



**THE LEEDS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
BRANCH OF THE YBKA
AFFILIATED WITH THE BBKA**



“The Leeds Beekeeper”

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“Why are there baby bees in the hall?!” obviously that is a perfectly normal text to receive and I was quick to point out in my reply that honeybees don’t have baby bees so they weren’t mine. However the response (which can’t be published in case children are reading) and I will paraphrase here “suggested I was missing the point”. It would seem me leaving a drawn out super frame had attracted a group of passing bees through an open door. They did have a passing resemblance to honey bees but were much smaller (hence the baby bee comment) but as for a positive ID, I didn’t really get chance between the squeals of “there is one over there” and “is that all of them” Hey ho.....

CHAIRMAN’S NOTES

So what’s been happening since we had our last little chat? There’s been lots of activity down at the apiary at Temple Newsam. We had a wonderful talk by Andy Gowdy on hygiene for the bees; very interesting and was very well attended. We have had a wonderful Taster Day at Temple Newsam. This was all organised by Chris Barlow our education officer and all records were broken. We had 74 members of the public coming down spending 2 hours going through the bees, hoping that they will be future beekeepers. Half were in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. I would personally like to thank Chris and his band of merry volunteers for their wonderful help and making it an exceptionally good day. We are currently running a queen rearing course organised and run by Dave Barrett our resident Master Beekeeper. This has proved very popular as all seats were booked well in advance. There is always something happening on a Wednesday night at the apiary so those members who don’t come down you’re missing a great deal. Cath puts on a wonderful cup of coffee and her selection of biscuits has greatly improved over the weeks. Don’t miss this



House for one

opportunity on Wednesday night, Come down and socialise with your fellow beekeepers.

I hope you are constantly doing your seven day inspections as we are now into the swarming season. If you spot those queens cells do an artificial swarm.

For those of you that are in the oilseed rape area. It has virtually come to an end now, so get your supers off and get them extracted before it all starts to crystallise in the frames which of course makes it hard to extract. We have just taken delivery at the apiary of 2 brand spanking new portable electric extractors bringing the total of electric extractors to 3 along with the 4 hand operated ones. These are all free to use by all our members. We do ask for a £10.00 refundable deposit when returned the following Wednesday.

June is the time that the population in the hive is nearing its peak and the queen's rate of lay has peaked. Your bee count in June will have risen to about 50,000 and the busy buzzing bees are busy bringing nectar and pollen in and will work well into the summer evening.

Now the early part of June marks the transition between the Spring flowers ending and the beginning of the Summer flowers and this is what Beekeeper's referred to as the June gap. If you have already removed the spring honey you may have to feed the colony as there could be nothing coming in. If June is particular dry make sure that your babies have plenty of water available. June is an ideal time to do queen rearing and any queens raised right now will get a good chance to mate during the long dry days of July. Get your supers ready for the main flow from white clover.

Happy beekeeping

Duncan

BEE COUNT

Some of you may have already seen this app released by Friends of the Earth; their "Bee Count" event runs until the end of the month. The app lets you record bees you see either in your garden or when out and about and provides a handy reference picture to help you identify the species. Over 15,000 people took part in last year's survey recording sightings of over 380,000 bees. With 35 bee species in the UK under risk of extinction it is important that we understand where populations of different bees exist in the country and this information can be valuable as conservation efforts are undertaken.



<https://www.foe.co.uk/bee-count>

HYPOPHARYNGEAL GLANDS

We continue our tour of bee glands and find ourselves at the hypopharyngeal glands (HPG), located on the side of the honeybee's head. These glands secrete a proteinaceous substance (termed royal jelly or "bee milk") which is fed to all castes of bees; larvae, queens and drones. However it is the age dependent role of the hypopharyngeal that has led to it being studied in such detail with function shifting as bee's transition between the nurse and foraging stages.

When bees first emerge from their cell, the HPG are underdeveloped, achieving full size between 6-12 days, this elevated HPG activity is observed until day 20, at this stage the bees are generally involved in nursing activities, before a sharp drop is observed, followed by an increase on day 21. During the dizzy heights of summer a bee's lifespan is around six weeks, roughly three weeks in the hive and three weeks on the wing. It is believed this dip at day 21 represents the bee's transition from hive bee to forager, at which point forager-specific proteins such as α -Glucosidase, are produced by the HPG. Such proteins hydrolyse glycosidic bonds in complex sugars allowing the processing of nectar.

Brood pheromone is a complex mixture of approximately ten components, of these two, methyl palmitate and ethyl oleate have been shown in laboratory studies to increase activity in the HPG of nurse bees. It has also been shown that the presence of brood pheromone will cause the HPG to revert to secrete brood food in newly swarmed bees, where once the queen begins to lay, nurse bees are lacking. In this way scientists believe that the HPG glands respond to the role of the bee, such that depending on the needs of the colony a bee can where necessary transition from forager back to nurse bee.

