



# THE LEEDS BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

## JANUARY 2014 – Newsletter 34



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### WELCOME

Welcome back to normal life, now that the Christmas and New Year festivities are behind us once again. I do hope that you all had a good Christmas and are once again looking forward to a productive year's beekeeping.

This newsletter has details of the Spring Convention in April, the General Husbandry Course in Leeds, and a special one day BIBBA course, taking place in Sheffield. Take these opportunities to help you improve your beekeeping over the coming months.

As usual, LBKA will be running a number of excellent courses for beginners during the year, and I would urge you to encourage more people to take up the hobby of beekeeping. We are constantly reminded that bees need all the help they can get, and that means lots of willing beekeepers and lots of people who are sympathetic to their needs.

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday	4 <sup>th</sup> January	Apiary Day
Tuesday	14 <sup>th</sup> January	LBKA Committee Meeting
Wednesday	29 <sup>th</sup> January	Winter Talk Association Bee Quiz + Film 'More than Honey' re honeybee threats
Saturday	1 <sup>st</sup> February	Apiary Day
Wednesday	26 <sup>th</sup> February	Winter Talk – Bee Breeding by Tony Jefferson
Dates to hold for this summer:		
Saturday	28 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	FERA Bee Husbandry Day
Saturday/Sunday	21/22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2014	General Husbandry Weekend

## NEWS ITEMS

### Wednesday Evening Refreshments

To re-iterate the comment in last month's newsletter – don't be a stranger – there is a group of beekeepers that meet in the Brown Cow and Dragon (Selby Road, Whitkirk, LS15 7AY – close to the turn off for Temple Newsam) every Wednesday evening around 8 o'clock (ish) for a drink or two. Don't be out of touch over the winter – come down and have a chat with fellow beekeepers.

### Update on Temple Newsam Break-ins

Following the recent break-ins at our Apiary, an eagle-eyed dog walker at Temple Newsam has spotted some of our stolen property. And his equally eagle-eyed wife realized it was ours after reading an item about it in the Friends of Temple Newsam newsletter!! With the help of staff at Temple Newsam, she contacted Dave Barrett who went to collect the items. He writes:

“ I've collected the stolen stuff. They'd carried it about 2 miles (in *our* blue Ikea bags) before dumping (past the running track and golf course).

“There are 2 smokers – still in good condition.

“Microscope in wooden box. The microscope looks great, no damage. Wooden box was sodden and mouldy. I've given it a good scrub and am optimistic that it'll dry ok.

“Three bee suits. They're pretty dirty (filthy really) having been rained on etc. Julia won't allow them anywhere near our washer:-). I'm going to hose them down tomorrow and take to coin op. Hope that they'll clean up alright. Think that they will.

“Two pair gloves. Probably beyond hope but I'll scrub and dry to see....

“I gave them a gift pack of honey by way of thanks.

“Good news isn't it?

“Dave”

Sadly, the suits were found to be badly rotted, so won't be returning to our lockers. But excellent news to have such wonderful public support, and to have got back what we did. And thanks to Dave for sorting it out.

### At the same time ....

To improve security at the apiary, new locks have been fitted, cctv signs have been put up, some windows have been bricked up and new grills have been put on the remaining windows and the door. We hope this will make it too much of a hassle to be attractive to vandals in the future.

### Swarms and the Law?

This is a short diary entry by Tristram Stuart, who more famously campaigns against food waste. The two letters after the article are interesting in their own right, as they discuss laws regarding the ownership of swarms, and whether one may legally trespass in pursuit of a swarm.

<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v35/n20/tristram-stuart/diary>

I then found this piece from a 1948 issue of the *Spectator* :

<http://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/27th-august-1948/14/trespassing-bees-i-believe-that-there-is-some-hope>

which led to this Canadian article (by someone who knows law, but not the difference between honey bees and bumble bees):

<http://www.ontarioalestatesource.com/images/Trespassers%20should%20know%20Bumble%20Bee%20Law.pdf>

then, in amongst some fairly tedious links, this piece regarding bees themselves being seen as trespassing:

<http://www.beesource.com/point-of-view/joe-traynor/the-letter-from-paramount-citrus/>

Contributed by John Duffy

## **Bee Decline Research**

Further research on the decline of bees is outlined in this link, send to us by Pennie Keech – and there's an amazing photograph that's well worth seeing.

