



NEWSLETTER

NECTAR LINES

British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA)

EDUCATION & APIARY PROJECT UPDATE

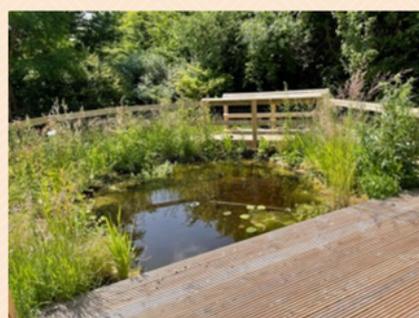
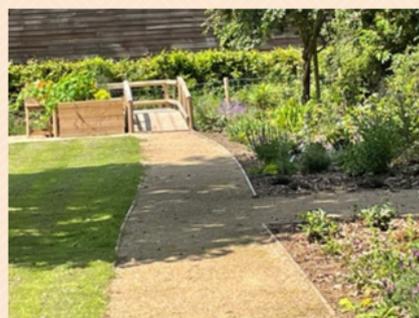
A lot of work has already taken place on our new Education & Apiary Centre at Stoneleigh which will enable school and visitor groups to learn about the importance of bees and the craft of beekeeping.

Wheelchair friendly paths have been created in the garden together with raised planters and a special viewing platform.

A wildlife pond and bog garden have been constructed and the pond is already home to a wide variety of insects and the bees visit regularly for a drink. The flower beds and planters have been filled with different varieties of plants which the bees will love and the honeysuckle has quickly begun to grow over the bee tunnel. The base is in place for a log cabin classroom which will be installed shortly.

This will enable small groups to stand safely behind a large window to watch as a beekeeper shows them inside a hive and explains all about the honey bees. Work has also been completed on the main building to create a new entrance area with disabled facilities as well as an updated training hall with all the latest equipment.

Some of the work has been delayed because of the pandemic but it is hoped that we will be able to start welcoming school groups to the Apiary in the new year.



THERE IS STILL TIME TO BE INVOLVED IN THIS
EXCITING ONGOING PROJECT; PLEASE
CONTACT ERICA.CHALLIS@BBKA.ORG.UK





BBKA Corporate Donor 2BScientific

When, in 2009, Tim and James Bernard first started thinking about setting up a distribution company their aim was for it to be different from any other UK distributor and to “give something back” both to the environment and to the Life Science industry. Once the name 2BScientific was established and the logo was chosen to include Bees, it was a natural choice to support Bee research and since the very first order, £1 per order has been donated to the British Bee Keepers Association.

The company then increased its contribution in this field to the next level, by donating to the Bees for Development charity, supported by a local beekeeper who writes the monthly “Bee Blog” for 2BScientific (<https://www.2bscientific.com/News>).



Supporting Bee charities and the environment enhanced our thoughts to work on helping the environment and sustainability more proactively. Consequently, 2BScientific became carbon neutral in January 2020. Everyone in the company worked hard to improve the sustainability of the distribution department to make the company free from single use plastics using recyclable jiffy bags, paper packing fillers and biodegradable bubble wrap. 2BScientific is also one of the first life science companies to set up a wet ice bag recycle scheme. 2BScientific then became a member of the Slave Free Alliance, ensuring a slave free supply chain for all the products we distribute from around the world. This year 2BScientific became a member of the Institute of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability. All the work that the company is involved in in this area originally stemmed from the initial support of the British Bees Keepers Association.

During these 10 years, the company also helped sponsor Beehives and other bee related research projects, including the “Adopt a Beehive” project which was set up by the BBKA.

Did you Know?

Some interesting honey bee facts

How does a honey bee navigate?

Bees use the position of the sun to help them know where they are and where they need to go back to; there is now some evidence of sensitivity to the earth's magnetic field too.

How many bees are there in a colony?

In the height of Summer there is an average of 35 - 40,000 bees in the hive. Over the Winter this falls to around 5,000.

How far does a bee fly?

It is possible for bees to fly as far as 5 miles for food, however an average distance would be less than a mile from the hive.

How many wings do honey bees have?

The honey bee has four wings in total. The front and rear wings hook together to form one big pair of wings and unhook for easy folding when not flying.

Do honey bees hibernate over winter?

No, bees overwinter as a strong colony clustered together, using their bodies to generate heat. The bees take turns to be on the cold outside.

Do honey bees sleep?

Bees do not sleep but they do remain motionless to preserve energy.

Why do bees sting?

A bee only stings under two conditions.; to protect the colony or when frightened.

Why is pollen so important?

Honey bees mix plant pollen with water to form bee bread that is fed to the growing larvae. It provides a rich source of protein and fat whilst honey provides energy.

How fast can honey bees fly?

The normal top speed of a worker would be about 15-20 mph when flying to food & 12 mph when returning laden with nectar, pollen or water.

WHAT BEE IS THIS?

At the BBKA office we receive many calls and questions from people with bees in their property, gardens and outbuildings. Our members are only able to help if they are honey bees but often they turn out to be bumblebees or solitary bees.

There are around 24 species of bumblebee and over 240 species of solitary bee in the UK so it is important to establish what type of bees they are to determine if our members are able to help.

Honey bees will form a distinctive cluster when they have settled as a swarm. They have large hairy eyes, a furry chest or thorax and distinctive bent antennae.



Honey bee swarm

If the bees are not honey bees they should be left alone where possible. All bees are valuable pollinators and many are becoming endangered.

