



LUNE VALLEY COMMUNITY BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2018

Club News

October meeting



We were delighted to welcome last month's speaker, John Vendy, who provided a very interesting talk on building top-bar hives and his experiences of keeping bees in them. Whilst much of his approach was very similar to our approach with long hives, there were some differences which generated an interesting discussion.

Apiary

As you may recall, the objective of our September meeting was to cut the meadow and rake off the cuttings. On the day, to say "rain stopped play" would be a considerable understatement! However, our thanks go out to the Community Payback Team who kindly stepped in on a later day and strimmed the meadow and Club House area and also weeded around most of the hedge line. The whole site is now looking very tidy.



Gift



We are very grateful to member Professor John Wakeford who generously donated an Austrian scythe to the Club, together with an alternative blade and all the various tools and sharpening equipment.

Club Meeting Programme 2018 – 2019

Please note the changes to the programme.

Wed 14th Nov **Speaker meeting** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
Topic: Bees and the Law **Speaker: Dr Fred Ayres**
Thankfully, cases of beekeepers falling foul of the law are not common, but they do occur and beekeepers need to be aware of them. Fred's talk will review the various areas of risk in an understandable manner and indicate what steps can be taken to minimise or avoid them.

Wed 5th Dec **Speaker meeting** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
Topic: Trees for Bees **Speaker: Dr Philip Donkersley**
Philip achieved his doctorate from Lancaster University three years ago after carrying out his research in the hives of local beekeepers! He is now a post-doctoral research assistant at the University and has published a number of academic papers on bees. His talk will outline some of his research findings and may even contain some data gained from the research project started at the meadow at our club apiary.

2019

Wed 9th Jan **Social Evening** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
Wine and cheese evening. We shall also be showing *More than Honey*, a documentary film made in 2013 by the Swiss filmmaker Marcus Imhoof, which looks into the fascinating world of bees, and showing small family beekeepers and industrialised honey farms. *More than Honey* is a film on the relationship between mankind and honey bees, about nature and about our future.

Wed 13th Feb **Open Speaker meeting** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
Topic: Gardening for Bees **Speaker: Dr Julia Piggot**
Julia is our Seasonal Bee Inspector. She 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.

Wed 13th Mar **Speaker meeting** **Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm**
Topic: The hive as a processing centre **Speaker: Pete Sutcliffe**
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.



BEE TOGETHER PROJECT

Bee Together 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.

The project is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and will be delivered in partnership of Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, Buglife, the Forest of Bowland AONB and voluntary groups, of which we are one. We have just received the following communication:

"Dear All,

As you may be aware from our last Bee Together update in June, we took the necessary decision to delay the start of the project until November this year to allow us time to recruit delivery staff.

We are delighted to announce that Catherine Mercer, who is currently working for the Essex Wildlife Trust, will be joining us as the Bee Together Project Officer from the 12th of November. Her first few weeks will inevitably be taken up with familiarisation of the project, its aims and objectives, and if time allows initial contact with people such as yourselves. We expect to be in touch later this year or in early 2019. We hope this will provide an opportunity on both sides for updates, thoughts and ideas to be shared as the project begins.

We look forward to developing this project together over the coming months."

New boost for hay meadows

● Partnership aims to restore wildflower havens

WILDFLOWER meadows in the Yorkshire Dales and Forest of Bowland are set to be boosted thanks to a new 14-month partnership.

Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (YDMT) and the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) have joined forces to restore wildflower hay meadows as part of the Haytime Rescue project.

The partnership project is supported by a grant of almost £20,000 from the Lancashire Environmental Fund.

Isobel Hall, programme manager at YDMT, said: "With support from local volunteers, farmers and specialist growers at Kew Wakehurst Millennium Seed Bank, we aim to bolster populations of rare species of wildflowers in Bowland, including melancholy thistle, globe-flower and birds eye primrose."

The project will deliver training and support for volunteers who will learn about propagating plants from sustainably sourced seed and how to 'foster' the plug plants, looking after them until they are large



Isobel Hall of the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust. Left, Globeflowers. Photo: Tanya St Pierre

enough to be planted out into suitable sites across Bowland.

Sarah Robinson, farming and wildlife officer from Forest of Bowland AONB, said: "We've selected specific sites to receive the plug plants, as it is very important to have the correct physical and biological attributes, as well as the right management, in order for the plug plants to thrive. Volunteers will help plant out the young plants and will revisit the sites to monitor progress."

