



LUNE VALLEY COMMUNITY BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2019

Social Evening



Despite the cold weather, we had a pleasing turnout for our wine and cheese starter before viewing the film "*More than Honey*". This remarkable documentary film made in 2013 by the Swiss filmmaker Marcus Imhoof, included some incredible photography as well as examples of hobbyist beekeeping, large scale commercial beekeeping and what happens when there are no bees to keep!

Next meeting



Our next meeting on Wednesday, **13th February 2019** is an Open Speaker Meeting when Dr Julia Piggot, our Seasonal Bee Inspector, will talk about **Gardening for Bees**. Julia also runs the Brigsteer Bee Reserve, a private wildlife reserve in the Lyth Valley, Cumbria. The 17.5 acre reserve is made up of limestone pasture, meadow and woods. The woodland is planted with trees used by bees for nectar, honeydew and resin for propolis and the grassland is managed to favour a flower rich flora and to provide nest sites for bumble bees and solitary bees.

Spring Feeding

February can be a fickle month, weather wise. In the North of England, it is traditionally our coldest month but recent years have seen mild periods which have stimulated the bees into activity only to have them retarded shortly afterwards by intense cold spells. This often results in the bees using up considerable amounts of stores and even starving.

To avoid this, especially if you are not really sure of the amount of stores in your hive, you could provide each colony with a supply of fondant, not syrup. Usually, if they do not want it, they will leave it untouched, but regular monitoring will enable you to replenish supplies if needed.

Research appeal



Philip is continuing his fascinating research into trees as a highly productive source of pollen and has asked if members could help by maintaining a simple record, of the type set out below, to record what trees and shrubs come into flower in your locality and for how long the flowering period lasts.

For those of you who do not know him, Dr Philip Donkersley is an entomologist with a major focus on evolutionary and microbial ecology. He is currently a senior post-doctoral research assistant at Lancaster University's Environment Centre and is currently working on his second major project, the Biopesticides for Africa project in the Insect Parasite Ecology Group. This project studies the practical applications of an insect pathogen as a pesticide for control of a key crop pest in sub-Saharan Africa.

TREE/SHRUB FLOWERING DATA 2019			
Name and contact details of Observer:			
Area of observation			
	Name of tree or shrub observed: (Latin, binomial, common English name, cultivar or colloquial names)	Flowering	
		Started	Ended
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
	Continue for as long as necessary		

When completed please either email to: p.w.donkersley1@lancaster.ac.uk or post to Philip Donkersley, Lab B29, LEC 1, Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, LA14YQ.

Club Activities Programme 2019 - 2020

2019

Wed 13th Mar	Speaker meeting Topic: The hive as a processing centre Pete has been keeping bees for over thirty years, is a "Master Beekeeper" and has held a number of senior positions with BBKA and Cheshire BKA. To ensure the colony survives in a healthy state, honey bees collect everything they need from the surrounding area in the form of relatively simple, readily available, natural products. They then process these in sophisticated ways into such diverse items as building materials, miracle foods, antiseptic paints, and store them where necessary for future use. The abilities required for these processes have evolved over millennia to a level of amazing sophistication, but how do they do it? This lecture will describe those processes in a way that helps beekeepers understand the requirements of their colonies better.	Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm Speaker: Pete Sutcliffe
Sun 10th Mar	Alternative Beekeeping for Beginners – Part 1 This inter-active workshop focuses on responsible, low intervention, bee-centric approaches to beekeeping and will cover everything you need to know and consider before taking up beekeeping. Comprehensive notes, refreshments and lunch are included.	Scarthwaite Hotel 9-30am to 4-00pm
Sun 14th Apr	Spring Apiary Inspection An opportunity for all members, especially new members, to experience a Spring inspection and assess how well the bees have over-wintered.	Club Apiary 10-00am to 2-00pm
Sun 5th May	Alternative Beekeeping for Beginners – Part 2 Meet the bees! This practical session will introduce you to active colonies of bees housed in a variety of different types of long hive and provide you with the opportunity to handle bees for yourself under expert guidance. Refreshments and full protective equipment will be provided, although you will have to provide your own wellies.	Club Apiary 10-00am to 4-00pm
Mon, Tues 20th & 21st May	Alternative Beekeeping for Beginners A repeat of the Club's open course but run exclusively for the members of the South Lakes branch of the University of the Third Age.	
Sun 23rd June	Summer Apiary Inspection An opportunity for all members, especially new members, to experience a Summer inspection and assess how well the bees have expanded and amassed stores during the Spring and early Summer.	Club Apiary 10-00am to 2-00pm
Fri 12th July	Working party to prepare for Open Day Details to follow.	Club Apiary 10-00am to 3-00pm
Sat 13th July	2019 OPEN DAY Details to follow.	Club Apiary