BEE BEARD

Another article fresh from the "Don't try this at home" department. Bui Duy Nhat, a Vietnamese beekeeper attracts clusters of wild bees to land on his face and body by keeping the queen bee close to him. He is one of the few 'specialists' in Vietnam who are adept in the practice of bee bearding, with over twenty years of experience. Don't Sneeze.....



Beeaclava; this year's must have fashion accessory © EPA

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/06/01/thousands-wild-bees-cover-mans-face-body/>

QUEEN REARING COURSE

All I can say is thank you to the person who dropped out of this amazing course led by David Barrett. By doing so it enabled me to take up the place by default. I'll try and give you readers a flavour of what you missed. Here Goes.

Session one

A Rainy evening, under the gazebo which occasionally gave up its accumulation of roof water and poured out onto those sat in the front row. David stood under an umbrella talking us through what was to come. Exciting, he had our whole attention.

Queen raising colony- She was given extra brood frames and 'bled/drifted' bees into it, making the colony sufficiently strong to pull out and raise new queen cells.

Bursting with bees, our job for the evening was to de-queen the hive, pop her into a queen introduction cage with attendants to be taken safely elsewhere, making the hive queenless.

Session Two

One week later. David talked about the importance of choosing the correct age of the larvae and working out the timings of a queen cell capping to identify the best queen cell. To remove ALL queen cells that had built inside the queen raising colony, making the colony hopelessly queenless with no chance to make any more queen cells. David spoke about our queen raising donor colonies; we were to choose for her track record of honey gathering, build-up, and temper. Any in the Leeds BKA apiary would be suitable.

That our task was to find day one larvae for the bees to raise new queens from, should we not do this, the new queen cells would be made from older larvae that would be too old to make a good queen, being closed when David checked in five days. The queen cells should be open after five days; older larvae would be closed and discarded. Hope this makes sense.

Then with our Chinese grafting tool, frame of chosen eggs, damp cloths, magnifiers, reading glasses and torches we set off to find the smallest day one larvae to graft into artificial queen cups, cover up with a damp cloth to prevent them drying out, each person had three to complete. Many got squished in our attempts of scooping out the Larvae, having to widen the cell first. Not an easy task! Our efforts of grafting were placed into a nursery frame, this went into the centre of our queen raising colony.



Dave with grafted queen cells

Syrup feeder and a whole pack of pollen on top of the frames, enabling the bees to put into the new queen cells an abundance of royal jelly, ensuring beautiful strong queen cells, swimming in royal jelly, lovely. Next week a nuc was needed ready to insert our queen cell.

Session Three

David checked the queen cells were open and usable on Monday. Hurrah, we had queen cells of the correct age larvae, a great success and with sufficient for everyone to have one queen cell. Those who wanted, brought a queenless nuc, made up that day, with frames of stores, capped brood and nurse bees, into which our queen cell would be placed inside a Nicot Hair Roller Cage.



Nicot Hair Roller Cage



Mini nuc with queen cell added

David demonstrated making a Nuc, mini Nuc, explaining what to do with the mini Nuc when the Queen was mated. Job done and completed, hurrah, smiles abound and relief, success so far.

Session Four to come

To wait three more weeks and hope our new mated queens are mated with Leeds BKA drones, and laying. So, fellow beekeepers, that is our journey of achievement so far. To David and Chris, enormous thanks for teaching and organising this fabulous course. For having the knowledge, courage, patience and humour to take us on learning curve.

Eunice Nicholson

Due to the popularity of this course it is hoped it will run again next year, keep your eyes peeled for details later in the year.

ROBOTIC BEES

Drones are undoubtedly becoming more prominent in everyday life and now scientists have created a robotic pollinator to mimic the work of insects such as bees. With 55 percent of honeybee colonies lost in the US last year it is somewhat inevitable that industry will turn to science to solve an issue affecting a country heavily reliant on commercial scale pollination.

Eijiro Miyako, a researcher at Japan's National Institute, has created an insect sized drone covered in horse hair bristles and a unique ionic liquid gel. The gel has a long lasting adhesive property ideal for moving pollen from one plant to another.



The future of pollination?

In a sense artificial pollination is not a new phenomenon, humans have been doing it for years armed with a paintbrush, but it is a slow laborious process, one which we are vastly outperformed on by stripy winged helpers. Whilst this is very much at the prototype stage – current versions require a ‘pilot’ to remotely control the drone but Miyako hopes to incorporate GPS, and a high-resolution camera in future prototypes.

There are areas where robotic pollinators could be of use such as in research laboratories where precision is needed during the crossing of plants, but as a society surely it is better to promote activities that save our natural pollinators than try and replace them with robotic equivalents? Or maybe this is the future and you could have a drone that delivers your Amazon package and pollinates the roses at the same time?

