

Newsletter
January 2014

Happy
New
Year!

Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association



Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SCO31754

MOST WANTED

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Cothal
Dyce

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HELP AT THE NEW APIARY

The fast approaching 2014 beekeeping season will be ADBKA's first in the new association apiary at Crathes Castle.

We would like to get more of our members involved in the association's work at Crathes.

Throughout ADBKA's history, which began in 1910, the association's continuous success has depended on the willing enthusiasm of its members, and this will be equally true in the next few years.

Our current membership numbers comfortably over 200, and from that large number we invite members, irrespective of beekeeping knowledge or experience, to consider becoming involved in routine hive monitoring and management at the apiary. This is a great way for beginners and newcomers to get some hands on experience under the guidance of experienced members, and a grand way for experienced beekeepers of making a worthwhile contribution to ADBKA's work.

These sessions will be lead by an experienced Team Leader, and are separate from the apiary demonstrations which are part of ADBKA's published programme. We are not expecting anyone to attend and help at more than a handful of apiary sessions through the summer season, from the beginning of May through to the middle of July.

....AND ON THE COMMITTEE

ADBKA's committee has put in another year of dedicated work. Much of this goes on behind the scenes, and can easily be taken for granted.

The Association committee meets approximately once every three months. Every AGM offers the chance for members to join the committee and get involved in helping to run the affairs of the association, and this year will be no exception.

Enthusiasm, even without much beekeeping experience, can be extremely useful, and both novices and experienced beekeepers are always welcomed with open arms.

Before the AGM in May please give some thought to having your name put forward for a place on the committee. Anyone interested who may wish to discuss things further, should get in touch, and a nomination can easily be arranged.

Please get in touch with me on 01224 637774 or at j.cooper@clara.net if you feel you would like to participate.

John Cooper

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The **National Honey Show** is a grand annual affair that can trace its history back to 1923. Like many of these big beekeeping events, though, it takes place a very long way from the north east of Scotland.

Now, thanks to funding from the National Lottery, the top flight lectures from the Show can be viewed on the internet. You can see four of these right now, with another three to follow shortly. They can be found at <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/lectures.shtml>

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**TALK: HONEY BEE HEALTH in SCOTLAND TODAY****- with Steve Sunderland, Lead Bee Inspector for Scotland**

Saturday 15 March at 2.00pm

The Kinellar Community Hall
Fintray Road
Blackburn AB21 0SS**BEE ALL YOU CAN BEE**

Why not start the year by thinking about how you can expand your beekeeping skills and knowledge? You'll likely have paid your 2014 subscription by now (if not, it should be in by the end of the month!), which means that your membership card will shortly be dropping through your letter box. The card contains this year's members' programme, a rich mix of practical and theoretical sessions that hold something for every beekeeper, whether novice or expert.

Once you have these dates entered into your diary, you could take a look at what the Scottish Beekeepers' Association has to offer.

The SBA's education and examination programme begins with the Basic Beemaster Certificate, which consists of a practical examination of the candidate's ability to handle bees and beekeeping equipment, and to interpret what is observed, along with an oral examination of the candidate's understanding of basic beekeeping theory. It takes about an hour or so and is conducted by an approved examiner from the SBA, often at the candidate's own apiary. After this, there's a wide range of modular examinations, covering topics from honey bee biology to the history of beekeeping, which are linked to various levels of certificates and qualifications.

For those who aren't keen on taking written exams, this year sees the introduction of the new Scottish Intermediate Practical Certificate. It aims to give beekeepers who have gained the Scottish Basic Beemaster Certificate with distinction and who have owned and managed at least two colonies continuously for at least five years the opportunity to sit a purely practical and oral examination. The assessment should take around one to two hours and will take place in the candidate's apiary during the active months of May, June or July.

Applications to sit the Basic Beemaster Certificate or the Scottish Intermediate Practical Certificate must be submitted to the SBA's Education Convener by 12 April 2014.

