



# The London Beekeepers' Association

# LBKA News

## June, 2016

Welcome to this month's newsletter! Since I'm away at the moment and I've not had time to coordinate articles, this is rather hastily put together in my travelling gaps. That's not to say that the articles have been hastily written! Regular contributors have once again written an informative set of articles. We've a few announcements and we have regular features from Richard, Howard, Mark, Emily and even a new Bee of the Month feature from Mark. Two of our course attendees – Sue Gurner and Ray Lancashire – have also sent photos from our second Introduction to Beekeeping course. This month has more photos than usual, to try and make up for last month's dearth.

<a href="#">From our Chair</a>	1
<a href="#">Announcements</a>	2
<a href="#">Bee of the month: Green-Eyed Flower Bee</a>	4
<a href="#">May's monthly meeting: Queen Rearing for the Small Scale Beekeeper</a>	5
<a href="#">Second Introduction to Beekeeping course</a>	6
<a href="#">June in the Apiary</a>	6
<a href="#">Focus on Forage</a>	8
<a href="#">Adventures in Beeland: What's flowering now: early May</a>	10
<a href="#">Upcoming events</a>	12
<a href="#">Committee</a>	13

A big thank you to all this month's contributors: **Emily Abbott, Richard Glassborow, Sue Gurner, Ray Lancashire, Howard Nichols, Mark Patterson and Emily Scott.**

I'm looking for people to volunteer to write for next month's newsletter – to write up Bee Health Day, to do a Facebook digest. . . and anything else you'd like to do. Please contact me if you're able to help out. I will contact other regular contributors for their pieces.

*Aidan Slingsby*  
Editor  
[services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk)

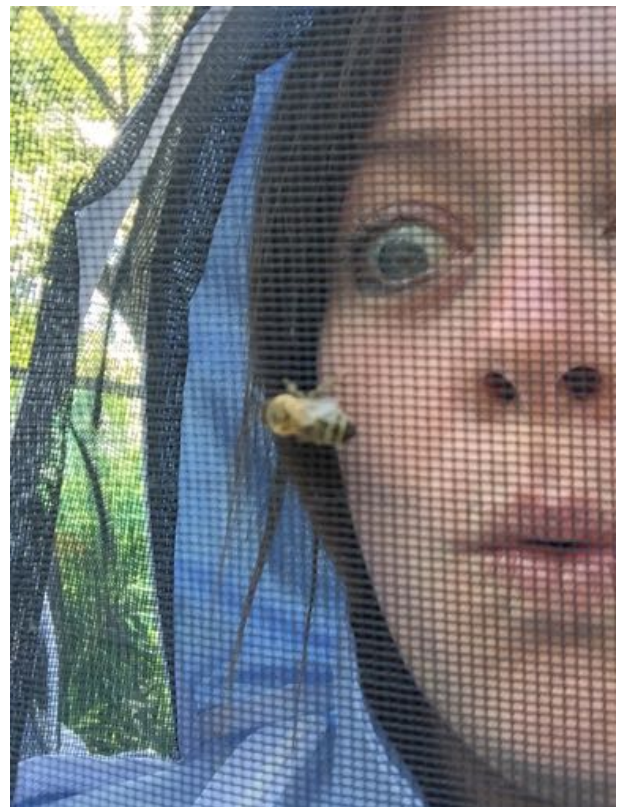
## From our Chair

*Richard Glassborow*  
[chair@lbka.org.uk](mailto:chair@lbka.org.uk)

Either London beekeepers have heeded the pleas for better swarm control or the weather conditions this spring have not encouraged the bees into swarm mode in quite the numbers we saw last year. Shall we encourage ourselves by saying it is perhaps a mixture of both.

Either way, I and, as far as I am aware, others on the swarm collection list are not seeing the numbers of swarm calls usually experienced by now. (I hope I don't regret saying that). But this is probably as good a time as any to clarify how the LBKA is managing swarms this year.