In addition to this specific species work, the projects will

facilitate ongoing field scale restoration of hay meadows.

Andy Rowett, fund manager at Lancashire Environmental Fund, commented: "This is fourth time the fund has supported hay meadow restoration work in the AONB with YDMT and we look forward to seeing the return of some of the rarer wildflowers to the Forest of Bowland hay meadows."

YDMT and the Forest of Bowland AONB have reintroduced wildflowers to more than 700 hectares of degraded meadows across the region since 2006.

Westmorland Gazette, 18th October 2018

2018-19 Courses and Open Meetings

Gardening for Bees by Dr Julia Piggot

Wednesday, 13th February 2019, Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm

In addition to being our Seasonal Bee Inspector, Julia 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.

Alternative Beekeeping for Beginners

If you have ever thought of owning a colony of honey bees, then this two-part course is for you!

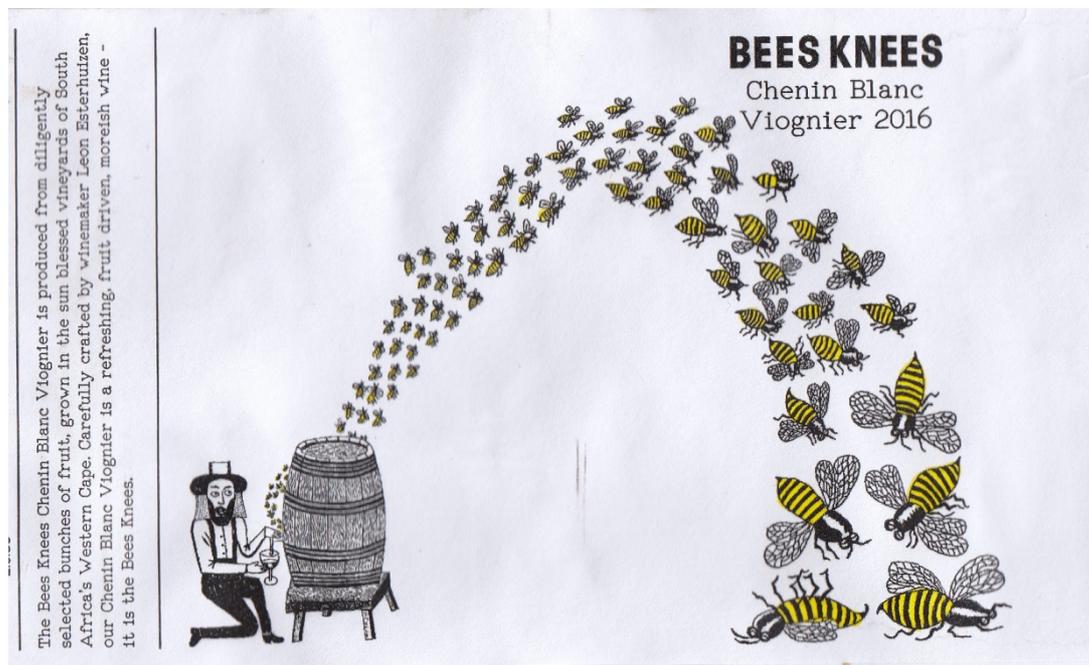
Part 1: Sunday, March 10th 2019, Scarthwaite Hotel, 9-30am to 4-00pm

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.

Part 2: Sunday, 5th May 2019, Club Apiary, Ashton Road, Lancaster, 10-00am to 3-00pm

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.

The Bees Knees



Beekeeping leads you to explore some strange places. I rather enjoyed this one!

Beekeeper keeping?



This was made by the pupils of a Steiner School in Holland. Their intention for their teacher is not recorded!

Apitherapy

Apitherapy is a term that refers to the use of bee products such as honey, pollen, and venom, for medicinal use. Since mediaeval times and earlier, the products of bees have long been considered fountains of health, and indeed, some are. Honey has shown to be effective in successfully fighting off a number of infections, including *E. coli*, as well as healing stubborn wounds. Bee pollen has proved to be a powerful anti-inflammatory agent. However, it is one thing to mix extra raw honey in yogurt or try out a topical cream containing bee pollen. It is an entirely different thing to submit to an intentional bee sting.

