

COMBINGS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE YORK AND DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION.

NUMBER 33. MARCH 2010.

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The queen marking colour for 2010 is BLUE.

AN ANCIENT PROVERB. Spring be near when ice cream chimes ye do hear.

ASSOCIATION NEWS.

I received an e.mail from our Web Master (Mistress) Linda Carey towards the end of January. She is rehashing our web site. Here is her e.mail – it is self explanatory:-

Just a quick email to let you know that the YDBKA website has had to be redesigned because of technical difficulties with the old site. However, the new site will have a slightly different web address: www.ydbka.org (you'll notice there's no .uk at the end). The new website is live at present but there's no information as yet (except for a link to the old website). Be patient as it will take about a couple of weeks to get the whole thing fully operational. Meantime, the old website will still be available until about June when it's due for renewal. After this time, the new website will then be fully functional together with the latest editions of the Combings (at long last)! (I've not been able to update the old site with the current edition of the Combings because I am unable to edit the site from my new computer system.)

This new website will make it much quicker (for me) to update immediately whenever I receive the Combings and also much cheaper (for the Association) as the hosting costs are under £10 every 2 years! A bargain! 🐝

I would like to comment on item 6 of the last Committee meeting.

BBKA education and Basic examinations.

David Gray, John Fuller and Chris Robinson had prepared a proposal, which was for consideration by the Committee, which after discussion read :-

Any member who has attended our Beginners Course, who has since been a continuous member of Y+DBKA, and who takes the Basic Exam in 2010, may retrospectively claim a full refund of the exam fee from Y+ DBKA as soon as the exam is completed.

This was proposed by Julia Manders and seconded by Nigel Davies, 4 in favour and 1 abstention.

The original proposal was for the Association to pay for all BBKA examinations in perpetuity.

What started as a good idea has finished up being practically worthless.

The idea being that Members can plan their learning ahead becoming better beekeepers, benefiting not only themselves but the Association also.

To become a Master Beekeeper, you must start by taking your Basic Exam; there are then eight written papers and a further two practical assessments: - Certificate in Beekeeping Husbandry and Advanced Certificate in Beekeeping Husbandry. Also, there is Microscopy Certificate which can be taken at any time after your Basic.

If a Member sat one module a year and fitted the rest in between, it will take nine years to become a Master Beekeeper. Using current prices, the cost to the Association would be £269 or £30 per year.

To the best of my knowledge, with over 100 Members, we have only two Master Beekeepers

So, if you are planning to take the Basic Assessment this year then the Association will fund you. Next year the Committee may not be so generous.

I am not suggesting that you all go all the way and become Master Beekeepers, but taking any of the modules or practical assessments will help you. 🐝

In previous years I have gone through the Basic Syllabus with prospective candidates, followed by a look through one of my colonies of bees.

This is done on a one to one basis and covers every item in the syllabus. I look upon it as a polishing up exercise. A session lasts up to two hours. It is not compulsory. It is free to members,

If you are interested, then let me know by Sunday 6th June. 🐝

The dates given on your summer programme for the Beginner Class are to be disregarded.

There are so many prospective beekeepers (70 I was told) that the whole subject of the Beginners Class has had to be re thought. It will now consist of seven weeks of theory on a Tuesday evening, commencing Tuesday 9th February. This will be followed by a practical course in the spring. 🐝

Item 10.2 in the minutes of the last committee Meeting reads: - The secretary to ask the editor if it is feasible if Combings can be sent by email to approximately 70 members saving postage. Nigel Davies could print the remaining addresses for posting of hard copies.

As editor of "Combings" I have no objection to this proposal. It was tried a few years ago, but soon reverted back to being sent through the post.

If you have any comments for or against, then please get in touch. 🐝

I have an e.mail from David Bough who is working on next years (2011) spring and summer programme and is asking Members if there was something in particular that they would like to be considered as a topic for a future York + DBKA meeting.

Give it some thought. Organising a programme is not easy at the best of times, so if you have a topic that you would like covered, then please get in touch with David. 🐝

The Association has three honey extractors for use by Members (free of charge) Jenny Smith 01 904706 941 has one, Sue Hesp 01 904 489 449 has the second and Rob Coleman 01 904 762 532 the third.

There are also two "Easy Steam" cleaners used for melting wax from combs a box at a time. Contact Tom Robinson 01 904 626 170 if you wish to use one of them.

Use them, clean them and return them promptly.

At our regular meeting on Wednesday 17th February, David Thwaites spoke to us on his work as an agronomist. A lot of time was spent discussing spraying.

