

The Auricle

Moray Beekeepers Association Newsletter

August 2015

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Scottish Charity Number SCO42185

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Contents:

[Chairman's Message](#) 1

[Beehive protection](#) 2

[Wasp Traps](#) 3

[Exam Success](#) 3

[Notice Board](#) 4



MBA Chairman, Andy Watson

Dear Members,

My first year as Chairman – and so far, what a year!

From the expectations of another good year and a reasonable spring – to the low Autumnal temperatures and heavy cold rain of the Summer. From fast filling supers to empty supers and having to feed our Bees. What next? We live in hope for an 'Indian Summer'.

Those of us who still have the 'Luxury' of full supers will be looking to take them off shortly – others will be looking to the Heather for a last gasp Harvest (although that looks to be a week or two away). So our minds now turn to Autumn and preparation for the Winter making sure our Colonies go in strong and healthy.

To that end, please note there is a Honeybee Health Day for those of you still looking to gain experience, this is worth doing.

Please support the teaching days and courses as best you can. The Committee Members put a lot of their own time into these courses and good turnouts make it feel worth the effort.

We are always looking for helpers and Committee Members for those who feel they can donate some time for the good of the Bees and the Association. It's a good way of picking up experience and learning the finer points of Beekeeping.

With that, I shall wish you 'Full supers and healthy Bees'!

Andy Watson

This wooden beehive by Italian designer Francesco Faccin has a 4.5-metre chimney to keep its inhabitants away from children and vandals.



Currently installed in the garden of the Triennale design museum in Milan, the Honey Factory houses a traditional beehive and all the equipment needed to process the sweet liquid the bees produce from nectar.



Faccin designed the structure to protect the hive from bad weather, and to keep it at a constant temperature with optimal ventilation.



"It can be considered as a real micro architecture that leaves a mark in the urban landscape where it's placed," he said.

Built around a steel frame, the four-sided hut has a parallelogram plan that tapers inwards slightly towards the side where the mono-pitch roof is highest.



Its tall shape allows the "flight step" – the point from which the bees take off – to be raised high above the ground, out of the way of anyone who might harm the insects.

"The big 'chimney', which is a clear sign of the project, helps to keep the entrance of bees far possible from children and possible vandalism," said the designer, who has previously created a manual fire-lighting kit and the interior for a Milanese restaurant.



The project also aims to promote the idea of urban beekeeping and provide information about its environmental benefits.

A door in the back features metal-mesh panels and the front has a thin window, so passersby can watch the bees and the beekeeper at work inside.



"Honey Factory will play a role of educating and allowing citizens to approach a complex and fascinating world of insects, observing them, listening to the bee buzz," said Faccin.

"Through a processing of materials, bees create a rich, comprehensive and sustainable food without reworking, comes directly from the producer to the consumer."



There has been a recent push from the design community to increase efforts to protect the welfare of bees and encourage them to live in cities. Snøhetta installed a series of wooden hives in Oslo, while Bettina Madita Böhm designed a cylindrical concrete beehive for urban beekeepers to use on rooftops.

Building the prototype Honey Factory



For his project, Faccin worked with beekeeper Mauro Veca to design an optimal habitat for the bees.

"I was able to work starting from accurate and reliable information, which is a key condition for an experimental project but scientifically correct," the designer said. Italian furniture company Riva1920 produced the prototype Honey Factory for its preview at the Satellite exhibition for emerging designers, which took place as part of this year's Salone del Mobile furniture fair in Milan.



Building the prototype Honey Factory
It was then moved to the Triennale for a six-month residency to coincide with the city's Expo 2015, which is themed around ideas for sustainable food production and farming. The museum is hosting an exhibition about the relationship between art and food to coincide with the event.

At the main Milan Expo site, the British pavilion is shaped to reference the honeycomb structures found in beehives, and presents visitors with information about the lifecycle of bees and their role in pollinating food crops. Photography is by Delfino Sisto Legnani.

Prestigious Examination Success

Congratulations to our Apiary Manager Mr Tony Harris who has gained the NDB, he is 1 of only 86 people who have attained the diploma since 1954.

The final assessments took place in Norwich over the weekend of 11th March.

NDB General Secretary, Margaret Thomas, lives in Aberfeldy now but passed her NDB in the 1980's while living in England.

As far as I know there is only 1 other person in Scotland with the qualification and that was from many years ago.

In order to be awarded the National Diploma in Beekeeping Tony must have achieved a successful assessment in the following parts which comprise the NDB:

- A three hour written paper
- A written assignment on a topic provided
- The preparation of a portfolio of beekeeping experience
- The preparation of a portfolio of plants and insects of relevance to beekeepers
- A practical assessment involving bee handling, disease recognition and general biology
- A viva voce including a presentation on the written assignment and a short spontaneous presentation

It should be noted that the NDB is not a modular qualification and normally candidates are expected to be successful in all the constituent parts in the year of their assessment. The Board of the NDB reserves the right to use its discretion to vary this requirement.

Candidates are expected to have:

- A good working knowledge of honey bee biology
- Competent practical bee handling abilities in all situations
- Expert colony reading skills
- Ability to prepare and assess hive products
- Disease diagnosis and knowledge of the appropriate remedies
- An ability to communicate
- Demonstrable training ability

Ed

WASP TRAPS

Wasps start to be real nuisance at this time of year, robbing hives of valuable honey as well as chomping through bees as they return from foraging flights. They just love anything sweet, i.e. honey and sugar syrup, and if your hive is left unprotected, wasps can quickly outnumber and over-run your bees, destroying the colony. There are however, a few things you can do to help your bees.

