

Y.B.K.A. eNews

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



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Our Chairmans message for the coming year

Yorkshire - biggest and best in BBKA

My first duty, and pleasure, as chairman of Yorkshire BKA is to pass on the thanks of all members to Dave and Eli Shannon for all of their hard work and enthusiasm over the last few years.

Dave has been an inspired chairman and under his leadership YBKA has grown stronger and more forward thinking. While Dave has been chairman Yorkshire has taken the county trophy at the National Honey Show three times (with thanks to all those members who win so many classes). Dave is a keen show-person and is well on his way to becoming a senior honey judge.

Eli also needs our thanks for the time, energy and support she has given to the YBKA web-site. This can be a thankless job when few contribute and you have no idea how well used the site is. Eli has worked hard for YBKA and we thank her for all her efforts.

I am sure that both Dave and Eli will continue to support Yorkshire beekeeping for many years to come. Dave continues as a member of the General Purposes Committee (GPC) with responsibility for Honey Shows. He is also an area representative for several district - a duty he takes very seriously indeed.

The GPC has had several projects

suggested to it for the coming years and we hope to pursue these for the benefit of all our members. These include a bee breeding programme, a PhD research project, the Northern Associations Network, an increased range of goods available through bulk purchase and possibly a spray liaison project. We also intend to extend the Gift Aid scheme to help district reclaim even more tax revenue and we hope to get more members involved in events at the Great Yorkshire Showground. The GPC is always open to ideas from members about other projects so please speak up.

And, of course, our own Bishop Burton Conference will be even better than last year with our key speaker being the person who trained Jamie Ellis - the man who really did get people talking last year - and who is one of the best in the world. You need to be there.

Yorkshire is the largest county association by both area and membership numbers within the BBKA. We need to think big and act big to influence beekeeping in this country. BBKA should represent our views and listen to what we say. To do this we need our members to be active and involved - so please - get involved.

Bill Cadmore
Chairman

JANUARY

JOBS FOR THE MONTH

Check that all hives are clear of snow and in good water tight condition.

Heft hives to get an idea of stores remaining.

Make or buy candy and feed this to the bees.

Fill in important beekeeping dates on your calendar

Make plans for bee breeding

Read the new books you received for Christmas

Get involved in the association



The Bees. The queen is surrounded by thousand of her workers. She is in the midst of their winter cluster. There is little activity except on a warm day when the workers will take the opportunity to make cleansing flights. There are no drones in the hive, but some worker brood will begin to appear in the hive. The bees will consume about 25 pounds of stored honey this month.

If you have not already done so now would be a good time to put candy / fondant onto your hives. I don't usually do this as I try to make sure that the colonies are well fed in autumn but tis year I've made sure that all colonies have extra food. There are as many ways of feeding candy as there are beekeepers but feeding candy in an inverted honey jar allows to record exactly how much each colony is consuming.

I belong to the school that says don't disturb your bees unless you have to so I try to do as little as possible this month - although the research hives will have samples of live bees removed on a regular basis in order to see how they are effected by the winter.

We have to hope the bees make it through these cold temperatures. In my apiary we have had 23 nights with temperatures below -10°C so this is the coldest winter I have experienced in 32 years of beekeeping. The bees deal with worse

conditions in Scandinavia so its possible that all will be well, although I worry that our carniolans may be more susceptible. The more native black bees will probably stand the cold better.

The Beekeeper. Little work is required from you at the hives. If there is more heavy snow, make certain the entrance to the hive is cleared to allow for proper ventilation. This is a great time to catch up on your reading about bees, attend bee club meetings, and build and repair equipment for next season.

This would also be a good time to update all of your records so that you can make plans for bee breeding in the coming year. Which are your best bees and what do you need to do to breed from them ?

Time Spent. You'll probably have to spend less than an hour doing actual beekeeping tasks this month.

Time can be spent making plans for the coming year. Take a look at your calendar and see which beekeeping events you'll be able to attend. The Bishop Burton Conference looks like an event not to be missed.

Yorkshire BBKA

Annual General Meeting - 18th December 2011

In view of the terrible weather we have been having the AGM was delayed by two weeks - to yet another day when the weather was bad. The General Purposes Committee (GPC) arrived early in order to hold their much delayed meeting while avoiding the need to make two long journeys for those members that live a long way from Harrogate. At one point we thought that the AGM would not be able to proceed but luckily enough folks braved the cold and snow to allow the meeting to proceed, and a very good and lively meeting it was.

Issues were discussed and debated and voted on in good spirit and with the good of the association in everybody's mind.

