



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

Established 1910

Scottish Charity Number SC031754

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK!

We have recently restarted Sunday morning working parties at the Crathes Apiary. Numbers have been limited under Covid restrictions and we have prioritised places for beginners from the 2020 and 2021 *Introduction to Beekeeping* courses who were unable to visit the apiary earlier.

It's great to see members back at the apiary working with the bees and gaining valuable hands-on experience. For some, this is their first experience of opening a hive and finding themselves in the midst of clouds of bees.

All being well, next season will see us back to our normal routine and we look forward to welcoming back many more members to our fantastic training apiary.

PLEASE NOTE:

We regret that our planned visit to the Kemnay Bee Group Apiary on 11 July and our members' barbeque scheduled for 24 July have both had to be cancelled in the light of ongoing Covid restrictions.

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Members return to our training apiary at Crathes Castle



A Cauld Blast

Beekeepers and honeybees are currently enjoying a prolonged warm spell, but it would do us no harm to be reminded of what North East weather can throw at us at other times of the year.

ADBKA member Fraser Brophy sent in this remarkable picture of one of his hives completely buried in snow. Fraser explains:

"We knew they were along the dyke but couldn't find the dyke or the fence so my partner had to walk along the top of the snow sounding with an upside-down hoe until she hit the roof of the hive while I dug in the right general direction."

The good news is that all of the colonies survived!

BeeBase

My name is Mitchell Barron, and I joined the association in connection with my work as a bee inspector in training.

I was delighted to join others of ADBKA at the event hosted by Murray McGregor at his Queen rearing facility recently and it was my pleasure to meet some of you there, at what was a very enjoyable and informative visit.

As a bee inspector I was really interested to hear about all the measures in place to minimise disease risks.

On that note, you will be aware that there have been a very small number of incidences of American Foulbrood (AFB) disease in the area served by the association. The Bee inspectors are working closely with the beekeeper to eradicate this outbreak as well as doing all 3km contacts with other beekeepers in the area to ensure that neighbouring hives have not been affected.

Something which helps greatly in our work to control this disease, and as a consequence is to the benefit of all, is having beekeepers registered on BeeBase.

Could I ask if you know of anyone who is involved in the keeping of bees, no matter how small a scale, but who is not registered, please encourage them to do so, not only will they be helping us to deal with the disease, but of course they will also enjoy the benefits of the advice and resources available to those registered.

BeeBase is free and completely safe. Your apiaries and details are not visible to any other beekeeper. Free registration is available at the [National Bee Unit website](#). BeeBase ensures that other beekeepers in the area are automatically alerted when notifiable disease is found in the area.

In addition to those you know, maybe even mentor, it may also be the case that you are aware of others in your vicinity, with hives or apiaries, but with whom you have no contact. Clearly any such site could harbour infection and so it would be useful if you could pass any information you have to us, and we will locate and contact the owners to allow us to carry out inspections and ensure these colonies are also free from disease.

Finally, you will be aware that the disease is caused by a spore-forming bacterium, and these spores can remain viable for decades, so there is a risk that bringing old equipment back into service could lead to viable spores becoming reactivated and infective. As we all know, recycling and heritage are important today, but of course bringing equipment back into use after years of storage or even neglect can also bring risk so could I also ask if you know the location of any derelict apiaries, equipment held in store, or any other legacy beekeeping equipment, please let us know.

If you have any concerns with the use of BeeBase or have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Scottish Government's Honey Bee Health Team and they will be delighted to help you Bees_mailbox@gov.scot

THIS MONTH IN THE APIARY: JULY

After the activity of the past three months, you can relax a little in July. Swarming will hopefully be past and your hives will be at peak population and very busy on a sunny day. There is no compelling reason to continue inspections on a seven (or ten, if queen clipped) cycle. Many beekeepers let their bees get on with it in July and August and only inspect occasionally, perhaps focusing on disease and/or the progress of new queens, and of course adding supers if required.

If you executed a swarm control procedure in May or June, then hopefully the new queen arising from the procedure will soon be mated and in lay. If you don't want the extra colony, you could (once certain the new queen is laying well) unite it with another, keeping the younger queen. The 'newspaper method' of uniting is common and reliable - you will find the details in every beekeeping manual.

Forward Planning

The next major activities will be dealing with any summer crop in August and then varroa treatment and winter feeding in September.

If you are getting a crop and haven't got an extractor, you'll need to work out where you can borrow one as well as getting hold of strainers, honey buckets, jars etc.

The **autumn varroa treatment is extremely important**, as it makes a major contribution to getting your bees through the winter. This treatment should significantly reduce the varroa/virus load on the all-important, long-lived 'winter' bees that will be born from September onwards and see the colony through until spring. It is essential to choose a **highly effective treatment, administer it properly** and don't leave it too late (start end August?). Some treatments take a long time (e.g. four-six weeks for Apivar), can be quite aggressive on the colony (MAQS), may have limited effectiveness (Apistan), or are only recommended at higher ambient temperatures (e.g. ApiLife Var, Apiguard). Only one treatment (MAQS) is licensed for use with supers on. So do your research now – ask around to see what more experienced beekeepers intend to use – and be clear how and when you need to deploy your chosen treatment. Apivar is recommended, especially for beginners.

