



Newsletter
May 2016



Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association (SCIO)

- promoting the study and development of apiculture, and advancing the heritage, culture and science of beekeeping amongst its membership and throughout the wider community

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SC031754

NEW ADBKA WEBSITE LAUNCHED

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Thanks to much work by Kitta Potgieter, we have launched a fantastic new website aimed at supporting and informing our members better than ever before.

The new site can be found via our existing web address; just go to

www.aberdeenbeekeepers.net

We are extremely grateful to Kitta for putting this all together, and would also like to thank Rosie's son, Andy Crighton, for his generosity in maintaining our previous online presence.

We look forward to developing the site over time, and would welcome any ideas members may have. In particular, we would be keen to receive any beekeeping photographs that could enhance our picture gallery. Email them with details to adbkanewsletter@btinternet.com

Meanwhile, forty ADBKA members have already taken up the invitation to join a discussion forum linked to our Facebook page. There's lots going on there, and if you haven't signed up yet, you're missing out. If you have provided an email address as part of your ADBKA subscription, you should have already been invited to join. For more information on linking up to our Facebook group, email David Morland: david.j.morland@virgin.net



Our new website is full of useful information and links to other beekeeping resources



BRING AND BUY SALE

Courtesy of the Seed family, at **midday on Sunday 29 May** we will be gathering at
Green Apple, Auchry Walled Garden, Turriff, AB53 5TP

where we will enjoy a barbeque and a chance to bletcher about how the season is progressing.
BRING AND BUY - members are invited to bring along any surplus beekeeping equipment that they want to sell (at a reasonable price!) and to have a poke around what others are selling on.
Please note that if you have a large quantity of equipment you wish to bring to the event, we can assist with transport.

HONEY JARS, SYRUP AND CANDY - at unbeatable prices.

THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE - Hugh Donohoe and David Morland will demonstrate how microscopy can be applied to the study of pollen, bees and bee diseases.

NEW EQUIPMENT AND BEEKEEPING BOOKS - we will have a good selection of new beekeeping equipment and books to browse and purchase.

DIRECTIONS: From the B9170 coming into Cuminestown, signs ("ADBKA", with directional arrow) will be placed at both ends of the lane to guide you in. A Sat Nav programmed with the post code will get you to the road end. Look out for the blue "Green Apple" sign in the yard.

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ABERDEEN AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our **2016 Annual General Meeting** takes place at 7.15pm on Wednesday 25 May at The Kinellar Community Hall, Fintray Road, Blackburn AB21 0SS

Distributed with this newsletter is a copy of the minute of our 2015 AGM. If you are coming along to this year's meeting, please bring along a copy of this, along with the other AGM papers sent out with our April newsletter.

BRING AND BUY SALE

Sunday 29 May 2016 at 12 Midday
Green Apple, Auchry Walled Garden,
Turrieff, AB53 5TP

See page 1

**DEMONSTRATION:
SWARM CONTROL**

Wednesday 8 June 2016 at 7.30pm
ADBKA Apiary
Crathes Castle
Banchory AB31 5QJ

(Make sure you bring your bee suit.)

Unfortunately, last month we had to cancel a planned practical demonstration at our Crathes apiary due to poor weather. Don't forget though, if you want to get some hands-on beekeeping experience you are welcome to join our group of volunteers who manage the apiary, gathering most Sunday mornings for a couple of hours from 10am. For more information, email grahamtorrie@icloud.com or phone 013398 82038

Saturday 25 June 2016
Trip to Murray McGregor's queen rearing unit

NB Now fully subscribed

BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES AND FREE EQUIPMENT LOAN FOR ADBKA MEMBERS ACROSS THE NORTH EAST

Honey extractors; Mini-melters; Heather honey press; Wax extractor; Wax foundation press

Contact: Sandy Gordon on 01224 484540

DANESTONE AB22 8AJ

Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife; Heather honey press; Wax melter; Unimel stainless steel 3 frame tangential extractor

BUY AND SAVE: CANDY AND SYRUP

Contact: Erling Watt on 074294 54572 email watterlingg@aol.com

LONGSIDE AB42 4XQ

Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife; Heather honey press;
Wax melter; Universal lightweight 9 frame radial extractor

BUY AND SAVE: CANDY AND SYRUP

Contact: Joan Gilbert-Stevens on 019755 81369 email craigmill@btinternet.com

MUIR OF FOWLIS AB33 8NX

Combimel stainless steel radial 9 frame extractor; Heated uncapping tray; Electric uncapping knife;
Refractometer; Candle-making kit

BUY AND SAVE: CANDY, SYRUP AND HONEY JARS

Contact: Graham Torrie on 013398 82038 email adbkanewsletter@btinternet.com

CRATHES AB31 5QJ

“O chestnut-tree, great rooted blossomer”

WB Yeats



Thanks to Janne Richardson of Fraserburgh for this fabulous drawing of Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)

Although children must nowadays wear goggles, gloves and hard-hats to play conkers, your bees will throw caution to the wind as they make the most of the horse-chestnut, which will be flowering this month.