One thing that came from Jenny Smith our Spray Liaison Officer. If spray contractors get in touch with her regarding an area to be sprayed, Jenny has difficulty knowing who has bees where.

It would help a lot if she where to have map references and locations for your permanent apiary sites. Contact her on 01 904 706 941 or e.mail lowrancehouse64@yahoo.com It is in your own interest to pass this information to Jenny.

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EDITORS MUSINGS.

You have all seen the press in cage used for marking queens. The circular one with many sharp pins round its circumference and thin string stretched between the pins to form a lattice.

The catalogues simply refer to them as "Press in cages". I learned recently that they have another name – Baldock cages. 

I used Certan for the first time this winter to protect comb from wax moth.

It comes in 120 ml plastic bottles which you dilute. I mixed up a full bottle and sprayed 27 x10 frame national supers and would have got 30 comfortably.

The cost per bottle is £12.00 this equates to 40 pence per super – rather a lot I think. Admittedly, if it saves you having to replace comb ravaged by wax moth then it is worth every penny.

Once diluted, it has to be used as it does not keep. Also, being a liquid sprayed on, your combs have to be left to dry to prevent mould forming, so the best time for application will be September / October before combs are put away for winter.

It took me all one afternoon to do those 27 supers, so it is a long job.

Frames should be aired before putting onto your bees as Certan has an unpleasant smell. 

The snow and frost we experienced over Christmas and New Year was an ideal time to rid your stored combs of wax moth.

By standing them out side under cover, cross cornered to allow an air flow, the frost will see off all stages of wax moth. Green houses are an ideal place to do it as they are redundant at this time of year.

It is also the time for wood peckers to have a go at your hives trying to get a meal from the bees and larvae inside. On one outing I saw wood pecker damage on one side of a hive and rat damage to the floor sides – it was only the metal mesh floor that kept the rat out. 🐭

The Women's Institute are having a campaign on saving bees. In their February 2010 issue they gave a web site:- www.adoptahive.com.

This intrigued me so I looked it up. It turned out to be American, and edited by Kim Flottum who is editor of "Bee Culture" and also writes for "Beecraft".

The banner headlines where:- "Expect Another 35% Loss in U.S. Bees to Colony Collapse Disorder This Winter".

Two other items caught my eye. The first was a book review on what the author considers to be the causes of Colony Collapse Disorder – read on ;-

Michael Schacker's *A Spring Without Bees* does a good study of the history of bees, beekeeping and the business of pollination. He outlines the initial discovery and trauma of Colony Collapse Disorder, looks at what the causes aren't – cell phones (remember that silliness?), mites, viruses. Then, finally, a pesticide – the pesticide, imidacloprid.

He focuses in on this family of chemicals and the effects of sub lethal doses on bees and other organisms, and offers a host of changes that need to be made so these chemicals are either banned altogether, or are rendered useless. He also offers a long list of alternative behaviours so that these chemicals aren't needed or allowed, and we can continue to have safe food. And he really has a thing for the chemical companies that make the stuff, the government agencies that allow it to be used without testing, and the politicians that continue to obstruct safe changes.

The second item was about the 200th anniversary of the birth of Langstroth, the man who always gets the credit for inventing the movable frame hive. In reality, there would have been others thinking along the same lines at the same time.

Two hundred years after his birth in 1810, Rev. Lorenzo Lorraine Langstroth, known as the "Father of American Beekeeping," will be honored. Langstroth's discovery of "bee space" and his invention of the movable-frame beehive will be celebrated with a national network of exhibits, workshops and seminars and, with your help, perhaps a commemorative U.S. postage stamp as well.

Langstroth started with “two stocks of bees in common box hives” while serving as a minister in Andover, Mass. in the 1830s. Before long he was studying beekeeping in depth. He observed his bees and sought to understand their ways in order to build hive boxes which would allow him to better combat the destructive wax moths and collect surplus honey without harming the bees or damaging their wonderful honey comb. 🐝

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When you go to out apiaries. Tell your nearest and dearest where you are going and what time you anticipate returning home. If you have a mobile ‘phone, have it on your person, fully charged and switched on ready for use in an emergency. Accidents by definition cannot be predicted,

Still on out apiaries, make a note of grid references of each of your sites, for they are often remote and possibly difficult to give any one directions to get there.

Also take your nearest and dearest to your sites occasionally so they are familiar with there locations. 🐝

BAILEY FRAME CHANGE.

