

Spring/Summer 2017

# Furness Flyer



A Newsletter for Furness Beekeeper Members.



## Letter from the Secretary

I cannot hardly believe we are well into the second half of the year which means not that many weeks of beekeeping left before we order the ambrosia and varroa treatment again,

We had that sudden outburst of very hot weather after a cold spell

and all hell broke loose with my bees with most of the colonies wanting to swarm. Now we have rain and wind and my advice is to take off any honey you have because it might be the last !!

On February the 13<sup>th</sup> we were all so shocked to hear of the sudden passing of Chris Sandham. She was one of the stalwarts of the club until her husband Russ needed more care to help with his dementia.

She was quite a character with a heart of gold but took no prisoners if a person did not toe the line.

I am not going to write a long obituary because we are all so upset and my words could not be adequate enough to say how we feel. As a tribute to her I have found n article she wrote for the Flyer in 2009 and Emma has included it in this newsletter.

Chris's son, also a Chris, has very generously donated his mother's beekeeping equipment to the club.

This donation has enabled us to furnish a new apiary we have just opened at Haverthwaite.

Needless to say Edna and I, and many others, will miss her very much..

The apiary at Haverthwaite was once used by David Johnson

and became redundant when David gave up his bees.

The land is owned by the Lake District National Park Authority and rented from them by a local farmer, Tony Wood.

The situation is excellent and with Gleaston most Saturdays at bursting point, we would have been foolish to pass up on the offer of continued use.

As long as the demand is there we will use both apiaries as teaching apiaries. Emma will post some photographs in this issue.

Edna has been given an excellent report after her treatment and sees the oncologist again in August.

This season has been very difficult for me to look after my bees properly, consequently I have decided to stop keeping my own bees and just do as much mentoring as I can, at the apiary, and with anyone that needs advice.

My advert is in the Beecraft magazine, but please contact me if you are interested.

Best Wishes and Happy Bee keeping to all.

D Walmsley June 2017.



## Our New Haverthwaite Apiary



We are very pleased to announce that we have opened a new apiary at Haverthwaite on land called Lag Bush Meadow.

It was once used by David Johnson and became redundant last year when David gave up his bees.

The land is owned by the Lake District National Park Authority and rented from them by a local farmer, Tony Wood.

Generously, we are allowed to use the land rent free.

We must thank Tony for the use of this meadow and the LDNPA for allowing us to erect a shed for equipment and fence off an area for the hives.

Thank you to David Johnson for arranging the work, plus organising a new gate which we will use as an entrance for parking at the top of the lane which runs parallel to the field.

Tony plans to establish a flower meadow and will not want cars and people passing over the length of it.

Ian Lockwood deserves some thanks too for negotiating with HM prison Haverigg, the providers of the shed which

we will use for the storage of equipment

Chris. Sandhams son, also a Chris, has very generously donated his mother's entire beekeeping equipment to the club.

This donation has enabled us to furnish the new apiary and we have no need to purchase any additional equipment.

This is a wonderful legacy from Chris for which we are so grateful.

The situation of Lag Bush meadow is excellent, with Gleaston most Saturdays at bursting point; we would have been foolish to pass up on the offer of its use.



As long as there is a demand for training we will use both apiaries as teaching apiaries and have no intention of leaving Gleaston for the foreseeable future.

To find Lag Bush Meadow: Take the turning to Rusland at the Haverthwaite crossroads on the A590 and then turn immediately right down what was the original A590.

Follow this road till it ends at a field gate but please take the left gate up the rough (but passable) lane.

You will see our entrance gate around two hundred yards along. It will be very nice if people called and gave us a visit..

Our apiary is open on Saturday mornings during the beekeeping season from 10.30am - 12.30pm.

