

Healthy Bees Plan

Issue 8 - August 2011

Quarterly Newsletter for all those interested in honey bee health

News and Highlights:

Update on plans for 2011/12. The Healthy Bees Project Management Board finalised the 2011/12 work plan in May and implementation is underway. The work plan includes further work on BeeBase to improve its usefulness to beekeepers; continuing to jointly fund (with BBKA) the BBKA education coordinator to improve the availability and quality of local education and training initiatives for beekeepers; production of additional good practice templates; continuing with the action plan started in December 2009 to increase the numbers of beekeepers registered on BeeBase; and, continuing to offer Fera-supported train the trainer courses for beekeeper trainers. The work plan also includes development of a campaign with Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) to inform beekeepers about the use of medicines, including good practice and their legal responsibilities.

As part of the enhanced education programme initiated by the BBKA and NDB and co-funded with Fera during 2010/11 (to develop course in a case materials and short topic-based training courses as well as to increase the number of beekeeper trainers), the BBKA has set up a Delivering Education Group which they chair. Members include representatives from BBKA, NDB, BFA, Fera and Northern Ireland and Scottish beekeepers. This group's purpose is to make sure that the new courses in cases and NDB short courses are well used by local associations, and to nurture and support the growing band of beekeeper trainers across the UK.



BBKA Train the Trainers Winter Training Programme –

The BBKA will be running a winter training programme to provide beekeeper trainers with training materials from which they can start to plan and prepare training sessions based on the needs of their students. The BBKA particularly want to attract trainers who are willing to commit to improving their beekeeping knowledge and teaching skills. The courses are aimed at those who teach towards the BBKA module examinations (1-8), those who wish to establish training and self-help support groups for those studying for the BBKA module examinations and those who wish to explore materials from the Red and Green Course in the Case. For further details and dates please contact Bill Cadmore (bill.cadmore@ntlworld.com).

- Update on the Random Apiary Survey. All the samples for the Random Apiary Survey (RAS) have now been collected and analyses are underway. As soon as these are completed a paper for publication in a peer reviewed journal and a one page summary of the findings will be produced. We will report on plans to share this information in the next quarterly newsletter due in October.

Education and training:

- With many beekeepers reporting the presence of large numbers of wasps in apiaries and around their bee hives, the NBU have produced the following advice note Advice note - wasps . Also with the poor weather conditions we have been experiencing the NBU produced an advice note on feeding bees Advice note - feeding bees . Both notes and many others can be found on BeeBase.
- Following on from the successful series of National Diploma in Beekeeping (NDB) Short Courses which were run during January to March 2011, the NDB will be running courses again, over the coming months. These are courses running over two full days which aim to allow delegates to become immersed in relatively narrow aspects of the huge field that is “beekeeping”. In small groups and with NDB-qualified tutors, this arrangement allows real learning and exploration of the subject to be achieved.

The original series of Short Courses, part-funded by Fera under the auspices of the Healthy Bees Plan, has been augmented by some new titles.

“**Anatomy and Dissection**” is a new course, written by Graham Royle which allows delegates to explore the external and internal anatomy of the honey bee and begin to make sense of the amazing complexity and special adaptation in such small creatures.

“**Integrated Pest Management, (IPM)**”, written by Bridget Beattie, is another new course which explores ways in which we can manage the health of our bees (not simply varroa) using combinations of techniques, to minimise adverse effects.

The list of 2011-12 Short Courses, dates and venues appears below.

| Month | Dates | Course | Lead Tutor | Centre |
|-------|--------|--|-----------------|----------|
| Aug | 20, 21 | Successful Wintering | Ivor Davis | Devon |
| Sept | 8, 9 | Nutrition and Pollen | Robert Smith | Kent |
| | 19, 20 | Microscopy for Beekeepers | Graham Royle | Devon |
| Oct | 8, 9 | Adult Bee Disease | Ken Basterfield | Devon |
| | 8, 9 | Anatomy and Dissection <i>New!</i> | Graham Royle | Kent |
| Nov | 5, 6 | Anatomy and Dissection <i>New!</i> | Graham Royle | Cheshire |
| | 11, 12 | Adult Bee Disease | Ken Basterfield | Kent |
| Dec | 2, 3 | Teaching for Beekeeping Tutors * | Bridget Beattie | Devon |
| | 4, 5 | Integrated Pest Management <i>New!</i> | Bridget Beattie | Devon |
| Jan | 14,15 | Adult Bee Disease | Ken Basterfield | Cheshire |
| | 28,29 | Microscopy | Graham Royle | Kent |
| Feb | 11,12 | Nutrition and Pollen | Robert Smith | Cheshire |
| | 25,26 | Anatomy and Dissection <i>New!</i> | Graham Royle | Devon |
| Mar | 17,18 | Teaching for Beekeeping Tutors * | Bridget Beattie | Kent |
| | 19,20 | Integrated Pest Management <i>New!</i> | Bridget Beattie | Kent |

* may qualify for Fera subsidy, see note.

Full details and an Application Form for the Short Courses are to be found on the NDB web-site www.national-diploma-bees.org.uk

Also to be found on the web-site are details of the three Regional Training Centres that will be used; these are all modern facilities chosen to enhance the learning environment.

The “Teaching for Beekeeper Tutors” course may be eligible for funding, as described in the paragraph below.

- The Healthy Bees Plan is still funding the accredited City & Guilds 7303 ‘Train the Trainer’ course and will continue to do so until the end of the 2011/12 financial year. We are in the process of writing around to local associations. If you would like to attend a course please contact beehealthinfo@fera.gsi.gov.uk in the first instance and we'll send you a form and letter explaining what you are able to claim etc. applications should be endorsed by a member of your local association ie. Secretary or Chair or your local Bee Inspector.

Working with others to raise awareness about BeeBase and the importance of registration:

- If anyone reading this Newsletter would like to help encourage beekeepers to register on BeeBase, particularly given the benefits to beekeepers and for control of honey bee diseases, the Healthy Bees Project Manager would be delighted to hear from you, contact details below. This may simply involve including the BeeBase address (www.nationalbeeunit.com) on your own websites or publicity material.
- Some 2200 additional beekeepers had registered on BeeBase during 2011. If you haven't already registered please do so by visiting www.nationalbeeunit.com or by phoning the NBU on 01904 462510. By letting us know that you keep bees and the location of your hives, you will be helping in our ongoing battle against disease and our efforts to sustain honey bee populations.



Medicines for bees:

- The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) continues to implement its action plan to increase the availability of authorised medicines for honey bees and also to ensure their correct use, which is paramount for food safety. Residues in honey, due to improper use of medicines, could undermine its image as a healthy natural product. Further details are given in the VMD Action Plan www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/pdf/bee_actionplan.pdf . Optimal use of available medicines by beekeepers is also important to sustain their effectiveness in treating pests and diseases.

**Healthy Bees Project Manager,
Fera, Sand Hutton, York, YO41 1LZ
beehealthinfo@fera.gsi.gov.uk**