



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

Urban Pesticide Study

President:

Alexander Gordon
Danestone
Aberdeen

Chair:

Malcolm Watson
e-mail:
adbkachair@
gmail.com
Tel. 07901 515212

Vice-Chair:

David Morland
e-mail:
adbkavicechair@
gmail.com
Tel. 07768 244420

Hon. Secretary:

Jamie Evans
e-mail:
aberdeenbeekeepers
@gmail.com
Tel. 079200 98395

Hon. Treasurer:

John Adams
e-mail:
treasureradbka@
gmail.com
Tel. 01224868402

*Membership
Secretary:*

Erling watt
e-mail:
adbkamembership@
gmail.com
Tel. 074294 54572

Newsletter:

Graham Torrie
e-mail:
adbkanewsletter@
gmail.com
Tel. 07594 063703

We have been contacted by Linnet McGregor who is studying for a PhD at the University of Aberdeen. Her project is entitled, "Pesticide problems for honey bees: a closer look in our towns". The premise of the project is that while there is legislation and good practice for pesticide use for agriculture and the public's perception of pollinators' problems with pesticides is centred at the farm, very little is known about pesticide exposure for hives in our towns.

Linnet is looking for a number of small-scale inner-city beekeepers to include in her research, which will involve the use of a newly developed passive sampling method called the APIstrip to measure pesticide exposure. It is a piece of rigid polystyrene coated in a resin designed to adsorb pesticides picked up by the bees during foraging. It's placed in between the combs (like a varroa strip) and left in the hive for two to three weeks. The strip will subsequently be analysed at SASA to determine which pesticides the colony has been exposed to and the severity of the exposure. Linnet will be looking to collect small amounts of bee bread for DNA bar-coding to determine the flora on which the hives have been foraging.

If you keep bees in an urban setting and are interested in participating, please contact Linnet by email: l.mcgregor1.20@abdn.ac.uk

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.

MURRAY MCGREGOR: VISIT TO QUEEN REARING UNIT

26 June

We are pleased to say that this visit can go ahead under Covid event protocols.

This has to be one of the best apiary visits in UK beekeeping! Murray McGregor is the largest commercial beekeeper in Scotland, managing around 4,000 hives, mainly aimed at heather honey. Murray shows us round his huge queen rearing operation at Coupar Angus and shares his vast experience of beekeeping. His queens are usually available for sale on the day.

Places are limited and priority will be given to those who have not been before. Booking will close on Sunday 20th June, after which time any remaining places will be allocated to those who have been before but are on the standby list. You can book immediate (not been before) and standby (been before) places on Eventbrite using the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/visit-to-murray-mcgregor-commercial-beekeeper-tickets-158692753297>



VISIT: QUEEN REARING SITE: AT COUPAR ANGUSPresented by **Murray McGregor**Saturday 26th June 2021*See front page for further details*

A recording of our last online talk, *Swarm Management, the Movers and Shakers*, is now available on YouTube. You can find it at:

<https://youtu.be/TXy9qGNTFeA>

THIS MONTH IN THE APIARY: JUNE

By and large June starts off as a continuation of practices in May.

Swarming

June is one of the higher risk months for swarming, so unless you have executed a swarm prevention or control manipulation on your hive, or the colony has swarmed, continue a seven day inspection cycle, as described last month and act on what you find.

Space

Super up as necessary.

Feeding

The 'June Gap' is a period between the end of the spring nectar flow and the summer flowers opening, usually at the beginning of June, when there may be little forage for the bees. In some years the gap is short and not noticeable, but it can last say a couple of weeks or so. Colonies may be at risk of starvation, especially if the weather is poor. If you have supers with stores on, the bees will consume the stores, but if not, be prepared to feed 1:1 syrup. Remember to remove supers if you have to feed.

Disease Inspection

June is a good time to do a full disease inspection, looking especially for any signs of the foulbrood diseases and/or varroa-vectored viruses such as Deformed Wing Virus. Maybe try to get an experienced beekeeper to come to do this with you. As part of the disease check routine, put your varroa tray in for a few days and do a varroa mite drop count. Use the Beebase calculator to determine what action should be taken.

Ian Mackley

The Scottish Native Honey Bee Society is currently running a survey searching for good examples of native honey bees.

Many beekeepers and the wider public are becoming more aware of the existence of native honey bees and the value of saving potentially good genetic material for bees adapted to their local environment which could be of value for all beekeepers.

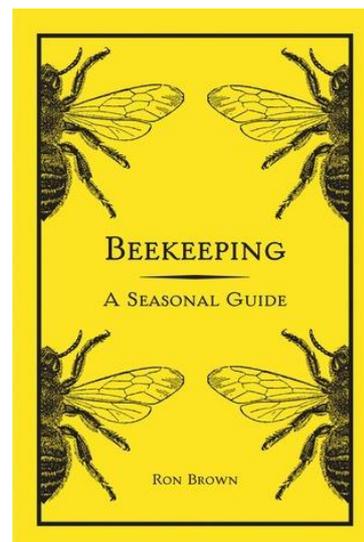
With this survey SNHBS plans to offer DNA testing for colonies that show good native characteristics from an initial screening by their team of assessors.

An information sheet providing details of the survey and explaining how to take part is circulated with this month's newsletter.

BEE for BOOK

Let's face it, you could read from now until the cows come home and never get through all of the books on bees and beekeeping. So, you have to be selective. To help you in the task, we are looking for ADBKA members to recommend a bee book that others may find valuable.