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2120832-robotic-bee-could-help-pollinate-crops-as-real-bees-decline/>

BEE GARDEN PARTY

Martha Kearney and Bill Turnbull invite you to join them at this year’s Bee Garden Party: 5-8pm on Thursday 29th June in the private gardens of Marlborough House, in London's Mall. It will be a fun evening, focussed on bees, with gin-fizz, wines and delightful food. A wonderful opportunity to meet beekeeping friends. With kind permission from the household of HM The Queen, and in the presence of the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Baroness Scotland. Raising funds to support the Charity Bees for Development. Tickets are £50 and available here [BBKA events](#) and here [Bee Garden Party](#), or call 01600 714848 to book.

FIRST SWARM

Ok, so this was a crisis of my own making – a queen cell had obviously been missed, but having said that how do we learn without making mistakes?!

Sunday was the first decent sunny day in ages and thus a bit of hedge trimming was in order. After a couple of hours I thought I would take a quick break, have a nosey at what my bees were doing, see what pollen they were bringing back to the hive before continuing along the privet. Upon approaching I noticed little clumps of bees on the floor around the hive, almost like little puddles of bees. Following these little gatherings led me from the hive to the pond, where at least 50 bees had committed harikari (or the bee equivalent). More groups of bees could be seen on the path and as I rounded the corner I became aware of a faint hum... Now the obvious explanation was that a neighbour was cutting their grass and I could retire back to a garden deckchair, cold pint in hand and enjoy the sunshine – how wrong was I! Sure enough there was a nice tear drop shaped swarm of bees clinging to the bush, with a smaller breakaway group above.



Erm...nothing to see here.....

Now I have heard several explanations of swarm collection and thus knew the theory, cardboard boxes were needed, extra hives etc. I had a spare brood box with frames, roof and a floor, a crown board was quickly cobbled together out of some plywood and I was good to go, just a cardboard box to find..... The house was scoured to no avail and so I decided to steal the rabbit's food storage bin (after emptying it of course). Now this was where my first mistake occurred (well second if you include the queen cell); I decided to add a little straw to the bottom of the bin so when I cut the branch and the bees fell into the bin their landing would be soft (don't let it be said I don't have a caring side).



Not quite from the swarm handbook

Bin in one hand, secateurs in the other I approached the bush, identified what I felt was going to be the branch that needed cutting and snipped away. Around a third of the bees plopped into the bin (obviously that would have been a thud without the cushioned landing). Was the queen among my bounty? Erm I wasn't really sure, so I took the bin to the hive, tapped the bees out, pulled most of the straw off the top and waited..... Well as the little buggers began flying back past me to the bush I decided that round one had probably been a failure and headed back into battle. Bin in one

hand, secateurs in the other, I was ready for what was turning into an extreme game of Ker Plunk – except I did want all the marbles to fall. Snip, another portion of bees plopped into the bin, but I hadn't got the main branch, another snip and the majority of the bees were snared. Surely now the queen was within? Back to the hive and the bees were tapped into their new home. Fairly sure I got a glimpse of her majesty (and by this point I was quite happy to believe it was her even if it was a drone in drag) I placed the roof on and retired back down the garden to wring out my wellies – bee suits and midday sun don't mix and let the bees settle into their new abode.

Monday I arrived back from work and decided I had better have a quick check to make sure my rehoused residents had settled into their new abode. Imagine my surprise to see the bees dragging lengths of straw out of the hive entrance and flying off with them over the neighbour's garden and returning empty handed (Not sure if bee tipping is a crime?). Tuesday, I decided I would have a quick inspection of them and was surprised to find that they had drawn out four frames of brood comb already – certainly not workshy! It also let me confirm that it was indeed Camilla and her loyal subjects who had absconded from Beeingham Palace and now find themselves in Beesor Castle with pond-side views.

On balance though I think it can go down as a success – one swarm captured, no stings received by the beekeeper, but next time (?!), I will miss out the straw and perhaps I will start keeping “an emergency cardboard box”.

Andrew

DRIFFIELD SHOW

Beverley BKA would like to invite LBKA members to join us at our annual honey show on Wednesday 19th July, at the Driffield Show Ground. Our show is part of the Driffield Agricultural Show and we will be in the horticultural marquee. Driffield Show is the largest one day show in the country and is certainly worth a visit. Please click to download the honey show schedule and entry form, we hope that we can encourage some of you to enter some of their honey etc in the show.

[Rules](#) and [Entry Form](#)

Many thanks

Gillian Thatcher, Honey Show Secretary

COUNTRYSIDE LIVE – LBKA PARTICIPATION

Countryside Live, an agricultural fair for children, took place on Wednesday and Thursday 17th & 18th May on the Ledston Estate, near Castleford thanks to support from the Wheler Foundation, (a charity encouraging agriculture, forestry and rural industry for the benefit of the public), LBKA was invited to attend together with Barkston Ash beekeepers.

