



LUNE VALLEY COMMUNITY BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER MAY 2019

New members

We are delighted to welcome new members Rob MacLellan and Cath Fatkin.

Spring apiary inspection

Despite the bright sunshine, as the air temperature remained around 6C and there was a brisk breeze, the inspection was postponed.

Visitors to the apiary

On 27th March I spoke to a meeting of some 50-60 members of Durham BKA on "Alternative Approaches to Beekeeping."

On Saturday, 20th April, a party from Durham BKA visited the Club apiary to look at our long hives, the bees in them and to see our alternative approaches in action.

In complete contrast to the previous weekend, the weather was warm and sunny with an air temperature of 24C.



Alternative Beekeeping for Beginners – Day 2

Due to the numbers of people on this course, the group was split into two for the practical day. The first group, led by Fred Ayres and John Vendy met on Sunday, 28th April, and were very fortunate with the weather, the day before being fairly cold and wet. The day was spent practicing a range of practical skills before carrying out inspections of both the Zest hive and a long hive. Everyone enjoyed the day and gave us a lot of positive feedback.



Trustee news

Huston Clements, one of our founder trustees and current Training Officer, has resigned both positions due to health issues and growing other commitments. Huston, together with his wife Janet, have made a significant contribution to the Club and the apiary. We greatly appreciate their contributions.

Lune Valley Long Hives in Ullapool



Three Lune Valley Long Hives were recently purchased by Christine Rogers, a beekeeper in Ullapool on the West Coast of Scotland. Christine kindly sent these pictures of one of her hives, duly painted and decorated. The next one is painted purple and the third cornflower blue. The hives were painted with three coats of Danish Oil followed by three coats of water-based Ronseal garden paint. A 750ml tin easily does two hives.

Bees and scarecrows

We have been invited to have a stand at this year's famous Wray Scarecrow Festival. Whilst the scarecrows will be on display from 27th April until 6th May, the festival itself takes place on Monday, 6th May (Bank Holiday Monday). This year's theme is "Creatures extinct, existing or endangered". **We are still seeking volunteers to help erect and dismantle the stand on 6th May, or help man it during the day.** Please, if anyone is able to help, it would be much appreciated!



Spare the weeds!

Many gardeners regard dandelions as one of the worst lawn and garden pests, but to honey bees they provide a valuable source of pollen and nectar. Save them where possible. Your bees will benefit!



Club activities programme 2019

23rd June	Summer Apiary Inspection	Club Apiary	10-00am to 2-00pm
	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.		
12th July	Working party	Club Apiary	10-00am to 3-00pm
	Working party to set up for Open Day. Details to follow.		
13th July	2019 OPEN DAY	Club Apiary	Details to follow
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.		
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.		
16th Oct	Speaker Meeting		Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm
	Topic: Bee Together Project		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	Speaker Meeting		Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm
13th Nov	Topic: Bees for Development		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.		
Sun	Managing woodland for pollinators	Club Apiary	10-00am to 4-00pm
17th Nov	A one day practical course, run by Catherine Mercer of Bee Together, which will include coppicing and other practical skills.		
Wed	Speaker Meeting		Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm
11th Dec	Topic:		Speaker: TBC
2020			
Wed	Social Event – Wine and Cheese Evening		Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm
15th Jan	Details to follow		
Wed	Speaker Meeting		Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm
12th Feb	Topic: The Woodland Trust		Speaker: Paul Littlewood
	Paul will explain the work of the Woodland Trust and provide advice on how we should manage the woodland at our Club apiary.		
Wed	Speaker Meeting		Scarthwaite Hotel, 7-30pm
11th Mar	Topic:		Speaker: TBC

Other events of interest

Northern Bee Auction

This year's event will be held at Houghton Village Hall, Cumbria, CA3 0NW, on Sunday, 19th May and offers a range of both bees and second-hand equipment. Further information can be obtained from: enquiries@beeauctions.co.uk



World Bee Day. 20th May 2019

The purpose of this international day is to acknowledge the role of bees and other pollinators for the ecosystem. World Bee Day is celebrated on the baptism day of Anton Janša, who was born in 1734 in what is now Slovenia.

In beekeeping he is noted for not only writing a number of impressive books on beekeeping but for advocating changing the size and shape of hives to a form where they can be stacked together like blocks. As a painter he also decorated the fronts of hives with paintings. Janša rejected the belief that the male bees are water carriers and assumed that the queen is fertilised mid-air. He advocated moving hives to pastures.

