



INDEX

Welcome	1
Upcoming Events	1
News Items	2
Drone Laying Queens	3
Beekeeping in Kurdistan	4
May Recipe – Home Made Cole Slaw	5
Lotherton Hall Volunteers Requested	5
April Apiary Day Report	6

The Queen marking colour for this year is RED

The yearly sequence is –
Blue **White** **Yellow** **Red** **Green**

The mnemonic for remembering is -
Be **Warned** **You** **Require** **Gloves**



WELCOME

Welcome to a Yorkshire Spring! If only it looked like our front picture this month! This picture was taken in December in Vietnam. Once again, beekeepers in other countries appear to have no need of protective clothing of any kind! Could it be that warm weather makes happy bees?

On the subject of beekeeping in other parts of the world, don't miss the article about beekeeping in Kurdistan – a fascinating read – I'm sure we'd all like to hear more about how this situation develops.

Meanwhile, back in Yorkshire some of you may be seeing drone-laying queens in your hives. Our Chairman, Dave, has written an informative and helpful article about this problem, and what to do about it. See Page 3.

Now the season is shakily getting underway, the list of events is growing bigger – lot's of activities over the summer – if you can volunteer to help out, either at the Lotherton Hall event, or perhaps at one of the Saturday apiary days, please do.

And don't forget to try out this month's recipe – perfect to go with your summer barbecue's.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 1 May	..	..	..	Improvers - Making Nucleii Spring Course Week 2 Theory Winter Course Week 3
Saturday 4 May	..	..	..	Apiary Day Taster Session
Wednesday 8 May	..	..	..	Improvers - Queen Find Mark & Clip Spring Course Week 3 Theory
Tuesday, 14 May	..	..	..	LBKA Committee Meeting

Wednesday 15 May	..	..	Improvers - Queen Find Mark & Clip Spring Course Week 4 Theory
Saturday, Sunday 18, 19 May	..	..	Weekend Course
Friday – Sunday 17, 18, 19 May	..	..	Lotherton Hall Garden Show
Wednesday 22 May	..	..	Improvers Clearing Bees + Extraction Spring Course Week 5 Practical
Wednesday, Thursday 22, 23 May	..	..	Countryside Live at Ledston Estate
Wednesday 29 May	..	..	Spring Course Week 6 Practical
Saturday, 1st June	..	..	Apiary Day
Wednesday, 5 June	..	..	How and When to Re-queen Spring Course
Wednesday, 12 June	..	..	Apiary Meeting Spring Course
Friday, 14 June	..	..	YBKA General Purposes Committee
Wednesday, 19 June	..	..	Apiary Meeting Spring Course
Wednesday, 26 June	..	..	Apiary Meeting Preparing for the Heather Spring Course



NEWS ITEMS

1. EU to Ban Neonicotinoids

None of us will have failed to notice the increased press and television coverage given to bees in recent weeks, regarding the use of neonicotinoid pesticides. Yesterday, the 29th April, the European Commission voted in favour of a ban. Although the UK did not support the ban, it will be bound by the decision. Read more about it at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22335520>.

2. Offer of an Out-Apiary

Offer of an allotment in Kippax opposite the swimming baths as an out apiary; it is fully enclosed with a fence and lockable gates. There is space on the site and Paul, the owner, would make any necessary adjustment for the bees. Paul's Tel. No 07765807360 E-mail eaglp@aol.com Please contact direct.

3. Request for Honey?

A lady has contacted Temple Newsam to ask if they could put her in touch with local beekeeper. She would like to buy some local honey for her hay fever. She lives in Moortown and can be contacted on Leeds 2174538.

4. York Beekeepers Association Auction

York Beekeepers Association will be having their Auction on 22nd June 2013. This is about a month later than their usual date because of the slow start to the season. It is usually quite a good auction and many of you may want to go. Timings, etc., can be found on <http://www.yorkbeekeepers.com/meetings.html>

5. YBKA 2013 Spring Conference

The Yorkshire Beekeepers Association Spring Conference was held on the 9th March at the Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate. The Minutes can be read in full at the following link:
http://www.leedsbeekeepers.org.uk/files/YBKA_2013_Spring_Conference_Minutes.pdf

6. Environmental Audit Committee

This is the link to the BBKA website, where you can read their response to the publication of the Environmental Audit Committee report, in addition to other BBKA news items.
http://www.bbka.org.uk/news_and_events/press_office/press_releases.php

7. BBKA General Secretary's Review April 2013

The BBKA General Secretary's Review can be read in full at:

http://www.leedsbeekeepers.org.uk/files/BBKA_GENSEC_Review_201304.pdf

8. Co-op Bee Plan – Wildflowers

Many of you will already be aware of the Co-op's Plan Bee. They have recently launched a competition to find patches of unloved ground, which they will transform into wildflower areas. If you want to nominate a patch near you, you've got until the end of May – see the website at this link:

<http://www.co-operative.coop/Plan-Bee/latest-news/plan-bee/win-a-wildflower-haven-for-your-community/>

9. New Swarm Lure from Vita

Although we don't usually promote products in the newsletter this swarm lure below is an interesting product. We've not seen anything similar so thought it was worth a mention?