The event was organised by Countryside Learning, a national charity that connects children, families and teachers with the countryside. Countryside Learning events deliver education outside the classroom giving inner city children the chance, often for the first time, to experience the countryside around them.

The event on the Ledston Estate included a host of exhibitors including the Ferret World Roadshow, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), British Waterfowl (meet the ducks), The Bat Show, The Bug Lady, Willow Weaving, Corndolly Making, National Trust, West Yorkshire Police – Wildlife Crime, Beagles, Gundogs, Xtreme Falconry, The Sheep Show, Environmental Explorers – Owls in the Countryside and many more.

Each day 8-10 groups of approximately 30 children from Yorkshire schools attended the Beekeeping marquee. After a short presentation the children visited each of the four stations, i.e. Honey tasting, an Observation Hive, a Cut-away Hive and Dressing-up in beekeeping suits.

The volunteers from LBKA over the 2 days were Liza Kidner, Trish Narayan, Alison Eagle-Heaton, Dave Cook, Ann Chamley, Angela Utley, Kim Walters and Cath Graham; they were fully employed throughout the event and even managed to enjoy themselves despite the hectic pace and the lively, inquisitive children.

With some funding from Yorkshire BKA the Barkston Ash beekeepers purchased some children's beesuits, various stickers and washable tablecloths – these helped to make the event a success and can be used again in future years. If you'd like to participate next year keep an eye on the newsletter where requests for volunteers will be posted.

Cath Graham

Pictures from the day are included on the next page.

SALE OF HONEY AT THE FEDERATION OF THE BLIND MEETING.

If anyone would be interested in selling honey on Tuesday 11th July either at the start (1 pm), end (4 pm), or during the break (2.30 pm) of the above meeting please contact the editor for more details.



BEEKEEPING BLUNDER

It was a lovely sunny afternoon for an inspection of my hives in the garden. The bees were very busy and not too pleased with my interference. I was examining the brood box when I felt a fluttering of wings on my cheek and a gentle buzzing rather closer than expected. Oh dear! There were bees in my veil. I moved to a quieter part of the garden to remove the veil and release the bees - of course I was too late, I received at least one sting on my ear, maybe more. I tried to remove the sting unaided, grabbed the 'After Bite' from my bag and coated my ear to ease the pain. I went back to the hive to finish the inspection as I'd left the hive open with a split brood box. I continued for about half an hour, ear throbbing, when I realised it was 5.30pm – oh dear, I had to leave the house by 6.15pm for the LBKA Committee meeting at 7pm and I wanted a bite to eat before leaving..... I quickly finished off, prepared the evening meal for me and hubby (half prepared earlier in the day). I nipped to the bathroom for a quick glance at my throbbing ear – it wasn't red as expected, it was covered in white paint!! – it wasn't the 'After Bite' I'd used after all but a similar shaped object – any guesses!

Maybe I'll not put my name to this.

Queen C

BEES ON THE BOX

Another appearance of bees on Countryfile as Ellie meets an urban beekeeper Warren Bader making use of green spaces on industrial units in Glasgow and working with a local school to inspire a new generation of beekeepers.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b08rzzr56/countryfile-lanarkshire>

LBKA SHOP

As many members will be aware LBKA run a beekeeping supplies shop for all your beekeeping needs at our Temple Newsam apiary (Think Arkwright's Shop but with a less temperamental till). Prices compare extremely favourably with the online bee retailers. So whether it is foundation for cut comb honey, jars to bottle your bounty or a new hive tool, LBKA have it covered. Additionally for those less DIY minded, there is a construction service for flat packed hive components for a small fee.

Current shop price list can be found [here](#)

ASK THE BEEKEEPER

Have you got a burning beekeeping question that you want an answer to? Then please send it to editor@leedsbeekeeper.org.uk and we will do our best to find you an answer!

12OZ HEXAGONAL JARS

Hopefully your bees have been busy and you now have lots of honey and not enough jars to put it in.... fear not LBKA have the answer! 12oz (340 g) hexagonal jars with lids are available in the shop at a bargain price of 23p each, they come loose so you can buy as many as you require. Please bring a cardboard box to carry them home in. If you require a large quantity, please email Duncan thebeeman@hotmail.co.uk or ring him on 07855 308143

Got an article for the next edition? Please email to editor@leedsbeekeeper.org.uk by 30th June.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

June

Saturday 10th - Apiary Day – 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

Saturday 10th – Sunday 11th – Weekend Course

July

Saturday 1st - Apiary Day – 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

Sunday 16th – BBKA basic assessment