

Newsletter  
July 2013



# Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SCO31754

## Crathes Apiary Update

A lease for the apiary site at Crathes Castle has now been agreed with National Trust Scotland.

We have been successful with both our bids for help with the funding of an apiary building for the new site. The two organisations we applied to are the Aberdeenshire LEADER Programme and Scottish Natural Heritage. In total the two grants amount to not far short of £20,000, and ADBKA will make up the balance of the total cost of the project from our own reserves.

Planning Permission and Building Warrant applications have been submitted, and once they have worked through the system the apiary building will be ordered.

Our hope is to complete the move from Craibstone to Crathes Castle, with the new building in place, by the end of the year.

There is not a great deal to see at the Crathes Castle apiary site at the moment, but if any members would like to have a quick look at where we are moving to, meet me at the lower end of the main car park at Crathes Castle near the high hedge at 11.00am on Saturday 3rd August. Please be prompt.

*John Cooper*

*To sleep, perchance  
to dream; Aye,  
there's the rub  
See page 4*

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### Turriff Show

If anyone would like to sell their honey on the ADBKA stall at the Turriff Show on 4th and 5th August they can either deliver it themselves to the stall on the morning of the 4th, or deliver it at an earlier date to Sandy Gordon at Danestone Market Garden. Sandy will transport it to the show, and the sales will be organised and monitored by ADBKA members.

All honey should be of first class quality and fit for sale to the public, and with containers and labels that conform to required legal standards.

The price per jar will be decided by joint agreement of all who wish to participate.

Any queries should be directed to Sandy Gordon.

### Does anyone

**know** how to safely transport a sealed queen cell without crushing it or letting it get too cold? Ideas to the editor, please. (See page 4 for contact details.)

### £200 Donation

Earlier this year ADBKA received a very generous donation of £200 from the Aberdeen Quaker Meeting Group. This came from a bequest from one of their late members, who had wished to do something to promote bees and beekeeping. ADBKA has undertaken to use this money in our programme of producing nucs to pass on, at non-commercial prices, to beginners. Despite last year's poor summer and the cold weather that lasted into May this year, a promising start was made to this nuc programme at the apiary demonstration on 15th June, when Fred Simpson and Kirsty Sutherland took off three nucs from the apiary hives. One of the parent hives used was the one kindly donated by Matthias Volkaert and Marion Kolata.

If these nucs, and any others that we may produce, do well, they will be offered for sale to beginners. We are using a batch of polystyrene nuc boxes which we bought last autumn. These boxes will of course be retained by ADBKA, and the recipients of the bees will need to provide their own hives.

The Aberdeen Quaker Meeting Group have been thanked for their generous gift, and I will write again to them at the end of the season to up-date them on the progress that has been made possible by the donation.

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**APIARY DEMONSTRATION:  
HARVESTING HONEY – MOVING FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE**

*With Graham Torrie*

Saturday 27 July at 2.00pm

Hillcrest, Craigmyle Road, Torphins, AB31 4HN

*All welcome, but especially useful to beginners and those in their first few years of beekeeping, still striving for that elusive honey crop!*

**GOING TO THE HEATHER:  
APIARY VISIT AND PICNIC LUNCH  
- with Murray McGregor**

Saturday 17 August at 2.00pm

Coilacreich, Ballater

*The site is on the north side of the A93, next to an electricity substation, about half way between Ballater and Crathie. Prior to our visit, we are meeting at 1 pm for a (bring your own) picnic lunch at the Deeside Gliding Club, just to the west of Aboyne. You can't miss the picnic tables and a large parking area on the left hand side of the A93 heading west.*

**APIARY DEMONSTRATION  
- with Hugh Donohoe**

Saturday 31 August at 2.00pm

Old Mill of Hirn, Banchory

*(Look out for detailed directions in the August Newsletter)*

If proof was needed of the potentially devastating consequences of uncontrolled pesticide spraying, Sky News has reported just such an incident resulting in the death of an estimated 50,000 bees in Wilsonville in the US state of Oregon. See <http://news.sky.com/story/1106549/dead-bees-pesticide-kills-50000-in-car-park>

*Thanks to Innes Simpson for this item.*



**MAQS Varroa treatment**

Further to the item in last month's Newsletter, there was insufficient response from members to warrant a bulk order.

If any one does use MAQS please pay special attention to the need for adequate ventilation in the hives when MAQS strips are applied. It is recommended that an open mesh floor is in place, that the hive has a full width hive door, and that an empty super is placed above the brood box.

Insufficient ventilation can lead to unacceptable bee mortality, but, properly applied, the MAQS strips are an effective treatment against Varroa.