<http://www.treehugger.com/natural-sciences/scientists-discover-another-cause-bee-deaths-and-its-really-bad-news.html>

## **“Bee Improvement for All”**

This is a one-day course run by Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association (BIBBA) in conjunction with Sheffield BKA. It is designed to help and encourage beekeepers of all abilities to improve their bees using simple methods. It takes place on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2014 from 9.00 for 9.30 until 16.30 at Knowle Top Chapel, Stannington Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S6 6AP

Full details are contained in Appendix 1 to this newsletter.

## **BBKA Spring Convention 2014**

Harper Adams University, near Telford in Shropshire will be the venue for the 2014 BBKA Spring Convention, which will take place on Friday, Saturday and Sunday 4 – 6 April 2014. There will be a full programme of workshops and courses over the three days. Check out the link at

[http://www.bbka.org.uk/news\\_and\\_events/spring\\_convention\\_2014](http://www.bbka.org.uk/news_and_events/spring_convention_2014)

## **Bee Trade Exhibition**

If April seems a long way away, you can fill in the gap by going to The Bee Trade Exhibition on Saturday 1st March, 2014. Opening between 9:00 am and 4:30pm in the Warwick and Stareton Halls at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG, this event holds itself to be ‘the biggest show in 2014’. All Welcome. Get the full details at <http://www.beetradex.co.uk/>

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## **THE NATIONAL HONEY SHOW**

This letter was received from the organisers of the National Honey Show:

“Dear All,

“The 2013 National Honey Show is now over and you can find the Full Results and the Cup Awards list on the website together with the slide shows for each day. These are available to download from DropBox to use in newsletters, websites and publicity purposes.

“The latest news is as follows:

“1) As the planned building work has been postponed indefinitely, we're back at St Georges College Weybridge for 2014. Half term is a little later next year so the dates are Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October to Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014. Judging takes place Thursday morning, the show officially opens at 2pm on Thursday, and the exhibition opens when judging finishes. We plan to continue the Thursday morning lectures, before the official opening and the trade hall will open at 12 noon on Thursday.

“2) This year, partly funded by the National Honey Show, and partly with National Lottery Funding, we were able to produce top quality videos of some of the lectures. The first two of these, ‘The Sustainable Apiary’ by Mike Palmer, and ‘Origins and Evolutionary History of the Honey Bee’ by Robert Paxton are now available to view on YouTube: <http://youtu.be/nznzpiWEI8A> and <http://youtu.be/Wtm8URk-V9A> respectively. We would like to thank our lecture sponsors and all who took part in this project. We hope it will mitigate the disappointment of all who were not able to be in two places at once during the show, giving you a chance to catch up at leisure. Details of further lectures available to watch will be listed as they go live, on the National Honey Show Website <http://www.honeyshow.co.uk/under> the ‘Education’ tab. It would be brilliant to be able to continue offering videos of our lectures in the future, so do contact us with all ideas for future sponsorship.

“3) We have a new Facebook page so do visit from time to time to see the latest news: <https://www.facebook.com/nationalhoneyshow>

Wishing all a well earned rest over the winter, and a good beekeeping season next year with prizewinning results.

Many thanks,  
Best wishes,  
Fiona and Helen”

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### **LAST JOBS OF THE YEAR – Musings of a Beekeeper**

Boxing Day was a lovely bright day with temperatures of about 6 degrees. Shops/sales – or apply annual oxalic acid treatments? Bit of a no brainer really.

It's a fairly quick job and I got all three apiaries (23 colonies) done in just under two hours. Plenty of activity about with a pheasant shoot at one and the tail end of a fox hunt at another. All colonies were alive, lovely to see really, though one was so small I'm sure that it'll die off fairly soon – next hard frost? Most colonies are wintered on double brood boxes with all bar two occupying just the top box. This made applying the treatments (no need to split boxes) a lot easier. Colonies differed in strengths considerably. Some with 8 seams of bees though most were the "correct" size of about 4 seams. Only got one sting, driving between apiaries. It had crawled from the thrown back veil and landed one on my bald spot (but don't be over impressed at its aim as it's now a pretty wide target!).

My next visit will be February when I will swap floorboards and replace mouse guards with entrance blocks. This to warm them up so they start to increase faster – essential if I'm going to maximise the Oil Seed Rape crop. When I swap floors I'm going to replace open mesh floors with solid ones. In future I'm going to have mesh floors on spring to autumn but will overwinter on solid floors. I think that they'll do better / thrive better with this arrangement. My observations show that over recent years colonies on solid floors are usually stronger in spring than their mesh floor counterparts. We'll see. Always interesting to try different arrangements isn't it?

