

Newsletter

September 2014



Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association

2014 HONEY SHOW

SATURDAY 18 OCTOBER 2014 at 1.45PM

The Kinellar Community Hall, Fintray Road, Blackburn AB21 0SS

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SCO31754



Circulated with this month's newsletter is our Honey Show Schedule, newly revised and updated by Barbara Cruden and Rosie Crighton. You'll find that there are more entry classes and categories than ever before, so more opportunities for everyone to get involved. As well as honey, you can enter beeswax, mead, art, needlework, baking, photographs and more. Don't forget our 'gift table', which consists of show entries that are subsequently gifted to a local charity.

The honey show is the number one event on our calendar, so we hope you will come along, even it's just to see what it's all about.

All trophy holders should ensure that they return their trophies to the secretary **before 18 October.**

NEXT YEAR STARTS HERE

Hopefully you are busy extracting, filtering and bottling this year's honey crop. Then there are the cappings to clean, melt, refine and turn into beautiful candles. Oh yes, and what about the hand creams and lotion bars you were going to make from the rendered wax from old combs?

As if all of this wasn't enough, the other thing that should be demanding your attention this month is the preparation of your bees for winter. The prospect of a successful season next year will begin to be shaped by what you do now.

If you missed our excellent session on *Varroa* treatment at the Crathes apiary on the 13th, the number one source of information is the National Bee Unit (NBU) advisory leaflet, *Managing Varroa*. You can download a free copy from the BeeBase website by going to <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/index.cfm?pageid=167>

If you want a paper copy sent to you, ring the NBU at the Food and Environment Research Agency on 01904 462510.

The goal at this time of year is to reduce the mite population at a point when it would otherwise be rising rapidly. This means that the winter bees that will be emerging from the final few brood cycles before the cold weather arrives will be protected from the harm that the mites inflict and so have more chance of seeing the colony through to next spring.

The second big job this month will be ensuring your bees have enough stores to get them through the lean winter months. They need a syrup feed, which you can produce by thoroughly dissolving 1kg of white granulated sugar in 630ml of warm water. For convenience - and according to many beekeepers for added effectiveness - you can buy containers of "inverted" syrup at a reduced price from our own Honey Jar Store. (Contact details on page 3.) You'll want to use one or other of the rapid feeders that are on the market, as opposed to the contact feeders that you might have used in the spring.

Next month your mind will turn to hive ventilation, mouse-guards and what to do when the snow arrives. In the meantime, you could do worse than read the NBU's fact sheet, *Preparing honey bee colonies for winter*. It's available via the website and phone number given above.



Ian Mackley demonstrates his oxalic acid sublimation technique for treating *Varroa* at a very well attended members' event at Crathes earlier this month

Not another bloomin' vote!

Afraid so.

See page 2.

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Members' Events

AUTUMN LECTURE SERIES:**An introduction to bees and beekeeping**

Aberdeen Grammar School, Skene Street,
Aberdeen, AB10 1HT

Thursdays, 7.30pm-9pm

Programme

- 18 September: The Biology of the bee
- 25 September: The Beehive
- 2 October: What do I need to keep bees?
- 9 October: The products of the hive
- 30 October: Help – there's something wrong with my bees!
- 6 November: The beekeeping year

The six-week programme will cost £10, payable on the first evening of attendance. Attendees who are not currently members of ADBKA will be able to redeem the full course fee against their first year membership of the association.

The programme is ideal for those thinking about starting out on beekeeping, but would also be of interest to novices preparing to take the next step, or even experienced beekeepers wishing to update their knowledge.

ABERDEEN AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION SOCIAL EVENING**plus the presentation of Honey Show trophies**

Saturday 22 November at 7pm

Dyce Church Hall
Victoria Street
Dyce
Aberdeen

As with previous years, this evening will be organised along the lines of an "American Supper". Members are invited to bring along some food and drink which will be laid out for all to share.

This is an informal gathering where we can blether about the beekeeping year that has just passed and look forward to what next season might bring. If you're in danger of becoming a bee bore in the eyes of your family and friends, relax here, you'll be among kindred spirits!

Please note the change of venue from that advertised in your 2014 membership card.

