Reactions Hawstead Village Hall IP29 5NP at 7:30	West Suffolk
Wed 25 Feb	AGM and DVD	Ipswich & ES Malcolm Marchant
Sun 1 Mar	<i>Bee Improvement for All</i> Roger Patterson See page 3	Suffolk BKA Jeremy Quinlan
Mon 2 Mar	Introduction to Beekeeping Course Dallinghoo Jubilee Hall IP13 0JX. This is the first of seven sessions.	I&ES BKA Jeremy Quinlan 01473 73770
Wed 4 Mar	Suffolk BKA AGM. 7:30pm Martlesham Community Hall IP12 4PB I&ES BKA hosting.	Suffolk BKA Ian McQueen 01473 420187
Sat 7 Mar	Beetradex: 9:00 - 4:30 Stoneleigh Park CV8 2LG	www.beetradex.co.uk/
Thu 12 Mar	Jill Tinsey: <i>Beeswax</i> Hawstead Village Hall IP29 5NP at 7:30	West Suffolk
Sat 14 Mar	Cambridge BKA One Day Meeting "My Style of Hive is the Best" Chesterton Community College, Gilbert Road, Cambridge, CB4 3NY	David Abson contact
Wed 25 Mar	David Blower: <i>Learning with the Bees</i> Details on page 5.	Ipswich & ES Malcolm Marchant
Thu 9 Apr	Presentation to be decided Hawstead Village Hall IP29 5NP at 7:30	West Suffolk
Thu 16 Apr	Swarm control Creeeting St Mary Village Hall	Stowmarket & District BKA Alan Seager
Fri-Sun 17-19 Apr	BBKA Spring Convention Spring Convention	Harper Adams University TF10 8NB
Wed 22 Apr	Celia Davis: <i>The Ins and Outs of the Honey Bee.</i> Details on page 5.	Ipswich & ES Malcolm Marchant
Sat 25 Apr	General Husbandry training: 10-4:00 Dallinghoo Jubilee Hall IP13 0JX. 2 nd session: 16 th May, Easton College	BBKA Jeremy Quinlan 01473 73770
Sun 26 Apr	Bee Health Day: 10:00 - 4:00pm Dallinghoo Jubilee Hall IP13 0JX	I&ES BKA Jeremy Quinlan 01473 73770
Sun 3 May	Nosema & Acarine afternoon 1:00 - 4:00 Old Rectory, Dallinghoo	I&ES BKA Jeremy Quinlan 01473 73770

The bus driver's mother-in-law's almond honey slice

One of the perks of taking a bus up the Hume Highway (Australia) is, so I am told, a certain bus driver on the Euroa line and the slices that her mother-in-law makes. The topping is more like a thick, nutty glaze than an icing - feel free to increase the quantity of topping by, say, 25% if you want an extra-generous covering.

INGREDIENTS

Base:

90g melted butter
1/2 cup (120g) firmly packed brown sugar
1 cup (145g) plain flour
1/2 cup (70g) packaged ground almonds

For the almond topping:

125g butter, chopped
1/4 cup (95g) honey
1 1/2 cups (200g) slivered almonds

METHOD

Preheat oven to 170°C.

Combine base ingredients and mix well. If the base seems floury, add a little extra melted butter. Press into a greased, 18cm x 32cm slice tray. (If you do not have a tray this size, use a smaller tray rather than a larger one. This is a fairly thin slice, and the mixture may not be enough to cover a larger tray). Bake for 12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove from oven, but leave the oven on while the slice is cooling and make the almond topping: Combine butter and honey in a small, heavy-based saucepan and stir over heat until butter is melted. Simmer, uncovered, about 3 minutes or until mixture is a light caramel colour. Stir in nuts. Spread base with hot topping and bake for about 15 minutes or until golden brown. Cool in the tray. [Honey Slice](#)
From the book 'Cravat-A-Licious' by Matt Preston.

Only a little more than 25% extra topping (so that there is more honey than sugar) and it would qualify for entry in the next honey show. A 'slice' is a peculiarly Australian delicacy.

A new suit for the New Year?

BB Wear offers a 20% discount offer on clothing, nothing else. We also offer your members 50% off of Washable Leather Gloves, Spats or our Basic J-Type Hive tool (Ref: BJT) with the BB1/BB10/RR1/RR101. No additional discount or alternatives, if the free items are not required. To claim the discount, members should first ask their Chairman or Secretary to email us confirmation that they are a member, then contact us directly, by email or phone and place their order. There are no discount codes on the website as they could be used by non-members.

<http://www.bbwear.co.uk/>

Thanks to Maureen Graystone for passing this on.

5 colonies of bees on commercial frames for sale

Two in 6-frame ply nuc boxes

Three in 11-frame cedar brood boxes

They are all from one particularly swarmy colony over the past two years and are surplus to my requirements. Best suited to someone who can bring them into productivity. I don't have the spare finances to pursue this. £500 the lot, will sell separately.

Tel: 01473 780683; Email: andrewcia@hotmail.com

If you go to www.sciencefriday.com/programs/archives/ and listen to 'The Buzz on Bees' you can hear Prof. Seeley talking eloquently, knowledgeably and above all with passion about honey bees.