Last spring I suggested that you do a shook swarm early on in the season – at the first inspection - and put all your bees onto clean foundation in sterilised frames in a scorched brood box.

My reasons for doing so where:-

With the incidence of pyrethroid resistant varroa becoming wide spread, it will get rid of all varroa in capped cells, thus reducing the amount of varroa present in the colony.

The shook swarm is a method being increasingly used instead of chemicals, for the treatment of EFB. You will reduce the numbers of bacterium present and the possibility of an EFB out break later. It will also reduce the risk of nosema, amoeba and chalk brood.

The use of chemicals to treat for varroa can build up residues in wax. Changing all your combs will give you a clean start.

If you think that is a bit drastic then you can use the “Bailey Frame Change”. This method has been on the go for many years. It is easier to perform than a shook swarm and you get all your bees onto new comb in sterilised frames in a scorched brood box.

You simply find your queen, put her onto a frame of unsealed brood and put her into your new brood box. The old brood box is put on top of the new brood box with a queen excluder between. Job done!

In time the brood in the top box will emerge and join the bees in the bottom box. Before this happens the queen will have moved off the frame she started on and it can then be put above the queen excluder.

The down side to this manoeuvre is that any varroa sealed in cells will emerge and move down into your clean brood box.

Another point to watch out for – there is the possibility that queen cells will be started in the top box. 🐝

I found this in BBKA News. Give it a try and tell me if it works.

Wax Moth Bait.

We can take advantage of the wax moth characteristic of mating outside the hive by providing a lure trap when they come out.

The following lure has been recommended and is currently undergoing field trials.

Cut a one inch hole just below the top shoulder of a 2 litre lemonade bottle. Pour in a cup of sugar, a cup of water and a half cup of vinegar. Stir well and then add a banana skin.

Hang one up in a tree at about head height near your hives and one in a high corner of your storage shed.

This interesting concoction should attract and drown any wax moths, so keep an eye on it and see what it captures

It will work better in warm weather and may also prove useful in attracting wasps away from your hives. 🐝

Queen bumble bees are coming out of hibernation now. It will only be a matter of time before one of us gets a call to look at them.

This advice was printed in BBKA News.

BUMBLEBEE “SWARM” ADVICE.

At this time of year, it is not uncommon for beekeepers to be asked by members of the public to remove unwanted 'swarms' of bees that, on investigation, turn out to be bumblebee nests.

Bumblebees have an annual lifecycle started by the queen in spring, and by June/July they may have grown to contain anywhere between a few dozen and several hundred workers.

The nests can be in all sorts of places, commonly in compost bins, cavity walls, under patios, in or under garden sheds, in tit boxes or sometimes in lofts under the roof insulation. Perhaps the oddest location I have come across is in a tumble drier (one that had not been used for a while), where the bees had made themselves very cosy in the fluff that had built up in the air filter.

Sadly, many people react with alarm when they realize that they have large numbers of bees, and want to get rid of them. If you are asked to remove a bumblebee nest, the first response should be to try to persuade the person involved to leave the nest alone. Assure them that the nest will naturally die off in late summer (by September at the latest). Point out that bumblebees are generally timid, only sting if severely provoked, and that they provide a valuable pollination service along with honey bees. Also make them aware that bumblebees are in decline and need our help, not eviction from their home! If they are absolutely adamant that the nest must go, it can be removed, provided that it is accessible. This is best done at night when the bees are all in the nest.

The comb will usually fit inside a shoebox or similar, and can be picked up with gloved hands along with many of the bees. The box can then be placed elsewhere, so long as it is at least a mile or so from the original location (or otherwise the bees will return home!). It needs to be placed in a sheltered, shady spot, protected from rain, and a small hole cut near the bottom for the bees to get in and out.

For further advice on bumblebees and their nests, contact the Bumblebee Conservation Trust www.bumblebeeconservationtrust.co.uk

Prof Dave Goulson

Editors note:- Some years ago I purchased a purpose built bumblebee nesting box. Thinking about it – it is about the same size as a shoebox. I have followed the makers instructions slavishly yet never managed to get it established – have you? 🐝

We are taught that one strong colony will gather twice as much honey as two weak ones.

I came across some figures recently in Yates and Yates. They are quoting research done in New Zealand on the subject. These are the figures quoted:-

Size of colony.	Honey production in kilos
10,000 bees	4
20,000	14
30,000	23
40,000	32
50,000	41
60,000	50

You can see how great the initial increase is, and the advantages to be gained by uniting weak colonies after winter.