Each tree bears three forms of flower: male, female and hermaphrodite (with both male and female characteristics). Between them they will provide honeybees with generous amounts of pollen and nectar.

Some plants will only release (or dehisce) their pollen when the air temperature warms up. (For example, dandelion needs around 10°C.) But horse-chestnut presents its pollen, both night and day, whatever the temperature.

And as if all this wasn't enough, your bees will find lavish amounts of resin on offer, from which they will produce propolis to glue together all of the hive parts that you want to separate.

Look out for bees coming back with heavy loads of brick-red pollen; a sure sign that they have found a horse-chestnut nearby.

We are looking for two or three members who might be interested in forming a small team running a top bar hive at our Crathes apiary. The idea is that the association would provide a flat pack hive and the bees to go in it; the team would face the challenge of starting from scratch and seeing the colony through the season, reporting regularly on the highs and lows in our monthly newsletter.

Running a top bar hive presents a whole series of challenges compared to what most of us are used to, for example in relation to swarm control. 'Natural beekeeping' has gained a lot of publicity in recent years, and we are sure that there would be great interest in this project amongst our members.

If you would like to be involved, please contact me at adbkanewsletter@btinternet.com or on 01339882038.

Graham

If you haven't changed your over-wintered hive floors yet, you really should have. On the old floors you'll find all of the detritus that has fallen from the colony since last autumn. Expect to see an unhealthy mix of dead bees, chalk brood mummies, mouldy pollen pellets, pieces of comb, propolis and lumps of candy.

Move your hive a foot or two to the side, put a clean floor where the hive was, lift the hive off the old floor and place it on the new one. This will be easier if you take the roof off to lighten the load and if you use the blade of your hive tool to separate the old floor and brood box, which will likely be stuck together with propolis.

Use a wallpaper scraper to remove the debris, scraping it onto a newspaper. Once everything is off, wrap up the paper and burn the lot in an incinerator. Now you can blast the metal mesh floor with a blow torch, giving it a final scrape at the end. If the wood of your floor is very dry, a coat of raw linseed oil on the outside would be worthwhile.

Obviously you won't want to use a blowtorch on the floor of your polystyrene hive. In this case, mix a strong solution of washing soda (1kg soda crystals to 5 litres of water) and give everything a good scrub.





Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment. Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail: aberdeenbeesupplies@hotmail.com

9-FRAME RADIAL EXTRACTOR (electric) – FOR HIRE £10 per hire period

STEAM WAX MELTER – available ON LOAN £10 deposit

Both items available from: Jock McGregor, 11 Marcus Road, Blackburn. Tel. 01224 790468

Bees Wanted: on Nat. frames - brood, split or nuc., what have you? (Of local provenance.)

Hives wanted: Any National hive parts in clean, sound condition, believed free of diseases (I understand the risks); any other useful equipment.

Tel.:- (01224) 580137

Mob. 07979 002388

e-mail: eric.viking@virgin.net

BEE PACKAGES, INCLUDING MATED QUEEN

£130 for one, but more than 15 would be £85 each. Telephone Sebastian Bacz on 07543270350 or 07415449400; email bee@benshoney.co.uk

Hal Salvesen is kindly offering space on his land for a beekeeper to **site beehives**. The area is around Alford and is heather moorland with road access.

If you want to take advantage of this, or would like more information, please contact Hal at:

halsalvesen@hotmail.com

BEES FOR SALE

Two nucs, 5 frames, with 2015 queens, marked and clipped.

Contact Bill Legge at

lotsw33@gmail.com

According to.....

.....Robert Huish in his 1842 book, *Bees: their natural history and general management*, "The most approved apparatus is a hood made of linen, large enough to throw over the head, and to fall below the shoulders, and fastened round the body by strings, to prevent the bees from slipping underneath: a mask should be made of iron wire, which is preferable to glass, horse-hair or gauze, as being more open, and less accompanied with those suffocating effects, than either of the afore-mentioned materials. The hood, when complete, presents the following appearance:

The gloves should be of the coarsest leather, such as the housemaids' gloves are made of, through which no sting can penetrate; at the same time, the leather towards the fingers should be of the most pliant kind, for if it be stiff and unbending, any operation with the combs becomes difficult: a sleeve should be affixed to each glove, so as to reach nearly to the elbows, and gaiters should be used for the protection of the legs, on the supposition that the operator does not wear boots, which are in themselves a sufficient safeguard: with this armour, a person may defy a whole swarm of bees. We generally make a small hole through the mask, for the purpose of admitting a tobacco pipe, which being filled with dry leaves, or even pounded tea, we have found to be of essential service in driving away the bees from any particular quarter, which is intended to undergo examination."

