



Leeds Beekeepers' Association



# JULY, 2012 – NEWSLETTER 16

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## WELCOME

Well, once again, the swarming season is past the worst, and hopefully will soon be over. This is a photo of one that got away – although we did rescue it and found it a good home.



We are holding an **APIARY SALE DAY** on the 4<sup>th</sup> August. If you have old equipment, or if you want to bag some bargain beekeeping equipment, now's your chance – check out the ad (Appendix A of this newsletter) and be sure to come along.

This month we are starting an exciting new section for the Foodies among us – Sue Baskind has kicked us off with a delicious recipe for **Orange, almond and honey cake**, which she says is “fab”. I certainly plan to try it. Another recipe next month.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### July 2012

Wed 4 <sup>th</sup>	Apiary Meeting
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup>	Apiary Day
Tues 10 <sup>th</sup> - Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup>	Yorkshire Show
Wed 11 <sup>th</sup>	Apiary Meeting
Tues 17 <sup>th</sup>	LBKA Committee Meeting
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup>	Apiary Meeting
Wed 25 <sup>th</sup>	Apiary Meeting

### August 2012-06-28

Wed 1 <sup>st</sup>	Apiary Meeting
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup> – Sun 5 <sup>th</sup>	Leeds Horticultural Show
Sat 4 <sup>th</sup>	Apiary Sale Day
Wed 8 <sup>th</sup>	Apiary Meeting
Sat 11 <sup>th</sup>	Taster Session
Wed 15 <sup>th</sup>	Apiary Meeting/YBKA GPC
Sat 19 <sup>th</sup>	Teddy bears' picnic, Thwaite Mills
Wed 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Apiary Meeting
Wed 29 <sup>th</sup>	Apiary Meeting

## NEWS ITEMS

### 1. Apiary Record Card

We all recognise the need for keeping accurate records as we examine our hives – especially as we start to expand and have more colonies to look after. The LBKA Committee has produced a Record Card that all members can use to make this task easier and more useful. For a copy of the Record Card, that you can download and use, please see Appendix B of this newsletter.

### 2. Request for old bee suits

We have received a message from Chris Garbutt, a Science Teacher at Bruntcliffe School, as follows:

“I am a science teacher at Bruntcliffe School in Morley, and last year myself and 3 colleagues began the journey of learning how to keep bees, culminating in us introducing two hives onto the school grounds. Both survived the winter (yippee!) and this year we started our beekeeping club, which has quickly grown in popularity. Unfortunately this now means we are at least 3 suits short of being able to get everyone out to see the hives at one time who would like to - and if all the trained staff are there it would be 5 suits short!

The initial funding we had has dwindled to virtually nothing and we simply cannot afford to buy any more suits at this time, so I was wondering if there was anyone out there who has any old, unused or unneeded suits that they wouldn't mind donating? They don't need to be clean, we can do that, just free of holes (!).

If anyone does then it would be massively appreciated and the unused suits would be being put to a good cause! I can be contacted on either 07908107527 or [garbutc04@leedslearning.net](mailto:garbutc04@leedslearning.net).”

### 3. Site for two colonies

We have had a request from Dominic Hewitson, who says

“I wonder if you can help me? I live in north Leeds and need to find a site for my two bee colonies. “

If there is anyone out there who knows of a possible home for Dominic's bees, please contact the editor and I will

pass your details to him.

#### **4. Plastic versus Cedar?**

An interesting study about to get underway! Personally I don't like the look of the plastic houses but will be interested to find out if there is any impact one way or another on bee health.

<http://www.itv.com/news/granada/2012-06-27/safari-park-research-to-help-save-bees/>

Link sent in by Clare McGettigan

#### **5. The Geometry of Bees**

In episode two of The Code Marcus du Sautoy explains why bees choose to use a hexagon to build their honeycomb structure rather than the triangle or the square. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00jftj>

Link sent in by Chris Barlow, who says "I also really like the duct tape on the beekeepers bee suit."

#### **6. Brownfield Habitats**

Wasteland or "brownfield" areas are vital but overlooked habitats for UK wildlife, according to the charity Butterfly Conservation. These sites are home to unusual, hardy plants and their patches of bare ground become warm "microclimates". <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/18513022>

Link sent in by Chris Barlow, who says "Doesn't mention honey bees but honey bees do benefit from these sites."

