



Newsletter

January 2022



# 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

## 2022 INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING COURSE

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The ever popular 'Intro' course will be offered again in 2022. It will commence on Friday 18th February and run for six weeks, followed by an Apiary visit on the weekend of 23/24<sup>th</sup> April.

The course will be entirely online again this year. Video presentations will be released weekly on

Fridays which can be watched at leisure, followed by a live Zoom Q&A session the following Tuesday.

Members of the Association who have renewed their membership for 2022 may take the course at a reduced rate of £10 per household. If you wish to do so, **please sign up as soon as possible** using the following Eventbrite link...

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/an-introduction-to-beekeeping-2022-tickets-239918541817>

In a new move this year, we are planning to hold one day 'Beginners Practical Courses' in May 2022, pandemic-permitting. These are intended to build on the Intro course by imparting practical knowledge and by practising basic skills in an apiary setting. Details will be available nearer the time. Places will be open to any member but overall numbers across the two events will be limited.



Last month Graham Torrie advised us that he was handing over the role of newsletter editor to Edna May Pyle.

Welcome to Edna May, and thank you for taking this on. We wish you well.

I would like to publicly thank Graham for all his great work. Graham was responsible for our newsletter from 2011 until 2016, and during that time the quality of the production steadily improved. Graham then returned to the role temporarily when Olga Macaulay stood down a year ago. So, after hundreds of hours of work and approximately eighty editions he can now take a well-earned break. Except that he can't, because Graham is also our Crathes apiary manager ! Thank you Graham.

Malcolm Watson

**ABERDEEN AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION WELCOME TO THE NEW YEAR and Q & A**  
 Thursday 20 January 2022 at 7.00pm Our first get-together of the new year will be a Zoom meeting when the committee will provide information about the Association's plans for 2022. There will then be the opportunity for members to ask questions. This is your chance to get help with any beekeeping problems you may have, or to share your thoughts on the year ahead. There's no need to book. Just login via this link: <https://zoom.us/join> Meeting ID: 844 6268 6398 Passcode: 151093

**Wed 16<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm. Online Talk – Solitary bees by Gavin Ramsay.**

Gavin has kept bees from the mid-1990s and since then he has managed to make most of the possible beekeeping mistakes! He chairs SNHBS, helps his local association and presents regularly on bee topics across Scotland and beyond. He used to be the Bee Health and Science Officer for the SBA until May 2020. He has also given up being a plant geneticist, and is starting to find out that running a beekeeping business is not for the easily distracted or the disorganised!

To attend this event, go to, <https://zoom.us/join>, Meeting ID: 862 6743 1911 Passcode: 090268

**THIS MONTH IN THE APIARY: JANUARY**

As discussed last month, your winter varroa treatment should already have been completed. The longer you leave it the less effective it will be as the increasing number of brood cells, into which the varroa mites go to reproduce, leave fewer mites outside the cells exposed to the treatment. It is often said that bees do not die of cold but of starvation. Remember the extended period of heavy snow in early February last year... The bees were fine!



We must now be keeping a closer eye on the amount of stores in the hive which is checked by 'hefting' the hive; lifting it up a few inches at the back. Assessing the quantity of stores there are from the weight you feel is a matter of experience and judgement but if you heft regularly you will get a sense of it. Don't open the hive unless absolutely necessary, and if you do, try to do it on a warmer day, do it calmly and quickly (to try to avoid the cluster breaking up) as the bees work hard to maintain a survivable internal temperature. If in doubt about stores, then you should feed. Bought fondant or home-made candy should be used at this time of year. Cut a hole, something like a long one centimetre wide slot, in the packaging and place the fondant package directly on the tops of the frames above the cluster of bees (which may be in a warm corner rather than the centre of the hive) with the slot roughly at a right angle to the frames. You will need an empty super or eke to raise the roof a little over the fondant, and cover the exposed tops of frames with sacking, carpet, bubble wrap or something similar with the crownboard on top. As the colony population increases over the next few months, the stores will be consumed ever more rapidly so you want to increase the frequency with which you check. Somewhat counter-intuitively, the warmer it is, the faster the stores will be consumed as more brood is created and the bees fly more.

