



FEBRUARY
2020

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

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FUTURE ARTICLES

ADBKA AGM 2020

Members are reminded that the AGM is to be held
on **SUNDAY 15TH MARCH,**

2.00pm at Kinellar Community Hall, Blackburn AB21 0JQ.

Any items that Members may wish to propose for the agenda and nominations for the committee (having first obtained consent from the person concerned for their name to go forward) must be received by the

Secretary – aberdeenbeekeepers@gmail.com

or by post to Townhead House, Ardoe, AB12 5XX

by Friday 21st February at the latest.

Life, Individual and the first-named Family Members may vote, as long as valid (either 2019 or renewed/new 2020) membership is held.

AGM WILL BE FOLLOWED BY GRAEME SHARPE'S TALK.

With qualifications in horticulture and apiculture, Graeme has been the beekeeping adviser at the Scottish Agricultural College since 2000. In this capacity he teaches beekeeping, advises the Scottish Government, and travels round the country delivering talks and training to beekeeping associations.

Graeme's talk at the AGM will cover his methods of beekeeping, including :

Getting the bees ready for the Oilseed rape, My beekeeping practices,

Swarming, Spring management, Summer management,

My varroa control, Feeding, Queen rearing, Nucs,

Do a bit on handling the honey crop.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due by 31st March, after which time you will not receive the monthly newsletter.

Current membership cards may be requested at members-only events, discounted beekeeping supplies and equipment loans.

As a charity we rely on member subscriptions to maintain our fine apiary and put on an interesting programme of events.

The rates for 2020 are unchanged at £20 single, £25 household, and free for under 16s. An updated membership form is available from the association website : this includes revised gift aid wording and a new section about data protection. We are also inviting members to state their occupation (or former occupation) – this information will help the committee to understand where special skills exist around the membership, that we may occasionally need to consult. Please renew your membership now, and complete the gift aid section if you are able to do so.

Malcolm Watson

BOOK REVIEW – BBKA ‘SPECIAL ISSUE SERIES’

The BBKA ‘Special Issue Series’ deserves to be better known. Each publication is a compilation of photo-illustrated articles mostly previously appearing in BBKA News over the past few years and almost invariably written by a Master Beekeeper or NDB holder.

For those early in their beekeeping career and perhaps already owning one of two of the usual Guides, the General Husbandry, Feeding and Swarming publications would be excellent next purchases. General Husbandry comprises 31 articles covering finding and marking queens, swarm catching, uniting, honey processing, feeding, comb changing and so on.

I have found them particularly useful to support study for Module exams, supplementing the standard text books and sometimes providing clearer, more comprehensive or more up-to-date coverage. The two or three page articles generally correspond quite closely with syllabus items and are of a level of detail that seems to match what the examiners might expect. The General Husbandry publication relates most closely to Modules 1,2,3 and 6 and Advanced Husbandry publication to Modules 2,3 and 8.

The two Husbandry publications are £10 each (80 pages) and the others £4 each (15 pages). There are also booklets in the thinner £4 series covering Honey Bee Anatomy, Flowers for Forage and the Beekeeping Year. They are available postage-free from the BBKA online shop...

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/pages/shop/department/bbka-resources>



STOP PRESS - A further Edition, ‘Queen Rearing’ (65 pages, £10), was published in April 2019. This would be very useful, and cost-effective, for Module 7, and to a lesser extent, Module 5, and a good first book for anyone venturing into queen rearing.

Ian Mackley

We are always interested in new articles for the newsletter, If you have an item for the newsletter, please contact **Olga Macaulay** by email at adbkanewsletter@gmail.com or **David Morland** at adbkavicechair@gmail.com

If you have an article for sale or loan or if you want an article then make use of the adverts section, there is no cost to advertise.

Similarly if you are available to help other members or want some help yourself then why not use this section to advertise what you want or what you can offer. Many members struggle to move bees to the honey crops on their own and it may be interesting for you to offer assistance and meet another member and learn how they manage their bees at the same time for example.

The adverts together with your contact details appear on the internet as part of the newsletter.

According to Samuel Hartlib in his 1655 book, *The Reformed Common Wealth of Bees*:

“Take a Calf, or rather a Sturk (or Steer) of a year old, about the latter end of April, bury it eight or ten days, till it begins to putrefy and corrupt; then take it forth of the earth, and opening it, lay it under some hedge, or wall, where it may be most subject to the Sun, by the heat whereof it will (a great part of it) turn into Maggots, which (without any other care) will live upon the remainder of the corruption. After a while, when they begin to have wings, the whole putrefied carcass would be carried to a place prepared, where the Hives stand ready, to which, being perfumed with Honey and sweet herbs, the Maggots (after they have received their wings) will resort. The gentleman in Cornwall, that practiced this experiment, used Hogsheads, or bigger Wine Casks, instead of Hives, and the practice of the Bee being to spend the first part of the Summer in filling the upper part of the Cask, and so still to work downwards: the Gentleman’s custom was (through a door in the upper part of the Cask) to take out what honey he wanted, without any disturbance to the Bees, whose work and abode was in the lower part of the Cask.”

Graham Torrie

NDB 'TEACHING BEEKEEPING' COURSE

Kitta and I attended a two day 'Teaching Beekeeping' course in November delivered by Tony Harris (where would we be without Tony's commitment to beekeeping education in Scotland?) under the auspices of the National Diploma in Beekeeping (NDB) organisation and organised by the SBA. The same course had been run earlier in the week in Perth. The course itself was designed by a beekeeping schoolteacher some years ago and so teaches well-founded principles and practices one would find in professional teaching situations.