#### **7. Passing Beekeeping down the Generations**

One of our members, Peter Benefer has provided a hive for his young daughter to paint. It was on view down at the apiary on 20<sup>th</sup> June and looks awesome – see front page of this newsletter.

The photo shown here is of Andy Hutchinson and his daughter (she's the one in the smart pink suit!) going through their bees.



#### **8. Help Wanted**

**Venue:** Thwaite Mills Watermill Museum, Thwaite Lane, Stourton, Leeds LS10 1RP

Events:

Teddy bears' picnic, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 11.30 to 3.30

Car show, 9<sup>th</sup> September, 10.30 to 3.30

Apple day, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 13.00 to 4.30

#### **Arrangements:**

Chairs/ tables etc provided.

Parking in main car park after unloading.

No fee to pay.

Set up usually one hour before, but advised attend earlier if possible.

(For information - Leeds City Council have 3 Bee hives on site)

The intention is that the volunteers will lead the event and sell their bee products, they should contact me at [secretary@leedsbeepers.org.uk](mailto:secretary@leedsbeepers.org.uk) so that I can co-ordinate any interest. If volunteers want to use the LBKA display materials they will be available for them to collect from the apiary on the Weds evening prior to the events.

If there are other vounteers without bee products to sell but willing assist others then they too should contact me.

#### **9. Amazing photos of a Bee Sting**

These are 'not to be missed' images showing the exact moment of a bee sting – they demonstrate very clearly that stinging must be an extremely unpleasant thing for a bee – <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2160353/Rare-photo-captures-exact-moment-bee-leaves-stinger-mans-arm.html>

## **9. Honeybee virus: Varroa mite spreads lethal disease**

The headline is probably stating the obvious at first glance but this time they have identified a specific variant of a virus. More information at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/18339797>

## **10. Middleton Produce Show**

John Cummings representing the Middleton Produce Show has requested the attendance of Leeds Beekeepers on Sun 9th September 12 noon - 4pm. In addition to providing information on bees, the attendees can sell their bee products at this event. There may be a fee for attendance although this is unlikely. Further details will be available shortly. If anyone is interested in providing the stand and selling products please contact [secretary@leedsbeepers.org.uk](mailto:secretary@leedsbeepers.org.uk). Display materials and information is available for use from the apiary clubhouse.

## **11. Zombie Bees**

You will no doubt remember the story of Chris Barlow's Zombie Bees in the last newsletter. I am pleased to report that following their removal to a permanent site, Chris tells me the bees are doing extremely well indeed. A happy outcome.

## **WHY NOT TAKE YOUR BASIC ASSESSMENT – from someone who did it last year!**

My name is Lynne Grandridge and I am now in my third year keeping honey bees.

Currently I have four colonies which I look after with my partner Dave. In the spring of 2009 Dave and I signed up for the Beginner's Course with LBKA and proudly took home our nucleus of bees in the August. After a nervy winter - for us not the bees - we had our worst nightmare in Spring as new bee keepers - our first swarm! This, despite us reading books, talking to experienced bee keepers and doing the artificial swarm procedure. Worst of all they swarmed to a completely inaccessible place and we lost them.

This made me decide I wanted to know more. Knowledge is all, I thought and I put my name down for the basic bee keeping exam, no way was I going to lose any more bees. The weekend arrived and I arrived at Temple Newsam classroom armed with all the information I had on bees. There were about eight or nine of us and our tutor for the prep day was the ever patient Brian Latham. He took us through the syllabus step by step and answered all the many questions we fired at him

After a couple of hours I began to realise I knew more than I thought and by lunchtime I was feeling a little more confident. Brian, all through the day just kept reminding us most of it was common sense and so long as we got the main points down we would all be fine. The prep day ended and all reason went out of the window on the way home, I was feeling very, very nervous. On arriving home I made poor Dave question me endlessly on the syllabus until I felt some of it had sunk in.