<http://www.vita-europe.com/news/vitas-swarm-lures-give-new-insight-on-honeybee-behaviour/>

10. Honeybees to Sniff out Explosives

Beekeepers may be interested in - and have mixed opinions about – this. Bees can be trained far more quickly and are far more cost effective than sniffer dogs. <http://www.inscentinel.com/457/>

11. Croatian 'bomb bees'

The Croatian 'bomb bees' that can sniff out landmines from THREE MILES away. Scientists in Croatia have unveiled specially-bred colonies of bees that can detect buried landmines from more than three miles away. The bees are trained by being fed an irresistible sugar solution mixed with the smell of explosives.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2315198/The-bomb-bees-sniff-landmines-THREE-MILES-away.html>



DRONE LAYING QUEENS

I thought that I'd done well. Every single colony had survived the winter. All had fresh pollen going in, so the queens were laying and there was brood to be fed. I left them alone until the weather finally improved at the end of April.

First inspections are always pretty speedy, no real need to linger. Clean any floorboards that need cleaning, check that there's a laying queen, ensure that there's enough food and finally take away the bottom brood box (I overwinter on double brood commercial hives). Whilst it sounds like a lot, in reality it's just a couple of minutes or so per colony.

Overall I've been pleased with the way that the colonies have emerged from winter. Some are really strong; most were "middling" (and this is good and as they should be) and a few weak. However, some had drone-laying queens. So far there have been three of these in two apiaries (the third apiary is still to be inspected at time of writing). Now this is a rarity for me. I see laying workers in the summer far more frequently and occasionally a summer drone laying queen, but drone laying queens after winter I can't recall having seen for ages.

So what are drone-laying queens, and what can you do? Well in these cases they are colonies that have had a normal queen, laying perfectly well, who simply changes over time, usually over winter. She can no longer lay fertilised eggs that develop into workers. That's normally because of poor mating (in these cases they were autumn 2012 bred queens). The queens do mate, but fail to gather enough sperm to store up for the years of service that should be possible. In these cases their sperm supply ran out during the winter. All they can now lay are unfertilised eggs (drone eggs) in worker cells. These develop into stunted drones raised in worker cells. You can spot this condition easily because the sealed brood, all in worker cells, has the recognisable drone

(raised) capping.

So why don't the bees recognise this and replace her? Well as far as she, and the workers are concerned, all is well. She continues to put out plenty of queen pheromone, which prevents the colony creating queen cells, and she's laying well. And of course there are no natural drones about so early in the season. So even if the workers did want to replace her, there are no mature drones available to mate with any virgin queens. So the colony I'm afraid is doomed.

So what's to be done? Well, most have a good number of normal worker bees, laid before the queen ran out of the sperm, gathered during mating. These are valuable still so early in the year so its simply a case of finding and killing the drone laying queen (my queens are all marked, making finding them relatively easy) and merging the remaining colony with another through newspaper. That way you boost the strength of the receiving colony when extra bees will do most good, particularly if you can merge them with a weaker (but queenright) colony.

You may be wondering what's the difference between a drone laying queen and laying workers. I will write a "part two" of this article next month, by then the timing of this condition, normally an affliction of summer, will be more appropriate.

Contributed by Dave Barrett



OLD AND NEW BEEKEEPING IN KURDISTAN

I have just returned from a trip to Kurdistan (Northern Iraq) where I encountered some old traditional hives.

Beekeeping in Kurdistan was severely curtailed, decades ago, with the oppression of Saddam and the resulting genocide of the Kurdish people. When I was in the mountains there, 4 years ago, the only bees I saw were ones which lived in the many caves on the limestone cliffs in the region. The Kurds have just re-started beekeeping with courses provided by NGO's, and using Langstroth hives, which they simply call 'boxes', and last year saw the formation of the Kurdistan Beekeepers Association in a town called Shaqlawa (15km north of Erbil, the capital).

It really is an adventure for them all. Some of them have no idea about swarming or queen cells, so they are all literally learning from scratch and watching to see what happens. It makes you appreciate just how good it is to be a member of an association which contains so many experienced people, and to be part of a unbroken tradition which goes back hundreds, if not thousands of years. I am in the process of offering assistance to them, perhaps in the form of books, and if I go back for another visit I hope to make personal contact with more Kurdish beekeepers, and join in with their activities.