Two motions that are due to be discussed at the BBKA Annual Delegates Meeting were hotly debated:-

1. The pesticides issue continues to bring out strong feelings and a strong argument was made for BBKA to cease all forms of sponsorship and endorsement links with agrochemical companies. Our BBKA ADM delegate argued that BBKA should continue to work with these companies but that there should be an end to any financial agreement.
2. The issue of Cleveland's bid to become a county member of the BBKA was debated and a formal vote was taken as to how our delegate should vote on this issue. Cleveland had previously been a district of Yorkshire BKA but some years ago moved to join Durham BKA. Durham BKA is supporting the Cleveland bid for independent membership of BBKA. Despite the fact that the GPC of Yorkshire BKA had previously voted to have our delegate abstain at the BBKA ADM in the Cleveland vote (18th June 2010 - item 11) the members vote at the AGM

gave our delegate a resounding vote in favour of opposing the motion that Cleveland becoming a separate county member of BBKA.

This might cause some problems at meetings of the Northern Beekeeping Associations Forum where we are trying to work with other associations in the north on projects that will hopefully benefit us all. The members present at the AFM were very much in favour of holding meetings with other northern associations in order to progress issues that were of concern to us. Having seen how effective the confederation of associations in the south west of England is as acting as a pressure group we hope that we can work towards the same.

The other issue that resulted in excellent debate and discussion was the proposed project for the northern associations to sponsor a PhD research post.

While all present seemed to be keen on the idea of sponsoring a research project that would be of direct benefit to beekeepers there was no agreement on how this might be funded. The members present were not keen to agree to fund the proposal from capitation and expressed the need to know exactly how much the sponsorship would cost. The YBKA Treasurer had framed a proposal that contained the phrase "no more than...". Members were not happy with this. As a result of discussions at the AGM the whole proposal is being looked at again - see the article about this in this magazine.

Lunch was very good although it was sad to see so much go uneaten. The GPC have agreed that we should aim to make all AGM's as interactive as this - Let the membership have the major say in policy making.

Varroa

Bee scientists to force killer mites to self destruct

Scientists may be able to halt global honey bee losses by forcing the deadly Varroa mite, lethal in the freezing weather, to self destruct.

The blood-sucking Varroa is the biggest killer of honey bees world-wide, having developed resistance to beekeepers' medication. It is particularly destructive in winter as depleted colonies do not have enough bees huddling together to keep warm.

Now researchers from the Government's National Bee Unit and Aberdeen University have worked out how to 'silence' natural functions in the mites' genes to make them self destruct.

Dr. Alan Bowman from the University of Aberdeen said:

"Introducing harmless genetic material encourages the mites' own immune response to prevent their genes from expressing natural functions. This could make them self destruct.

"The beauty of this approach is that it is really specific and targets the mites without harming the bees or, indeed, any other animal."

Dr Giles Budge from National Bee Unit, part of the Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera), said:

"This cutting edge treatment is environmentally-friendly and poses no threat to the bees. With appropriate support from industry and a rigorous approval process, chemical-free medicines could be available in five to ten years."

Environment Minister Lord Henley said:

"Bees are essential to putting food on our table and worth £200m to Britain every year through pollinating our crops. This excellent work by UK

scientists will keep our hives healthy and bees buzzing."

The process uses the Nobel Prize-winning theory 'RNA interference', which controls the flow of genetic information. So far the 'silencing' has worked with a neutral Varroa gene, which has no significant effect on the mite. Scientists now need to target a gene with the specific characteristics that are perfect to force the Varroa to self destruct.

Tests by other scientists have shown the treatment can be added to hives in bee feed. The bees move it into food for their young, where the Varroa hides.

Varroa facts

- The Varroa mite, like a brown crab, is the biggest global killer of honey bees.
- It originally attacked the Asian honeybee but jumped to the European honeybee, which has a poor natural defence.
- The mite injects viruses, suppresses the bees' immune system and feeds on blood.
- Beekeepers use chemical controls but can never eradicate it and over the past decade the Varroa developed resistance to some medication.
- If untreated, or given inappropriate chemicals, it can take just 1,000 mites to kill a colony of 50,000 bees.
- Honey bees are worth £200m to the UK economy a year through pollinating crops
- The Varroa mite entered the UK in 1992.

- Honey bee populations have dropped by 23 per cent since 1992, potentially costing the economy millions of pounds.
- In 1992 there were 23,767 beekeepers and 151,924 colonies. In 2010 there have been 21,000 beekeepers, and 116,500 colonies.
- In summer an average colony has 30,000 to 50,000 honey bees.

