

Newsletter

December 2013



Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association

Merry Christmas!

Established 1910
Scottish Charity Number SCO31754

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APIARY UPDATE

Our Chair, John Cooper, writes:

With our bees having now flitted to the new apiary at Crathes Castle and the new cabin now in place, we just await a Completion Certificate from Building Standards to complete things.

Thanks are due to the following members for all their hard work in painting and other finishing jobs: Graham Torrie, John Steele, Witek Mojszewicz and Edwin Ritchie.*

We also acknowledge with gratitude the funding which has been provided by the Aberdeenshire LEADER programme and by Scottish Natural Heritage.

A permanent plaque acknowledging these contributions will be fixed to the cabin in due course.

You will see from the 2014 programme of events, which will be circulated soon on payment of your 2014 subscription, that the official opening of the new apiary will take place next May.



Some of the cabin work party taking a welcome fly

Our hope is that this move to Crathes Castle, which was enforced by the projected re-developments at Craibstone, will prove to be a great success in coming years. Not only have we got an excellent site for the apiary, but through liaison with National Trust Scotland, our new landlords, we will have opportunities both to raise our public profile and also extend ADBKA's role with the public in promoting beekeeping and the importance of bees to everyone.

Look out for an item in the Newsletter early next year which will expand on this issue and invite members to become more involved in our apiary activities.

*(*Members won't be surprised to hear that no-one has put more work into the project than John himself! Ed.)*



ADBKA bees settling in to their new home

Circulated with this month's newsletter is your membership renewal form. The completed form, along with your 2014 subscription, should be sent to our Treasurer, Louise Forbes, in January. Regrettably, the subscription rates have had to rise this year to £20 for a full single membership and £25 for a household membership. Which, we hope you'll agree, is still great value.

Please note that the membership renewal date is 1 January and the deadline for submitting next year's subscriptions will be 31 March. Best get it done early, though.

Our President, Robert Wood

It is with great regret that we inform members that Bob Wood and his wife Gillie were recently knocked down by a car when on holiday in Chester. We understand that they are both now back in the North East recuperating, though Gillie is still in hospital.

We wish them both a speedy and full recovery.

Members' Events

FILM:**WHAT'S KILLING OUR BEES?**

Saturday 18 January at 2.00pm

The Kinellar Community Hall
Fintray Road
Blackburn AB21 0SS**FORUM:****DISEASES AND THEIR
MANAGEMENT****- with Stephen Palmer**

Saturday 8 February at 2.00pm

The Kinellar Community Hall
Fintray Road
Blackburn AB21 0SS

We brought this year's beekeeping season to a close in traditional fashion with a social gathering on 30 November in the Kinellar Hall. With lots of tartan on show to mark St Andrew's Day, we shared a grand spread of food and drink brought along by those present, and were entertained by the fine fiddle playing of association member, Emma Chapman.

Once again we must thank our Secretary, Rosie Crighton, and our committee for their terrific work in organising and delivering our Members' Events programme in 2013. And, once more, a special thank you goes to Stephen Palmer for presenting this year's six-week Autumn Lectures series, "*An Introduction to Bees and Beekeeping*".

While our bees are taking a well deserved rest over the next few months our events programme begins another year's beekeeping in earnest. January has a film about honey bee losses and, to complement that, in February Stephen Palmer will host a forum on the management of bee diseases.

Christmas Quiz

The answers to the quiz are on page 4.

- Q.1 German beekeeper Karle Kehrlé was an influential figure in the development of beekeeping in the UK. Under what name was he better known?
- Q.2 What is bee bread?
- Q.3 Beekeepers in the UK have been warned to be on the lookout for the invasive pest, *Aethina tumida*. What's its common name?
- Q.4 You inspect a hive and find queen cells drawn in the middle of a comb over worker brood. What's likely to be going on?
- Q.5 How does a worker bee transport a) water and b) propolis?
- Q.6 Willie Smith designed the famous Smith Hive. From where did Willie hail?
- Q.7 Under certain conditions, a colony will sometimes replace its queen late in the season without swarming. What is this phenomenon called?
- Q.8 A young worker bee produces wax to build comb, but where on its body are its wax glands?
- Q.9 At what stage in its lifecycle does a honey bee produce silk?
- Q.10 What will be the accepted colour for marking queens reared in 2014?
- Q.11 In a flower, what is the name of the male structure that produces pollen?
- Q.12 What are ostia?
- Q.13 What is a Butler cage used for?
- Q.14 Is the optimum temperature for rapid crystallization of honey a) 36-38°C; b) 13-15°C; or c) 4-6°C?
- Q.15 Who said in 1964 that he would "float like a butterfly and sting like a bee"? (*Be careful with the name, now!*)