D J Walmsley



### **For Sale**

3 stocks of black bees

12 - 15 empty super boxes in excellent condition also some with frames  
in all national

nuke boxes some 6 frame, some 5 frame in good condition

3 Ashworth feeders

Various bits and pieces

Tel: 01539441319 or 07436793120

### **NBU Alert: High Mite Levels in Colonies**

In some regions of the UK, colonies are starting to show symptoms of high levels of Varroa mites, for example wing deformities and perforated cappings. Therefore, it might be prudent to start monitoring colony mite populations and information on how to do this can be found on page 15 of the Managing Varroa booklet. Also, the Varroa calculator can be used to help calculate your estimated mite population in your colonies:

<http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/public/BeeDiseases/varroaCalculator.cfm>

If your colonies have a high amount of Varroa, i.e 1000 mites after calculating it from the average drop, you may want to treat them with a registered varroacide

## Ford Park Plant Nursery



This Spring Ford Park have opened their new plant nursery. They specialise in herbaceous perennials (plants that come back year after year) that are wildlife friendly. The plants are grown and cared for by Head Gardener Sarah, Val the new horticultural trainee and all the amazing Ford Park volunteers. All the plants are hardy and will grow happily in Ulverston and its surrounding areas.



The nursery was built largely by the volunteers during a concentrated effort during March, working in all weathers six days a week. Sarah says, “We are so proud of it.”

Everything is grown in an wonderful mix, so there is something for every-

one: people and wildlife, including numerous insects.

The new plant nursery is inside the kitchen garden that still provides fresh food for the cafe. If you venture to the back of the kitchen garden you will come to the Rose Arch. This beautiful area is available for Weddings and Naming Ceremonies.

For children there is the Soup Trail. Dotted around the garden are little plaques that children can use to make rubbings on an available leaflet. They need to find all the ingredients to make a delicious soup. What a pleasant way to spend an afternoon!



Whilst I was there Head Gardener Sarah showed me around the garden and pointed out some of the ways plants are good for wildlife.



“Cirsium rivulare (left) is looking great at the moment. Plants like this on which many flowers grow close together make it worth the journey for bees!”



They even sell teasels (left & below), which some may see as a weed. Sarah says, “We love them as not only do they provide pollen, nectar and seeds - which the birds love, but they also collect ‘bowls of water’ for insects where the leaves join the stem.



“Some flowers have ‘guidelines’ which show insects where to find the pollen and nectar. These delicate corncockles (left) growing in the garden are now sold out in the nursery, but we may grow a second crop for late summer sales.”

“The foxglove (right) uses its speckles, which look like pollen, to attract



bees into the flowers where it stores its nectar. Hiding its nectar inside the flower prevents it from evaporating. Its pollen is along the top inside of the flower so it rubs off on the back of the bee as it enters to collect the nectar.”



“We grow salsify (left & below) for the flowers which turn into these fabulous giant dandelion-like seed heads as well as eating the roots in soups and stews”



## **Beekeeping in a Small Garden**



Many thanks to Russ and Chris Sandham for hosting an afternoon in their garden.

Chris keeps two hives in a very small space adjacent to the Furness General Hospital in Barrow and produces very large amounts of honey.

We did not completely fill her garden with beekeepers and had plenty room to sit for some tea and cake after finding and marking the queens.



## **The Accidental Beekeeper**

In June 2004-ish I went to the hospice Gala and car boot. I was fascinated by a group of people trying to put up a gazebo. Later I went back to see what it was all about. It was some beekeepers selling honey ( at 3 times the price of Asda) . They were busy talking to each other and told me the Bee show was at 11 am, what that was I'd no idea, so I picked up a leaflet and left.

That leaflet stayed stuck on my fridge for 2 years, it was advertising “ Free Beekeeping lessons “.

A long time later an old friend called to see me and noticed the leaflet on still on the fridge, she said her sister-in-law fancied keeping bees and could she have the information.

I gave the lady a ring with the details and decided to go along with her to see what it was all about.