Out with the Old, In with the New

The Aberdeen and District Beekeepers' Association is planning to follow more than one thousand other Scottish charities in changing its legal form to become an incorporated organisation. This will mean that ADBKA will become, for the first time since it was founded in 1910, a corporate body. Businesses and partners will be clear about who they are dealing with and the risk of personal liability will be removed from our office holders. All of our committee members will become Trustees of the newly formed charity.

To get there, we need to go through a detailed administrative and legal process, which began after members at our 2014 AGM approved the move. The next step, as required by our association rules, is to hold a postal ballot of members. A ballot form is being sent to everyone – it will come along with the newsletter for those members who get this by post, and in a separate mailing to those who receive the newsletter by e-mail. An advisory note circulated along with the voting form will give you all of the information you need.

Graham Torrie
Aberdeen and District Beekeepers Association
Hillcrest
Craigmyle Road
Torphins
AB31 4HN

Dear Graham

Fettercairn Community Allotment Visit to Crathes

I am writing on behalf of the Fettercairn Community Allotment group to express my sincere thanks to you and John Cooper for giving up your time to host our visit to the apiary at Crathes on Saturday.

John gave a very interesting and informative introduction to keeping bees with its many rewards and potential pitfalls. Everyone enjoyed seeing the workings of a hive and especially tasting the end product! It was also very generous of John to give away the rest of his delicious honey samples.

The facility you have at Crathes is a credit to your organisation, and I'm sure will do much to highlight the plight of the beleaguered honeybee.

Yours sincerely

Sue
Sue Barrie
Treasurer

www.tram.btck.co.uk

Scientists at Lund University in Sweden are looking at the potential for 'raw' honey to fight infections, including MRSA, that up until now require the use of antibiotics. Its effectiveness is being put down to 13 types of lactic acid bacteria found in the stomachs of bees, which are removed during the processing of shop bought honey. Researcher Dr Tobias Olofsson is reported as saying that "When used alive, these 13 lactic acid bacteria produce the right kind of antimicrobial compounds as needed, depending on the threat."

You can read the story on the Independent's website, which also has an interesting short video featuring one of the researchers explaining the study. Go to <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/bacteria-found-in-honeybee-stomachs-could-be-used-as-alternative-to-antibiotics-9724292.html>

Thanks to James Beattie for this item.



Everything you always wanted to know about.....

MELISSOPALYNOLOGY

Do you lie awake at night worrying about whether that heather honey you're selling at your gate is as pure as it should be? No? Better read on.

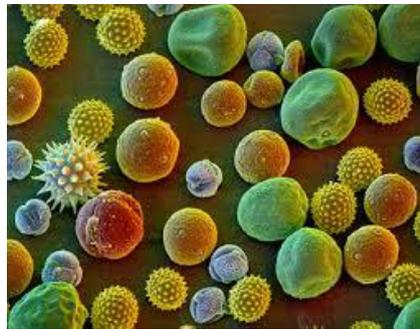
Melissopalynology is the study of pollen in honey in order to confirm its geographical and botanical origins. When a flower is disturbed by the wind or by an insect, lots of pollen grains are dusted into the air and some of these fall onto the nectar. A crop-full of nectar will contain many hundreds of pollen grains, and although some of these are filtered out and consumed by the bee on its way back to the hive, a large proportion ends up being stored with the ripened honey.

Using a light microscope of x400, x600 or x1000 magnification, it's possible to see the structure of the pollen grains in a honey sample. The drawing on the right shows the main parts of a representative pollen grain. It's a living cell made up from an inner wall called the intine, which contains the cytoplasm or chemical compounds within the cell. Outside of this is an

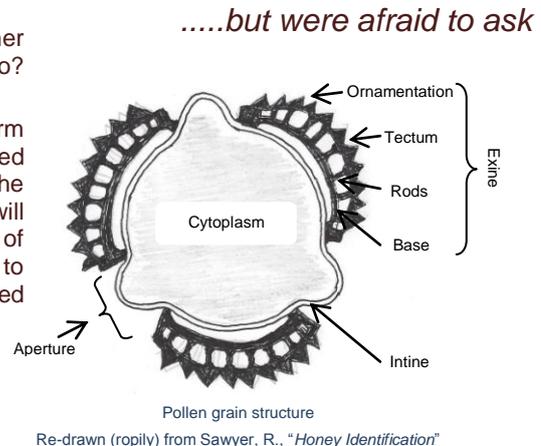
external layer called the exine, composed of a base, upon which is built various patterns of rods and spikes forming ornamentation on a tectum or cover. In some cases, the intine bulges through apertures in the exine layer.

