



# CARLISLE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter March 2014



## Chairman's muses

Well, here we are again happy as can bee.

Another year: Are we brimming with optimism, preparing the frames, ordering more foundation, booking our turn for the extractor, ordering the honey jars? Or ..... are we anxiously walking round the hives checking there is the odd bee venturing out? Are we looking to see whether the bees are just flying off to do what bees have to do or are we standing watching for hours, checking to see whether they just MIGHT be new brood acclimatising themselves to their hive's location and looking forward to their six weeks or so of life? Such are the emotions of spring when you are a relative novice to the beekeeping lark. Guess which camp I fall into.

At the time of writing however, winter has been kind and the bees do seem to be out there and, wait .... what's that I see? .... Yup, they're bringing in the pollen!!! Yippee! Looks as if all is well. Oh, hang on though, does that mean they are busy using up their stores?? If I "heft" the hive, just how heavy is it meant to be?? How can I be sure they have enough? Will I risk a peep..... the sun is shining after all and I only have to wear a reasonably thick jersey so it's not too cold. Oh, but hang on, what is it that we learnt on our course about when to give fondant and when to give syrup?? Better read that section again. Maybe

I'll phone Nick ... or Walter? No, I plagued them with questions last year; can't keep doing that. Don't want to phone my guru brother-in-law, David, in Inverness or I'll be on the phone for hours and can't cope with listening to the life cycle of the honey bee yet again. Oh, cripes, what will I do?

Hang on, it's starting to rain. Think I'll go inside and have a cup of tea! Might phone Charlie ... or Syd? Not David.

Robin MacLeod

**PS. Great start to our Association's year, with a very impressive and stimulating talk from Furness's own David Walmsley on which bees do what, when and how. Our next meeting on the 31<sup>st</sup> March is by our own home grown experts, lending their expertise and insight in to keeping bees healthy – something that affects us all, whether new or experienced – and is a must for attending.**

**Oh, and don't forget our 1<sup>st</sup> Apiary day on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April which will not just be "clean up day" but an opportunity to find out just what is happening locally around our hives at the moment and give some pointers to ensuring that our girls get the best possible start to the season. See you there.**

## 2014 Programme

### Winter meetings

Houghton Village Hall starting at 7.30 p.m

**January 17th** Annual Dinner  
Eden Golf Club

**February 24th** David Walmsley Which bees do what, when and how

**March 31st** Keeping Bees Healthy

**April 29th.** Janet Queen, Rose Castle gardens\*

**September 29th** Peter Matthews 'Preparing Honey for a Show'

**October 27th** Honey Show

**November 24th** AGM

\* Janet Queen has gained permission to show us Rose Castle Gardens in May. date tbc

### Apiary Meetings

at the Association's Walby Apiary at 2.p.m.

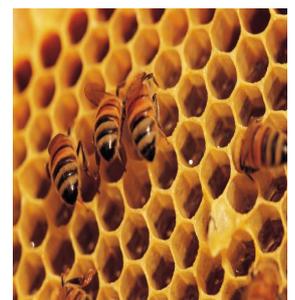
Saturdays	Sundays
12th April	27th April
Clean up	
10th May	25th May
7th June	22nd June
5th July	20th July
2nd August	17th August
30th August	14th Sept.
27th September	Clean up day.

On the first apiary meeting of the month there will be short talks on apiary management by a branch member. The topics suggested, although these are not set in stone, are, beginning in May, queen rearing, swarm control, increasing colonies and wax collecting.



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## STARVATION WARNING

With the continued mild weather persisting past winter, it is possible that some colonies may be getting low on food reserves. This will be particularly true in warmer areas of the UK where brood may have been reared throughout the winter. If you have not already done so, now is the time to go out and inspect your colonies. Below are a couple of pointers to consider.

- Information received from Regional Bee Inspectors suggests that in some areas, especially in the East of England; colonies in many apiaries are starting to become light.
  - Stronger colonies have been rearing small amounts of brood throughout the mild winter, and currently many have at least 2-3 combs of sealed brood and one comb of open brood. With the current forecast suggesting a fairly settled period throughout the rest of the week, now would be a good time to get out to the apiary and see what levels of food your colonies have. Should the weather continue to stay mild and warm, a liquid sugar feed can be used in small quantities, not to overload them; a spring sugar solution of 1kg of sugar to 1300ml of warm water. However should the weather turn cold again, fondant should be switched when the bees stop taking the syrup down.
  - Some colonies have had the opportunity to forage on ivy last autumn and so may be heavy, and the bees may be sitting on a lot of hard ivy honey. It is possible that with the milder weather they have been able to get out and gather water – but worth considering when thinking about how much food colonies have and whether they can access it.
  - It is possible that over the winter, *Varroa* may have continued to breed, it is therefore important to monitor the natural drop of the mite. In extreme cases it may be necessary to think about a spring treatment to bring numbers down, particularly where no treatments have been used since late last summer.
- We would also like to inform you that this year's Seasonal Bee Inspector Posts for recruitment in England and Wales have been advertised and are now on the FERA Website. Externally they are being advertised electronically via Beecraft and also the Bee Farmer's Association Bulletin. Please note that the closing date for applications is 24th March.