I phoned the number on my leaflet and spoke to chap who told where to meet and to bring a pair of wellies and did I want a membership form !! Yes ok.

My *other half* wasn't too keen to come with me and wanted nothing to do with BEES.

That was until the membership form came along with the ‘summer programme’.....

Meet at Mrs So&So look at the bees and have some tea.

Meet at Mr & Mrs house Look at the Bees and garden have some tea.

Barbeque at this persons garden.

Rare bred sheep shearing have some tea., there were shows to go to and boat trips and stuff going on all summer, all for £5 membership.

for £5 membership.

This was when the *other half* decided to come along to lessons.

So off we went to the Apiary one not so bright Saturday in April 2006.

A kindly lady sorted out a beesuit for us and we had a look in the hives. That was all ok with suits on I felt safe and it was interesting looking at the bees at work. My *other half* was still in the car park looking from a distance!

The people were friendly and welcoming and we soon got use to our weekly classes and the *other half* gradually moved a little closer and after 3 or 4 weeks managed it as far as the hut.

He was still as he put it “marginally less terrified.” I was having a great time, it didn’t take me long to fit in as it’s in my nature to be nosey and helpful. We went to Plumgarth, Hospice Gala, Lakeland Rose show and lots more. Visited members homes and gardens had some lovely cakes and teas and looked at some wonderful views, the summer just sailed by.

Then, OH DEAR, the question came “So, when do you want your bees?”

My Goodness it never occurred to me that I’d have my own bees. The *other half* was gob smacked and I went home to study the Garden to see where they could go. I thought that if I didn’t get bees I couldn’t belong to the club! *Not true but the thought of no more visits and cream teas was bad.*

Our house backs on to the hospital car park with a public footpath at the back of us. I had visions of the bees swarming to the canopy at the entrance of the

hospital. But that’s ok I’d get someone to get them for me. They say that bees are docile when swarming. *Tell that to lad that cuts the grass and jumped off his motor mower and ran like hell when they swarmed last year.*

The *other half* was having a duck fit, { Must have been all the cream teas }

However I’d taken note in my lessons and knew that it was all about **Where**

you placed your hives, so on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2006 my first hive was delivered.

I was and still am very lucky to have Dr Dougie living nearby. He’s supposed to be retired, but is always ‘on call’.

This is my 3<sup>rd</sup> season and the *other half* has got used to the little blighters after getting stung on his face a couple of times. Our first year produced 50lbs of honey, last year was 29lbs and this year it’s **150 lbs** and there could be more to come.

Of course the *other half* is still complaining only now it’s because the house is turning into a production line and the kitchen is so full of honey and equipment that no meals are being made.

But then, there’s no pleasing some people.

We have come to love our Saturdays and I’m now Assistant to the Apiary manager.

We have met some lovely people and made some lifelong friends, our summers just fly by and our social life has never been better.

We just love every minute of it.

Chris Sandham 2009

## What are the connections between solar panels and honey bees?



You might not think that the humble honeybee has much in common with solar power. But actually the two are connected in unique and interesting ways. The Southern Alliance for Clean Energy has a special connection to honeybees with three residents beekeepers on staff, a hive at our Asheville office, and it goes without saying that we're pretty big fans of harnessing the sun for clean, renewable energy.

When it comes to honeybees, there is not a more efficient animal on this planet and humans have a lot to learn from these hardworking, social insects. It's no surprise that smart land use and business practices are being deployed around the globe to foster solar development and support pollinators. Solar farms need land, which can easily coexist as a food-rich "pollinator friendly" habitat.

One solar installer in North Carolina has grabbed headlines for finding a way to "host pollen-producing plants

for bees and other beneficial insects" around large solar installations.

By far the sweetest (pun intended) bee + solar combos we found in the U.S., is Minnesota-based energy co-op Connexus Energy who has partnered with local beekeepers to set up beehives in the same field as the solar panels. They even provide "solar honey" to customers "who have subscribed to receive a portion of their household energy from the solar garden." Connexus' site also has a "garden beneath its solar array that includes 10 species of native grasses and 36 species of flowers" to provide pollen and nectar (what eventually becomes honey) for the busy bees.