In previous years we have tried to follow best practice and take collected swarms to a dedicated quarantine apiary where their health and temperament can



*Bee wonderment at our Introduction to Beekeeping course. Photograph by Sue Gurner.*



*Ecology Centre, Holland Park – the venue for our Bee Health day.*

be assessed, treatment can be administered if necessary (principally for varroa), and then bring them on to BBKA nucleus standards for sale to members. Swarms can be given but not sold (insurance becomes invalidated) but the logistics of raising full nucs in the middle of London are considerable and rely heavily on the good will and hard work of the swarm collectors and swarm apiary managers (thank you Karin Courtman for past services and Paul Vagg who managed last last year and doing so again this and all those who are on the collection list).

Partly of course this is a voluntary public service. But there are costs to the association: swarm collectors get a flat rate contribution to expenses of £20 (bad luck if it is in a congestion zone), frames, nucs, treatment and feed have to be provided. The economics work if the nucs can be sold for a reasonable price but last year there were so many swarms around and it seemed members were happy to get bees of unknown status for free rather than pay for some where all the hard work had been done.

The sales calendar is challenging too. It is understandable that nucs become difficult to sell in late summer when there is limited time to build them up into a strong colony with a better chance of surviving winter. The time of high demand is early spring when beekeepers want to replace winter losses and before splits start becoming available. But that means over-wintering nucs, with months of care and attention rewarded by relatively low success rates.

So this is why, this year, the committee decided to try a hybrid policy, facilitating both swarm collectors to deliver swarms for free (but flat rate expenses paid) direct to beekeepers wanting bees and not minding the uncertainties of swarms, and, if collectors prefer or cannot find a receiver, raising swarms to BBKA nuc standards for sale.

We would still like to find more swarm apiaries across London to make it easier for collectors from all over to bring swarms in and for collectors to collect. And

we are trying to link new beekeepers who would like to learn how to collect swarms with more experienced swarm collectors so they can join up on a call-out, skills can be passed on and we have more people able and willing to collect swarms.

But so far this season the bees are not cooperating: they are largely staying put in their nests so we do not yet have a test for this policy or a capacity problem!

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## Announcements

**This is our official place for announcements.** If you only read one section of the newsletter, it should be this one!

### June's Monthly Meeting is Bee Health Day

Our June Monthly meeting will be replaced by Bee Health Day, 10:00-16:00 at the Ecology Centre, Holland Park, Kensington, W8 6LU. Howard, Richard, Mark and others will run this day which will be about brood diseases and how to recognise them, using bees from our Holland Park apiary. **This members' only event is limited to 40 people – and there aren't many places left – please check with Howard [education@lbka.org.uk](mailto:education@lbka.org.uk).**

### Lambeth Country Show Wants You!

*Emily Abbot*  
[events@lbka.org.uk](mailto:events@lbka.org.uk)

It's the 42nd Country Show at Brockwell Park on 16th-17th July from 12-8pm, and we have a stall there again. It's an event that we all love. There's sheep shearing, a Best in Class sheep competition, jousting, owls, music, food, sheepdog trials and the LBKA! Our stall is in the Farm Zone and we have an observation hive there which is always popular with children and adults alike. We also have pollinator friendly seeds to sell, leaflets about bees, competitions, lots of chatting to the public, and members' honey and products of the hive to sell (let us know if you have any you'd like to sell there, although it might be too early in the season for many of us).

I'm looking for volunteers to come and help man the stall over the weekend, with people needed to help set up at about 10am on the Saturday, then manning the stall through to 8pm that evening. On Sunday we will need volunteers from 11.30 am ready for the opening at 12pm, through to helping us close down and pack up, finishing at about 9.30pm. Please email me at



The area we planted at Eden community garden last spring, now looking fantastic.

[events@lbka.org.uk](mailto:events@lbka.org.uk) if you have any time you can offer over us and I'll put a rota together. I'll also be emailing people who have said they'd be happy to help in the past so please keep an eye open for that too.

It's a really good weekend so please do give some time as we'll need 20-30 volunteers to make this work and not be too burdensome on just a few.

## Forage planting

As part of our **Tesco Bags of Help** funded project we are planting an area outside the Mudchute Farm cafe with bee friendly garden flowers on **Saturday 25th June** from **1200-1600**. This is the first of several opportunities to help plant for bees at Mudchute.

We need volunteers to help prepare the ground and plant flowers. All tools and gloves will be provided. There'll also be refreshments for those taking part.