The next morning I think the drive to Temple Newsam Apiary was the longest ever and I felt so nervous I really thought I would not be able to go through with it. But the examiners were really nice and tried hard to settle our nerves. Luckily I got to make my frames before the hive inspection which helped calm me down I love making frames and do all ours. The hive inspection went really quickly and the questions I was asked were what I ask myself each time we do our own hive inspections so I didn't feel under any pressure at all. The final section was the question and answer section. This was when my nerves came back full tilt!! My examiner was very patient and took his time asking the questions very clearly and after I answered a few I started to relax, even when I completely lost the thread he just gave me a prompt and brought me back on track.

I am so very pleased I took the exam I feel much more confident with the bees both on a handling basis and noticing things happening in the hive. One word of caution though passing the exam has not stopped my bees swarming despite our best efforts the bees always win!!

Contributed by Lynne Grandridge

## HONEY RECIPES

### Orange, almond and honey cake

#### **Ingredients**

200g/7oz unsalted butter  
200g/7oz demerara sugar  
3 eggs  
1 tsp vanilla essence  
200g/7oz ground almonds  
100g coarse polenta  
Zest of 2 oranges  
1 level tsp baking powder

#### **For the syrup:**

Juice of 2 oranges  
Equal amount of honey

**To serve:** 2 tbsp chopped unsalted shelled pistachios (optional). Serve with Greek yogurt and summer berries as a pudding

#### **Method**

- Grease a 20-25cm springform tin then line it with baking paper. Grease once more. Preheat the oven to 160C/315F/Gas 2½.
- Beat the sugar and butter together until light and creamy. The demerara sugar will not dissolve until cooking so do not worry if it appears gritty.
- Beat in the eggs one by one, then stir in the vanilla essence, ground almonds, polenta, orange zest and baking powder (it is a good idea to mix the four last ingredients before adding).
- Pour into the pan and bake for 40-50 minutes until the surface is light brown and the cake is coming slightly away from the sides of the pan.
- Remove from the oven, cool for 10 minutes, then turn out. This cake will only just set, rather than dry out like other sponges. Handle carefully as you remove it as it is quite fragile.
- To make the syrup, blend the orange juice and honey together. Prick the cake all over with a skewer before brushing the syrup all over the surface and sides. Scatter over the pistachios.

Contributed by Sue Baskind

## BEGINNERS' CORNER – JULY 2012

*This feature is aimed at those who started beekeeping and got (are getting!) their first nuc(s) in 2012.*

Many of you have got your nucs now and either have them still at Temple Newsam or have taken them home. At the time of writing the weather has been dreadful and although we are having a day or two of summer, the forecast is for more cold, wet and windy weather ahead. This is not good news for bees or beekeepers! The NBU has issued a 'starvation' warning because of the weather - so check your bees have a decent store of honey and if not, feed them with a 1:1 sugar syrup.

If your bees are still at the association apiary then remember you can only access them on Wednesday evenings (or on an Apiary day – next one Saturday July 7<sup>th</sup>). Use your time there wisely - make sure you know what you want to do and that you have all your equipment with you when you go. Take some syrup ready-made up in a plastic bottle in case it's needed (and a feeder and a super to house it, if necessary).

Although it's fun going through your colony and just looking, don't forget that each inspection should have a purpose - don't disturb and chill your bees unnecessarily. The swarming instinct seems to be strong despite the weather though so if your new colony is very strong, keep an eye out for the signs. Check for any signs of disease - if you don't know what these are come and ask. Check to make sure you have a laying queen – if you see eggs (laid singly and neatly) then there is no need to hunt for the queen as well. Check they have honey stores and check they have enough space (for brood and for honey).

I have to say my bees don't seem to have been taking any notice of the weather – there is fresh honey in both my hives at the moment. If only they had queens as well, all would be perfect! But that's another story – maybe I will be writing about re-queening next month (or maybe I will be sacked as a mentor due to incompetent beekeeping).