Swapping out gravel and turf grass, often located underneath solar panels, for native flowers and grasses, is a great way to provide pollen and nectar (2 main food sources) for nearby bees and other pollinators. We recommend selecting native, pesticide-free plants that grow between 1-2 feet tall in full sun, depending on how far off the ground the solar panels are. If you select plants that grow too tall, then you risk blocking sun from hitting the panels and creating energy.

"Many cities and counties require visual buffers around a solar farm and, instead of ornamental shrubs, our company is using more native plants – like magnolias, wax myrtles and American

holly. These native plants grow quickly, making it an easy business decision.” – Kathryn Parker, vegetation construction manager with Strata Solar of Raleigh.

Our own organization has experimented with providing pollinator habitat around our solar arrays. We’ve had mixed results (some plants just didn’t take or grew for one season but didn’t return). It’s important to find the right plants for your area, but a successful garden can provide food for bees, at-

tractive landscaping for people and cut down on the time needed to cut grass and maintain vegetation: a triple score!

Sarah Giliam <http://blog.cleanenergy.org>



*Summer Solstice* by Amanda Clark. ©

A Poem by Pablo Neruda.

Let the wax raise green statues,  
Let the honey drip in infinite  
tongues,  
Let the ocean be a big comb and  
the Earth a tunic of flowers,  
let the world be a cascade, mag-  
nificent hair,  
unceasing growth of Beedom.

Painting by Amanda Clark  
<http://earthangelsart.blogspot.co.uk>

## The Hive at Kew Gardens

“My approach to a sculpture seeks to frame nature so one can experience it more intimately,” says British artist Wolfgang Buttress, whose 17-metre high Hive installation opens at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, in London on Saturday. “I want visitors to feel enveloped, wrapped-up and involved in the experience, rather than adopting the position of an external observer.”

Its 170,000 pieces of aluminium, suspended from the ground, appear as a twisting swarm of bees from afar, but as you come closer it becomes a hive-like structure of latticework whose low humming sound and hundreds of flickering LED lights draws you in to a multi-sensory instillation. The intensity of sound and light is controlled by the vibrations of honeybees in an actual hive at Kew that is connected to the sculpture.

Honeybees communicate primarily with each other through vibrations. By

biting a wooden stick connected to a conductor, visitors to the Hive can get a sense of four types of vibrational messages through the bones in their head. These include the tooting and quacking signals that virgin queen bees make when they challenge each other in a display of strength to determine who will be the queen of the hive; begging, when a bee requests food from another another; and the waggle dance which communicates the location of a good food source.

No-one outside of a research laboratory will have had the opportunity to experience these bee messages which form part of pioneering work into honeybee communication being conducted by Martin Bencsik, a reader in physics at Nottingham Trent University.

Buttress, from Nottingham, originally conceived the Hive as the centrepiece of the UK Pavilion at the 2015 Milan Expo after researching the well-publicised decline of bees and stumbling across Bencsik’s research. It integrates architecture, art and design with science and the environment.

A one-acre wild flower meadow planted with 34 native species, including clovers and cornflowers, and a few later flowering cultivated varieties surrounds the Hive at Kew, along with 65 metres of



native hedging. When in bloom, the idea is that the buzzing of wild bees, of which 50 species have been identified at Kew feeding on the flowers, will greet the visitor as they walk along a path to the upper level of The Hive where an oculus connects the structure with the sky and the elements (unlike the dark, dry cavity where honeybees live).



Created and built by engineers Simmonds Studio, architectural practice BDP and York-based Stage One, the £6m Hive won the gold-medal for best pavilion at the Milan Expo, whose theme was feeding the planet.

