



BURTON and District BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Fun with Pollen Traps

A Zoom talk by Bob Smith NDB

On Monday the 11th of January 2021, around 21 members joined the first of three Zoom meetings arranged by Sam Hampton. The subject was “Pollen” and the speaker, Bob Smith, was excellent, easy to listen to and backed-up by a whole range of slides and charts. He explained how vital pollen is as a food source for our bees.

Before retiring, Bob worked as an analytical Chemist and is now Chair of the Central Association of Beekeepers. Bob is an excellent and knowledgeable speaker who, because he lives in Kent, was only able to speak to us now because of the “wonders of Zoom”. Zoom has become an excellent way of keeping in touch and seeing some friendly faces during these grim times. It is free and easy to use, but if any members need a bit of technical advice please just ask.

Bob’s talk reminded me of a wonderful sales leaflet that I picked up many years ago from a beekeeping stall at the market in Loule, on the Algarve in Portugal. It is reproduced below and I am not sure if even Bob knew what amazing stuff pollen is!!

“Pollen is a nourishment and a perfect natural medication. It’s derived from flowers and contains 35% of first quality proteins, 13% of amino acid (all the well known ones), high content of enzymes, all the vitamins and mineral salts, and a vast range of complex acids and 50% of fibre. It is anti-cancerous and anti-arteriosclerotic, and anti-clotting of the platelet. It strengthens the walls of the capillaries, preventing cardiac, brain and eye haemorrhages and heart attacks.

Pollen is rich in glutamic acid (the brain energy) and the intestinal enzyme that it produces. It’s recommended to students, when the brain is in stress, tired or exhausted, to sportsmen/women, to all the physical breakdowns and weaknesses, prostatitis, liver, anaemias in general, intestines, heart and intoxications.

In general, the pollen revitalizes, regenerates and delays the ageing of the skin and the body. Pollen is life and it’s known as the biggest source of essential substances.”

I think the whole thing needs to be taken with a large pinch of salt as most of it is wild exaggeration, but hats off to Jose the stallholder for effort and translating it into English.

Richard Matkin



A pollen trap

Beekeeping in the United Arab Emirates

Suzanne King

As some of you know I have had reason to visit Dubai over the last year or so, before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. The first time I went was September pre-Covid. The temperature hit 46°C most days – cooler than the summer in July when it likely does reach 50°C except this would mean workers outside would be given a two-hour break, so officially Dubai only reaches 49°C!

As I lay in the shade of a tree sweating and dreaming of cool rain, I thought about the lack of insects, birds and bees. It was rare to see a fly, let alone a bee or wasp and there was only the occasional bird. Obviously Dubai is a city built from the desert, but there are now trees and shrubs and waterways and fountains. Also, to the east are hills with fresh water lakes.

The pandemic, and then the Dubai summer, prevented further visits until last December, when, as soon as lockdown Two finished, I boarded a plane with my daughter. Temperatures were much more pleasant, in the early 30s °C. I did spot the occasional fly, there were definitely more birds and, on visiting a rather gaudy garden, we saw bees, including honey bees. The first was a tiny bee about 9 mm long, but with pollen baskets! The number of photos on my phone says something of my excitement!

Then there was the visit to the Hatta Honey Centre. We did the 'tour' with a non-beekeeper guide who

then introduced me to one of the beekeepers. He was actually the director, born in Lebanon. He had spent 35 years in the USA, and has now settled in the UAE. He became a beekeeper by default, but learnt his craft mostly via Denmark.

You think beekeeping is tough in the UK? During the Dubai summer (April to October) it is too hot for the bees to forage, plus there is little forage.



Honey bee on Morning Glory

The beekeepers have to provide shade, water and feed. Whilst I could see Langstroths being used at the centre, they have designed their own polystyrene hive with extra ventilation to try to combat the heat. Traditional hives would have been made from palm trees (hollowed trunks), mud, and clay (see photo on next page). They also displayed a cave, presumably like our old bee boles.