Bee Together Project

The Bee Together Project is encouraging people to take on a BeeWalk; a Bumble bee Conservation Trust survey that runs throughout the summer. <http://www.beewalk.org.uk/>

To help participants feel confident and enjoy their survey, the Project is running training days to teach bumble bee ID and how to carry out the survey. If you are interested in joining in with a BeeWalk, or just want to learn more about identifying bumble bees, please come along to one of the courses.

- 23/05/19 – Devonshire Institute, Grassington
- 29/06/19 – Colt Park, Ingleborough NNR

Both training days are free to attend. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

For further information and a booking form, please contact catherine.mercer@ydmtd.org



The second Learning from the Bees workshop and conference will take place in Berlin from 29th August to 1st September 2019. For details visit www.learningfromthebeesberlin.com

Swarms

The swarming season is now with us and swarms can be a useful and cheap way to increase your bee stocks. Whilst swarms from an unknown source will be of an unknown temperament, this should not deter you.

Swarming is the natural process by which a honey bee colony reproduces itself. The process begins when the colony starts to produce drones. Some time later it may produce up to 20 queen cells. Once most of these are sealed, the queen and around half the bees in the colony swarm (leave the hive).



The swarm will settle in a temporary, and often exposed, location. Only then will the scout bees stop searching for food and start to look for a new home, a process that can take from several hours to several days.



Collecting a settled swarm can sometimes be as easy as simply brushing them into a box and then emptying them into a hive. On other occasions it is a little more challenging!

An alternative approach is to site swarm boxes, sometimes called bait hives, around your apiary to provide tempting new homes for swarms. Ideally a swarm box should take 6 frames of whatever size you are using in your regular hives, smell right, and be at least two metres off the ground. To make them smell right, add a frame of old drawn comb and rub the inside with propolis and herbs such as lemon grass. Ideally, swarm boxes should be erected in the autumn so that they weather before the swarming season starts.



Once the swarming season starts, simply walk by your swarm boxes every 1-2 weeks to check and remove any swarms to appropriate hives. Once in their new home, it is advisable to shut the queen inside for a few days to avoid the possibility of the swarm absconding.

Honey fraud statement

Published in January 2019, the APIMONDIA Statement on Honey Fraud is the official position of APIMONDIA (the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations) regarding honey purity, authenticity and the best available recommended methods to detect fraud. The Statement aims to be a trusted source for authorities, consumers, manufacturers, retailers, supermarkets, traders and other stakeholders of the honey trade chain, to ensure they stay updated with the developments of testing methodologies regarding honey purity and authenticity.

The APIMONDIA Working Group on Adulteration of Bee Products will be the responsible body for the preparation and reviewing of this Statement at yearly intervals or whenever significant new information becomes available that the group becomes aware of. The Working Group will ensure through consultation with the leading honey scientists, technical experts, specialist honey laboratories or others with sufficient market knowledge, that the Statement is reflective of the most up-to-date information and collective thinking on the topic. Due to the dynamic nature of honey fraud, this Statement is intended to be reviewed and updated periodically, and every time significant scientific advances occur in any of the fields covered by the document. Updates will be published on the APIMONDIA website and other appropriate publications. To see the full statement, go to www.apimondia.com/en

Propolis



Propolis is a resinous mixture that honey bees produce by mixing saliva and beeswax with exudate gathered from tree buds, sap flows, or other botanical sources. It is used as a sealant for unwanted open spaces in the hive.

Honey bees collect resins on their hind legs from a variety of plants and deposit them in the nest cavity where the resins, often mixed with wax, are called propolis. Two graduate students, Mike Simone-Finstrom (PhD 2010) and Renata Borba (PhD 2015) demonstrated that the presence of a propolis envelope on the inner walls of the nest cavity acts as an antimicrobial layer that enshrouds the colony, providing a quantifiable constitutive benefit to bee immune defences (Simone et al., 2009; 2017; Borba et al. 2015; 2016). The propolis envelope also directly reduces two diseases of honey bees, chalkbrood and American foulbrood (Simone-Finstrom and Spivak, 2012; Borba and Spivak, 2017). Propolis use by honey bees is an example of social immunity, and is a unique example of social-medication, since bees increase resin collection after challenge with a fungal parasite (Simone-Finstrom and Spivak, 2012).