With bees pollinating 70 of the most important crops that we eat, including most fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, as they collect the nectar and pollen from the crops' flowers, Buttress says he wanted to highlight the significance of pollinators to our existence. "Bees are highly sensitive creatures and can be seen as sentinels for the health of the planet," he says.

Kew's director, Richard Deverell, said the Hive is a "great way to tell the story about the relationship between plants and insects". For that reason, he says the botanical gardens are the perfect

new home for a structure that allows us: "to explore the urgent issues we face in relation to pollinators, their intimate relationships with plants and their vital role in helping us feed a rapidly growing population".

Deverell says he hopes the Hive - the first UK Pavilion to be reused and brought back to Britain after an Expo - will attract a different audience to Kew, which had 1.6m visitors last year. Kew has spent two year's worth of its events and festival budget on the structure, which is hosting talks, tours and trails throughout its 18 months in residence.



The thoughtful Buttress says he wants the Hive to reconnect people with nature. "I opened a bee hive for the first time two years ago and it gave me a different outlook on life and how humans are connected to nature. We are in danger of losing that vitally important connection, especially in cities."

The Hive's meditative soundtrack of a 40,000-strong honeybee colony, along with instruments and the human voice, created by members of the band Spiritualized, has been named as one of the Guardian's best albums of 2016 .

Alison Benjamin [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com)

## Why Honeybees Are Good at Grooming (It's All in the Hair)

Honeybees are pretty good at what they do, gathering as much as 30 percent of their body weight in protein-rich pollen to bring back to the hive per foraging trip.

But it gets awfully messy. When bees prowl around a flower, perhaps drinking nectar for immediate energy, pollen falls all over them and sticks to the hairs that cover their bodies — even their eyes.

They use their legs to clean off most of the pollen and fill structures called pollen baskets on their rear legs.

Their grooming process is efficient. Researchers at Georgia Tech found that a bee could shed about 15,000 pollen grains in two minutes as it brushed itself clean. Guillermo J. Amador, David L. Hu and colleagues recorded the behavior on video because they wanted to learn more details about how the bees clean up regularly. They reported their work in *Bioinspiration & Biomimetics*.



Dr. Hu's lab in the mechanical engineering department of Georgia Tech concentrates on biological processes that may have engineering applications. One of its subjects is how different animals keep clean. So they study the structure of things like cat tongues and eyelashes.

Insects are interesting because, Dr. Hu said, they operate on a different scale from humans. When we want to create things that we can clean, he said, "we make surfaces that are very smooth — like car smooth." The same is true of our countertops. And that's largely because we use water.

But for something the size of a bee, water doesn't work so well. "When insects get into water," he said, "they can't get out because of surface tension." So nature has come up with other solutions. "Nature," as Dr. Hu puts it, "doesn't do smooth."

But it does hairy very well. So a bee uses hairy legs to clean a hairy body and eyes. Dr. Amador and Dr. Hu concentrated on the eyes, which a bee needs to clean in order to see clearly.

They used several techniques to study what the bees were doing and how much pollen they were getting rid of. One of the techniques used backlighting to silhouette bees and pollen grains so

computer software could recognize and count the black dots against a light background. Dr. Hu said the technique was inspired by Pig-Pen, the Peanuts character who was always accompanied by a cloud of dirt particles.

They also used a bee leg, removed from the bee and attached to a small motorized apparatus. Dr. Amador, now a researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems in Stuttgart, Germany, said that different spacing of the hairs on the leg and the eye turned out to be important, a bit like cleaning a hairbrush with a comb.

You wouldn't use a brush to clean another brush with exactly the same kind of bristles.

There are a number of ways the information might be useful. We can turn the hose on a car, but not on sensors, microchips and microrobots.

As for the smooth surfaces humans are so fond of, Dr. Hu was reassuring.

“We’re not going to have hairy tabletops anytime soon,” he said, “or hairy cars.”