Although research has shown that bee venom can, in some cases but not all, help build immunity for future stings, there have been no studies showing any additional therapeutic effects of bee stings. Despite the absence of evidence to show whether or not it works, many groups on the internet not only endorse but promote the practice.

In America apitherapy, or Bee Venom Therapy (BVT) as it is called there, is the rapidly growing practice of injecting honey bee venom through live bee stings. It is claimed to bring relief, though

not necessarily cure, an incredible list of ailments including cancerous tumours, arthritis, musculo-skeletal conditions and psychological disorders.

BVT practitioners claim that the healing potency of bee venom is initiated after a sting, when it stimulates the adrenal glands to produce cortisol, a natural human hormone that has anti-inflammatory properties. In addition, BVT jump starts the immune system to produce a healing response through the hypothalamus, pituitary, and adrenal glands, and spurs the production of endorphins, the body's natural pain killer. It is also claimed that the known antibacterial and antiviral properties of bee venom make it a unique weapon in fighting bacterial and viral ailments of the central nervous system and elsewhere.

BVT has also been the cause of several deaths where those being treated have gone into anaphylactic shock.

Until such time as research establishes whether or not BVT is, or can be, beneficial, you are recommended to treat this approach with caution.

Anaphylaxis (anaphylactic shock)

As every beekeeper should know, anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially life-threatening reaction to a trigger. Common anaphylaxis triggers include:

- **foods** – including nuts, milk, fish, shellfish, eggs and some fruits
- **medicines** – including some antibiotics and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin
- **insect stings** – particularly wasp and bee stings
- **general anaesthetic**
- **contrast agents** – special dyes used in some medical tests to help certain areas of your body show up better on scans
- **latex** – a type of rubber found in some rubber gloves.

In some cases, there is no obvious trigger. This is known as idiopathic anaphylaxis.

People known to be at risk of anaphylaxis are advised to carry two epinephrine autoinjectors with them at all times. An epinephrine autoinjector is a medical device for injecting a measured dose of epinephrine (adrenaline). There are a number of different available brands of epinephrine autoinjectors, of which Epipen is the most well-known. Other brands include Altellus, Anapen, Emerade, Fastjekt, FastPen and Jext.

However, the Coroner, Dr Sean Cummings, who presided over the inquest of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse who died of an allergic reaction after eating a Pret a Manger sandwich, has criticised the pens as 'inherently unsafe' because they are too short to reach muscle and don't contain enough adrenaline.

The UK Resuscitation Council, a professional body established in 1983, states adrenaline injection needles should be at least 25mm, to ensure they reach muscle to allow it to work quicker. Patients often have to stab through thick clothing to administer the shot of adrenaline in an emergency, but for some adults, mainly those who are obese, the body recommends the needle of an auto-injector should be around 38mm. For toddlers, it should be at least 16mm.

Due to manufacturing problems, there is currently a world-wide shortage of most brands of epipen. Until recently, users were advised to change unused epipens every 12 months. **Now, users are being advised to retain their epipens for up to 16 months and not to discard their current epipens until they have actually received replacements.**

'High-yield' Farming Could Help Spare Habitats and Reduce Environmental Impacts, but Only if Intensive Use Curtails Farm Expansion



We often equate organic agriculture as being better for the planet. But what if we minimised the spread of agriculture, preserving more wild land and intensified our use of current farm land? Agriculture that appears to be more eco-friendly, but uses more land, may actually have greater environmental costs per unit of food than "high-yield" farming that uses less land, a new study has found.

There is mounting evidence that the best way to meet rising food demand while conserving biodiversity is to wring as much food as sustainably possible from the land we do farm, so that more natural habitats can be "spared the plough." However, this involves intensive farming techniques thought to create disproportionate levels of pollution, water scarcity and soil erosion. Now, a study published today in the journal *Nature Sustainability* shows this may not necessarily be the case.

Scientists have put together measures for some of the major "externalities" - such as greenhouse gas emission, fertiliser and water use, generated by high and low-yield farming systems, and compared the environmental costs of producing a given amount of food in different ways. Previous research compared these costs by land area. As high-yield farming needs less land to produce the same quantity of food, the study's authors say this approach overestimates its environmental impact. It would be better to calculate the cost per unit of food produced. Their results from four major agricultural sectors suggest that, contrary to many people's perceptions, more intensive agriculture that uses less land may also produce fewer pollutants, cause less soil loss and consume less water.