Bumblebee nests will normally die out in autumn. Most bumblebees are not aggressive and do not sting unless provoked and so present a low risk.



Bumblebees



Tawny Mining Bee



Leafcutter Bee

As their name suggests, **solitary bees** do not live in colonies. Each female makes her own nest but they can nest close together in large numbers. If they are in the lawn or buildings they may look worrying but they will not cause any damage. Most species only fly for a few weeks so they will probably disappear again within a few weeks so they should be left alone where possible.



European Hornet

European Hornets are native and of no threat. They are black and brown with a hint of orange and have a very big curved tail. They are valuable pollinators living mostly in woodland.

However, Asian Hornets are an invasive species and must be reported!

ASIAN HORNETS

In September each year we urge beekeepers and members of the public to keep their eyes peeled for Asian Hornets and their nests. The Asian Hornet (*Vespa velutina*) is an invasive non-native species which poses a serious threat to our native pollinators, including honey bees, so it is important to raise awareness so people can report any sightings.

The BBKA has a designated set of Asian Hornet Teams and Co-ordinators based across the country as part of our local branches. They are on standby all year round to deal with potential sightings and assist the National Bee Unit (NBU).

The Asian Hornet has some distinct features:

- * mostly black with a single yellow/orange band towards the top of its abdomen
- * yellow socks
- * an orange face
- * slightly smaller than our native European hornet



During September each year we encourage everyone to:

- Download the free 'Asian Hornet Watch' app which is available for both iPhone and Android
- Familiarise themselves with what Asian Hornets look like
- Report suspect sightings using the 'Asian Hornet Watch' app or, by filling out an online report form (https://www.brc.ac.uk/risc/alert.php?species=asian_hornet) or by emailing: alernonnative@ceh.ac.uk.

Please follow the BBKA on social media and share our Asian Hornet posts to help raise awareness:

Facebook BBKA-TheBritishBeekeepersAssociation

Twitter @Britishbee

Instagram britishbeekeepers

Help us to look out for the Asian Hornet!

DOWNLOAD THE ASIAN HORNET WATCH APP FREE FOR DETAILED GUIDANCE ON ID & TO QUICKLY REPORT POTENTIAL SIGHTINGS



Junior Beekeeping

Beekeeping can be of huge benefit to schools and their pupils as outdoor learning can have a positive impact on behaviour and can offer a different learning experience to being in a classroom. It helps to build confidence which can then have a positive effect on pupils' achievements in the classroom.

The BBKA currently have two Beacon Schools. This status is awarded to schools who demonstrate sustained best practice in beekeeping. Our Beacon Schools educate their pupils about the enjoyment and appreciation of beekeeping and increase awareness in young people of the importance of bees and other pollinating insects in the environment. They also share their knowledge with their local communities.

These schools are a valuable source of advice for other schools who are looking to set up an apiary. They have a wealth of experience and can help to demonstrate the wide-ranging benefits keeping bees can bring to children.

Pupils can also take the BBKA Junior Beekeeping Certificate which is a lovely way to encourage their interest in beekeeping and especially for those children who struggle with academic subjects.

In addition, we have our 'Bees in the Curriculum' online resources for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children. This is available to everyone via our website and includes fact sheets and work sheets about Bees and Minibeasts, Bee Products, The Beekeeper and Pollination.

It is important we continue to educate and enthuse children and young people as these are the beekeepers of the future!





BBKA Corporate Donor National Bee Supplies

As beekeepers, we are all more attuned than most to the natural environment and the impact we can have upon it. Although every day seems to bring more news about extreme weather and declining insect populations there is also a growing awareness that our individual actions can make a positive difference. At National Bee Supplies we believe we have a responsibility to try and make a difference to the world we live in and to leave it in a better way for future generations. So we have taken action now and we will continue to look for better ways to mitigate any damage our business causes. We have more than offset all the carbon generated in making and despatching our beehives and other equipment, to our customers. We have installed solar panels on our roof (saving, on average, 1 ton of carbon a month), we constantly look at ways to reduce our waste, we have planted trees and we have created wildflower meadows. We want to ensure that every customer who buys from us can do so in the knowledge that they are making a choice for positive change.

We would love to believe that the days of the throwaway society are numbered. The care we put into selecting and seasoning the wood for our hives, plus the craftsmanship employed in making every component, means that our hives are built to last. That's why we are the only beehive maker to offer a 10 year guarantee on all our assembled hives. The best value hive is the one that doesn't need to be replaced and of course products that last are also the best ones for the environment.

If ever there was a time to all work together this is it. We recognise the invaluable work carried out by BBKA and value our relationship with them. This is why we are proud to offer a 5% discount to all BBKA supporters. At Christmas and in fact throughout the rest of the year, 5% of all sales of gifts sold on our website will be donated to BBKA. We will be sharing all the profits from a wonderful new children's book 'Bettie the Bee' between BBKA and Plantlife and the super sustainable T Shirt range from Teemill will be shared, again between those two charities plus Bees Abroad

In every Beehive Starter Kit we include a copy of BBKA's excellent book 'Guide to Beekeeping' to help new Beekeepers starting out in this wonderful hobby. Most of all we are proud that BBKA has chosen NBS hives for their apiary at their Headquarters in Warwickshire.

Whilst we always aim to provide the best quality products and service to our customers, we strongly believe that every business also has a responsibility to the wider community. We know that there is always more that we could, and probably should be doing so we will always try to keep those broader responsibilities in mind.

David Robinson
National Bee Supplies