Contributed by Dave Barrett

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### **GENERAL HUSBANDRY COURSE**

We are committed to help raise the beekeeping standards of all our members, not just those starting out in the craft. With that in mind, we are keen to offer training to members who have a few years experience under their belt and want to learn more.

I'm therefore delighted to be able to tell you that we have booked a weekend course next year, which will cover the BBKA General Husbandry course in depth. It will run on the weekend of 21st and 22nd June 2014 at Temple Newsam. Mornings will be class based exploring the theory behind what will then be the afternoon practical demonstrations. It will be highly participative with small groups led by experts. The course leader is Gerry Collins, Chairman of BBKA Education Committee and qualified to the highest beekeeping standard, the National Diploma in Beekeeping.

We are inviting applications now from members who have kept bees for at least two years. It doesn't matter how many colonies you have, though to take the exam later you would need to have three colonies available in your apiary. Ideally you will have already passed the BBKA Basic exam

The course costs a bargain £35 for the weekend (subsidised by LBKA). There will be a maximum of 16 course members – split into three small groups for the practical afternoon sessions. Application details are below and places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. In the unlikely event of there being spare places we will offer it up to neighbouring associations.

So what will it cover? I will not list it all but it does include explanations and then practical demonstrations (actually DOING it) on things like

Find, mark and Clip Queens. Where best to look in the brood chamber. How to discourage her from walking back to combs you have already searched. If still you can't spot her then there are three further methods, fully explained which you could use to seek her out.

Disease. Correct handling of frames to look for AFB/EFB. And full details of varroa identification and control of course.

## Creating successful Artificial Swarms

### Nucleus hives.

- how to make up a mating Nuc. with queen cell or virgin.
- how to make up a Nuc to receive a mated queen.
- how to develop a Nuc to a full sized colony
- how to unite a Nuc with a full colony

### Shook Swarm technique.

Bailey Comb Exchange. You've heard about it but what is it? It is a method used when you want to get your bees onto new/ clean comb and will of course be demonstrated on the day.

### Successfully Uniting Colonies.

Moving bees. How to prepare and transport bees safely ( for both you and them).

And much much more. It is an action packed programme and will greatly help those wanting to then take the BBKA General Husbandry exam itself the following year.

Dave Barrett

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## APPLICATION FOR GENERAL HUSBANDRY COURSE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Applications will be confirmed (either as successful or on reserve list). Full payment will be due by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. I will remind you of this nearer the time.

Please either e-mail [dbarretthome@gmail.com](mailto:dbarretthome@gmail.com)

### Or post to

Mr. D. Barrett  
23Beck Meadow  
Barwick in Elmet  
Leeds  
LS154PA

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## **HOT TODDY RECIPE**

- 2tsp honey
- 2 drams of whisky (50 mls)
- 2 cloves
- ½ Cinnamon stick
- An equal measure (50 mls) of not quite boiling water
- 1 slice of lemon
- 1-2 tsp lemon juice
- Grating of nutmeg

1. Put the honey and a measure of whisky in a mug or heatproof glass.

2. Add two cloves and half a cinnamon stick for spice flavours
3. Top up with just-off-the-boil water.
4. Stir in a slice of lemon and just enough lemon juice to balance the sweetness of the honey.
5. Add a grating of nutmeg as desired.
6. Breathe in deeply and drink as soon as it is not too hot to burn.

PLEASE SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS (ARTICLES, ANECDOTES,  
PHOTOS, RECIPES, ETC.) FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER TO  
KATEY SLATER AT EDITOR@LEEDSBEEKEEPERS.ORG.UK

## Bee Improvement for All

A whole day's learning on how to improve your bees



*learning to graft*

**Sheffield**  
**Sat 15 March**  
**2014.**

**Knowle Top**  
**Chapel**

£15 including buffet lunch  
£5 accompanied juniors  
[sec@sheffieldbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:sec@sheffieldbeekeepers.org.uk)



*calm bees - a pleasure to handle*

*Can't make Sheffield? Can't make the Saturday? Try*

**Whitby**  
**Sun 16 March 2014**

**Sneaton Castle**  
[stoneleabees@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:stoneleabees@yahoo.co.uk)

**Sheffield venue**



*We set off to get Roger Patterson to give us a talk at one of our club nights and ended up getting him for the whole day! Roger doesn't need an introduction for most beekeepers - but for those who don't know, he has been keeping bees for half a century and is heavily involved in all aspects of the craft. He is currently a BBKA Trustee, BDI Vice President and BIBBA Committee Member, and maintains the Dave Cushman web site. He is touring the country delivering this programme and will be in Sheffield Saturday 15 March 2014. For those unable to make the Saturday or too far north for Sheffield, the programme is repeated in Whitby the next day, Sunday 16 March.*