SBA WORKSHOPS for 2014**WAX WORKSHOP**

A one day course on candle making, wax mouldings and foundation moulding & wiring will be held at E.H.Thorne (Beehives) Ltd at Newburgh (KY14 6HA) on Saturday 1st March 2014 from 10am to 4pm. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided but bring a packed lunch and mug.

If you wish to attend the course please **apply by 25th January 2014** enclosing the fee of £20. Please enclose a telephone number and if possible an e-mail address. Bring stout soled shoes (factory floor is cold) and protective or work clothes.

SKEP MAKING WORKSHOP

A one day course on skep making will be held at The Pyramids Business Park, Easter Inch, Bathgate (EH48 2EH) on Saturday 12th April 2014 from 10am to 4pm. Materials will be supplied and by the end of the day you should be well on the way to having a "swarm collection quality" skep finished. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided but bring a packed lunch and mug.

If you wish to attend the course *please telephone Alan Riach on 01506 653839 to check for availability of places and apply by 25th January 2014* enclosing the fee of £45. Please enclose a telephone number and if possible an e-mail address.

HONEY WORKSHOP

23rd August 2014 at Thornes of Newburgh.
Workshop on the harvesting and processing of honey along with tips on preparing the bees for gaining a surplus. Course fee £20.

For all Workshop and Course applications please use the Application form available from <http://www.scottishbeekeepers.org.uk/NewsEvents/WorkshopsCourses.aspx> and send it along with a cheque, made out to the SBA, to Alan Riach, Woodgate, 7 Newland Ave, Bathgate, EH48 1EE, except where stated otherwise.

Take a closer look at.....

.....the BEE'S KNEES

Part 2: The back legs

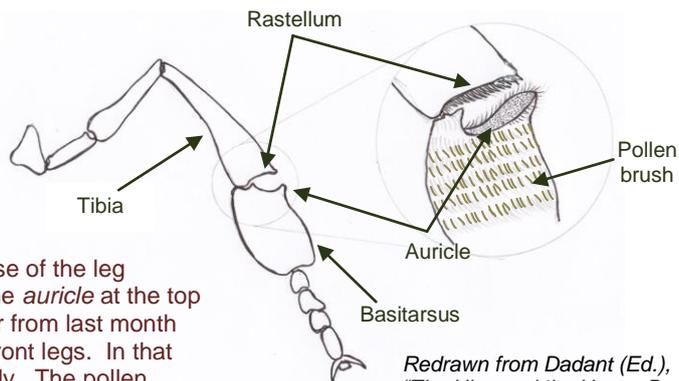
The honeybee's back legs play a key role in pollen gathering. There's a much bigger story to tell about the process, but here we'll just focus on the pollen press. It's made up of two parts: the stiff hairs forming the *rake* or *rastellum* at the base of the leg segment called the tibia, and the concave surface called the *auricle* at the top of the next segment, the basitarsus. (You might remember from last month that this is where we found the antennae cleaners on the front legs. In that case, the tool was on the inside of the joint, next to the body. The pollen press is on the outside of the back legs.)

There are rows of hairs forming the *pollen brush* on the inside surface of the basitarsus, and this is where the gathered pollen eventually ends up. The bee then rubs its back legs together. The rake scrapes the pollen from the pollen brush of the opposite leg and deposits it in the hollow of the auricle. By then flexing the joint between the tibia and the basitarsus, the bee pushes a compressed ball of pollen up onto the outside surface of the tibia, where it is held by special hairs forming the *corbicula* or *pollen basket*.

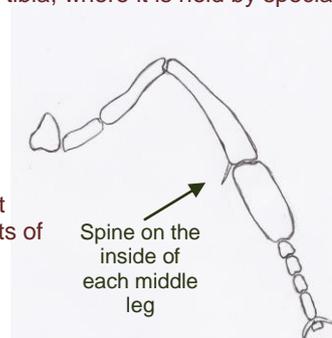
You may have noticed that in our two-part look at the bees' knees, we've gone from the front legs in December to the back legs this month. What happened to the middle legs?