Notes

1. Photos of the Varroa mite are available from Defra Press Office.
2. The full report is available at: www.parasitesandvectors.com/content/3/1/73
3. RNA interference (RNAi) was discovered by Professor Andrew Fire who won the 2006 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for it: http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/2006/press.html. For more information go to: www.nature.com/focus/rnai/animations/index.html.
4. The Food and Environment Research Agency supports and develops a sustainable food chain and healthy natural environment, and protects against

biological and chemical risks. www.fera.defra.gov.uk/. The National Bee Unit advises beekeepers, supports industry, and controls serious pests and diseases to minimise economic and environmental impact. <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/index.cfm>

5. In 2009 the Government launched the Healthy Bees Plan, a 10-year strategy to protect and improve the health of honeybees in England and Wales. To help start it, Defra and the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) contributed £2.8million up to 2011.
6. In June 2010, Defra and WAG announced £2.5million of funding for the Insect Pollinators Initiative for research into understanding and mitigating the biological and environmental factors affecting insect pollinators.
7. In October Defra announced support for the British Beekeeping Association to increase the number of quality trainers for beekeepers across England and Wales. This is to teach amateurs the skills to care for bees and guard against pests and diseases.

Editors Comment

The Varroa approach being tried by FERA is interesting although I wonder about the feasibility of bathing enough Varroa in the treatment. The RNAi approach being used is starting to look very feasible for protecting bees against viruses, and probably other parasites as well. The large-scale field-trial has just been published and Beologics in the US is now getting close to having products on the market over there.

- See 1 Gene-knockdown in the honey bee mite Varroa destructor by a non-invasive approach: studies on a glutathione S-transferase
Ewan M Campbell¹, Giles E Budge² and Alan S Bowman¹
<http://www.parasitesandvectors.com/content/3/1/73>
- 2 Large-Scale Field Application of RNAi Technology Reducing Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus Disease in Honey Bees (*Apis mellifera*, Hymenoptera: Apidae) -Wayne Hunter^{1*}, James Ellis², Dennis vanEngelsdorp^{3*}, Jerry Hayes⁴, Dave Westervelt⁴, Eitan Glick⁵, Michael Williams³, Ilan Sela⁶, Eyal Maori⁶, Jeffery Pettis⁷, Diana Cox-Foster³, Nitzan Paldi^{5*}
PLoS Pathogens | www.plospathogens.org
1 December 2010 | Volume 6 | Issue 12 | e1001160

YBKA PhD Research Project

The sponsorship, by YBKA (and others), of a PhD research project of direct use to the beekeeping community.

For a few years now the beekeeping associations that make up the eastern counties have sponsored a research project by a PhD student at Sheffield University. The beekeepers get regular updates and presentations about the research she is doing, the researcher gets three years to study a specific area of honeybee biology and hopefully all of us gain from the information gained.

The beekeeping associations act as industrial sponsors for the research project. This means that they give £4000 each year for three years to the project. This industrial sponsorship unlocks other grants and matched funding so that the university gets all the funding needed for the project - this includes wages for the researcher, the cost of the laboratory space and all the equipment that will be used plus costs incurred in any fieldwork. As a single piece of equipment for DNA analysis can cost tens of thousands of pounds this can add up to a great deal of cash - and the key is the industrial sponsorship by beekeepers.

The big advantage to the beekeepers of being an industrial sponsor is that this buys a 50% say in what the project will be and the appointment of the researcher. This is important because while pure research has its own value the truth is that most pure research does not bring direct benefit to beekeepers. A sponsored project could be research into an applied aspect of our hobby which would be of direct benefit to us.

The other pluses of being a sponsor is that the researcher is contracted to give a monthly update on the project and to give talks to beekeepers about the project.

What I like about the idea is that we can stop saying "What are you doing about the problem?" and start to say "We're doing this!"

Of course there is the small problem of raising £4000 for each for three years.

At GPC meetings suggestions have been made about raising this sum through a capitation increase - asking all members of YBKA to pay up to £2.50 extra a year for 3 years - this has not proved a popular idea though it is a simple solution and most of us can actually afford £7.50 if it helps us keep our bees alive in the future.

The "up to" phrase is used because we are meeting with other beekeeping associations in the north of England to try and get them to join us in this project - the more beekeepers we can get involved the lower the cost for each of us. The down side of this is that Yorkshire loses some control of the project.

Other ideas for fund raising have been:-
A donation of £5 from each 'new beekeeper' training fee to be donated to the fund by districts.
Districts to donate raffle or tea & coffee monies / raffle monies for the next 3 years to the fund.
Each district to make a donation from their funds (proportionate to membership) to the project.
A special honey sale to be held by district to raise funds for the project.