*(Photo courtesy Fraser Brophy)*

We have now benefited from a year of articles about the most important things to do each month in the apiary, courtesy of Ian Mackley. If anyone would like copies of months they missed or didn't keep, or indeed the whole set, please email him at [educationadbka@gmail.com](mailto:educationadbka@gmail.com)

## HONEY BEE HEALTH

Following the recent review of Scotland's first 10-year Honey Bee Health Strategy, the Scottish Government Honey Bee Health Team committed to issue a survey to help identify the areas in which improvements can be made to best continue to support Scotland's honey bees in future years.

This is an opportunity for beekeepers and those with an interest in honey bees to give their views on what they consider to be the most important issues facing the beekeeping sector in Scotland. This information will help the Scottish Government to determine the direction of the new 10-year Strategy which is due for publication in June 2022.

The Survey is now live and can be accessed using this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/JVLGWY8>

If nothing else, it contains an interesting question about compulsory registration of beekeepers/apiaries in Scotland. This is being seriously considered, so this is your opportunity to express your views.

The closing date to submit responses is Friday 28th January 2022. The survey is anonymous, voluntary and replies cannot be traced back to individuals.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

Membership of ADBKA fell due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January.

There are a number of options for renewing your membership.

The easiest way is to set up a direct debit by completing the online form available from the Association website. (<https://aberdeenbeekeepers.net/membership-direct-debit/>) Membership fees will be taken from your account on the 16th January and your membership card will be sent out promptly after this date. The advantage of this is that once set up, your membership will be renewed automatically each year, unless you instruct otherwise.

Payment by BACS to the association, (details on the membership form). Please ensure that you include your name and membership number on the details, as this makes administration a lot easier.

You can also pay by cheque/Postal Order made out to ADBKA and sent to the membership secretary. Cash is also accepted, but obviously this is a much less secure method of payment.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Membership Secretary.

Membership should be paid no later than 31<sup>st</sup> March after which all benefits of membership will cease. Should you choose not to renew, it helps with administration if you could let the membership secretary know. It is also helpful to know the reason for non-renewal, as feedback helps the committee to improve the service the association offers.

May I take this opportunity to wish all of our members a safe, happy and healthy 2022, and to thank you for your continued membership and support of the association.



### 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

#### Buzzing in !

Hi everyone, I'm Edna May, and have just taken over responsibility for the ADBKA newsletter from Graham Torrie. I'm still quite nervous about having enough material, so would be delighted to hear from any of our members at [adbkanewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:adbkanewsletter@gmail.com) ! We all just love to speak about our bees, so here is your opportunity!

#### EQUIPMENT

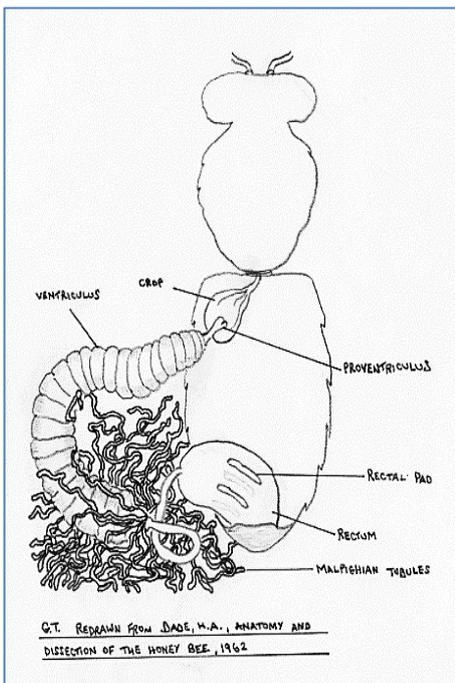
- Flat pack Nat. hives (W. Red Cdr.), OMF floor, brood body, 2x supers, crown board & flat roof (w. metal): £165
- Poly nucs: £36
- Brood frames (Hoffman) x10: £12
- Brood foundation (wired) x10: £15
- Hive tools (s/s) trad. pattern: £8

Can deliver locally.

Enquiries: (01224) 580137

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

## A Beekeeping Alphabet



#### M is for the Malphigian tubules

No, the Malphigian Tubules are not a 1970's rock band but about 100 tiny long, white, convoluted

tubes, sealed at the far end and floating in the bee's abdominal cavity and connected to the alimentary system between the mid and hind guts, just upstream of the pyloric valve which controls flow into the small intestine. The walls of the tubules are only one cell thick. They extract waste from the haemolymph in the abdomen and route it down the gut. Water from the waste is largely reabsorbed by 'rectal pads' before relatively solid waste is excreted.

