

Buzzword



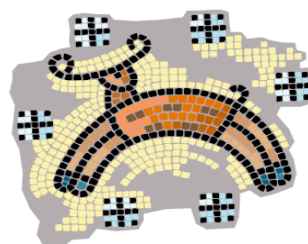
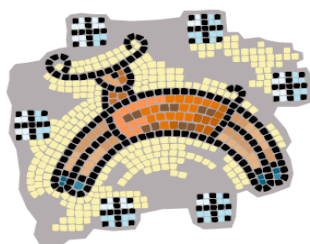
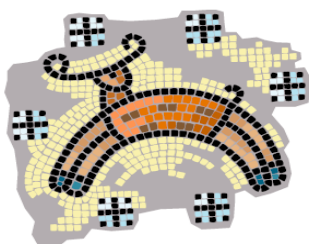
December 2013

Inside: AGM., , Monitoring Hives in Winter, Cuckoo Bees, Poem and more.

Almost Christmas, and no sign of snow yet. The weather this year has been kinder to bees and beekeepers than in recent years, but beekeepers know from bitter experience that beekeeping in the West of Scotland is challenging; and yet we keep going. It is to be hoped that next year's crop of beginners stay the course, and that we have bees to give them to encourage their adherence to, and enjoyment of, a hobby which some old hands have been practicing for over thirty years. Congratulations to them, all beginners, and a crop of beekeepers who have obtained their Certificates. Thanks to **Chris Urie** for the photograph.



Having successfully obtained their Basic Certificate are Allan, Margaret and Julyan. Jane, who completed Modules two and six and the Intermediate Certificate, and Joyce who completed Module one and the Intermediate Certificate.



Ayr and District Beekeepers AGM was held on the 7th of December.

Main Points:

Changes to the Constitution:

Meetings: The quorum for an AGM will be one fifth of the total membership (previously one quarter)

Finance: The Treasurer will keep accurate records of monies received and spent and these records will be independently examined annually by a suitably qualified person nominated at the AGM.

Alteration of the Constitution: The Constitution will be altered only at an AGM or at an EGM, and then only by a two-third majority vote **of those present.**

The Ayr Agriculture Show will only run for one day this year due to financial constraints. So far as we know the Flower Show will remain in its current form.

The committee decided unanimously to confer Honorary Life Membership of the Association to, **Phil MacAnespie, Tony Riome and Ian Jamieson**, in appreciation of the hard work, dedication and commitment they have shown over the years to the Ayr and District Beekeepers Association. This decision was warmly welcomed by all members present.

The presentation of Certificates to the successful candidates, above.

Tea and Biscuits were served and the meeting concluded at approximately 9.30pm



Monitoring during the Winter Months.

Old hands will forgive me if I seem to be stating the obvious, but I think it is worth reminding beginners especially, that once their bees are bedded down after dealing with preparatory chores, the hives should be checked periodically to ensure the bees have enough stores.

A reminder of what should have been checked:

- Your hive is Queen Right, Pest and Disease free.
- Varroa numbers are below the treatment or damage threshold of one thousand mites.
- Each hive has sufficient stores, is sound and protected from vermin.

Once you have taken every precaution to ensure your colonies survival leading up to winter, it is important to remember to still monitor them during the cold months. ***This is particularly essential for those hives that were strong throughout the year and went into winter vigorously too.*** A standard British National colony will need between 20 -30 kilogrammes of food and larger hives will need more. Once they have stored all their food for winter, there are several methods that can be employed to monitor your hives:

Hefting the hive.

At the end of autumn, go around and heft your hives to gauge the weight of the brood boxes. This is the weight you want to try and maintain

throughout the winter and if it is getting particularly light, then chances are that you will need to feed them fondant. It is advisable to do this every other week. *Around December, giving your bees a block of candy for Christmas won't hurt either.*

Opening the hive

This should be done quickly as a quick assessment to the health of the colony. Even when a colony has plenty of food they may become isolated from it and end up starving. *Therefore every other week open the hive and have a look at the frames next to the cluster. If they are empty replace them with frames that have food from that hive and score the honey with your hive tool. Place the frame next to the cluster and repeat with subsequent frames.* If food is low give them fondant which should be placed on the top bars, directly above the cluster.