Sun 8th Sept	Autumn Apiary Inspection	Club Apiary 10-00am to 2-00pm
	An opportunity for all members, especially new members, to experience an Autumn inspection and assess how well the bees are prepared for winter.	
Sun 15th Sept	Meadow Mowing Day	Club Apiary 10-00am to 4-00pm
	Preparing the meadow for winter. Scythe, strim or just carry away the cuttings! But please do come, we need to complete this in one day.	
Wed 16th Oct	Speaker Meeting Topic: Bee Together Project	Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm Speaker: Catherine Mercer
	Catherine is the Coordinator of the Bee Together project which aims to connect communities and landscapes to reverse the decline of wild pollinators, and in particular wild bees. The project involves coordinating and delivering capital works and activity-based projects along the B-Line from Lancaster to Leeds, connecting communities to create pollinator super-highways.	
Wed 13th Nov	Speaker Meeting Topic: Bees for Development	Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm Speaker: Bob Spencer
	Bob is a Trustee of Bees for Development, an organisation that promotes sustainable beekeeping to combat poverty and to build sustainable, resilient livelihoods. It supports beekeepers to maintain environments that are good for bees, for biodiversity, and for people. Bees for Development works with local partners on community-based projects, and provides a wide-range of information services.	
Wed 11th Dec	Speaker Meeting Topic:	Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm Speaker: TBC
2020		
Wed 15th Jan	Social Event – Wine and Cheese Evening Details to follow	Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm
Wed 12th Feb	Speaker Meeting Topic:	Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm Speaker: TBC
Wed 11th Mar	Speaker Meeting Topic:	Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm Speaker: TBC

Other events of interest



Saturday, 9th March 2018, Beetradox 9-00am to 4-30pm
Hall H3, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG

This is the largest, independent trade exhibition of beekeeping equipment in the UK and attracts over 2500 beekeepers. A diverse range of free lectures run from 10-00am to 3-00pm.

Admittance is £5 if booked in advance, or £6 on the day.
www.beetradox.co.uk/registration/



12th -14th April 2019,

BBKA Spring Convention

Harper Adams University, Newport, Shropshire,
TF10 8NB

The annual BBKA Spring Convention provides an impressive range of workshops, courses and lectures spread over three days. A large trade show also takes place over the first two days. Admittance for non BBKA members for the full convention is £26 (booked in advance) or £30 on the day. Entry to the trade show on the Saturday is £5. The full programme can be downloaded from: www.bbka.org.uk/news_and_events/spring_convention.php

Northern Bee Auction

This is usually held around April time at Houghton Village Hall, Cumbria, CA3 0NW, and offers a range of both bees and second-hand equipment. I have been told that there will be one this year but no date has yet been announced.

Beeswax wanted

Andrew Case is a woodworker / leather worker in Heysham who makes and sells wood and leather "balm" using, in addition to other products, beeswax. He is looking for local suppliers he can work with, rather than purchasing from the internet, as he believes there is a lot of value in producing local, and natural, products. If anyone has any beeswax for sale, refined or unrefined, please contact Andrew on 07988280841.

British native dark honey bees



Over the past 30 years there has been a huge increase in queen bee imports to the detriment of our British native dark bee. Although stocks of 100% pure native dark bees are extremely low, there are a number of initiatives around the UK to save existing native dark bee stocks and help improve the population throughout the country.

Archaeological, biological and historical evidence shows that honey bees in the UK from around 4,000 years ago up until the 19th century were genetically the dark European honey bee - *Apis mellifera mellifera*.

mellifera mellifera.

From the early 1800s, a small number of Italian bee imports took place, mainly for experimental reasons, and this continued sporadically with very little effect upon the native bee population. However, between 1916 and 1925 the British black bee, as it was then known, was rendered virtually extinct in England and Wales by *Acarapis woodi* (acarine mite), the outbreak being called the 'Isle of Wight disease'. Parts of Scotland and Ireland though, were less severely affected by this outbreak.