Well, at least in terms of this narrow take on the subject, there's not much to say. At the base of the tibia of each middle leg there is a small spine, though its purpose (if it has one) seems a bit uncertain.

Hedging his bets a bit, R.E. Snodgrass, writing in *The Hive and the Honey Bee*, notes that these spines "are said to be used for loosening the pellets of pollen from the pollen baskets of the hind legs, and also for cleaning the wings and the spiracles". An opportunity for more research, then. Do you think anyone has tried handing a bee a very small guitar?



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



Talks on Bees

In addition to Stephen Palmer's first class lectures, between 15 and 20 talks on bees and beekeeping have been given by various members to a wide range of different groups over the past year or so.

ADBKA would like to maintain this level of contact with the non-beekeeping public. The more people know about the importance of bees, the role of beekeeping and ADBKA's work, the better, and ADBKA sees the dissemination of this kind of information as one of its important roles.

If you belong to, or know of, a group who might like a talk on bees and beekeeping please get in touch and we will see what can be arranged. Several talks in recent years have been delivered in schools so, once again, if you are in contact with a teacher or a school that might be interested in having a talk on bees and their importance, please let us know. Also, if you are involved in delivering talks to schools or community groups yourself, pass on the details so that we can keep a record of the extent to which the ADBKA is engaging with the people in our area.

John Cooper

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**

NB. Increased supply cost means that we have had to raise the price of candy to £5.50 per carton, making a box of four cartons £22.

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

John Anderson is looking to reduce his stock of honey pails (various sizes, small to large) and is generously offering them to members on the basis of a donation to the ADBKA of £1 per pail. John is based at Luncarty Villa, Gladstone Terrace, Turriff, AB53 4AT. You can contact him on 01888 562705 (h), 07801 691842 (m) or by e-mail at johnanderson64@hotmail.com

We are very grateful to John for this kind gesture.

Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment.

Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail:

AberdeenBeeSupplies@hotmail.com

2014 DIARY DATES – from the SBA website

March

7th - 8th - Ulster Beekeepers Association Conference, Greenmount Campus, Co. Antrim

22nd - SBA Exams, Modules 1,2,3,5,6,7&8

29th - SBA Microscopy Exam, Scotlandwell, Portmoak Hall

April

4th - 6th - BBKA Spring Convention, Harper Adam College, Newport

May

30th May - 1st June - Gardening Scotland, Ingliston

June

18th - Staging Exhibits and Judging at Royal Highland Show

19th - 22nd - Royal Highland Show

July

27th July - 1st Aug - Federation of Irish Beekeepers Conference, Gormanston

August

3rd - 4th - Turriff Agricultural Show (includes Honey Show)

9th - Kinross Agricultural Show (includes SBA display)

22nd - 24th - Ayr Flower Show

September

5th - 7th - Scottish National Honey Show, Camperdown Park, Dundee

20th - 21st - Fife Honey Show, Dobbies, Dunfermline

27th - SBA Autumn Convention, Barony College, Dumfries

October

1st - ? - SBA Tour Speaker

24th - 26th - UK National Honey Show, Weybridge

November

8th - SBA Exams, Modules 1,2,3,5,6,7&8

According to.....

.....Charles Darwin, considering the subject of instinct in his 1859 book *On the Origin of Species*, "Thus, as I believe, the most wonderful of all known instincts, that of the hive-bee, can be explained by natural selection having taken advantage of numerous, successive, slight modifications of simpler instincts; natural selection having by slow degrees, more and more perfectly, led the bees to sweep equal spheres at a given distance from each other in a double layer, and to build up and excavate the wax along the planes of intersection. The bees, of course, no more knowing that they swept their spheres at one particular distance from each other, than they know what are the several angles of the hexagonal prisms and of the basal rhombic plates. The motive power of the process of natural selection having been economy of wax; that individual swarm which wasted least honey in the secretion of wax, having succeeded best, and having transmitted by inheritance its newly acquired economical instinct to new swarms, which in their turn will have had the best chance of succeeding in the struggle for existence."