The Hatta Honey group run 3000 hives in 25-40 apiaries. There are eight beekeepers with two helpers each. BUSY! They are trying to promote UAE honey and educate the population about real honey (sound familiar?) including the crystallisation/granulation property of honey which

again people think indicates the honey has gone off.

In terms of promotion and education, apart from the Honey Centre, they have a bee bus and observation hives which they take to schools.

Unfortunately, there is no call for pollination services in the UAE as much of the food consumed is either imported or grown in greenhouses, apart from dates. Bees can and do forage on date palms, but the palms are still mostly hand pollinated. UAE tomatoes are successful but need bumble bees for buzz pollination within a greenhouse.

There are four flows from October to April producing very different tasting honeys, one being a wildflower honey. The flowering times are short for the non-wildflowers so they are able to sell them as single floral honeys. Samples were available to taste. I was surprised to find that the wildflower honey tasted very similar to ours, but the other three – Ghaf, Samar and Sidr were very different. The Samar has a medicinal taste which reminded me of manuka honey which started a sideline conversation: UAE are planning to do research in collaboration with Australian colleagues comparing UAE honey (especially Samar) to manuka.

The average honey crop per productive colony is about 1.5 Kg/year - the decimal point is in the correct place! With good management this can increase to 10 Kg/colony/year. UAE honey is expensive. I bought a pot of the Samar honey, as it tastes so unusual, for 174 dms (£35). They do not use a queen excluder, just take frames that contain honey. Often these are not fully capped, but the water



content is not an issue.

Varroa is a big problem. Currently they treat with apivar or bayvarol. They steer away from vaping oxalic acid. I discussed my management using open mesh floors, biotechnical methods and occasional MAQS.

Currently the UAE does not have the asian hornet (*Vespa velutina nigrithorax*) although they are well aware of the problems it is causing in Europe. They do have their own hornet which predates on the colonies. There is also a bee bird that can wipe out colonies fairly quickly. As yet there is no small hive beetle.

Unfortunately with the harsh existence for honey bee colonies, losses are high so they have to import packages of bees from Egypt and Italy with all the risks that this entails.

After over an hour chatting, my daughter was wilting with hunger and I was pulled away. Incidentally the Hatta Honey Centre is keen to have samples of different honeys from around the world so if you have honey to spare they would be interested in buying some. §

Bee Improvement Group

If you have bees which haven't been treated for Varroa for several years, and you think they're quite healthy despite this, Sam (our acting Membership Secretary) would be particularly interested to know who you are, and whether you would be willing for him to come and see your bees when the season gets under way, so please get in touch sam.hampton@btinternet.com

If you would just like to join this group or would like to know a little about queen rearing, he will be holding Zoom meetings of interested members throughout the spring, so please contact Sam.

The Training Apiary

In spite of the weather, a small group of hard working members have made good progress at the RSPCA site.

We have taken delivery of 35 fruit trees, a mixture of apples, pears, plums and damsons. Some are cordons to grow up the perimeter fence, and the rest are 'step overs' which will be trained along supports to form the barriers between the hives.

Most of the trees have now been set and, together with the flower beds and the wild flower meadow should produce a wonderful sight in the summer.

Well done to all the volunteers, and keep the good work.

Richard Matkin



Supports for fruit trees



Forthcoming Events

Monday 8th February 2021 8pm

“Planting for Bee Forage”

(A Zoom session)

Norman Carreck NDB

Norman was going to talk to us last year but got stuck in traffic and never made it to the meeting.

Norman has worked at Rothamstead Research and more recently at LASI Surrey University.

Items available to buy from the association shop:

HIVE PARTS:	
NATIONAL SUPER FLAT PACK	£19.50
NATIONAL BROOD FLAT PACK	£24
14 X 12 BROOD FLAT PACK	£35
4" ROOF FLAT PACK	£36
CROWN BOARD	£13.50
FRAMED WIRE QUEEN EXCLUDER	£18
MESH FLOOR	£32
BUDGET OPEN MESH FLOOR	£16
SLOPING HIVE STAND	£27
PLASTIC NARROW ENDS	£6.50
NUCLEUS HIVE	£82.85
FLAT PACK HIVE, STAND & ONE SUPER	£235
10 SPACE CASTELLATIONS (PAIR)	£3.44
11 SPACE CASTELLATIONS (PAIR)	£3.44
STEEL FRAME RUNNERS – PAIR	£1.60