My choice for this first article in the series is *Beekeeping – A Seasonal Guide* by Ron Brown, first published in 1985. My hardcover edition was published by Batsford in 2011. I haven't been able to find out all that much about the author, but here's what I've got. The rear cover of my copy tells us that Ron Brown (OBE) had over 50 years' experience of beekeeping in Britain and Central Africa. Another title of his on my bookshelf, *Honey Bees – A Guide to Management*, published in 1988, adds that he also worked with bees in New Zealand, China and Brazil.



He was President of the Devon Beekeepers' Association from 1982-1984 (following in the footsteps of the legendary Brother Adam, who held that position around ten years earlier) and was quite prolific in his writings on bees and beekeeping. I've already mention two of his books; to those, add: *Managing Mini Nucs*; *Honey-bee Swarms*; *Beeswax*; *Great Masters of Beekeeping*; *A Simple Two-queen System*; and *Ron Brown on Beekeeping*. A trawl of the Internet turned up a notice in the April 2011 newsletter of Conwy Beekeepers announcing his death.

Anyway, on to his book. The first thing to say is that my 2011 Batsford edition is a thing of beauty. It comes with a yellow, embossed hard cover with black flyleaves front and back enclosing 192 pages of tightly-bound, high quality paper. Some pages have a watermark of bees or honeycomb.

If you're looking for a book with lots of pictures, this isn't for you, there are none. There are, however, some well-drawn illustrations to help us understand the equipment or manipulations being described. And Ron really has a lot to tell us, including topics rarely found in other bee books, for example setting up a two-queen system or using a Taranov board for swarm control.

More than anything else, it's the structure of this book that appeals to me. As the title implies, the text is broken down in accordance with the seasonal activities of bees and beekeeper: Spring, Early Summer, High Summer, Autumn, and Winter. In addition, there's a further sub-division offering different ideas and advice for 'beginners', 'improvers', and 'experienced' beekeepers. This has found me going back to *Beekeeping – A Seasonal Guide* year after year, with Ron Brown encouraging me to try out ever more ambitious techniques as my own experience broadened and my confidence grew. *You may well find yourself doing the same.*

Graham Torrie

First Case of AFB This Year

An outbreak of American Foulbrood (AFB) has been found in a single hive in an apiary in the Stanley area of Perthshire. The infected hive was detected by the beekeeper with the disease being confirmed by SASA on the 21st of May 2021. This is the first finding of AFB in Scotland this year.

The Scottish Government has provided more information on how to identify and report foulbrood diseases of honey bees, which can be found at

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foulbrood/>

The SBA has published information from the Scottish Bee Health Improvement Team on 'Spotting the Foulbroods' (American and European) in the April Scottish Beekeeper magazine.

Please remember to register your hives on BeeBase

<https://nationalbeeunit.com/>

to ensure you receive automatic notifications of any foulbroods detected near to your apiaries.

We Need to Talk About: Drones

Part 1

Ask yourself: why have drones evolved to be so much larger than workers and queens? One expert has suggested the reason is that the drone has to carry the queen for the duration of their coupling during mating, and this seems reasonable. However, a remarkable piece of filming undermines that theory. This clip on YouTube <https://youtu.be/OWB0i1cSBWl> clearly shows that during the first few moments of the drone and queen's aerial coupling, the effort of flying is shared. Then, in the final stages, it is the queen that carries the drone!

If you have an alternative answer to this curious question, contact the newsletter and we'll share your ideas.



EQUIPMENT

- Flat pack Nat. hives (W. Red Cdr.), OMF floor, brood body, 2x supers, crown board & flat roof (w. metal): £165
- Poly nucs: £36
- Brood frames (Hoffman) x10: £12
- Brood foundation (wired) x10: £15
- Hive tools (s/s) trad. pattern: £8

Can deliver locally.
Enquiries: (01224) 580137
aberdeen.honeybees@gmail.com

Aberdeen Bee Supplies

Jock McGregor is the local agent for Thorne Beekeeping Equipment. Contact him on 01224 790468 or e-mail: 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

For Sale: **DN4 frames**, unassembled, no nails or foundation. Packs of 10. Open to offers. May be able to deliver.

Contact Chris at cpcollett@aol.com

BEE CABIN

BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

WE'RE HERE FOR ALL YOUR BEEKEEPING NEEDS
DESS, ABOYNE AB34 5BB

For the convenience of beekeepers out with our location, we will now be holding a Thursday evening pick up point in KINGSWELLS Aberdeen.

Orders through www.beecabin.ecwid.com, Telephone 07809229375 or email beecabin@gmail.com received **BEFORE 4pm on a**

Thursday can be collected between **7pm to 7.30pm** on a Thursday evening. Location, Park and Ride LOWER car park Kingswells Causeway off the A944. This is for a trial period but will continue throughout the season if viable.

A complete, FLAT PACKED, Thorne's cedar **National hive**. Comprising:

- Open mesh floor
- Brood body with 11 D.N.4 frames on metal runners with standard wired foundation
- Dummy board
- Slotted steel queen excluder
- Two supers each with 10 SN1 frames on metal castellations with 20 sheets of British standard shallow wired foundation
- Crownboard with two plastic porter bee escapes
- 4" roof.
- Entrance block
- Instructions, nails and glue.

£180.00

Contact Ron Smith on 07588813870 / usersmi954@aol.com

A Beekeeping Alphabet

F is for Fondant

Although often conflated, fondant and candy are different things. Both are solid feeds generally used in the October-March period when feeding liquids syrups is inappropriate due to the risk of fermentation or mould. Fondant comprises sugar, glucose syrup and water and has a softer texture than candy made from sugar and water alone. Fondant is generally bought whilst candy is often home-made. The bees need to liquefy, dilute and invert both before consumption so a water source is important (not usually a problem in Scotland!)



Ian Mackley