Honeybees have been shown to have a preference to use their right antennae to greet other bees. Scientists have suggested that this 'antennal lateralization' may be akin to right or left handedness in humans and many other species. Read all about it at <http://io9.com/honeybee-friendships-may-shed-light-on-human-social-lif-594710097>



**Power Lines and Bees**

A long-time member, Andy Leith of Banff, has been in contact with an issue he has experienced regarding the possible effect of overhead power lines on bees.

Some years back Andy noticed that some stocks of bees he had close to very good clover fields were producing very little honey compared to other stocks he had on another site. The ones near the clover were near to pylons and underneath power lines. He suspects that the power lines were having some negative effect on his bees, possibly by disorienting them when they were returning to the hives.

Andy has monitored this situation for the last few years, and with the increase in recent years of overhead power lines from wind turbines, feels convinced that the bees close to power lines do poorly. Andy lost the last of his bees in 2012, but would be interested to know if anyone else has any experiences which are similar.

If anyone keeps bees close to or beneath power lines, it would be good to hear how well or how poorly those colonies do.

Please write to or phone the newsletter editor (see page 4) with any observations on this issue, and the responses will be published next month.

THE SCOTTISH BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

**AUTUMN CONVENTION**

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2013**

8.45am – 5.10pm

at

**INVERNESS COLLEGE – UHI**

**3 LONGMAN ROAD, INVERNESS, IV1 1SA**

**Book early to avoid disappointment**

**Mike Brown - Head of the National Bee Unit** - **Supporting Britain's Bees & Beekeepers**  
- **Activities of the National Bee Unit**  
- **The NBU's Queen Rearing System**

**Dr Mario Pahl – University of Wuerzburg** - **Honeybee Biology**  
- **Honeybee Cognition:**  
(Learning, memory and navigation in  
a miniature brain)

**Tickets £30 including coffee, lunch and tea**

(Students half price)

TRADE STANDS

Beecraft, Bee Books New & Old, BIBBA, SBA, Brunel Information, Solway Bee Supplies, Scottish Government Bee Inspectorate, Abelo.

Bookings for the Convention to Alan Riach, Woodgate, 7 Newland Avenue, Bathgate, EH48 1EE  
Tel. 01506 653839 e-mail [alan.riach@which.net](mailto:alan.riach@which.net)

Please make cheques (£30) payable to SBA and **enclose SAE** for programme and receipt.

**Closing date 14<sup>th</sup> September**

A list of B & B's is available from Alan Riach on request

Inverness-shire BKA is hosting a lecture in the College on Friday at 7-00pm. The lecture, to which all are welcome, is entitled "In the Company of Dolphins" by Charlie Phillips, Field Officer for the Whale & Dolphin Conservation Trust

## Notice Board



### Abelo Beekeeping Equipment

Wide range of products & competitive prices

Please check our offers at  
[www.abelo.co.uk](http://www.abelo.co.uk)

Contact Sebastian Bacz on  
07508944101 or e-mail  
[sales@abelo.co.uk](mailto:sales@abelo.co.uk)

### Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment.

Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail:

[AberdeenBeeSupplies@hotmail.com](mailto: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

### Wanted

Queens – mated or unmated

e-mail Ewan Campbell at [e.m.campbell@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:e.m.campbell@abdn.ac.uk)

Hello,

I am writing to you as I am undertaking a photo project documenting some of the many beekeepers in Scotland.

I would love if some of your members were willing to take part in the series.

If possible, could you get me in contact with anyone who might be interested.

I am willing to travel out to wherever they might be (I am currently in Perth)

The aim of the project is to show the variety of beekeepers within Scotland, by taking portraits of them within their own environment (this can be near the hives or within a place the sitter feels most comfortable i.e their homes).

The photographs will be taken on film and hand printed.

I would respect the wishes of the beekeepers (i.e I am not going to demand anyone be photographed that does not want to be, and I will not upset the bees)

This is part of my final year project at the Edinburgh College of Art.

The images may be used in the degree show, and I would make a print for anyone involved.

I can provide more information if needed.

Thank you,

Nadia Gabriel

[hello@nadiagabriel.co.uk](mailto:hello@nadiagabriel.co.uk)

### The Honey Jar Store

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:

Honey extractors ✓

Mini-melters ✓

Heather honey press ✓

Wax extractor ✓

Wax foundation press ✓

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

## According to.....

.....Jurgen Tautz in his 2008 book *The Buzz about Bees*, "Foraging is probably the most demanding period in the life of a honeybee. Perhaps it is then no surprise that a pronounced state of sleep has recently been discovered and described to occur in foragers. Young bees sleep for shorter periods, and not in a day/night rhythm. Foragers sleep longer, and largely at night. Bees sleep in the hive, but sleeping bees can also sometimes be seen outside the hive. Sleeping bees can be identified by a posture reflecting a lack of muscle tonus, in which the antennae hang down, and the legs are folded beneath the body."