FRAMES & WAX:

SN4 SUPER FRAMES 10 PACK	£10
SN4 SUPER FRAMES 50 PACK	£33.00
DN4 BROOD FRAMES 10 PACK	£10.00
DN4 BROOD FRAMES 50 PACK	£33.00
14 X 12 BROOD FRAMES 10 PACK	£16.24
SUPER WAX FOUNDATION 10 PACK	£8.00
BROOD WAX FOUNDATION 10 PACK	£11.50
14 X 12 BROOD WAX 10 PACK	£18.00
NATIONAL DUMMY BOARD (PLASTIC)	£7.50
NATIONAL DUMMY BOARD (WOOD)	£7.00

QUEEN MARKING:

CROWN OF THORNS	£6.00
QUEEN CLIP	£4.50
MARKER PENS - ASSORTED COLOURS	£5.00
BEE BRUSH	£4.00

FEEDERS & FEEDING:

ENGLISH FEEDER	£9.50
RAPID FEEDER	£4.50
NUC FEEDER	£6

SMALL MILLER TYPE FEEDER	£1.00
FEEDER EKE	£7.00

HONEY & WAX EXTRACTING:

STAINLESS STEEL DOUBLE STRAINER	£21.00
STRAINING CLOTH	£3.50
30 LB PLASTIC BUCKET	£3.50
BAIN MARIE	£14
NYLON HONEY BUCKET VALVE	£8.50
30LB PLASTIC TAP BUCKET	£15.00

GENERAL BEEKEEPING:

SMOKER	£35.80
HIVE STRAPS	£6.50
HIVE TOOL	£7.00
PIN HAMMER	£3.50
BEE DISEASE ID CHARTS	£6.00
FRAME NAILS 500G	£2.88
POLLEN ID CHARTS	£6.00

Shop Update

Shop News

Many thanks to all those members who have visited the shop at the training apiary to purchase equipment.

We have been open regularly on Saturday mornings but as winter draws ever nearer and the rush for equipment has diminished, we have moved to a more flexible approach. The shop will now be open on Saturdays 10am-12 noon by request until early next year.

If you would like to purchase equipment, please contact Dave who will arrange for the shop to be open. It would be much appreciated if advance notice could be given.

Dave's email : dave.coates32@gmail.com

Phone number : 01283 713603

Sugar

Every few weeks, Dave continues to collect sugar (made from sugar cane) from the supplier. The sugar is available for members to purchase from the shop. Note it is too early to feed syrup this month.

Who's Who

<i>vacancy</i>	<i>Club Secretary</i>		
Sam Hampton (temporary)	Membership Secretary	<i>sam.hampton@btinternet.com</i>	
Bob Hurd	President	<i>pat90bob@gmail.com</i>	
David Coates	Chair Education Secretary	<i>dave.coates32@gmail.com</i>	01283 713603
Suzanne King	Education and Training Honey Show Secretary	<i>suzanne.king21@btinternet.com</i>	
Sam Hampton	Treasurer	<i>sam.hampton@btinternet.com</i>	
Sue Coates	Librarian	<i>susan_coates@talktalk.net</i>	
Hamish Low	Asian Hornet Team (AHT) leader	<i>hamish51151@gmail.com</i>	
Sheila Pirie	Committee member	<i>smpirie@hotmail.co.uk</i>	
Jane Ratcliffe	Committee member		
M Baker	Committee member		
Richard Matkin	Committee member	<i>richjomatkin@btinternet.com</i>	01283 812958
Sarah Winfield	Minutes Secretary		
Chris Ring	Website/Facebook	<i>ChrisDRing@outlook.com</i>	
Margaret Cowley	Newsletter Editor	<i>newsletter@honeybee.org.uk</i>	
Trustees	Bob Hurd David Coates S Hampton F Oldfield S King H Low R Matkin C Ambler	Volunteers	C Ring P Yates R Wykes R Harrison I McMillen