There is a great demand for 'pure' honey in Kurdistan which people will pay up to \$60 per kilo for (£40), if they know the source is good, because there is so much adulterated stuff around. Most of their honey currently comes from neighbouring Turkey but they are seeking to eradicate imports, and to eventually export.



Interestingly some of the Turkish honey arrives in dinner plate sized plastic tubs, which are about 4cm deep and contain a huge slab of naturally constructed comb floating in the honey.

The hives I saw in Kurdistan are basket weave construction, about a metre long, and are tubular in design, but slightly wider at the back than the front. The hive is used horizontally. Some of the insides were lined

with mud and fine grass, but I found one with comb directly attached to the basket work, suggesting it was once mud covered rather than lined. The entrance end of the hive has a plaster finish, about 2cm deep, and painted white, with the actual entrance carved through the plaster. The back of some of the hives had a removable basket woven 'lid'. In others the entrance end was the lid. In the example I have provided the lid would have been at the back but is missing.

These hives I saw were empty so I have no idea how or where they were used, but I hope to find out one day.

Contributed by Andrew Lane



HOME MADE COLE SLAW

Serves 6

Preparation Time 15 min

Ingredients

½ medium-sized white cabbage, shredded
400g carrots, peeled and grated
2 eating apples, peeled and grated
6 spring onions, trimmed and sliced
100ml mayonnaise
2 tbsp clear honey
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard
3 tbsp crème fraîche or yoghurt

Method

Place the cabbage, carrot, apple and spring onions into a large mixing bowl.
Beat together the mayonnaise, honey, mustard and crème fraîche or yoghurt. Pour over the vegetable mix, stir well to coat evenly and toss thoroughly.

Contributed by Sue Baskind



LOTHERTON HALL 17/18/19 MAY – LBKA VOLUNTEERS REQUESTED

The Lotherton Hall Garden Show will take place on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 17/18/19th May. The Leeds Beekeepers Association have a stand in one of the marquees and volunteers are requested to make this a successful event.

We have display material (re general beekeeping and LBKA activities) our own display boards, an observation hive and children's craft material, including candle making. We expect to have some hive products for sale too. Volunteers are needed to assist on each day. This is an opportunity to share your beekeeping enthusiasm with the public and to entertain youngsters in bee-crafts – all materials are supplied.

If you could fill any of the slots listed in the table below it would be very much appreciated, please e-mail secretary@leedsbeekeepers.org indicating which timeslot(s) you prefer.

If you have any hive products for sale, (even if you cannot attend yourself then) again please e-mail as above.

All volunteers will gain free entry into the event and free parking, there are lots of other activities including ferret racing, birds of prey demonstrations, sheepdog displays, falconry demonstrations, ferret racing and a reptile house in addition to the plants and gardening materials on sale. You can combine a good day out with a few hours of volunteering. Do it for the bees!

LOTHERTON HALL					
Set up on Thursday, 16 th May between 14.00 and 16.00					
Fri 17 th May		Sat 18 th May		Sun 19 th May	
10.00 – 13.30	13.30 – 17.00	10.00 – 13.30	13.30 – 17.00	10.00 – 13.30	13.30 – 17.00



APRIL APIARY DAY REPORT

A nice pleasant Saturday morning at Temple Newsam LBKA apiary - the apiary temperature hit 17°C. Positively tropical and the bees were very busy flying by 11.30ish. All hives showed plenty of activity especially after Keith had checked the all the hives for supplies.

A new feature of apiary days is the "advice point", which was manned by Robin and Keith for any one wanting spring bee keeping questions answered.

The kettle was put on straight away and tea, coffee, biscuits and squash were available asap. Sue brought freshly baked honey bread which was delicious.

The big event of the morning were two ladies from a university taking portrait shots of beekeepers with beekeeping paraphernalia for a university project. They spent most of the morning there and took plenty of photographs.

Robin and several others made remarks about up and coming apiary jobs, including tidying up and painting. This will start this coming Wednesday for the first Wednesday evening of the new season. Robin offered to bring his trailer down to take rubbish to the dump so the plan for Wednesday evening is to clear "rubbish", including an old office cabinet, an old wooden door and several other interesting non bee related items loitering around the place. Painting the observation hive was mentioned, as well as demonstrations hives.

Folks sighted during the morning included me, Jeff, Mark, Sue, Claire, Martin, Dave B, Dave H, Richard, Keith, Sam, Paul, Sophie and her mate, Trish, Ronnie, Brian and many others to.

The morning finished around 12.30 ish.

Chris Barlow



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