This item is published in BeeBase and the above article has been extracted from “Monitoring during the winter months” For further information go to www.nationalbeeunit.com .



Buzz of the Cuckoo Bee

With its huge doe-like eyes and cuddly exterior, this beast sure looks cute. But we all know looks can be deceptive. *Holcopasites heliopsis* is a cuckoo bee. Cuckoo bees sneak into the nests of more familiar species of bee, like the ones we see gathering pollen from flowers. The cuckoos have no pollen baskets of their own, nor do they build or provision their own nests. Instead, they lay their eggs in the brood cells constructed by the host bee. When the cuckoo hatches, it eats the pollen provided by the host for its own larva, and then consumes the chubby host larva itself.

In zoology this way of making a living is known as inquilinism (from the Latin *inquilinus*, meaning “lodger”), and in bees it is surprisingly common. Several

thousand of species of bee follow this way of life. This species is tiny, approx 5millimetres at most. Reassured? Me neither!

The New Scientist. 2 November 2013



Question.....If you were thinking of giving someone a Christmas present of a frame of lovely Ling honey, you can. It is available from London-based beekeeper Steve Benbow. You can obtain it through thelondonhoneycompany.co.uk For how much?!

Answer.....below.

The Observer Food Monthly Supplement December 2013.

The Bee Carol

Silently on Christmas Eve,
the turn of midnight's key;
all the garden locked in ice –
a silver frieze –
except the winter cluster of the bees.

Flightless now and shivering,
around their Queen they cling;
every bee a gift of heat;
she will not freeze

within the winter cluster of the bees.

Bring me for my Christmas gift
a single golden jar;
let me taste the sweetness there,
but honey leave
to feed the winter cluster of the bees

Come with me on Christmas Eve
to see the silent hive –
trembling stars cloistered above –
and then believe,
bless the winter cluster of the bees.

Carol Ann Duffy. The Bees. ISBN 978-0-330-44244-2 www.picador.com/carolannduffy

Christmas Themed Recipes.

Honey Syrup Base. You will need

1. Honey.
2. Boiling Water

Method:

Mix 4 parts honey to 1 part hot water and cool before use.

Pink Honey Bee

2 Parts vodka or rum
1 part honey syrup
3 parts cranberry juice.

Method:

Shake with ice and strain into a large cocktail glass. Garnish with a cherry.

Non Alcoholic Cranberry Punch

60 ml honey
120 ml orange juice

1 litre sparkling mineral water
200 ml cranberry juice
4 tablespoons tap water
1 stick cinnamon
1 small orange
Fresh cranberries and mint to garnish, or make ice cubes.

Method:

1. Put the orange juice, honey and cinnamon with the tap water in a small pan. Heat gently to melt the honey, and then boil briefly. Leave to cool.
2. When ready to serve, put the cranberry juice, mineral water and slices of orange into a punch bowl with the prepared syrup. Add the cranberries and leaves of mint or prepared ice cubes.



Neonics could damage brains of unborn babies, say experts.

European safety experts have ruled neonicotinoids may potentially harm the developing brains of unborn babies. They have called for recommended exposure limits for the nicotine-like chemicals to be lowered while more research is carried out. Three neonicotinoid pesticides are already subject to a temporary ban throughout the E.U. because of concerns about harm to bees. The two-year moratorium takes effect from this month. While accepting the ban, the UK Government has said it rejects the science behind it. A statement from the European Food Safety Authority said the insecticide imidacloprid “may affect the developing human nervous system”. Similar concern was expressed about another neonicotinoid called acetamiprid, which is not affected by the ban.

The move follows research on rats showing offspring exposed to imidacloprid suffered brain shrinkage, reduced activity of nerve signals controlling movement and weight loss.

The Herald. 18.12.13

A Christmas Present of One Frame of Ling Honey from Steve Benbow will cost £50.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to Buzzword throughout the Year. Thanks to Bob and Lindsay for hosting the social night once again.



A special thank you to Tony and Elizabeth for allowing the apiary to continue at Monkwood Mains.

A Merry Christmas to everyone and all the Very Best for 2014.

To contribute to Buzzword contact www.bees5@btinternet.com
Thanks Suzanne Clark.