By studying these features, alongside the overall size and shape of the pollen grains, the family or genus of the plant from which they originated can be identified. With a light microscope it is also possible in some cases to identify the specific plant species. However, to do this properly a three dimensional colour image of the pollen is needed, which calls for a scanning electron microscope. The picture below shows the beautiful images that are revealed.

If all of this sounds fairly straightforward, think again. As well as the technical equipment and expertise needed to carry out the analysis of pollen in honey samples, there are a multitude of practical problems to overcome. For example, the sticky excretions of sap sucking insects such as aphids can collect airborne pollen from all sorts of plants. When bees collect this 'honeydew' it gets mixed with floral honey stores and the alien pollen will be seen in a sample being tested. Similarly, pollen stored in combs, not necessarily from floral nectar sources, will get mixed with the honey during extraction. The melissopalynologist needs to anticipate this corruption and avoid reaching false conclusions.



Pollen grains photographed using a scanning electron microscope



But what's all of this got to do with your heather honey? Well, the Honey (Scotland) Regulations 2003 require that if you are selling a jar labelled 'heather honey', the contents must come "wholly or mainly" from that source. If you've put your hives on the hills early, there may be a great deal of bell heather honey in your jar. Now, bell heather isn't a heather at all, it's a heath. There could be trouble brewing.

However, let's face it; you're only likely to get caught out if the neighbour who buys your honey is a botanist or microbiologist (microbiologists are like ordinary biologists only much, much smaller). You can sleep sound.

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**

You may be asked to show your ADBKA membership card when you visit the store, so remember to take it along

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



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

According to the information sheet this honey extractor is made of stainless steel, it is electric and holds 12 shallow / 12 deep frames to 20 shallow frames. We would be open to offers about the cost, from the information we have it is an older unit but in very good condition and was £1,698 +VAT when new.

Contact Rhona McConnel at
Rhona.McConnell@stork.com
or call 07872327043 or 07590674091



Did you know that you can
**advertise bees, beekeeping
equipment and related items
on this page for free?** Just call
Graham on 013398 82038, or e-
mail

adbkanewsletter@btinternet.com

We currently have 227 readers!

Our area SBA Representative is

Stephen Palmer
Stephen can be contacted on
01888 551367, or by e-mail at
palmers@fintry.plus.com

BeeCraft is offering a discount to local beekeeping associations who wish to take out a bulk subscription to their monthly magazine on behalf of members. The price of an annual subscription to BeeCraft in 2015 is £27.00. With a 10% discount that you would get by going through the association, the price would be £24.30 per subscriber for 12 hard copies of the magazine delivered to your home, plus a free digital copy. To take advantage of this we need a minimum of 10 subscribers.

If any members are interested in taking up this offer, please contact our Treasurer, Louise Forbes on 01224 313096 or e-mail:
forbes.email@btinternet.com

A preview of BeeCraft magazine can be seen at www.bee-craft.com

Last chance to take up this offer!

According to.....

.....TSK and MP Johansson in their 1978 book, *Some Important Operations in Bee Management*. "After repeated admonitions to avoid exposing sweet materials in the open during the robbing season, it may appear contradictory that in some circumstances it is advisable to feed the entire apiary from exposed feeders. In Europe, some apiaries are routinely fed in outdoor feeders.

"Special circumstances: (a) A large number of colonies can be fed with a minimum of labour when bees are able to fly. (b) Individual hives do not need to be opened. (c) When robbers interfere with necessary manipulations of the colonies, sweetened water in outdoor feeders diverts the robbers by creating an artificial flow. As when bees are busy in the field during a natural nectar flow, hives can then be opened without robbing. (d) Outdoor feeders can be used to 'call bees off' when they are robbing outdoor facilities such as candy and fruit stands. (e) If a whole apiary is on the verge of starvation, outside feeding can be used to tide the bees over until an expected nectar flow starts, or until feeders can be installed in the hives and filled. (f) It has been suggested that outdoor feeding after the final flow of the season is a hygienic measure, which keeps the bees flying and reduces the likelihood of diseases such as nosema."