June – A Swarmy Month!

23rd. Well as Beekeepers, we know that June can be the month for swarms, especially if the weather is just bee perfect. Despite inspections, bees decide when it's time to go.

My last inspection was on the 22nd, one particular hive had multiple Queen cells through each box, these were removed making up several nuc's, that same day I see some scout bees buzzing around some old empty hives, the scouts seem to stop after the nuc's were made up.

24th. The next day, the scout bees were back, this time working in/around one particular old empty hive, later my son spots a swarm in a tree, by now this old hive was getting quite busy, looking good.

This would be a good chance to capture a video of the swarm leaving the tree, hopefully heading into the old hive. Knowing it could take a while I got myself a chair to sit & relax in, the sun was beating down, I could feel my eyelids closing, thinking to myself, best not nod off, maybe the buzz of bees will alert me!

At that point, buzzing starts, it's my phone. With a frantic call from my neighbour, lots of bees inside house, coming down a disused chimney, not good, really bad!

Went for a quick look, yes, bees all round the chimney vent cap, also in the inside of the window. Very bad! Got suited up, armed with a leaf blower/sucker and smoker, after a couple of hours messing about, managed to stop the bees entering the house, still plenty around the chimney pot, even with the smoker going & periodically, gingerly blasting air from the blower up the chimney. The leaf sucker made short work of the bees inside the house.

Before leaving, I placed a temporary (sealed) cover around the open fireplace.

Late that night, managed to get the swarm out from the tree into a cardboard box, placing the box up to the old hive the scouts were working on, went back to the tree to collect the stragglers in a small box, shaking them into the top of the hive.



25th. Now to seal off my neighbours chimney pot cover! Still some bees buzzing around. Suit up complete with harness, ascend the dizzy heights for a look.

Replaced the vented pot cover, but this still left a bee space between the chimney can and pot cover, so applied a good thick bead of silicone.

Screen Mesh installed on the inside, to keep the mesh in place I used a good thick bead of silicone on both edges. (The mesh is what I used on my hives & feeders.) Chimney can is now Bee proof.

Certainly something to think about. Bee-Aware.

Colin Carnegie



FOR SALE

Small nucs of bees on national frames.

Queens 2021. Price -£150

Also: Flat packed, new -

Roofs (Thornes), nails included - £45.00 - 9 available

Supers - £30.00 - 6 available

Brood boxes - £43.00 - 4 available

Please contact Olga Macaulay if you are interested or have any questions.

Collection from Aberdeen Mob. 07435907500, Email: macaulay.olga@gmail.com

FOR SALE

Complete National Hives, ASSEMBLED
Like the set of all necessary bits.
Ideal for beginners or if want to expand your apiary.
Used but in a very good condition. Stained.

It includes:

- 1 Stand-solid wood, self made, strong and robust.
- 1 Mesh floor with the entrance block 1 Brood box.
- 1 queen excluder (wooden, metal or plastic - of your choice)
- 1 Super box
- 1 solid crown board
- 1 roof

Additional bits to it are:

- insulation board under the roof,
- frame spacer for feeding with fondabee in winter,
- mouse guard.

6 or more sets like this are available,
Price £250.00



COLONIES FOR SALE ranging from Nucleus hives starting at £60.00 each (not including poly hive) to larger colonies ready to be transferred into a National Hive starting at £150.00 each, prices depend on the amount of frames with brood at all stages (including a 2021 queen). We can sell the larger colonies with a good condition National Western Red Cedar Hive, which includes an Open Mesh Floor with Varroa Slide, Brood Box full of Hoffman frames, Plastic Queen Excluder with bee space, Crown board and Roof, price of hive £150.00.

Contact at mstewart840@gmail.com

01467643062 or 07890631813

FOR SALE

- Four Smith hives
- Various feeders, frames, etc
- Thomas 9-frame stainless steel extractor
- Honey warming cabinet
- Heather press

Contact Margaret Spalding on 01356
624426 or 07720863005

Brechin

A Beekeeping Alphabet

G is for Guard Bee

Being a guard bee patrolling the entrance to the hive is the last of the age-related roles performed by 'house' bees before they become foraging bees after about 21 days of adult life. One can sometimes see guard bees raised on their front legs in a 'ready for action' defensive posture. Their duties are pretty obvious! When the guard bees sting, the so-called 'alarm pheromone' - isopentylacetate - is released at the sting site alerting the rest of the colony and guiding other defenders. Isopentylacetate can sometimes be smelled - it is said to smell of bananas - when a lot of stinging is going on.

Ian Mackley