Editors note :- I have referred to Yates and Yates. They are J.D.Yates and B.D.Yates. A husband and wife team who have written a series of books covering the BBKA exams all the way through to Master Beekeeper.

Two books cover all eight modules. Others cover Microscopy, The Basic and Husbandry exams

They are expensive but if you are interested in furthering your beekeeping knowledge, then they are well worth having 🐝

SMOKING BEES.

We are taught that before opening a colony of bees that we should smoke the entrance and wait a few minutes while the bees gorge themselves with honey and thus make them less inclined to sting. It is also said to disrupt the harmony of the colony allowing you time to do your manipulation.

It is my belief that smoking the entrance warns them that you are coming and heightens their defensive instincts. It also drives them towards the top of the hive where you are going to start work.

If you need smoke, then the first puff should be over the queen excluder after you have removed any supers. From then on, the less smoke you use the better.

Smoke will probably be required again to drive bees off the frame tops when replacing your queen excluder and then possibly to clear frame tops when replacing supers.

If you are looking for the queen, then smoke can be detrimental – she will leave the frames and hide in a corner somewhere.

If you have to use lots of smoke to keep your bees under control, then you should consider requeening with a more gentle strain of bee. Working with bees that are not aggressive and stay put on the comb makes beekeeping a pleasure not a chore. 🐝

MORE ON FINDING QUEENS.

This is a topic that I keep coming back to. Here is a method that I have not come across before, although, like many things, it has probably been used in the past. (If it was any good, it would be still with us).

Every year I get a communication from Bickerstaff's Apiaries of Liverpool. They are importers of Greek queens. Included in this years envelope was a DVD, and part of it was taken up with finding your queen.

The method was to stick a NEODYMIUM magnet to the queens thorax. All you have to do then was to pass your hive tool close over the surface of your bees until you came to the queen. She would then become attached to your hive tool by her magnet. Another alternative was to use a magnet instead of your hive tool – the advantage being that you did not have to hold the magnet quite so close to the bees.

Mr Bickerstaff did point out that you should not use wired foundation or metal ends - it would also negate the use of metal hive runners – even plastic runners are held in place using metal pins. Could the queen become attached to the pins that hold frames together? A stainless hive tool would not work either.

In one demonstration on the DVD there was a distinct ping as the queens magnet hit the hive tool.

I went onto the internet to see what I could find about neodymium magnets – and there were thousands of entries.

One site quoted £7.00 for 100 magnets 2mm × 1mm – the size suitable for marking your queen. 🐝

Y + DBKA, THE BEE GARDEN.

Fiona Davies sent me this piece on how a working party acquired wood chippings, took them to Murton and spread them on the new garden. She was assisted in her task by husband Nigel, David and Laura Bough, David Gray, Tom Robinson, Bill Scriven and Hugh McPherson. Also included were a series of photographs which I am unable to print. They show the party toiling in the snow and celebrating at the end with mugs of soup.

Long before a new bee garden could be planted up outside the Bee Pavilion at Murton Farming Museum, a little bit of preparation had to be undertaken.

Firstly the overgrown hawthorn and rose briar hedge had to be wrestled into submission. A very satisfying afternoon with chain saws and long ropes saw the hedge reduced to about 5'. Beside the scalped hedge, a mountain of very prickly branches had grown till the summit pierced the lowering rain clouds! Tea and cake revived us all.

Next the rough ground chosen as the site of the garden had to be cleared of weeds, such as mile high thistles, rampant nettles and couch grass. An approved herbicide reduced the weeds to a brown wasteland. The heavy machinery arrived two weeks later and the dead weeds and grass were rotavated into the 'garden'.

The garden now had a shape, a sort of D shape, with a post and rail fencing around the top side and the field hedge to the east. The path next to the Bee Pavilion formed the straight side of the D. To prevent weeds swamping the new bee friendly plants, weed suppressant matting was laid over the whole site and fastened with long strips of wood to the 4" planks of that had been fastened in place around the edge of the garden previously. We now had a very large 4" deep, D shaped 'area', and still a long way to go before planting could begin!

The next step involved collecting and spreading a large amount of bark chippings. This seemed a relatively easy procedure in the planning stages. However when you look back and recall all the rain we had in early December, and combine this with a sodden field to drive through to get to the Bee Pavilion, we were perhaps being a bit optimistic in thinking it was an afternoons work.