For further information contact Mark on [forage@lbka.org.uk](mailto:forage@lbka.org.uk).

## Apiary available

St. Paul's way trust school in Poplar are offering space within their school grounds for a competent beekeeper to place 1-2 hives. There is no rent payable nor will it be paid. There is an expectation staff and pupils can attend some inspections.

The school eventually wants to train its staff and pupils to care for hives of their own but for now this is not possible so they are offering space to site hives for free.

Interested persons should contact [garylynch@spwt.net](mailto:garylynch@spwt.net).

## Pesticides And Bees

It would seem that there's a chance that some "bee-friendly" plants in some garden centres have been

treated with neonicotinoids. Dave Goulson – scientist, speaker and campaigner – is trying to raise money to help screen for these plants and advise garden centres where levels are high. This seems a worthy cause.

If you're interested to know more, please see <https://walacea.com/campaigns/pesticides-neonics-and-bees-keeping-bees-safe-in-our-gardens/>.

## WhatsApp groups

*This announcement is repeated from last month.*

We are trialling use of a couple of "WhatsApp" groups. WhatsApp is a messaging app for smartphones which makes it easy to send instant messages to a group of people. We are trialling this to try to find good ways to help members contact each other more easily. There are two groups. If you'd like to join either of them, ask Aidan at [services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk).

**LBKA-swarms:** This WhatsApp group is for both **swarm collectors** and **budding swarm collectors**. The idea is that when a swarm collector goes to collect a swarm, they can inform the group so that budding swarm collectors can come along and watch/help. Swarm collectors can also use this to coordinate themselves. Please only use this group for the purposes of coordinating swarm attendance!

**LBKA-demos:** This WhatsApp group is for **people who are happy to demonstrate some beekeeping** and for **people who want to come and watch**. The idea is that you're going to do something like an artificial swarm and are happy to interested members to come along, send a group message and invite people. Please only use this group if you have something to demonstrate.

These groups are trials and their success depends on how people use them. We hope that a mixture of new and experienced beekeepers will join these groups and that knowledge can be shared. We also always need new swarm collectors, so the more people who are comfortable doing it, the better! Also remember that all LBKA members are volunteers and have other pressures on their time

## Old announcements from May

Check previous newsletters at <http://lbka.org.uk/newsletters.html> or contact [services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk) for more details.

**Assets to LBKA charity:** members voted at our EGM to transfer our assets to the new LBKA charity.

**Vlad Zamfir:** The committee have co-opted Vlad Zamfir ([vlad.zamfir@lbka.org.uk](mailto:vlad.zamfir@lbka.org.uk)) onto the committee. He will help run our Mudchute apiary, web analytics and digital outreach.

**Bee waiting list:** Our bees/swarm/nucs waiting list is at [http://lbka.org.uk/swarm\\_list.html/](http://lbka.org.uk/swarm_list.html/). Aidan ([services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk)) can add/remove you to/from this. Members can also use this list to offer bees to members.

**Tesco Grant:** We were awarded £8K by Tesco to help revive the Meadows at Mudchute.

**Mudchute Farm Fundraising Summer Party:** £50 (food and drink included) on 29th June 2016 from email [banquet@mudchute.org](mailto:banquet@mudchute.org).

**East London beekeepers:** If you're in East London and treat for varroa with a "conventional" way, you might be able to help Glasgow-based Andrew Shaw.

**Vicarage apiary site available:** Next door to Fulham Palace.

**Joy Everley Jewellers:** There's an opportunity to sell honey outside the Joy Everley Jewellers shop in Soho (W1F 7RF) on **23rd July between 12:00-17:00?**

**South of England Show – Bees & Honey Marquee:** needs stewards on 9th, 10th & 11th June. Stewards are allocated to either a morning or afternoon slot and have the other half of the day to look around the show. Email [chief.steward@deodar.org.uk](mailto:chief.steward@deodar.org.uk) for more information.

**Bee Bonanza at Stepney City Farm:** Anyone is interested running or helping run an LBKA stall?

**Wild bee talk:** Free talk by Russell Miller on 16th June, 18:00-20:00, in Stoke Newington. Book here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/free-bee-talk-with-russell-miller-tickets-25376843823>.