James Gorman [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)



## Thousands of honey bees descend on pelican crossing



A real buzz was created when a swarm of bees engulfed a post in a Carmarthen street.

Eye-witnesses have described how they saw thousands of honey bees descend on the town centre on Monday afternoon.

One resident managed to snap a picture of the insects, who had made a temporary home for themselves near a pedestrian crossing on Water Street in the town centre.

“My partner came into the house completely covered in bees,” said local resident Lauren Brown.

“We went outside and there were thousands of them, all over the place. I’ve never seen anything like it before; they were everywhere on Water Street and Catherine Street.

“My partner was able to grab a picture of them near the pelican crossing. I didn’t want to go anywhere near as I’m terrified of them!”

It’s believed the bees remained in the area for up to four hours, before a

local beekeeper was able to safely take them away.

Although the sight of thousands of bees flying around can unsettle people, they are normally just looking for a new home, and are not intent on attacking or stinging anyone.

They swarm because they are looking for

somewhere to form a new colony, with each swarm containing a queen bee and thousands of worker bees.

“It’s right in the middle of the season, so there’s no need for anyone to be alarmed,” said John Pilgrim, chairman of Carmarthenshire Beekeepers Association, who passed the scene at the time of the swarm.

“As the old saying goes: a swarm in May is worth a load of hay; a swarm in June is worth a silver spoon; but a swarm in July is not worth a fly.

“It’s started a bit earlier this year so we’re right in the middle of it.

“The natural propensity of the honey bee is to regenerate by forming a swarm, and it can happen anywhere.”

Mr Pilgrim said that people should not be frightened of swarms of bees, adding: “It’s a natural process, they’re not out to attack anyone or sting anyone.

“They’re not violent creatures.

“If they’re part of a swarm, it’s likely that they’re ‘drunk’ on honey anyway.”

Robert Harries [www.WalesOnline.com](http://www.WalesOnline.com)

## Bees can play football and score goals

It's long been thought the bee is a clever little blighter...

They're the only insects we get food from.

They can lift way more than their non-flying friend the ant.

And then there's the waggle dance- the merry jig that honey bees do for their nest mates to show them where the best source of food is. Depending on the direction they dance in and how long it lasts, their mates can work out where the grub is!

Well now, a species of bumblebee is proving that, despite "having a brain the size of a poppy seed," they can also play football...

The bees surprised scientists at Queen Mary, University of London, by working out how to use a novel tool to obtain a sugary treat simply by watching how it was done.

Buff-tailed bumblebees witnessed a trained bee roll a ball to a goal.

They were then "brought on" for their chance of glory and quickly started scoring.



Most even realised they could use a ball closer to the goal too.

The research builds on previous experiments from the same lab, which taught bees to tug a string to get a reward.

The learning abilities of animals without big vertebrate brains often get severely underestimated, joint lead author Dr Olli J Loukola says. "The idea that small brains constrain insects is kind of wrong, or old-fashioned."

"Insects continually surprise us with how smart they are, and this is another really cool chapter in that story," says Margaret Couvillon, a bee researcher at Virginia Tech who was not involved with the study.

We know what you're thinking - can we see a bee five-a-side in the future?

Dr Loukola says he could certainly train some to score on one side of an arena and some on the opposite side. Then he might be able to study whether bumblebees could share a ball.

From [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)

## 120,000 bees, 6-foot-long honeycomb found in woman's ceiling

Two months ago, Lisa Ohrmundt heard some buzzing around the side of her house.

The Decatur, Georgia, resident didn't think much of it, but she called her friend -- who's a beekeeper -- just in case. Her friend came over one afternoon with a Bee Box, hoping to lure some of the honey bees inside.

A couple hundred bees swarmed around the pair as they unsuccessfully tried to lead them away from the house. That number may sound high to some, but it was nothing compared to the hive inside Ohrmundt's ceiling: There were 120,000 bees nesting in a beehive above her living room.

