



# 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

## SPRING INTO ACTION!



The bees at our training apiary in the grounds of Crathes Castle have been making the most of the early pollen offered by these drifts of snowdrops. Although the flowers also offer a small amount of nectar, it's the yellowish orange pollen that they are bringing home in the pollen baskets on their hind legs.

Although it's still too cold to be looking into your hives, keep an eye on the activity at each hive entrance and look for workers bringing in pollen. If they are, it's a very good indication that your colony already has a growing brood nest.

Eggs, larvae and pupae all give off a pheromone that stimulates the older bees to go out and forage for pollen. Of the three, larvae have the most powerful influence. Experiments conducted by John Free at the Rothamstead Bee Research Unit in the 1960s revealed that foraging workers that are excluded from the brood nest are still roused to gather pollen, indicating that there is a volatile chemical in the pheromone that permeates the hive. The effect is significantly increased when the foragers are allowed to make antennal contact and engage in food exchange with nurse bees feeding brood, and further still if they come into direct contact with larvae.

His work was published in the journal *Animal Behaviour*, Volume 15, Issue 1, January 1967, Pages 134-144.

Don't forget to register to attend our online Annual General Meeting, which will be held on 18 March at 7pm. Our AGM is an important part in the business of running our association. Members get to hear directly from our Chair and our Treasurer, who will provide an update on our activities and finances. We also hold elections to appoint our Office Bearers and other committee members for the forthcoming year. All of the committee members are trustees of our charity.

Register to attend by going to:  
<https://adbka18mar2021.eventbrite.co.uk>

### Membership Reminder

Thank you to the many members who have renewed their membership for 2021 and taken advantage of the £10.00 discount off the usual renewal fee.

Membership of the ADBKA falls due on the 31st December each year. The association allows a period of three months to renew memberships during which previous years members can continue to enjoy the full benefits of membership. This period expires on 31 March.

After this date members who have not renewed their membership will be removed from the active members list and will no longer receive the monthly newsletter or be entitled to attend association events be they online or the various events that we will hopefully be able to attend later in the year. The £10.00 discount also expires on the 31st March. Anyone renewing after this date will be required to pay full fee.

The application form can easily be downloaded from the ADBKA website, there are a variety of payment options. Please feel free to contact myself (contact details on newsletter) should you have any questions or problems renewing your membership.

I wish you all well.

*Erling Watt*

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**ABERDEEN AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**Thursday 18 March 2021 at 7pm - [Online](#)

Following formal business, a short film will be shown: 'Manley to the Heather'

To book your place for this event please register at:

<https://adbka18mar2021.eventbrite.co.uk>**TALK: THE USUAL SUSPECTS:****THE MYSTERY OF THE VARROA MITE, DWV AND THE HONEYBEE**Presented by **Amy Cooper**

Wednesday 21 April 2021 at 7pm

To book your place for this [online](#) talk please register at:<https://adbka21apr2021.eventbrite.co.uk>

**Amy Cooper** is a PhD researcher in the Zoology Department at Aberdeen University. Her primary research interest concerns the interactions between the honey bee, the *Varroa* mite and Deformed Wing Virus (DWV). All topics of great interest and concern to beekeepers, so this promises to be an interesting and informative talk.

**THIS MONTH IN THE APIARY: MARCH****Feeding**

March is a critical time. Many colonies which have otherwise survived the winter starve out in March. The amount of brood is increasing and may exceed the number of adult bees. Adult bees will consume more stores as they become active and fly on warmer days as well as feeding and warming the brood. So pay particular attention and feed if necessary or in any doubt. Be particularly alert for periods of warm weather (rapid consumption of stores) followed by cold weather.

We are getting to the time where syrup might be ok again, especially towards the end of the month, but fondant is always 'safe' and an invert syrup would probably be better than a plain sugar syrup.

**Plan for the Season**

Beekeeping will get hands-on in April, so it's a good idea to have a plan in mind for the season by now. The season rarely goes to plan, but you'll get more out of your beekeeping if you have one. Reflect on lessons from the previous season. Read up on and watch videos of any manipulations you intend to perform and check that you have, or can get, the kit you need to perform them. This applies especially to swarm control - assume swarming will happen, decide well in advance what you are going to do about it and be prepared.

**Cleaning**

Cleaning kit can of course be done any time over winter. We'll cover tools this month.

*Hive Tool (and other small accessories):* Make up a solution of 100g of washing soda in 500 ml of warm water, and add a dash of washing up liquid. Scrape off any large chunks of wax, propolis etc. and soak the tool for a while. After a scrub and a rinse, it should be spotless and gleaming again. Other small metal and plastic hive parts, e.g. Porter escapes, queen cages etc., as well as feeders, can be cleaned in the same solution.

*Smoker:* The bellows are usually screwed on and can be detached. Sticky deposits on the bellows can be removed with the washing soda solution. A heavily used smoker may have tarry deposits on the outside, inside the lid and particularly around the rim, making opening and closing difficult. Apply a blowtorch to these deposits for a minute or so. They will coke up into a more solid, brittle deposit which can be fairly readily chipped and scraped off.

**Ian Mackley**





### 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)

#### BEES AND HIVES FOR SALE

2 x colonies in poly National hives + 1 additional hive – each hive complete with two supers

Call Richard on 07764852001 (New Deer)

#### APIARY SITE - DUFFTOWN

We are located in Dufftown and have what might be considered a bee friendly one acre walled garden which we are in the process of restoring.

If you have anyone looking to place some hives, we might be happy to help out.

Garden has fruit trees, plenty flowers and other bee friendly inhabitants.

Contact Andy at:

[andrewjpettitt@icloud.com](mailto:andrewjpettitt@icloud.com)

#### BEES FOR SALE

At least 3 colonies for sale all on b/s frames. All have been treated for varroa. Telephone Sandy Watson  
Mobile number. 07856653419

#### 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](mailto:aberdeen.honeybees@gmail.com)

#### BEE CABIN

##### BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

Tel 07809229375

Online shop - [www.beecabin.ecwid.com](http://www.beecabin.ecwid.com)

WE'RE HERE FOR ALL YOUR BEEKEEPING NEEDS

DESS, ABOYNE AB34 5BB

## A Beekeeping Alphabet

### C is for Cold Way

A debate much loved by some beekeepers, 'Cold Way' describes arranging the frames at right angles to the plane of the front of the hive, allowing draughts to flow unobstructed to the back of the hive. In the alternative 'Warm Way', the frames are parallel to the front plane of the hive.

Does it matter? It's such a well-known debate that if it were of importance, surely it would have been thoroughly researched and if one way was demonstrably better than the other this would now be widely known and implemented?

Secondly, it's only a possible question with square National hives where there are two possible orientations of the brood body (and thus frames) relative to the floor/entrance. Langstroth hives are rectangular and necessarily the 'cold way'. In the Haynes Bee Manual, respected author Claire Waring offers an argument in favour of the warm way producing better brood pattern and nest geometry, but even she starts by suggesting the main issue is convenience - whether you want to inspect from the rear or the side of your National hive.



Ian Mackley