From this time onwards, major imports of Dutch and Italian bees occurred, mainly from Holland. This importation has continued, mainly from Australia and New Zealand, and despite the recent import restrictions, the bee population is still being topped up by major imports of largely Italian style queen bees. The direct result of these imports is that the genetic mix of our honey bee is broad, and although natural selection still favours dark bees, many of the major genetic advantages of our original native dark bee have been lost. Even in Scotland where *Apis mellifera mellifera* numbers were still significant up to the late 1960s, these imports have had a severe and adverse effect.

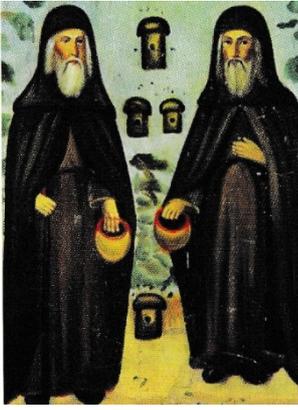
However, small pockets of pure *Apis mellifera mellifera* remain in remote parts of the country, and handled very carefully, there is a real possibility of re-introducing these on a major scale to save this exceedingly valuable species.

Patron Saints of Beekeepers

When it comes to Patron Saints, beekeepers have an amazing choice!

At this time of year we tend to think about St Valentine. Officially recognised by the Roman Catholic Church, St. Valentine is known to be a real person who died around A.D. 270. The saint we celebrate on Valentine's Day is known officially as St. Valentine of Rome in order to differentiate him from the dozen or so other Valentines on the list. Saints are certainly expected to keep busy in the afterlife and St. Valentine is no exception, having wide-ranging spiritual responsibilities for beekeeping and epilepsy, as well as the plague, fainting and travelling. As you might expect, he is also the patron saint of engaged couples and happy marriages.

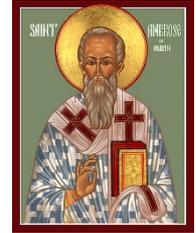




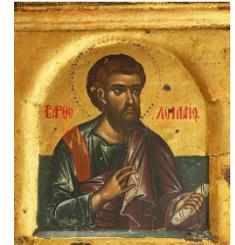
Ukrainian and Russian beekeepers have different patron saints, St. Savvaty and St. Zosima of the Solovetsky Islands. On the Feast of St. Alexius the Man of God (March 30th), Ukrainian beekeepers would begin their chores by hanging small icons of Savvaty and Zosima in little shrines placed among their beehives.

Beekeeping was and is so popular a form of agriculture that the Slavonic liturgical 'Book of Needs' or 'Trebnik' which contains blessings for many items has no less than four liturgical blessings of: New bees (called the 'voiceless ones'), new bee-hives and beekeepers, beekeeping implements and new honey and beeswax to be used in the making of Church candles.

St Ambrose was Bishop of Milan. There is a legend that as an infant, a swarm of bees settled on his face while he lay in his cradle, leaving behind a drop of honey. His father considered this a sign of his future eloquence and honeyed tongue. Among other patronages, he is the patron saint of bees, beekeepers & candle makers.



St Gregory (left) is responsible for opening the flowers on 12th March. A few weeks later on 21st March, St Benedict (right) summons the bees to search for nectar. According to legend, St Bartholomew was martyred by being flayed alive and because of this fate he became the patron saint of tanners. In many parts of Britain, he was also patron saint of beekeepers, probably because his feast day on 24th August coincided with the gathering of honey. Until the 1950s, the village of Gulval in Cornwall celebrated St Bartholomew's Day with blessing the mead, while the annual St Bartholomew's Fair in London was famous for its honey-coated apples.



St Kharlamii was a bishop and healer from Asia Minor. He did not recognise any other methods of treating ailments except by way of natural healing, performing most of his healing arts with honey and beeswax. In Bulgaria, special pies and flat cakes were baked & decorated with a symbol of a hive or cross. These and honeycomb were brought to the church. After the service they were handed to friends and relatives. In some localities, honey was blessed and kept behind the altar for 40 days and then used for medicinal purposes.



St Dominic (Modomnock, Domnock or Dominick) started beekeeping in Wales and, when he returned to Ireland, he gave his hives to St David.

St. Gobnait was born in Ireland in the 5th or 6thC. Gobnait is Irish for Abigail meaning "brings joy". As the patron saint of beekeepers, her name has been anglicised as Deborah, meaning honeybee. Bees have long been important in Ireland and were part of the ancient laws called the Bech Bretha or Bee Judgements. In prehistoric times the soul was thought to leave the body as an insect, either a bee or a butterfly. Many accounts exist of how St Gobnait prevented invaders (said to have been O'Donoghues of the Glens) from carrying off cattle. On their approach she let loose the bees from her hives and they attacked the invaders, forcing them to flee. One version of the tale has the beehive turning into a bronze helmet and the bees themselves turning into soldiers. There is a statue of her near the site of the community she founded at Ballyvourney, showing her in nun's habit standing on a skep surrounded by bees.