Three of us set off in a Land Rover towing a huge trailer, capable of holding about 5 cubic metres of (free) chippings. We arrived in Askham Richard during a downpour, around 1pm. We started shovelling hot, fragrant Lleylandi clippings and chippings into the trailer. We were soaked but warm as we stood knee deep in the biggest pile of chippings I've ever seen.

An hour and a half later we finally finished filling the trailer. We covered up our precious cargo, to stop it all flying away as we drove round the York Bypass, and set off for Murton. As we opened the gate to the field where the Pavilion is, a top floor window in the Museum was thrown open and the Manager shouted over to us that the field was very soggy and even the Land Rover might not make across the field. Pause for brief discussion. We'd come this far, where on earth would we leave our load of chippings if not at least try and get it to the Pavilion?

Closely watched by a very large resident cow with huge horns, the Land Rover began the last lap of our journey. We didn't even make it past the cow. The Land Rover plus its load was just too heavy, the rain was still pouring and the light was fading fast. Quickly, the Land Rover was detached from the trailer. Then the experts managed to tow the trailer slowly out of the quagmire and onto more solid ground. The cow watched me very closely as I rescued the bits of brick and stone we'd used to stop the jockey wheel sinking out of sight into the mud. The last thing I needed was the cow escaping into the Museum car park. We still had chippings to deal with, somehow, somewhere?

The 'Management' came down from his Dress Circle seat to suggest what we might do with our chippings. We knew where we wanted to put them! It was suggested that as the school parties had stopped for the Christmas holidays, we could empty out the chippings on the hard ground by the outside toilets, over in the 'Danelaw Village'. At least we had a hardcore road to drive on.

Daylight had gone so we worked in the glare of the Land Rover's headlights. We started the soul destroying job of emptying out the chippings from the trailer, within spitting distance of the Bee Pavilion. We were given until the 6th January to shift the chippings to the pavilion garden, before the school visits commenced again. That seemed ages away.

Within days the world turned white and remained so for weeks in the worst (or best) snow and ice for over 30 years. With the Christmas festivities only a memory and New Years Eve come and gone, January 6th was looming fast. However all was not lost. The word had gone out by phone, by email, by word of mouth, York & District Beekeeping Associated needed YOU! Or more specifically, you and your spade. With 6 wheelbarrows, numerous spades, about a dozen well wrapped up volunteers, and bags of enthusiasm, the chippings were shifted to their final destination, a month after being first collected.

It took about an hour of shovelling and barrowing to finish the job, with some especially enthusiastic volunteers. Afterwards, we celebrated with mugfuls of spicy pumpkin soup.

And now we need you the members to help fill the youthful Bee Garden with plants to encourage and attract bees and other beneficial insects. If you have any rooted cuttings of plants such as Forsythia, Ceanothus, Hebe, Lavender, Delphiniums etc, we'd love to give them a new home, once the better weather arrives. Watch this space for the next instalment of YDBKA, The Bee Garden. 🐝

I found this snippet on sugar prices late last year, but cannot remember where I found it.

Global shortage to cause sugar rush?

Droughts in India and floods in Brazil, coupled with the demand for sugar ethanol for bio-fuels, have pushed the price of table sugar to a 29-year high and forecasts are not hopeful of a reduction any time soon.

The US Department of Agriculture predicts a drop in supply of up to 46 per cent next year, but has still set a cap on imports which could drive the price up further.

Sugar is currently selling at 26.27 cents per pound on world markets, up more than 80 per cent since the start of the year (prices tumbled between last September and March) and the highest it has been since October 1980 (42.30 cents). Its most recent low point was just 8.39 cents in October 2003.

However, other sources say there will still be plenty of sugar to go around and only bulk industrial consumers will be affected.

Even so, while panic buying is not advised, beekeepers can enjoy cheaper prices thanks to a deal struck between Conwy BKA and retail firm Booker at any of the company's 173 cash-and-carry outlets in Britain (excluding N Ireland). See Booker website for store guide.

Visitors will require identification, in the form of a current BBKA or local BKA card or letter from your BKA secretary or a current BDI certificate. The price for 15 x 1kg bags of Silver Spoon works out at roughly 67p/kg compared to 88p/kg for a 5kg bag at Sainsbury's or 84p/kg for Lidl own brand.

Bulk sugar and fondant can also be obtained from Shepcote of Driffield. They will deliver small quantities to your door. 'phone 01 377 252 537. 

Here is another system for getting rid of varroa mites on your bees.

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PAST EVENTS.

Monday 14th December 2009. Murton.

The Committee met to discuss ways and means of accommodating the 70 prospective beekeepers who have registered their interest in keeping bees. With such numbers it is going to be a challenge.