## Old announcements from March

**Be a mentor:** We're looking for mentors. Find out more from Tristram at [mentoring@lbka.org.uk](mailto:mentoring@lbka.org.uk).

**Apiaries on offer:** The London Fire Brigade are offering Wennington (RM13 9EE), Hornchurch (RM11 1SH), Woodford (IG8 0BS), Park Royal (NW10 7NU), Chiswick (W4 4JY), Biggin Hill (TN16 3UB) and Addington (CR0 0QA) as potential beekeeping sites; contact [services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk) for more details.

**£2500 donation:** Neil's Yard Remedies have donated a further £2500 to LBKA through their "Bee Lovely Campaign" which we will use for our forage creation programme that Mark is running.

**Members' area:** Logon to the "members-only" section of the website at [http://lbka.org.uk/members\\_area.html](http://lbka.org.uk/members_area.html) to check your details, read minutes and peruse opted-in members (if you are also opted-in).



*Green-Eyed Flower Bee*

## Do you have any announcements?

If you've any announcements for the next issue of LBKA News, please send them to Aidan at [services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk).

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# Bee of the month: Green-Eyed Flower Bee

Mark's new regular feature will give a tour of different types of non-honeybee.

*Mark Patterson*  
[forage@lbka.org.uk](mailto:forage@lbka.org.uk)

This month, June is Green Eyed Flower Bee *Anthophora bimaculata*. This solitary bee resides in the *Apidea* family of bees which also contains bumble bees, cuckoo bees and our beloved honey bees.

They are a close relative the Hairy Footed Flower bee is well know in London where it graces our gardens in large numbers from March to late May feeding primarily on *Pulmonaria*.

By now their hairy footed cousins have all but disappeared for this year having provisioned for their offspring which will emerge next spring.

The Green Eyed Flower bee is smaller than the Hairy Footed Flower bee with less conspicuous sexual dimorphism. Their abdomens are well marked with contrasting stripes, their overall appearance is squat, rounded body shape and their emerald green eyes are very prominent. They can sometimes be confused with the closely related but far less common Flower bee.

The Green Eyed Flower Bee prefers to forage on Echiums, Salvias, cat mint, Sainfoin and other legumes.

They emerge end of May and can be seen gracing our gardens until early August.

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## May's monthly meeting: Queen Rearing for the Small Scale Beekeeper

What happened at last month's meeting.

*Howard Nichols*  
[education@lbka.org.uk](mailto:education@lbka.org.uk)

Attendance at the meeting was about 30 in number and these ranged from new beekeepers to older, more established beekeepers. It was a hot day and, with both the fan turned on and the rear door open, the acoustics could have been better. A member helpfully brought this to our attention after the event. In future, we will close the door and turn off the fan during the meeting.

The topic was "Queen Rearing for the Small Scale Beekeeper". A colony will only rear queens under 1 of 3 impulses and we covered 3 different methods of queen rearing, one to utilise each impulse. We then went on to cover the use of mini nucs to finish off the queen cell development and to enable the new queen to mate. The former was dealt with by general discussion, use of props and PowerPoint slides. The latter by use of props and general discussion.

### Queen breeding or Queen rearing

Queen breeding usually involves a knowledge of genetics whereas queen rearing does not. Only rearing was considered.

The meeting covered the 3 different impulses under which a colony raises queen cells. It also covered beekeepers' 5 main selection criteria for choosing the colony with the genetic material for queen rearing, illustrating the importance of keeping colony records. It discussed the difference and purpose of a cell raising colony then used of a cell finishing colony to best utilise different impulses.

### 3 practical examples of how to rear queens

1. **Judicious use of queen cells** as part of Artificial Swarm Control in Spring when the bees produce queen cells under the swarm impulse. Rather than destroy most of these they can be harvested although we may be further propagating the swarming impulse.
2. **Miller method.** This is a more proactive method whereby the beekeeper instigates and then controls the production of queen cells under the emergency queen cell impulse by means of a Miller frame.
3. **Grafting (a.k.a. the Doolittle method).** Again, a proactive method whereby the beekeeper instigates and more fully controls the production of queen cells from start to finish under the supercedure impulse. The standard Chinese grating tool was observed and considered. The setting up of the cell-raising colony also formed a significant part of this section of the meeting.