In prehistoric times the soul was thought to leave the body as an insect, either a bee or a butterfly. Many accounts exist of how St Gobnait prevented invaders (said to have been O'Donoghues of the Glens) from carrying off cattle. On their approach she let loose the bees from her hives and they attacked the invaders, forcing them to flee. One version of the tale has the beehive turning into a bronze helmet and the bees themselves turning into soldiers. There is a statue of her near the site of the community she founded at Ballyvourney, showing her in nun's habit standing on a skep surrounded by bees.

POSHBEE

A professor at Royal Holloway, University of London, will be leading a world's first study into the effects of agrochemicals on bees across the UK and Europe.

With a grant of €9million, the research consortium, POSHBEE, led by [Mark Brown, Professor in Evolutionary Ecology and Conservation at Royal Holloway](#), will study honey bees, bumble bees, and solitary bees, who all face, in Europe and around the globe, many threats and are in decline.



POSHBEE is a consortium of academics, governmental organisations, industry, and NGOs that will address the issue of agrochemicals to ensure the sustainable health of bees and their pollination services in Europe.

For the first time, the study will incorporate the knowledge and experience of local beekeeping, farming organisations and academic researchers (including the EU RefLab for bee health), the study will provide the first comprehensive pan-European assessment of the exposure hazard of chemicals.



It will look at the mix of chemicals that bees are exposed to, as well as their co-occurrence with pathogens and nutritional stress for solitary, bumble, and honey bees across two major cropping systems.

Professor Mark Brown, Royal Holloway, said of the five-year study: "I'm very excited to be leading this new study, especially as it will examine many species of bee, from our well-known social honey bees to

much less well-known, but equally vital solitary bees.

"With 42 partners working on POSHBEE across the UK and Europe, and with the help of experts from science to beekeepers and farmers, we aim to make ground-breaking findings and start to work on ways to keep bees healthy.

"We hope that by the end of the five-year study, we will have a good understanding of the threats that bees face, as well as a range of advice and tools for policymakers and practical beekeepers and conservation organisations that will keep our bees healthy into the future.

"After all, they are our best pollinators and are essential for our human well-being."

For more information, follow the team on Twitter @poshbee_eu.



Manuka honey's healing power could be lost by the time you eat it!

Rhys Blackely, Science Correspondent, The Times, 3rd January 2019

Manuka honey, which can cost as much as £100 a jar and is reputed to have potent healing properties, may have lost its active ingredients before buyers get it home, a scientist has warned. The honey, produced by bees that forage upon the manuka bush in New Zealand, has been feted by celebrities including Gwyneth Paltrow, Scarlet Johansson and Katherine Jenkins, the Welsh singer, is supposed to possess powerful antibacterial properties thanks to methylglyoxal (MG), a compound found in most types of honey but only in small quantities. Studies have found that it can ease coughs and colds and fight the bacteria that cause stomach ulcers.

Merilyn Manley-Harris of Waikato University, New Zealand, warned consumers, however, that some manuka honey sold in Britain might have lost its active ingredient through exposure to heat while being transported to stores. "Manuka honey is tested before it leaves New Zealand," she said. "But there's a whole issue of what happens between here and the UK when it is on a ship. It's a minimum of four to six weeks to ship, the containers are not refrigerated and the inside of a hull can get quite hot."

"Once it's in the UK, the way honey is handled in the shop could also affect it, shopkeepers need to be keeping this stuff cool. A day in the sunshine won't make a difference but a few weeks in a hot shop window and the honey probably wouldn't be active anymore." Professor Manley-Harris said that short-term exposure to heat, such as putting a spoonful of honey in tea, would not harm its effectiveness,

Holland & Barrett, the leading health food retailer, said last year that it would begin testing jars of manuka honey amid suspicions that fake products were flooding the market. An estimated 10,000 tonnes of honey with the manuka label is sold around the world each year, yet New Zealand produces only 1,700 tonnes.

The legal definition of manuka honey is hazy. The only guidelines state that it must contain at least some MG. This lack of clarity means manuka can be diluted with cheaper honey and still be a legal product.