However, the team behind the study, led by scientists from the University of Cambridge, caution that if higher yields are simply used to increase profit or lower prices, they will only accelerate the extinction crisis we are already seeing. "Agriculture is the most significant cause of biodiversity loss on the planet," said study lead author Andrew Balmford, Professor of

Conservation Science from Cambridge's Department of Zoology. "Habitats are continuing to be cleared to make way for farmland, leaving ever less space for wildlife. Our results suggest that high-yield farming could be harnessed to meet the growing demand for food without destroying more of the natural world. However, if we are to avert mass extinction it is vital that land-efficient agriculture is linked to more wilderness being spared the plough."

The Cambridge scientists conducted the study with a research team from 17 organisations across the UK and around the globe, including colleagues from Poland, Brazil, Australia, Mexico and Colombia. The study analysed information from hundreds of investigations into four vast food sectors, accounting for large percentages of the global output for each product: Asian paddy rice (90%), European wheat (33%), Latin American beef (23%), and European dairy (53%). Examples of high-yield strategies include enhanced pasture systems and livestock breeds in beef production, use of chemical fertiliser on crops, and keeping dairy cows indoors for longer.

The scientists found data to be limited, and say more research is urgently needed on the environmental cost of different farming systems. Nevertheless, results suggest many high-yield systems are less ecologically damaging and, crucially, use much less land. For example, in field trials, inorganic nitrogen boosted yields with little to no greenhouse gas "penalty" and lower water use per ton of rice. Per ton of beef, the team found greenhouse gas emissions could be halved in some systems where yields are boosted by adding trees to provide shade and forage for cattle. The study only looked at organic farming in the European dairy sector, but found that, for the same amount of milk, organic systems caused at least one third more soil loss, and take up twice as much land, as conventional dairy farming.

Co-author, Professor Phil Garnsworthy, from the University of Nottingham, who led the dairy team, said: "Across all dairy systems we find that higher milk yield per unit of land generally leads to greater biological and economic efficiency of production. Dairy farmers should welcome the news that more efficient systems have lower environmental impact."

Conservation expert and co-author, Dr David Edwards, from the University of Sheffield, said: "Organic systems are often considered to be far more environmentally friendly than conventional farming, but our work suggested the opposite. By using more land to produce the same yield, organic may ultimately accrue larger environmental costs."

The study authors say that high-yield farming must be combined with mechanisms that limit agricultural expansion if they are to have any environmental benefit. These could include strict land-use zoning and restructured rural subsidies. "These results add to the evidence that sparing natural habitats by using high-yield farming to produce food is the least bad way forward," added Balmford. "Where agriculture is heavily subsidised, public payments could be contingent on higher food yields from land already being farmed, while other land is taken out of production and restored as natural habitat, for wildlife and carbon or floodwater storage."

The authors caution that high-yield will only benefit if habitat is simultaneously protected. And they urge caution in interpreting the results as "The useful data are worryingly limited. We considered only four relatively well-studied sectors and a narrow set of externalities - not including important impacts such as soil health or the effects of pesticide exposure on human health."

To learn more about the research: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/s41893-018-0138-5>

Fred Ayres, Editor & Chairman, November 2018



**Support our Club by
buying a
LVCB MUG
Only £6.50**

The Lune Valley Long Hive An innovative but simple long hive



Only £295

**Only obtainable from Lune
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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
- 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
- Despite its high specification, it is economically priced whilst offering exceptional value for money.

Open Meetings and Courses Programme 2019

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



Gardening for Bees

by Dr Julia Piggot

7-30 pm, Wednesday, 13th February
Scarthwaite Country House Hotel
Crook O'Lune, Lancaster LA2 9HR

Whether you have a small patio, or a large garden, growing flowering plants is an effective way to help Britain's bees and other pollinating insects, such as butterflies, hoverflies etc. Pollinating insects need food, water and shelter. They love plants which are rich in nectar and pollen. Nectar contains sugar for energy, whilst pollen contains protein and oils – forming a balanced diet.

Cost £7 including refreshments.



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

Charity No: 1167725

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**

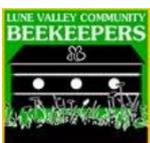
If you have ever thought of owning a colony of honey bees but have been deterred by not knowing exactly what is involved, or how much time it might take, then this course is for you! This inter-active workshop focuses on responsible, low intervention, bee-centric approaches to beekeeping and will cover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

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