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Members may be interested to know that work is underway to convert the ADBKA from an Unincorporated Charity to an Incorporated Charity, and as part of this process it will be necessary to produce a new Constitution, which will be circulated to all members in due course. The main advantage of incorporated status is that it gives our Trustees, who currently are our Office Bearers, a greater degree of protection. As long as we are unincorporated our Office Bearers carry full individual responsibility for ADBKA affairs, which our committee has decided is a somewhat unfair responsibility. If we become incorporated this individual responsibility will not apply.

We will keep everyone informed of progress via the Newsletter, and ultimately the change from unincorporated to incorporated status will be carried out with the full involvement of ADBKA members.

We are just in the early stages of the process of change at the moment, and more information will be published in due course.

If you are a member of the Scottish Beekeepers' Association, you may already be aware that it is also in the process of writing a new constitution as part of its move to become an Incorporated Charity. Members of the SBA can see the latest draft of the new constitution on the members' page of the SBA website.

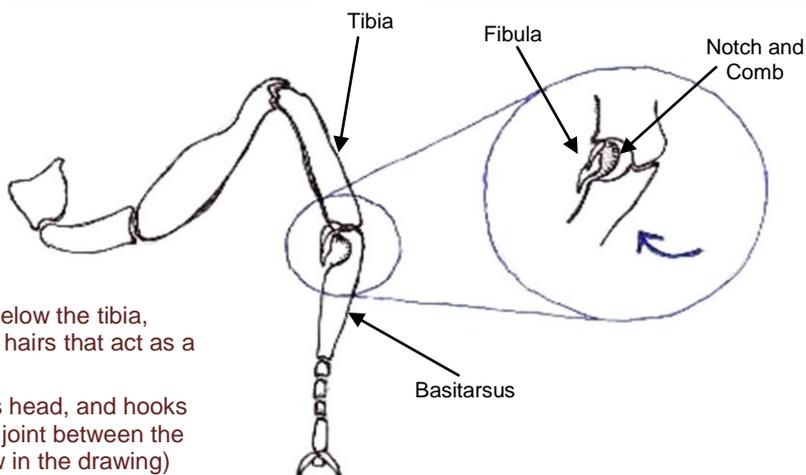
Take a closer look at.....

.....the BEE'S KNEES

Part 1: The front legs

The honeybee's front legs are equipped with a handy device for cleaning its antennae, perhaps its most important sense organs. The gadget comprises a clasp or *fibula* at the bottom of the segment of the leg called the *tibia*, which works in conjunction with a notch in the leg segment below the tibia, called the *basitarsus*. The notch is lined with hairs that act as a comb.

The bee raises one of its front legs, lowers its head, and hooks the base of one antenna with the fibula. The joint between the tibia and the basitarsus is bent (see the arrow in the drawing) so that the antenna is now held in the notch. With a forward movement of the leg and an upward movement of the head, the antenna is drawn through the comb and clasp, cleaning it of pollen and dust. There now, that feels better.



Redrawn from Dadant (Ed.),
"The Hive and the Honey Bee"

The neonicotinoid debate continues to take up much newsprint. The Sunday Herald has been airing the controversy over another variant of this group of pesticides, thiacloprid. It seems that it can still be used, despite a ban on another three related chemicals coming into force on the 1st of this month. Everyone seems to have a view, including the Scottish Wildlife Trust, the National Farmers' Union in Scotland, the European Commission, the Scottish Government, and the chemical manufacturer, Bayer. If you have the stamina for more of this, you can find out what they all think at <http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/home-news/the-loop-hole-that-allows-bee-harming-pesticide-to-be-sprayed-in-scotland.22834205>

Meanwhile, the guest speaker at our members' event in October, British Beekeepers' Association Chair, David Aston, has suggested that the alternatives to neonicotinoid treatments that will be used by farmers as a consequence of the ban hold "the potential of an increased risk to bees and other pollinators". His stance seems to be taken as supporting the pro-neonicotinoid side, including the National Farmers' Union. See how the Farmers Weekly reports the story at <http://www.fwi.co.uk/articles/30/11/2013/142213/older-crop-sprays-39more-harmful39-than-neonics.htm>



Miss Christie

Older and long-standing members will be pleased to know that Miss Christie, who provided refreshments at our Honey Show for many years and who was a frequent winner of the Manson Trophy, is in good health and spirits in an excellent care home in Ellon.