Propolis has been used for years in folk medicine because of its proposed effect on various body systems, dating back to the time of the ancient Greeks, Romans and Egyptians. In fact, Hippocrates notes that propolis is beneficial for promoting wound healing, both internal and external, while Pliny the Elder, documents that propolis may be used to treat tumours, muscle pain and ulcers.

This bee product was also documented in the Persian manuscripts as a remedy for various conditions, including eczema and rheumatism. Today, propolis is used in a wide variety of skin care products, including creams and extracts. It is also available as a supplement, with people taking it on a regular basis to boost their immune system function.

EU bans UK's most-used pesticide over health and environment fears

The Guardian, 29.03.19

Chlorothalonil is the most used pesticide in the UK.

Photograph: Peter Barritt/Alamy

One of the world's most common pesticides will soon be banned by the European Union after safety officials reported human health and environmental concerns.



Chlorothalonil, a fungicide that prevents mildew and mould on crops, is the most used pesticide in the UK, applied to millions of hectares of fields, and is the most popular fungicide in the US. Farmers called the ban "overly precautionary".

But EU states voted for a ban after a review by the European Food Safety Authority (Efsa) was unable to exclude the possibility that breakdown products of the chemical cause damage to DNA. Efsa also said "a high risk to amphibians and fish was identified for all representative uses". Recent research further identified chlorothalonil and other fungicides as the strongest factor linked to steep declines in bumble bees.

Regulators around the world have falsely assumed it is safe to use pesticides at industrial scales across landscapes, according to a chief scientific adviser to the UK government. Other research in 2017 showed farmers could slash their pesticide use without losses, while a UN report denounced the "myth" that pesticides are necessary to feed the world.

A European commission spokeswoman said: "The [chlorothalonil ban] is based on Efsa's scientific assessment which concluded that the approval criteria do not seem to be satisfied for a wide range of reasons. Great concerns are raised in relation to contamination of groundwater by metabolites of the substance."

Chlorothalonil has been used across the world since 1964 on barley and wheat, as well as potatoes, peas and beans. The ban will be passed formally in late April or early May and then enter into force three weeks later, the commission spokeswoman said.

The link between chlorothalonil and bumble bee losses was revealed in December 2017 in research that surprised scientists. How fungicides harm bees is still being studied, but chlorothalonil in particular is likely to make them more susceptible to the deadly Nosema parasite by killing beneficial gut microbes.

Bee myths and customs



Bees don't sting in the dark!

I would recommend that you don't put this to the test – especially if you are holding a torch at the time!

Not in our name

PAN UK (Pesticide Action Network UK) and other environmental groups have resigned from government and industry pesticide bodies. "We are announcing our formal resignation from the Pesticides Forum and Voluntary Initiative. These bodies were formed by government and industry to reduce environmental harms from pesticides. However, in the two decades since they were created, the area of land in the UK treated with pesticides has risen by more than half and populations of wildlife (including birds, butterflies and bees) are suffering alarming declines. Meanwhile the Pesticides Forum and Voluntary Initiative continue to defend the status quo, and they're doing it in our name". Here is their resignation letter:



18 April 2019

Dear Secretary of State

We are writing to you today on behalf of the RSPB, Wildlife and Countryside Link and Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK) to express deep concern regarding the environmental impacts of pesticides, and to announce our formal resignation from the Pesticides Forum and Voluntary Initiative.

Our organisations have long participated in these voluntary groups in the hope that they would lead to better protection for the environment. We have contributed to the groups constructively for two decades. However, in that time they have failed to take meaningful or significant action to reduce pesticide-related harms, and have consistently advocated pro-pesticide positions despite our concerted efforts to the contrary. Meanwhile, the area of UK land being treated with pesticides has risen by more than half, and many of our crops are being treated more times with a wider variety of chemicals. As the last remaining members representing civil society, and in light of recent evidence as to the impacts of pesticides on the natural environment, we can no longer stand by while these initiatives bolster the positions of vested interests, in association with our organisations.

Government has recently taken positive steps by banning metaldehyde and supporting restrictions on neonicotinoids, and more than two-thirds of the UK public want pesticide use to be reduced. The Pesticides Forum and the Voluntary Initiative are clearly outdated and out of step with scientific evidence, public opinion and recent precedents that you have set.

The evidence of the ongoing deterioration of our environment clearly shows that voluntary measures have failed. As the UK exits the EU and its extensive framework of environmental regulations, it is more important than ever that we introduce mandatory measures which both reward those farmers working hard to use minimal or no pesticides, and discourage the overuse of pesticides that we know causes such harm to our environment.