Finally, the specific topic of making up and management of a mini nucleus was covered. This was dealt with by the use of an Apidea mininuc.

It was particularly heartening to find so much interest and enthusiasm for this subject. A lot of questions were asked. The 2 main points taken away by members seemed to be that it is not as difficult and mysterious as often thought and that any beekeeper can embark upon this subject at 1 of the above 3 entry points, depending upon his or her level of confidence.

"Queen Bee" by David Woodward was the suggested textbook for those wanting to further explore this subject.

To any new members who have not been to our Sunday monthly meetings please do come along and give it a try. You will find a friendly atmosphere and informative and passionate discussion about many beekeeping aspects. If you have not been before please introduce yourself to a committee member so that we know you are new. The monthly meetings are all included within your membership and are free to all. As the beekeeping season is now underway then the monthly meeting is also an opportunity to obtain assistance with some of the more challenging areas of apiculture. The topic of discussion is only one element of the meeting. It is also an informal and sociable event where members meet with each other to discuss bees and beekeeping and secure support with managing their colonies.

The Committee tries its best to reflect members' wishes and aspirations on beekeeping matters. If you would like a particular beekeeping subject to be the topic for discussion at a monthly meeting please ask a committee member.



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## Second Introduction to Beekeeping course

We ran our second weekend beekeeping course of the year last month. Sue Gurner and Ray Lancashire took some photos which are scattered across the next few pages (to make up for the lack of photos in last month's write-up. Thanks to everyone who organised and helped on this course.

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## June in the Apiary

Where we should be with our colonies at this time of year.

*Howard Nichols*  
[education@lbka.org.uk](mailto:education@lbka.org.uk)

### Swarm control

This is still the main priority if the colony has not yet swarmed. Routine inspections should be made every



7 days to check for queen cells. Make sure you have sufficient spare equipment for swarm control. Upon finding queen cells, do not panic. You have sufficient time to close up the colony, go home to think things through and collate equipment. You are unlikely to have time to order equipment from a supplier, have it delivered and make it up. For anyone with access to Ted Hooper's Guide to Bees and Honey then Artificial Swarm method is covered extremely well on pages 138 to 140. The National Bee Unit also has a helpsheet for free download on the Beebase website.

## Removing honey

Another seasonal task in early June is removing and processing the spring honey brought in by the bees, if capped. If spring honey is removed then keep a watch on stores within the hive.

## Collecting swarms

If your bees do swarm or you are called out to collect another swarm then personal and public safety should always be the overriding priority. Do not attempt to climb trees or use ladders beyond your capabilities. A simple order of action may be as follows:

- Make sure they are honeybees.
- If on someone else's land then obtain permission to enter from the landowner. If a branch of the tree needs to be cut then, again, make sure you have permission.
- Ensure any bystanders are moved away to a safe place.
- Put on bee suit and light smoker. Spraying the swarm with a fine mist of water is a refinement which will help keep the swarm in a cluster.
- Place a large sheet (an old bedsheet is ideal) on the ground underneath the swarm.
- After making sure that you are safe then deposit as much of the swarm as you can in a box or large



A mason bee on sage blooms.

Check varroa mite drop if not done in April or May. The Beebase varroa calculator is a useful diagnostic tool.

Enjoy your June beekeeping activities.



## Focus on Forage

Mark's regular update on what is in flower that bees like.

Mark Patterson  
[forage@lbka.org.uk](mailto:forage@lbka.org.uk)

June is a month of the year which brings uncertainty for many a beekeeper, for those in rural areas in particular. June is the beginning of the summer season when the spring flowering plants and trees shed their blooms having been pollinated and now begin to form seeds but the main flow of summer flowering blooms has yet to begin. Beekeepers refer to this period of change as the "June Gap".

At this time of year Honey bee colonies are approaching their peak in worker population in readiness for the summer flow, Queens are laying at a prolific rate and colonies have many larva to feed. A reduction in incoming nectar and pollen as the spring flowers cease but the summer flowers are yet to peak can leave large colonies struggling to feed themselves or fill supers with surplus honey for the beekeeper.