Wednesday 13 January 2010.

A Committee Meeting was held at Fulford Methodist Church Hall.

Wednesday 20th January. Murton.

This was a well attended meeting. Our speaker was Geoff Coates, Agri – Environmental Manager for Syngenta. He spoke of the “Buzz Project” undertaken by Syngenta to encourage farmers to plant bumble bee friendly plants in head lands round their fields for which they would receive a payment.

Not only did these headlands encourage bumble bees but birds and small mammals also.

His talk, according to your programme was to be on bumble bees, but in reality it was more about Syngenta and what they had done to encourage bumble bees in general, since there has been a 70% decline in bumble bee numbers over the past 30 years, with six species being in a precarious state and three on the verge of extinction due to loss of habitat and thus food supply.

Mr Coates spoke eloquently about what his Company had done to encourage bumble bees, but did not mention all the other insects (including honey bees on occasions) that are killed indiscriminately by their insecticides.

He could not let the evening pass without mentioning the endorsement of Syngenta products by the BBKA.

Friday 22nd + Monday 25th January. Murton.

These two meetings were held in the library at Murton. All those who had shown an interest in our Beginners Class were invited. In total thirty or so prospective beekeepers turned up for the two meetings.

David Gray chaired the meeting speaking of the commitment they will need, some of the costs involved and siting of hives. Nigel Davies gave a short film show on aspects of beekeeping.

Also at the meeting giving support where, Sue Hesp who is the mainstay of the Beginners Class, Secretary Tom Robinson, Committee Members – David Bough. Julie Manders, Hugh McPherson.

Wednesday 17th February. Murton.

Our speaker this evening was David Thwaites – an Agronomist. His job is to advise farmers all over Yorkshire on pests, diseases and the use of fertilisers, that pesticides are safe and correctly used.

Mr Thwaites touched on a number of topics – a lot of time was spent discussing insecticide spraying, with many questions coming from the floor.

Contractors should only spray when bees are not flying and then with wind speeds of less than five miles per hour. (This must be difficult).

The law states that beekeepers need permission from a farmer to put bees on his land. The farmer then has a duty of care towards beekeepers, keeping them informed when spraying is to take place, and also to inform spray contractors of the presence of bees.

The onus is really on the beekeeper to keep others who need to know, informed as to the whereabouts of their bees.

Jenny Smith is our Spray Liaison Officer. It would help her a lot if she were to have map references for your permanent apiary sites. Contact her on 01 904 706 941 or e.mail lowrancehouse64@yahoo.com

This was a good topic yet poorly attended.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Saturday 6th March.

Yorkshire BKA Spring Conference. Normanby Pavilion, Great Yorkshire Show Ground, Harrogate.

This meeting was originally scheduled for Saturday 13th March.

Wednesday 17th March. 19.30 Murton.

An introduction to Seasonal Bee Inspector Dhonn Atkinson who will speak about his work.

Saturday 20th March.

British BKA Module Examinations take place at the Normanby Pavilion at the Great Yorkshire Show Ground, Harrogate.

Friday 26th March.

This is our Annual Dinner to be held at the White Swan at Deighton – a few miles south of York on the A19. 'Phone Secretary Tom Robinson on 01 904 626 170 for a menu.

Saturday 27th March.

Yorkshire BKA Honey Judges workshop. Normanby Pavilion at the Great Yorkshire Show Ground, Harrogate.

Saturday 3rd April.

Lincolnshire BKA's annual auction will be held at the Lincolnshire Showground on the A15 a few miles north of Lincoln.

It is always a big do, usually with bees for sale. The auction itself is held under cover, so there are no problems with inclement weather.

Wednesday 21st April. 19.30 Murton.

Half yearly General meeting and a visit to our pavilion.

Saturday 13th March.

Yorkshire BKA Spring Conference. At the Yorkshire BKA Pavilion on the Great Yorkshire Showground at Harrogate.

Wednesday 14th April. 19.30.

York BKA Half Year General Meeting at Murton.

Saturday 17th April.

British BKA Spring convention at Stoneleigh. Members in advance £13.00, on the day £16.00.

Thursday 22nd to Sunday 25th April.

Harrogate Spring Flower Show.

Saturday 24th April.

Yorkshire BKA Bishop Burton Conference. 09.00 start.

This years speakers are, Dr Giles Budge – Research Co-ordinator at the National Bee Unit. Dr Jamie Ellis – Assistant Professor of Etymology at the University of Florida and Willie Robson from Chain Bridge Honey Farm.