Enjoy your bees, if the weather permits,  
Best wishes, Juliet, LBKA Mentoring [mentoring@leedsbeekeepers.org.uk](mailto:mentoring@leedsbeekeepers.org.uk)

## A BEGINNER AT AN APIARY DAY

As a total beginner just completing the Winter course, I went along to the Apiary Day in May not knowing what to expect. The practical sessions scheduled for the end of our course had been delayed due to rain, rain and more rain. Chris was very welcoming - and I soon had a paintbrush in my hand and was getting to know a bee-hive close-up. As I was finishing off Chris suggested that I assist Shane with "sorting out that hive over there". The hive in question was the same which co-incidentally I had inspected on my so-far first and only practical session the previous week. It had not really been warm enough, and the rain had not long stopped, so it had had to be quick: however we had noted no Queen excluder in place so brood was all over the place, also some of the drawn out comb, loaded with honey, had somehow become all pushed over to one side making it near impossible to take out some of the frames.

Shane gave me the job of operating the smoker and remarked cheerfully that what we were about to do "would make the bees really mad". The aim of our inspection was to put the queen excluder in place, and a bonus would be to find the queen. This would mean that over the next few weeks the brood would all end up in the right place, and it would then be easier to sort out the other issues in the hive.



Shane instructed me to use the smoker quite a bit. As we didn't know where the queen was, we needed all bees to move down before removing any frames or the super and the smoke would achieve this. Shane worked quickly to avoid prolonged upset to the colony. We didn't find the queen but that was to be expected. Once the queen excluder was in then everything went back together as quickly as possible and the job was done.

Shane was kind enough to talk through what he was doing and why and was generous in answering my beginners questions. Plus I got a good insight into the effect that smoke can have on bees, and experienced the noise of a colony of (quite) "mad" bees. It was a really useful and interesting experience; thank-you Shane and Chris.

So to all beginners - go along to the Apiary Day, as you never know what you will end up doing!

Contributed by Camilla Hawkes

### **IT'S NOT ALWAYS BEES YOU HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT**

A rather cocky Bee Inspector stopped at a farm and spoke to the old farmer who had a sideline keeping bees. He told him, "I need to inspect your apiary." The old farmer said, "OK, but don't go in that field over yonder."

The Inspector replied, "Mister, I have the authority of the Government with me. See this ID? This means I am allowed to go wherever I wish on any agricultural land. No questions asked or answered. Have I made myself clear? Do you understand?"

The bee farmer nodded politely and went about his farm chores. Half an hour later, the farmer heard loud screams and saw the Inspector running for the fence and close behind was the farmer's huge-horned prize bull. The bull was gaining on him with every step. The man was clearly terrified, so the bee farmer immediately threw down his tools, and ran to the fence and shouted out, "**Your ID! Your ID! Show him your ID!**"

AS USUAL, MANY THANKS TO THOSE WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED –  
AND PLEASE SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS (ARTICLES, ANECDOTES,  
PHOTOS, RECIPES, ETC.) FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER TO  
KATEY SLATER AT [EDITOR@LEEDSBEEKEEPERS.ORG.UK](mailto:EDITOR@LEEDSBEEKEEPERS.ORG.UK)

DO YOU HAVE BITS OF UNNEEDED BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT HANGING  
AROUND?  
FANCY MAKING A FEW QUID FOR IT (AND CLEARING OUT A BIT OF SPACE)?  
WANT TO BUY SOME SECOND- HAND BEEKEEPING KIT?

COME DOWN TO THE LBKA MEMBERS'

# **APIARY SALE DAY!**

**SATURDAY AUGUST 4<sup>TH</sup>**

AT TEMPLE NEWSAM APIARY

FROM 10:00 AM – 12:00 NOON



**BRING YOUR STUFF TO SELL!  
COME PREPARED TO BUY!**

**FOR REASONS OF APIARY HYGIENE AND DISEASE PREVENTION, PLEASE DO NOT  
BRING OLD COMB OR BEES**

PLEASE ENSURE ALL OLD EQUIPMENT IS CLEAN

CARS MAY BE BROUGHT DOWN TO THE APIARY IN ORDER TO UNLOAD BUT  
**MUST BE RETURNED TO THE CAR PARK BEFORE 10.00 AM**

LBKA WILL NOT BE TAKING COMMISSION ON SALES

TEA, COFFEE AND BISCUITS AVAILABLE AS USUAL