"They had a condo in our ceiling -- why would they go in that little box?" Ohrmundt thought after she found out the news.

There were 120,000 bees nesting above Georgia resident Lisa Ohrmundt's living room.

Ohrmundt never heard a single buzz come from her ceiling, so she wasn't prepared for the 6-foot-long honeycomb Georgia Bee Removal employee Bobby Chaisson pulled from her ceiling on Tuesday.

"It looked like a scene from 'Dexter,'" Ohrmundt told CBS News. "There was plastic everywhere, everything was

taped off. I stuck my head under the plastic as the beekeeper got to work."

Bees started "falling out" of the ceiling, and globs of thick, sweet honey followed, Ohrmundt said.

A beekeeper used a heat sensor to spot the hive, which was high up in Ohrmundt's ceiling. Once he located the hive, he climbed up a ladder and cut into the ceiling, slowly pulling back the sheetrock.

Bees instantly started "falling out" of the ceiling, and globs of thick, sweet honey followed, Ohrmundt said.

Over the course of six hours, the beekeeper was stung about 10 to 15 times as he used a vacuum to suck them off the honeycomb and into large canisters. He plans to safely relocate them.

"This guy said this hive has probably been in there at least 2 years," said Ohrmundt, adding that she's lived in the home for about 9 years.

Neighbors told Ohrmundt the previous homeowners also had a huge honeycomb removed. She believes they may not have properly sealed the area off and the bees entered the home through a crack.

Chaisson caulked the ceiling back up and put insulation between the ceiling and the second floor so the bees couldn't get back in.

Ohrmundt owns a landscaping business and she encounters bees frequently -- but never in her life had she encountered as many bees as she did that day.

"I was never scared of them before, but when all those bees started flying, I was like, 'I'm out of here,'" she said.

So far, it looks like Chaisson's work was successful. Ohrmundt found about 20 dying bees on the floor the next day, but that's to be expected, considering they just lost their home.

With all the commotion, Ohrmundt wasn't even thinking about the honey dripping from the walls. Chaisson told her there was about 60 pounds of it -- the honeycomb weighed about 120 pounds.

"My roommate is furious for not getting any of the honey," Ohrmundt joked. "But the beekeeper said he would bring me some."

Jennifer Earl [www.cbs.com](http://www.cbs.com)



## Solitary Bee Project needs the public's help

Scientists are appealing for the public's help to record sightings of common, but relatively unknown, native insects – solitary bees.

There are about 250 species of solitary bee in the UK, which means they account for more than 90% of our total bee species. They are so named because, unlike honeybees and bumblebees, they rear their young on their own.

The Solitary Bee Project has been launched by two scientists at Anglia Ruskin University – PhD student Stephanie Maher and Dr Thomas Ings, Senior Lecturer in Zoology at Anglia Ruskin – with the aim of learning more about these bees and where they nest.

Maher explained: “Relatively little is known about this vast group of bees, particularly compared to their more famous cousins; the bumblebees and honeybees.

“In particular we have very little knowledge about where they choose to nest and why. In fact over the last 25 years, only one academic paper has been published from the UK containing data about their nest sites.

“Solitary bees have a hugely important role as they help to pollinate our crops, trees and wildflowers. The aim of our project is to gain a greater understanding of how they nest and where, so this can be taken into account in a range of areas including agriculture, gardening and urban planning.”

The Anglia Ruskin scientists have chosen to focus on four species of solitary bee. These species all nest in aggregations (nests grouped together), making them easier to spot.

The four species are the Tawny mining bee (*Andrena fulva*) and the Ashy mining bee (*Andrena cineraria*), which both become active in spring, the Yellow legged furrow bee (*Halicetus rubicundus*), which is a summer bee, and the Ivy bee (*Colletes hederæ*), which is most abundant during late summer and autumn.

Maher added: “Solitary bees vary greatly from their physical appearance to the way they live, making them truly fascinating insects to study.