Cost. £25.00 per head including lunch. £15.00 excluding lunch.

For more information and to purchase tickets contact Bill Cadmore, 104 Hall Lane, Horsforth, Leeds, LS18 5JG. 'phone 0113 216 0482.

Sunday 25th April.

Beverley BKA Annual Auction will be held in the Woodmansey Village Hall, Long Lane , Woodmansey, HU17 0RN. It is south of Woodmansey on the A1174.

Tuesday 4th May and Thursday 6th May. Murton 18.30

These are the start dates for this years Beginners Course. It is going to be held on two evenings each week due to unprecedented demand, for eight weeks

Saturday 15th May 2010. Murton.

Our 11th Annual Auction. Lots accepted from 09.00, viewing from 11.00 and the auction will commence at noon.

If you have any bees for sale, they must be examined by the Seasonal Bee Inspector prior to the sale. Bees to be brought to Murton the evening before the sale. The organiser is Nigel Davies 01 904 468 001.

Details are enclosed as part of "Combings".

Saturday 22nd May.

Apiary meeting. Contact Tom Robinson on 01 904 626 170 for the venue.

Saturday 5th June. Apiary Meeting 14.00

At the Nature reserve New Earswick hosted by David Gray. 01 904767 944.

Sunday 6th June. Hardcastle Craggs. 10.00

The National Trust are holding another "Balsam Bash" in attempt to remove the invasive water balsam. They have done this for a couple of years now and don't appear to have got on top of it. Meet at the Midgehole car park.

Editors note:- I put some bees on a site close to water balsam this year for the first time. It starts flowering in July and continues into September. I noticed that balsam stood six feet tall at first. Towards the end of its flowering period it was only half that. You know how explosive the seeds are. Was the late balsam from the seeds of the early balsam. If so, then it could explain why the National Trust have to keep going back.

Saturday 12th + Sunday 13th June.

Yorkshire BKA Queen Rearing Course with Clive de Bruyn. Beekeepers are being sounded out about this (October 2009) to see what numbers are likely to attend.

This course is shown in the Yorkshire BKA events calendar. (February 2010).

Sunday 4th July. Murton.

There is an open invitation to the public on the craft of beekeeping at the Yorkshire museum of Farming at Murton.

Saturday 10th July.

Jenny Smith will host this years barbeque. More details in your March "Combings". Jenny always puts on a good do. Don't miss it.

Tuesday 13th to Thursday 15th July.

The Great Yorkshire Show at Harrogate.

Wednesday 21st July.

Driffield Show, on the Kellythorpe Show Ground just south of Driffield.

Saturday 7th August.

Tockwith Show. £7.50 a head.

Saturday 14th August. Heather Meeting.

To be held at Dalby Forest. Contact Nigel Davies for more information nearer the time. 01 904 468 001.

Saturday 28th to Monday 30th August. (August Bank Holiday weekend)

Cawood Craft Fair.

Friday 17th September to Sunday 19th September.

Harrogate Autumn Flower Show.

Wednesday 22nd September. Murton 19.30.

A talk on honey showing by Tony Jefferson. To help you prepare your exhibits for next months Honey Show.

Wednesday 20th October. 19.30.

York BKA Annual General Meeting at Murton.

Wednesday 17th November. Murton.

York BKA Annual Honey Show.

Saturday 4th December.

Yorkshire BKA's Annual General Meeting at the Normanby Pavilion, Great Yorkshire Show Ground, Harrogate.

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FOR SALE.

CLARO BEES for all your beekeeping supplies.

Large stock and very keen prices on all items.

Cedar National hive parts, frames (all in first and second quality), clothing, gloves, foundation, jars, spacers ,tools, smokers, medicines, straps etc. etc. all normally in stock and at below list prices. Advice on the selection and use of beekeeping equipment always available. Open every Saturday morning 09.00 to 12.30 April to October inclusive.

Beside the Harrogate Arms, past the RHS Harlow Carr Gardens, Crag Lane, Harrogate, HG3 1QA, or by arrangement: - 01 423 567 315. A map showing our location is available at www.hrbka.org.uk 

12oz/340gr hexagonal honey jars in boxes of 84 with lids at £23.50.

Ambrosia syrup at £16.00 per 14kg tub. Contact Colin Hattee on 01 430 860 972. 

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AND FINALLY:-

ADULT: A person who has stopped growing at both ends and is now growing in the middle.

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YORK & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 13 January 2010.