ATTENTION: How to avoid the sting of fake Manuka honey

In a bid to clamp down on the large quantities of fake Manuka honey, the New Zealand government has passed laws forbidding the real thing to be exported unless it has passed its own purity tests.

Manuka Doctor's Head of Bee Keeping in New Zealand, Greig, commented: "The government standards are excellent for our industry. There is so much fake manuka out there but now customers know: buy Manuka Honey that is harvested and packed in NZ and it's going to be 100% genuine Manuka honey".

To make sure your Manuka honey is genuine, look out for the 'New Zealand Made' and 'Tested



Certified' logos on the pot.
The Manuka Honey industry is also changing how the active ingredient is measured. The number on the front of a pot is a measurement of the amount of Methylglyoxal (MGO) and this in turn is related to the strength of antimicrobial activity. The greater the number, the stronger the

antimicrobial activity.
Antimicrobial products have the ability to kill or slow the spread of microorganisms, including bacteria, parasites and fungi.
Manuka Doctor is the leader in manuka honey that is harvested and packed in New Zealand. It has a huge following – and the buzz continues to grow.

Daily Mirror, 15th January 2019

Membership Renewal 2019-2020

Club membership falls due for renewal on 1st March and prompt renewal would be both helpful and appreciated. Membership subscription remains unchanged at £12 per member, as does Public Liability insurance cover at £10. Please complete the membership renewal form and return it to: High Tarn, Aughton, Lancaster, LA2 8LU. I know this is a bit of a chore but it keeps us compliant with both GDPR and HMRC.

LUNE VALLEY COMMUNITY BEEKEEPERS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM – 2019-2020		
Title:	Name:	
2019-202 Subscriptions		Amount
Annual Membership		12.00
Public Liability Insurance (delete if not wanted)		10.00
Donation		
Total due		
Please indicate method of payment		Cheque/BACS/Cash
Bank details for BACS payment <i>Please quote your name as the payment reference to help us identify the payments.</i>		Lune Valley Community Beekeepers Account number – 29993268 Sort code 77-26-17
I consent to the holding of my membership records on computer and consent/do not consent to disclosure to other members of the Charity and BeeBase.		
Signed:		Date:
Gift Aid declaration (for tax payers only) – past, present & future donations		
Please treat my subscription as a Gift Aid donation. I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given.		
Lune Valley Community Beekeepers – HMRC Charities Reference XT22947		
Signed:		Date:

Fred Ayres, Editor & Chairman, February 2019

The Lune Valley Long Hive

An innovative but simple long hive



Only £295

Only obtainable from Lune Valley Community Beekeepers

Essential features:

- Designed by bee-centric beekeepers for bee-centric beekeepers
- Comfortably houses one colony of bees without the needs for additional supers or brood boxes
- Has a hinged roof to avoid the need for heavy lifting
- Can be managed by a person in a wheelchair
- Can be used with 14 x 12 frames (recommended), standard brood frames or top bars
- Has a removable floor tray which can act as a biological sump or a debris board for varroa counts
- Has 2" thick wooden walls which provide five times more insulation than a standard hive
- Roof space is ventilated and has space for a jumbo feeder
- Has a metal roof
- Is manufactured locally, especially for LVCB
- Is constructed from pine wood to reduce the cost but will need an external preservative or coat of paint
- Despite its high specification, it is economically priced whilst offering exceptional value for money.

Open Meetings and Courses 2019

It would be very helpful if members could print off the following notice and put it on local notice boards.

ALTERNATIVE BEEKEEPING FOR BEGINNERS

**Part 1: Sunday, 10th March, 2019
9-30am to 4-00pm**

**Scarthwaite Country House Hotel
Crook O'Lune, Lancaster LA2 9HR**

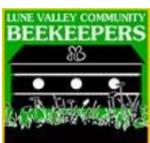
If you have ever thought of owning a colony of honey bees but have been deterred by not knowing exactly what is involved, or how much time it might take, then this course is for you! This inter-active workshop focuses on responsible, low intervention, bee-centric approaches to beekeeping and will cover all you need to know to start keeping bees.



**Part 2: Sunday, 5th May 2019, 10-00am to 4-00pm
The Apiary, Nazareth House, Ashton Road, Lancaster LA1 5AQ**



Meet the bees! This practical session will introduce you to active colonies of bees housed in a variety of different types of long hive and provide you with the opportunity to handle bees for yourself under expert guidance. Full protective equipment will be provided, although you will have to provide your own wellies.



**For further details or to book a place visit
www.lunevalleybeekeepers.co.uk**

Charity No: 1167725