“We just need as many people as possible to find aggregations, which are lots of nests grouped together, and tell us if they spot bees using them.

“If people think they might have seen nesting aggregations in previous years, perhaps in gardens or local parks, then we encourage them to take a closer look at those.

“Or perhaps people might want spend a little time searching the ground on their usual walking route or daily commute. They might be surprised by what they find!”

To take part in The Solitary Bee Project, visit

<http://thesolitarybeeproject.org/>

From <https://www.cambridgenetwork.co.uk>

## The Solitary Bee Project

### What are solitary bees?

There are more than 200 species of solitary bee in the U.K. meaning they account for more than 90% of all our bee species. They are so named because, unlike honeybees and bumblebees, they live alone. They vary greatly from their physical appearance to the way they live, making them a truly fascinating group to learn about. They are also very important to us as they help pollinate our crops, trees and wildflowers.

### The mystery of the solitary bees

Quite little is known about this vast group, particularly compared to their more famous cousins; the bumblebees and honeybee. One part we have very

little knowledge about is where they choose to nest and why. By gaining a greater understanding of nesting, we can better inform our land management practices in everything from agriculture to gardening to urban planning. That is the aim of this project.

### Meet the bees

To begin our journey to understanding nesting we have chosen four solitary bee species to focus on. These species all nest in aggregations (lots of nests grouped together), making them easier to spot. They are also active at different times of the year so we can begin to get an overview of what's happening throughout the season.

From <http://thesolitarybeeproject.org/>



Tawny Mining Bee  
*Andrena fulva*



Ashy Mining Bee  
*Andrena cineraria*



Yellow Legged Furrow Bee  
*Halictus rubicundus*



Ivy Bee  
*Colletes hederae*

## Cemetery beekeeping, honey operation buzzes among graves



NEW YORK (AP) — The silent graves and mausoleums of Brooklyn's Green-Wood cemetery are the final resting place of luminaries who created a buzz when they were alive, like composer Leonard Bernstein, newspaperman Horace Greeley and maverick artist Jean-Michel Basquiat.

It's also home to some 600,000 honeybees and a beekeeping operation that churns out honey sold under the brand name "The Sweet Hereafter." Brooklyn beekeeper Davin Larson, 30, who worked with bees as a youngster growing up in the Midwest, got the idea for the hives while listening to a classical music concert at Green-Wood's central chapel two years ago. "I was sitting there when I thought, "This has to be a perfect place to keep bees in the city,"" he said.

Founded in 1839, Green-Wood sprawls over 478 acres of rolling hills, winding roads and pretty paths and ponds, making it one of the larger green areas in the city.

Larson proposed the idea to cemetery volunteer Nicole Francis, herself a backyard beekeeper. She sold the con-

cept to the cemetery's public programming director.

Today, the bees help pollinate the cemetery's tons of flowering plants and trees, said John Connolly, Green-Wood's General Manager Public Engagement and Involvement.

To help defray the high cost of maintaining the hives, supporters of the program are encouraged to shell out \$500 to sponsor a hive, or \$250 for half a hive.

Green-Wood's beekeepers harvested 200 pounds of honey this year, sold from a wheeled cart outside the cemetery's gothic main gate.

In the spring, the bees feed on sugar water, which encourages them to build honeycombs. Then, depending on the weather, they produce honey from April through June, Larson said. In the fall, the bees are fed a formula twice as sweet to ensure they have enough food through the winter.

"We probably bought 400 pounds of sugar this year," Larson said.

Green-Wood contains the remains of 560,000 people, including decorative arts designer Louis Comfort Tiffany, Brooklyn Dodgers owner Charles Ebbetts, box-score inventor Henry Chadwick and "Wizard of Oz" actor Frank Morgan (who played the Wizard and other characters).

"I was concerned people whose have relatives buried in Green-Wood would object, but they've been nothing but supportive," Larson said.





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