Present Sue Hesp (Chair) Tom Robinson (Secretary) Jenny Smith, Julia Manders, Nigel Davies, David Bough, and Matt Atkinson.

Apologies. David Gray, Chris Robinson Hugh Macpherson.

1. The minutes of the committee Meeting held on 11th November and the sub committee minutes of the Meeting subsequently held on 14th December concerning Education were circulated and were accepted as a true record and signed by the Sue Hesp.

2. Matters arising not dealt with separately on the agenda.

The insurance of the contents of the Pavilion, David Bough has completed the valuation of the contents and the Treasurer needs to be provided with this valuation in order to cost the insurance.

3. The secretary told the meeting that 60 potential beekeepers had been contacted about the open days. Due to Bad weather these have been postponed until Friday 22 Jan and Monday 25 Jan.

To date 14 people have booked Monday and 18 for Friday.

The meeting was advised that it is the intention to hold theory classes commencing Tuesday 9 February for 7 weeks the last one being on 23 March.

After some discussion on the cost of the course and the implications of potential beekeepers with bees and without bees wishing to become members and payment of capitation fees it was proposed by Nigel Davies and seconded by Jenny Smith that the fee for the 7 weeks course should be £35 which would not include membership of YDBKA. It was considered that the practical course should also be £35, which would include membership of YDBKA.

4 Report on the Management Meeting of the Yorkshire Museum of Farming held on 12 Jan .

The first hour of the meeting was told of plans by the DVLR to increase their rail lines and build workshops under a "5 year plan"

The Accountants Report and the finances of the trust were discussed and costs continue to be excess of receipts

Plans to increase revenue and reduce expenditure were considered and the date of the next meetings when some of the plans will be reviewed will be on 18th February and 9th March.

5. During a discussion on the progress of the co-operative funded projects, Nigel Davies told the meeting that some members of the committee were responsible for purchasing items as the money was available in YDBKA bank.

5.1 Mesh Screen Rails and posts £400 Nigel Davies

2 TV with DVD Player £260 Sue Hesp

3 Virtual Hive £225 Tom Robinson

4 Children's bee suits £149.50 David Bough although TR offered

5 YMOF Bee Exhibition includes Obs hive £950 David Gray.

6. BBKA education and Basic examinations.

David Gray, John Fuller and Chris Robinson had prepared a proposal, which was for consideration, by the committee, which after discussion read

Any member who has attended our Beginners Course, who has since been a continuous member of YDBKA, and who takes the basic exam in 2010, may retrospectively claim a full refund of the exam fee from YDBKA as soon as the exam is completed.

This was proposed by Julia Manders and seconded by Nigel Davies,

4 in favour and 1 abstention.

7. The secretary advised the meeting about the Bee Health Forum on Thursday 27 May which the Chairman and Secretary would attend.

8. Linda Carey who looks after YDBKA Web site has contacted the secretary about changes in her computer but has offered to update and continue to operate free of charge. Action TR
The secretary to advise Linda that we would be delighted if she would update and continue to operate the YDBKA Web-site.

9 A discussion on the death of BBKA members and the comment was made that any member aware of the death of another should circulate the committee and other members by email ASAP.

AOB

10.1 Julia Manders asked that where possible beginners should be allocated a "buddy" to help. This was accepted and where possible carried out.

10.2 The secretary to ask the editor if it is feasible if Combings can be sent by email to approximately 70 members saving postage. Nigel Davies could print the remaining addresses for posting of hard copies.

DONM 24th Feb 2010, 7.30pm Fulford Methodist Hall

YORK & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

11th Annual Auction of Bees and Bee Keeping Equipment 2010.

Saturday 15th May 2010

at

Yorkshire Museum of Farming, Murton, York, YO19 5UF.

Bees must have been inspected and cleared by the Seasonal Bee Inspector three weeks or less before they are brought to Murton for sale, otherwise they will not be accepted.

Inspected and cleared bees should be brought to Murton the evening before the auction day, between 19:00 and 21:00 hours.

Lots will be accepted from 09.00 on the day of the auction.

They should be of reasonable quality, and will be scrutinised by the Stewards before being accepted. It is recommended that all equipment be sterilised before submitting it for sale. Drawn comb, rusty tin ware, and items of poor quality will not be accepted.

The vendor may fix a reserve price on any item by informing the Steward when booking in the items.

Viewing is from 11.00 and the auction will commence at 12.00.

For further information please contact Nigel Davies 01 904 468 001 or Tom Robinson 01 904 626 170.