The link to the vacancies on the website is here:

<http://fera.co.uk/careers/jobVacancies/index.cfm>

## ANNUAL DINNER



The annual dinner on 17th January, was held for the first time at The Eden Golf Club.

This is a lovely venue, set in fantastic surroundings on the golf course. The food was excellent, and was served to us by very attentive staff.

As well as being delicious, there was ample for everyone, and as soon as any of the dishes of accompanying vegetables etc. were empty, they were immediately replaced by new full fresh ones !

After the dinner Mr. Harry King kept us very entertained with his stories of the Television Industry.

All in all a great night was had by all who attended.

Many thanks to Peter Nanson for organising the dinner.

### Letter of appreciation:

*I am writing to say a big thank you for a great night out at the Annual Xmas Dinner at the Eden Golf Club. As a non bee keeper I was warmly welcomed by everyone who was there. The meal was excellent.*

*The after dinner speaker, Mr Harry King was an absolute delight with his funny anecdotes and celebrity stories.*

*Well done to Peter for organising the dinner and we will certainly be booking places for next time.*

*Carole Cotter*

## NEW BEGINNERS COURSE

The Beginners' course of 6 sessions will be held at Houghton (details of venue and how to get there will be forwarded when they register interest)

**Dates:** Saturdays April 5th, April 12th, May 3rd, May 10th, May 17th + date to be arranged

**Time:** 10am -12 noon

**Content:**

Natural History, - Life cycle, castes, age related duties,  
Hives and equipment  
Bee health  
Apiary hygiene  
Setting up an apiary  
Swarming  
Seasonal management  
Practical bee handling session(s). Weather permitting

**Cost:** £40 per person per course payable at first session

**Contact** Christine Matthews, [silverhive@hotmail.com](mailto:silverhive@hotmail.com) or tel 01461 205525 to register interest or if you have any questions.  
Christine.



## 4th NORTHERN BEE AUCTION

This years Bee Auction will be held on Saturday 26th April 2014 at  
HOUGHTON VILLAGE HALL



Indications at this time are that there will be Bees for sale  
(obviously weather dependent.)

Items for sale need to be registered before the day.

Peter is also taking pre-orders for Hive parts, frames, foundation, syrup and hive clean etc.  
which will be available for collection on the day at the auction.

To submit items for sale, or for any further information please visit the website or contact  
Peter Harris.

### BEEHIVEMAKER

Beehives made to order at our joinery workshop

- [www.beehivemaker.co.uk](http://www.beehivemaker.co.uk)
- [sell@northernbeeauctions.co.uk](mailto:sell@northernbeeauctions.co.uk)  
Enquiries: [peter@northernbeeauctions.co.uk](mailto:peter@northernbeeauctions.co.uk)

**Peter Harris**  
**Tel 078304 32014**

### REQUEST FOR RESEARCH—CLIMATE CHANGE AND BEE DIVERSITY

I am doing a project on the effects of climate change on phenology and consequently bee diversity, for my university degree.

I was wondering if anyone at the Bee Association would have a beehive close to an orchard who would be interested in monitoring closely the visitation rates of honeybees and other wild species compared to daily measurements of temperature (min and max). Or any other numerical investigation they think may be relevant to crop yield. The research is a study of how climate change is affecting numbers of bee species and how bee diversity can increase pollination service in rural England (April - May 2014).

#### # Research Questions

- 1) Is bee visitation rate increasing with mean surface temperature?
- 2) Is bee diversity increasing with mean surface temperature?

#### # Methodology

30 samples from April to May 2014, as follows:

Monitoring with a choice of a transect walk or a 4 m x 4 m quadrant (observation plot). Observation of bees to last 15 min each day and to be conducted at any time between 09:00 and 18:00h. Temperature measurements to be done at the same time each day.

**Thank you for your attention.**

**Best Regards,**  
**Bruna lotti 07462 184 929**