After learning about the different ways in which people learn, most of the first day was taken up with how to work from creating aims and objectives, followed by schemes of work and then down through session plans, to get from a high level idea for beekeeping training, say a course or demonstration, to detailed delivery plans. As a prelude to day 2, the day closed with participants giving short presentations on subjects of their choice. We learned about dog training, combating invasive plant species and constructing buildings from straw, and memorably, in a talk about apitherapy, we heard about 'Apilarnil' - a 'smoothie' drink made from liquidised unsealed drone brood - peddled in Romania to treat (human!) reproductive problems.

Day 2 was concerned with how best to deliver material. Powerpoint was discussed at some length as well as other relevant forms of delivery such as apiary demonstrations. The final bit of 'theory' concerned assessment and feedback.

The course was held at the Cawdor Community Centre and it would be remiss of me not to mention Ann Chilcott's superb home-cooked hot lunches which she kindly brought in each day.

Ian Mackley

THE REMARKABLE HEARING OF THE GREATER WAX MOTH



The greater wax moth (*Galleria mellonella*) lays its eggs in beehives, where the larvae feed on the wax and debris of the honeycombs

A humble moth has been identified as having the sharpest hearing in the animal kingdom - up to 150 times more sensitive than a human's.

The greater wax moth has four auditory receptor cells. Yet its ears are very simple in structure, each being about the size of a pinhead.

For years, the greater wax moth's hearing has been a subject of study. More recently, scientists at the University of Strathclyde, Scotland, tested the moth's hearing with a wide range of sounds. They measured the vibrations of these tympanal membranes and recorded the activity of their auditory nerves. The "eardrums" still responded when exposed to sounds at a frequency of 300 kilohertz, the highest recorded in any creature in the natural world. By comparison, bat echolocation has been recorded at up to 212 kilohertz, the hearing of dolphins peaks at 160 kilohertz, and humans do not hear beyond 20 kilohertz.

The researchers said it is an example of a well-known animal with a newly discovered, extraordinary, sensory characteristic.

It also reflects on the 'co-evolution' of animals, as the moth's development is intertwined with that of their predators, bats.

The researchers used a state of the art scientific instrument called a laser Doppler vibrometer to test the hearing of twenty moths.

Hearing in greater wax moths is used for bat detection and also where males produce trains of ultrasonic pulses for courtship.

Researchers would like to use the superior hearing capability of the greater wax moth as the basis for new technology. How? "To help make better, and smaller, microphones," says Dr. James Windmill of the University of Strathclyde. "These could be put in a wide range of devices such as mobile phones and hearing aids."

TALK-POLY VS WOOD HIVES

Joan Gilbert-Stevens will be giving an overview of the various benefits and disadvantages between the use of either wooden or polystyrene hives at the members meeting **on Tue 11th February at 7pm at Kinellar Hall**. This hopefully will prove to be of interest particularly to new members who have not yet decided on the make or type of hives they are considering utilising. Joan has employed the use of hives manufactured from both types of materials over the past 3 years and will update with general information based on her experience over this time.

MEMBERS EVENTS

2020

FEBRUARY

Tuesday 11th

at 7p.m. at Kinellar Hall
Talk-Poly vs Wood Hives
by Joan Gilbert-Stevens

Tuesday 25th

at 7.00p.m.
at MacRobert Building, King St.
Evening Class Begins

MARCH

Sunday 15th

at 2.00p.m.
at Kinellar Hall.
AGM plus talk –
Going to the Oilseed Rape
by Graeme Sharpe

Saturday 21st

at 10.00a.m.
at Westhill Library
SBA EXAMS

APRIL

Tuesday 14th

at 7.00p.m. venue tba.
Talk – The Scottish Native
Honeybee Society
by Euan Campbell

Sunday 19th

at 2.00p.m. at Crathes
Demonstration–Spring Inspection
by Hugh Donohoe



KCBG

BEGINNERS WORKSHOP

"HOW DO I START??"

"WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW??"

KCBG invites anyone interested in taking up beekeeping to a short introductory talk on **Thursday 19 March 2020 – 7pm**

Friendship Room, Kemnay Village Hall, AB51 5SS

(accessed via side door)

This short session will cover some first steps – basic advice about equipment, time requirements, costs, suggested reading materials, benefits of club and SBA membership, suitable apiary sites.

This will be followed by our AGM and refreshments which you are welcome to attend.

TALK FREE, REFRESHMENTS £2.

A follow-up session will be held on

Thurs 26 March 2020, 7-9pm.

Wainman Room, Kemnay Village Hall

Topics will include:

The beekeeping year, what to expect when you look in a hive, hive and frame types, good hygiene practices, basic bee biology, forage, swarming, harvesting honey, bee diseases.

THERE WILL BE A CHARGE OF £5 TO COVER HANDOUTS AND REFRESHMENTS.

PLACES LIMITED: ANYONE WISHING TO ATTEND,

PLEASE EMAIL: chairperson@kemnaybees.org

ABERDEEN BEE SUPPLIES

JOCK MCGREGOR IS THE LOCAL AGENT FOR
THORNE BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT.

CONTACT HIM ON **01224 790468**

or e-mail: aberdeenbeesupplies@hotmail.com