At the Spring Conference your district delegates to the YBKA will be asked whether your district will support this scheme and to commit your association to contributing to the fund in proportion to your membership numbers.

PLEASE discuss this and say whether you are willing to support the scheme. How your district raises the money will be up to you - increased fees or fund raising - it's your choice.

We would love to be able to say "We helped solve the problem"!

THE YORKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

In conjunction with Bishop Burton College
Saturday 9th April 2011

YORKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
53rd CONFERENCE
AT BISHOP BURTON COLLEGE, BEVERLEY
EAST RIDING of YORKSHIRE

" Honey Bees and Beekeepers in our Natural Environment "

Our Speakers for the day**Dr Giles Budge**

Dr Giles Budge has worked in plant pathology research and development for 10 years. Giles started work at the National Bee Unit in October 2007 as the research co-ordinator. Prior to this, he was responsible for the development of real-time PCR-based diagnostics for bee pests and diseases and the delivery of the EFB study.

Prof. Keith S. Delaplane

Professor, Department of Entomology, University of Georgia,

Prof. Delaplane's expertise is in honey bee management, sustainable bee health management, bee foraging ecology, social evolution, and crop pollination. He oversees an off-campus lab of one dedicated state-funded technician, one soft-money technician, 1-2 graduate students, and 1-2 hourly workers. The lab work over 200 hives. He is the author of several books on beekeeping.

John Hendrie

John has been involved with bees and beekeeping almost all his life, having been stung at the age of two by one of his father's colonies. Since graduating from university in 1971, he has held many offices in local beekeeping associations, including branch secretary (12 years) and treasurer of Kent BKA (8 years), He was appointed to the exam board of the BBKA in 1991, is a vice chairman of the National Honey show and a director of Bee Craft magazine.

Programme

0900 – 0930	Registration
0930 – 0935	Welcome and Introductions
0935 – 1030	Prof. Keith S. Delaplane Honey bee ecology and its application to beekeepers
1030 - 1050	Coffee
1050 – 1150	Dr Giles Budge Colony losses
1200 – 1300	John Hendrie Communication in bees
	Luncheon
1400 – 1500	Prof. Keith S. Delaplane Honey bee genetics and breeding
1500 - 1545	Discussion Talk with the speakers in smaller groups
1545– 1615	Tea Goodbyes and disperse

Other Attractions**Northern Bee Books**

A variety of the latest beekeeping publications will be on sale.

National Bee Unit

An information stand will be available.

Stamfordham Beekeeping Supplies

Suppliers of quality beekeeping supplies

Yorkshire Beehives

Hive made to order by local craftsman

Compak-Spink

Suppliers of all sorts of containers and honey jars

BBKA Training

Beekeeping Training Day 5th February 2011

A Beekeeping Training Day is taking place at The Food and Environment Research Agency, Sand Hutton, York, YO41 1LZ, on Saturday 5th February 2011. This training event - jointly funded by BBKA and the Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera) - is part of a national initiative under the Healthy Bees Plan to increase the number of beekeeper trainers and to provide them with training materials from which they can start to plan and prepare training sessions based on the needs of their students. We particularly want to attract trainers who are willing to commit to improving their beekeeping knowledge and teaching skills

Objective of the day

The single most important factor in the health of our bees is the knowledge of beekeepers. With the huge influx of new beekeepers this has put huge strain on those teaching beekeeping at all levels. This day is provide support in terms of resources, mentoring, practical advice and knowledge to those involved in teaching, demonstrating or mentoring beekeepers.

Venue

The Food and Environment Research Agency, Sand Hutton, York, YO41 1LZ, on Saturday 5th February 2011.

Format of the day

A series of topics will be covered, as per the outlined agenda, plus an opportunity for those groups represented to set out what training they undertake at the moment.

Opportunities will also be provided for the swapping of ideas and best practice. We hope to have both a WHITE and YELLOW Course in the Case for members to view.

Cost

The day is partially funded by The Food & Environment Reseach Agency (Fera) and is free to participants. Refreshments and lunch will also be provided free of charge.

Speakers

The event is the second regional event under a programme that will be undertaken between now

and next March 2011. The speakers are all actively involved in beekeeping practice and education at a national and a local level.

Beekeeping Groups not affiliated to the BBKA are especially welcome to attend.