On a recent visit to see her, Sandy Gordon and John Cooper found her completely up to date with ADBKA affairs and an avid reader of our Newsletter.

Three cheers for Miss Christie!

The next round of SBA Module Examinations will be held on 22 March 2014. If you want to sit modules 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 or 7, your application must be sent to David Wright, 20 Lennox, Edinburgh EH5 3JW, by 31 January.

Download the application form from <http://www.scottishbeekeepers.org.uk/>

Visit the ADBKA Honey Jar Store for:

Ragus Candy
Apistan (10 strips, sufficient for 5 hives)
Ambrosia Syrup
Honey Jars and Lids
Mesh Floors – National size (wire only)
Hessian Squares for smoker fuel



Free loan of:
Honey extractors
Mini-melters
Heather honey press
Wax extractor
Wax foundation press

Approximately half a mile along Laurel Drive, turn into Laurel Place on your right - it's a semi-circle so take the second entrance into this street. Now turn left into Laurel Avenue. Danestone Market Garden is signposted, on the left, about 100 yards along.

**Danestone
Market
Garden
AB22 8AJ**

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

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

Notice Board



Abelo Beekeeping Equipment

Wide range of products & competitive prices

Please check our offers at
www.abelo.co.uk

Contact Sebastian Bacz on
07508944101 or e-mail
sales@abelo.co.uk

9-frame radial extractor (electric) – FOR HIRE £10 per hire period

Steam wax melter – available ON LOAN £10 deposit

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

Aberdeen Bee Supplies

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

I am part of a local community trust, we are taking over the running of the local information centre and are planning to make it an area to showcase local makers and producers, from previous experience I know that local honey is something which sells really well and I was wondering if you could help in identifying bee keepers who may be able to process honey and sell it to us?

Kind regards,

Amanda Biscombe

Local Development Assistant

Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust
Glenlivet Estate Office, Main Street, Tomintoul,
AB37 9EX

Tel. 01807 580358

E-mail amanda@tgdt.org.uk

QUIZ ANSWERS

Q.1: Brother Adam

Q.2: Pollen, mixed with some nectar or honey, then sealed in a cell with a thin layer of wax

Q.3: The Small Hive Beetle

Q.4: The colony is queenless and the bees are making emergency queen cells.

Q.5: a) in her crop or honey stomach; b) in her pollen baskets

Q.6: Innerleithen in the Scottish Borders

Q.7: Supersedure

Q.8: On the underside of its abdomen

Q.9: As a larva - it produces silk to spin its cocoon

Q.10: Green

Q.11: The stamen (consisting of the anther and filament)

Q.12: They're the valves through which blood enters the bee's heart (*come on, you were told in last month's newsletter!*)

Q.13: For introducing a new queen

Q.14: b)

Q.15: Cassius Clay

I Robot: What would the world do without bees? Pollinate crops with robo-bees, of course. These 'drones' weigh less than 80 milligrammes (a worker weighs around 90-100 milligrammes), beat their wings more than 100 times per second, can move in all directions and can hover in a static position.

Read all about it in *Popular Science* at <http://www.popsci.com/technology/article/2013-09/true-bee-or-robot-be>

Thanks to James Beattie for this item.



According to.....

.....Hilda Ransome in her 1937 book *The Sacred Bee in Ancient Times and Folklore*, "In many parts of England and Scotland the bees are said to emit a buzzing sound exactly at midnight on Christmas Eve. The districts in which this belief have been found are Northumberland, Cumberland, Yorkshire, Wiltshire, and in Fife and the North-East of Scotland. Whether this belief arose on account of the dissatisfaction when the alteration of the calendar took place in 1752 or earlier we have not been able to discover, but in Yorkshire the custom was to go and watch by the beehives on the old and new Christmas Eves in order to determine which was the right one, for the people said that the bees would make a humming noise when the birth of the Saviour took place; and as the bees dislike innovations they affirm that this humming takes place on the old Christmas Eve."