1. Put a reduced entrance block in place so the hive entrance is easier for the bees to guard.
2. Placing a wasp trap next to your hives will catch hundreds of wasps and surprisingly few bees.
3. Take care not to spill any honey, wax comb or sugar syrup near your hives or in your apiary as this will attract every wasp in the neighbourhood. Once they have started visiting the apiary, they will stay around until the frosts kill them off but by this time your bees may have been killed off as well.

You can buy wasp traps from suppliers or you can save a few pounds and make one yourself from a clear 2 litre plastic bottle, as shown in the photographs below. – it will work just as well.



wasps will try and enter a hive



clear bottles worked best



commercial wasp trap



it definitely works!

Cut about 5 holes in the bottle, about 1/3 of the way up and above that, about 2/3 of the way up, wrap a couple of bands of duck tape. Pour in the magic mix, then screw the top back on and sit on the ground beside the hive or just park it on the roof. The small holes were originally supposed to be the diameter of a thick straw and round, but two quick cuts with a Stanley knife blade and folded back to expose a small triangular hole is equally effective. If it is windy you can secure the bottle by trapping between a couple of boulders or attaching it somehow to the side of the hive.

The idea is that the odour of the mix attracts the wasps in quickly, and when they wish to leave they fly up to the light above the dark bands of duck tape. They eventually fall down into the thick mix and drown.

The mix? Something fruity (fruit juice, jam, actual fruit) plus a small pile of sugar, plus more water and a good glug of vinegar. Then a couple of drops of washing-up liquid to hasten the drowning and make escape unlikely.

If you are new to beekeeping or haven't experienced wasps robbing a beehive you will be shocked at the numbers involved. Last summer I caught hundreds of wasps in the bottle over just a few days!

Tony Harris

NOTICE BOARD

THE SCOTTISH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

AUTUMN CONVENTION **Saturday 12th September 2015**

in SRUC Oatridge Campus,
BROXBURN EH52 6NH

Book early to avoid disappointment

Jamie Ellis - University of Florida - Addressing the sustainability of beekeeping in the 21st century - Honey bees as super organisms: the hive or the honey bee?

Rinke Vinkenoog - Northumbria University - Bees and Balsam - a perfect match or recipe for disaster?

(The effects of Himalayan Balsam on the plant-pollinator network)

Derek Mitchell – Physics & Microelectronics Lecturer - Heat Bees, Boxes, Trees & Honey (The thermal performance of nests)

Tickets £30 inc coffee, lunch and tea (students half price)

Bookings for the Convention to John Coyle, Rose Cottage, Burnton, By Kippen, FK8 3JL. Tel No 07774266 540
info@beekeepinginscotland.co.uk

Please make cheques (£30) payable to SBA and enclose a Stamped Addressed Envelope for programme which acts as your ticket.

TRADE STANDS

Beeecraft, Bee Books New & Old, SBA, Brunel, Solway Bee Supplies, Scottish Government Bee Inspectorate, Abelo. British Bee Feeds (Lyle Laird).

MORAY BEEKEEPERS HONEYBEE HEALTH & DISEASE DAY

MBA will be running the above course

on Saturday 15th August 2015 from 10am to 4.30pm at Birnie Training Apiary near Elgin

This is a fun day but very important as we will cover the practicalities of keeping your bees healthy with an emphasis on varroa and brood diseases.

Useful information for all beekeepers but particularly for new beekeepers who want to give their bees the best chance of getting through winter.

Cost for the course is £20 for members, £30 non members (includes lunch and course hand outs)

To book your place or for more information
Contact: Tony Harris on 07884 496246
Email: tony@moraybeekeepers.co.uk

Please note that numbers are limited so book early to avoid disappointment

ASSOCIATION HONEY EXTRACTORS



If you don't have your own honey extractor you can borrow one of the Associations. The one on the left is a heather honey press and the one on the right is a manual radial extractor for liquid honey and we have both for you to use.



You can borrow them for free by contacting

Anne Black, Tel. 01343 543940, or
Andy Watson, 07786247347

SCOTTISH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION (SBA)

Moray Beekeepers Association is affiliated to the SBA and you are encouraged to join. Membership of £30 a year will give you a monthly magazine, £2 million Public and Product liability insurance, a compensation scheme if you lose your bees and access to beekeepers throughout Scotland,

Contact membership convener: Mr. Phil McAnespie, 12 Monument Road, Ayr, KA7 2RL

SBA web site: www.scottishbeekeepers.org.uk

Space available for your notice - contact the Editors

FOR SALE
LOCALLY BRED 2015 QUEENS £20
5 FRAME NUCS, HEADED BY LOCALLY BRED
2015 QUEENS £170
CONTACT TONY HARRIS Tel. 07884 496246
(last few remaining)

The Association website is packed with lots of useful information on beekeeping and bees and has an interesting blog that you are encouraged to contribute to. It is well worth a visit – the address is

www.moraybeekeepers.co.uk

Items for inclusion in the Newsletter to be sent to the Editors: Pete & Bridget Deeming at 59 Beils Brae, Urquhart, Elgin, Moray, IV30 8XQ or you can email: petedeeming@hotmail.com or phone 07791049004