Beekeeping Training Day 5th February 2011

09.00	am	Arrival, registration & coffee
09.25	am	Introduction
09.30	am	Learning Styles, the BBKA training Structure and Resources.
10.15	am	Teaching Methods and Course Structures
11.00	am	Coffee
11.15	am	Examinations, including how they improve competence
11.45	am	Exchange of good practice
12.30	pm	Lunch
13.15	pm	Apiary Teaching style, including how to demonstrate to groups and how to involve trainees
14.00	pm	Teaching Disease
14.45	pm	Coffee
15:00	pm	Learning Resources
15.30	pm	Conclude
16.00	pm	Home

Attendees are asked be prepared with ideas and or materials for these sessions. Experienced trainers will have many excellent resources and schemes of work to share while recently trained members will be able to relate their own experiences of what worked and what did not.

The British Beekeepers' Association

National Beekeeping Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire CV8 2LG
 Tel: 02476 696679; Fax: 02476 690682

Beekeeping Training Day 5th February 2011

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If you would like to attend please complete the application form below and return it to the address given (by email if possible) by 20th January 2011. There is no charge for the day and lunch will be provided.

Many Thanks

I would like to attend the training on 5th February at the NBU, Sand Hutton.

Title First Name Surname

Beekeeping Association

Telephone

email (please print)
 (if you do not have an email please give full address)

About You:- (please tick)

I have kept bees for	0-5 yrs 5-10yrs 10-20 yrs 20+yrs
I have this number of colonies	0-5 5-10 10-20 20+
I hold the following beekeeping qualifications	Basic Modules 1...2...3...4*...5...6...7...8... Gen. Husb. Adv. Husb. Other
I have been involved in training new beekeepers for	0-5 yrs 5-10yrs 10-20 yrs 20+yrs
I am involved in training new beekeepers for	My association Private company
I have a background in education or training	Yes No
Course in the Case (White)	Not seen Seen Use Use as a resource

Individual Needs (Please state any dietary or medical needs that the organizers need to know about)

The structured discussion groups will allow attendees to share and exchange examples of good practice. You are asked to come prepared with ideas and or materials for these sessions.

W P Cadmore
 BBKA Regional Training Coordinator
 104 Hall Lane
 Leeds
 LS18 5JG

email bill.cadmore@ntlworld.com
 Tel. 0113 2160482
 07847476927

We look forward to welcoming all trainers, educators and demonstrators to this day.
 Registered Charity No. 212025



On The Keeping of Bees by John Whitaker A5 203 pages
 To review a book by a friend could be difficult - but not in this case. Our YBKA treasurer has written a gem of a book which deals with our hobby in a refreshing and positive manner. Aimed at the beekeeper with a couple of years experience who now wants to go further this is an ideal book for those about to take the BBKA basic examination. The chapter headings demonstrate that this is a book written by an active beekeeper and deal with those issues that you need to address if you are to be a successful beekeeper - and deals with them in a straight forward and practical manner - so if you want to answer the question "What should I do next ?" then this is the book for you. Chapters are divided into short sub-sections so it is easy to find the text you're after without having to read too many pages - having said that I found this to be as readable as some of the fiction I get from the library. I would have liked a few more diagrams and charts but the photographs are excellent and are used to illustrate the text in a easy to follow way.

John addresses all of the facts and skills you need to be a good beekeeper. The book encourages you to take things a little further in each task - the reader is encouraged to look a little bit harder at what is happening both in the hive and in the surroundings, to complete each task a little more thoroughly or to plan a bit more carefully. I am frankly envious of a person who can write such a useful and readable book.

The book will be available in the new year and details of how you can obtain a copy will appear in the February edition of this newsletter. Hopefully John will have signed copies available at Bishop Burton.



Y.B.K.A. Handbook 2011

Every member of the association (all 1250 of us) should receive this handbook in the near future. They were issued at the AGM in December. The handbook lists all of the district associations, gives a summary of the accounts for the past year and contains articles about many of the activities that YBKA undertakes. It also has information about examinations and projects that we would like to promote in the coming year.

In addition it contains the full text of the constitution (apart from Standing Orders) so that members can be aware of what they pay for.

Please use the handbook to keep in touch with other districts and to contact your reps. on the GPC.

Yorkshire Area Representatives

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Y.B.K.A. DATES

YBKA Spring
Conference
March 12th 2011
Yorkshire Showground

Bee Breeding Event
March 26th 2011
Yorkshire Showground

Bishop Burton
9th April 2011
Bishop Burton College

Schools Days
14th-15th June 2011
Yorkshire Showground

Great Yorkshire Show
12th-14th July 2011
Yorkshire Showground

AGM
December 3rd 2011
Yorkshire Showground

GPC Meetings
4th February 2011
6th May 2011
17th June 2011
23rd September 2011
3rd December 2011

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Research Agency, Sand Hutton, York, UK, YO41 1LZ

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