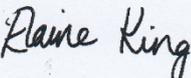
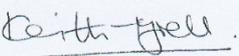
So today, we are officially resigning from these voluntary bodies and calling for them to be replaced with the mandatory measures required to discourage pesticide use and support farmers to adopt non-chemical alternatives. Amongst other steps, these should include:

- Increased support for research into Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and better support to farmers to adopt IPM and organic techniques, for example through the Environmental Land Management Scheme.
- Introduce a pesticide-use reduction target alongside an improved monitoring system which measures the impact of pesticide use on human health, the environment and wildlife.
- Consult on the introduction of a pesticide tax to drive more sustainable use of pesticides in the future, with revenue reinvested into supporting sustainable agriculture.

We agree with you that the UK's exit from the EU should not lead to any weakening of pesticide standards. It is imperative that we use this unique opportunity to embed a more sustainable form of farming which is less reliant on pesticides.

We are keen to discuss the issues outlined in this letter at your convenience and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Mike Clarke, Chief Executive,

Dr Elaine King, Director, Wildlife and Countryside Link

Dr Keith Tyrell, Director of PAN UK

Weak honey bee colonies may fail from cold exposure during shipping



The stress of cold temperature may play a role in colony losses during shipping.

Cold temperatures inside honey bee colonies may cause colony losses during and after long-distance hauling, according to a preliminary study by Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists.

Every year almost 2 million honey bee colonies—nearly two-thirds of the managed colonies in the United States—are loaded aboard semi-trailers and shipped across the country multiple times to pollinate crops like California almonds. But within days of arrival, some of these colonies will have few if any honey bees left to visit almond flowers, to provide essential pollination services to California's 1.3 million acres of almond orchards.

"We found that less robust colonies—those that have fewer than 10 frames of honey bees and larvae when loaded onto trucks—cannot maintain the temperature inside the hive and are subjected to cold stress," said Dacotah Melicher, a post-doctoral researcher with the ARS Bioscience Research Laboratory in Fargo, North Dakota. Smaller colonies are more likely to fail and fail faster, and many lose almost all of their bees within days of arrival. Robust colonies with 10 or more frames were able to maintain stable temperatures and populations.

Honey bee transporters often worry about colonies overheating during shipping, which can cause a colony to die very quickly. However, chilling can be as damaging but is less obvious. If brood—bee larvae—are chilled, it can result in developmental abnormalities when they emerge as adult bees. This could be the cause of smaller colonies failing within a few weeks of being shipped. Colonies with fewer than 10 frames just may not have the numbers to allow the colony to thermo-regulate well enough to prevent chilling.

When honey bee boxes are loaded onto semi-trailers, they are oriented with the hive box openings inward toward a central aisle or outward toward the highway. The aisle helps prevent overheating, but may cause air turbulence that can affect hive temperature if the outside air temperature is low. Internal colony temperatures also varied significantly depending on where they were located on the trailer. Colonies near the front and the back of the trailer and the colonies facing the central aisle showed the greatest loss of temperature, but more hives need to be monitored to see if location matters. In addition to measuring colony temperatures, the scientists also profiled genetically mediated responses—known as gene expression—at departure, on arrival and after a recovery period of three weeks to identify honey bees' internal reactions to the stress of being trucked.

What the researchers found was that, after the recovery period, the activity of genes that support more disease resistance and those that respond to cold stress as well as genes that guide aggressiveness all had decreased significantly as the hive rebounded from being transported. At the same time though, the bees' genes involved in producing antibiotic peptides had increased activity, possibly as a way for the bees to prepare to fight off new potential bacterial infections to which the stressed hive may be more vulnerable.

"Before we can really pinpoint the greatest stresses, we need to measure honey bee responses to other factors that occur during long-distance trucking such as vibration, air pressure, diesel exhaust, and the stress of confining the honey bees within the boxes during transport. It's likely that some factors are causing more stress than we expect, but there might be inexpensive solutions that could help beekeepers save hives" explained Melicher.

The Agricultural Research Service is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency. Daily, ARS focuses on solutions to agricultural problems affecting America. Each dollar invested in agricultural research results in \$20 of economic impact.

Fred Ayres, Editor & Chairman

Tel: 01524 811978

Email: fred@lunevalleybeekeepers.co.uk

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 need 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.