Bee Improvement should be of interest to all beekeepers and for a number of reasons including temper, quietness on the combs and suitability to the locality. The queen is an important factor in the characteristics of a colony, so colony assessment and queen selection need more attention than many beekeepers give them. This does mean queen rearing, but the bees give us many opportunities during the summer to raise queens with little effort needed by us.

"Bee Improvement for all" is a one day course that is designed to help beekeepers use these opportunities to improve their bees, as well as giving information to those who wish to raise more queens. Some speakers and books don't serve the beekeeper with a few colonies very well, as they often use methods that are beyond the needs of the ordinary beekeeper. This course is organised to help and encourage beekeepers of all abilities to improve their bees, using simple techniques without the need for specialist equipment. Amongst the topics covered will be:

- Setting the criteria you want in your bees.
- How to assess your own and other people's colonies.
- Recording assessments using simple methods.
- Rearing queens from local bees to avoid relying on buying them.
- Deciding which colonies to use queen cells from and which queens to cull.
- Using natural queen cells the bees build.
- "Artificial" queen rearing for those who want more queens.
- Changing queens in colonies.
- Making up mating nuclei.
- Getting queens mated.
- Working with other beekeepers and the local BKA.

There will be plenty of information on colony management, with emphasis on understanding what is happening inside colonies and keeping things simple. This course will help beekeepers to rear their own queens from local stock and not rely on imports.

"Bee Improvement for all" courses are organised by the Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association (BIBBA) on a nationwide basis, sometimes in conjunction with local BKAs or bee breeding groups. They are all day events, but the timings and cost will depend on local arrangements.

Further details can be found on <http://www.bibba.com> or <http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/beeimprovementforallday.html>

**natural queen cell**



**emerging queen**



**Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders Association (BIBBA)**

**in conjunction with Sheffield BKA**

**“Bee Improvement for All”**

A one day course to help and encourage beekeepers of all abilities to improve their bees using simple methods.

**Sat 15<sup>th</sup> March 2014. 9.00 for 9.30 - 4.30**

**Venue: Knowle Top Chapel, Stannington Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S6 6AP**

**Application Form. Please fill in and send/email to Joy Slingsby (details below)**

Name ..... Adult/Under 18. (Please delete)  
 Address ..... Under 18s must be accompanied by fee paying adult.  
 .....  
 ..... Your Association .....  
 Postcode ..... Email .....  
 Tel No ..... Mobile No .....

Additional attendees:-	Adult (tick)	Under 18 (tick)
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
<b>A. Total attendees</b>		
<b>B. Course fee, including refreshments &amp; buffet lunch</b>	<b>@£15</b>	<b>@£5</b>
<b>C. Total payable (AxB)</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>+£ =</b>

*Add more rows  
or use a second  
page as  
necessary*

<b>Overall total payable</b>
<b>£</b>

**Payment by BACS/online banking preferred:**

The Co-operative Bank a/c name: Sheffield Beekeepers' Association sort code: 08 92 99  
 a/c no. : 65460575 (please reference BACS payment with your name - abbreviated as necessary & BIBBA - e.g. "Phil K BIBBA")

Please send an email to [treasurer@sheffieldbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@sheffieldbeekeepers.org.uk) with your name, postal address and contact number so that we can acknowledge your payment.

If your bank does not allow you to input a reference for the BACS payment please state when & how much you paid and any reference given by your bank's system so that we can verify your name against a payment.

Or pay by cheque, **made payable to "Sheffield BKA"**, and send to Joy Slingsby, Treasurer SBKA, 108 Crimicar Lane, Sheffield S10 4FE. Please enclose a note with your name, postal and email address and contact number so that we can acknowledge your payment.

Attendances may be accepted on the day, but only if the venue hasn't reached capacity. A fee of £18/head will apply to all.

If telephone or email bookings are made and full payment has not been received by 7 days in advance (unless by arrangement) it will be assumed the booking has been cancelled and the place may be re-allocated.

Details of the event can be found on <http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/beeimprovementforallday.html>

Any queries other than bookings or payment please email [sec@sheffieldbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:sec@sheffieldbeekeepers.org.uk)