The June Gap is often felt the most in rural areas dominated by intensive agriculture. The plentiful hawthorn blooms of **hedgerows** and gluts of autumn sown **Oil Seed Rape** are largely over throughout most of the British Isles by June but the summer **wild flowers** are not yet at their peak and the **Heather** bloom is still many weeks away.

In urban areas the June Gap is rarely felt because our

bucket. Try to aim for 90% of the bees as you then have a 90% chance of including the queen.

- Turn box or bucket containing most of the collected swarm upside down on top of the middle of the sheet with a stone or piece of wood wedged between the box (or bucket) and the sheet. This allows access for the remaining bees.
- Come back at dusk to collect up the swarm by removing the stone and tying the sheet around the box. It can then be hived.

### Other action to be taken this month

Add supers as necessary, adding another in advance of it being needed by the bees. This may be either a brood super or a honey super, depending upon circumstances.





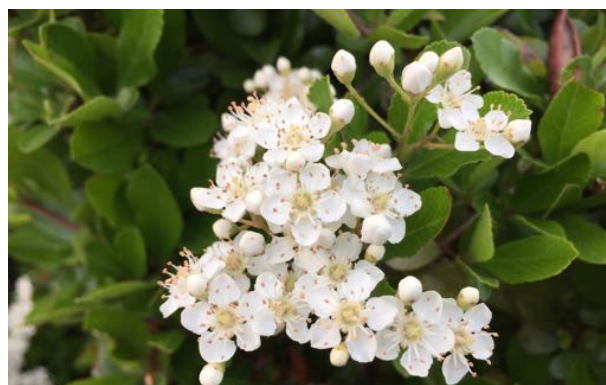
Cherry leaf featuring extra floral nectaries at its base nod along the aerated leaf edge.



Echium.



Cotoneaster.



Pyracantha bloom.

towns and cities contain an abundance of exotic plants which bloom throughout June filling the gap in forage availability.

In urban parks and gardens **Privet** hedges are coming into bloom. Beekeepers loath Privet because its nectar produces a bitter tasting honey that is unpalatable to most but for the bees Privet can help see them through the brief June Dearth. Other garden shrubs important as sources of nectar in urban areas include **Hebe**, **Choysia**, **Pyracantha** and **Cotoneaster**. They are all popular with bees and are widely planted in urban car parks, and amenity areas around housing developments. Shrubs like **Ceanothus** provide an abundance of yel-

low pollen and include several varieties which flower throughout June.

Urban areas contain many exotic trees which flower after our native species have ceased flowering. These include **Sweet Chestnut**, **Pseudo Acacia**, and **Tree of Heaven** alongside native **Limes**. In urban areas with milder microclimates our native Limes will flower much earlier than in rural areas or the north of the country where July is their usual season. The same is also true of **Bramble** which in towns and cities grows in abundance along railway sidings and brownfield land.

Our urban gardens also contain many blooming annuals and perennials at this time of year. Right now in my garden **Nepeta**, **Geraniums**, **Campanulas**, **Thyme**, **Sage**, **Valerian**, **Perennial Corn Flower**, **Wallflowers**, **Osteospermums** and **Giant echiums** are in bloom attracting large numbers of bees. As June progresses

**Lavender, Echinops, Escalonia** and **Teucrium** will come into flower, also popular with bees.

Another advantage to beekeepers in urban areas include the widespread planting of **Prunus** (Cherry and Cherry Laurel) species. These shrubs and small trees have now ceased flowering but they produce leaves with extra floral nectaries at their base and in some species smaller outlets along the serrated leaf edge. When moisture levels in the soil combine with warm sunny weather these plants may produce more sugars through photosynthesis than they require so they exude the surplus sugars through these extra floral nectaries. In times of dearth bees along with ants and wasps will visit these plants to collect the sugary waste excreted from these extra floral outlets.

Away from urban centres there are a number of plants common in rural areas which also produce extra floral nectaries which will be visited by bees. These include **Bracken**. Bees will also take advantage of the sticky secretions produced by Aphids as they suck the sap of broadleaf trees. These alternative sources of forage can make life a little easier for our honey bees during the June gap.

As an urban beekeeper with hives in London I have always been fortunate to never have to worry about the June gap and most years in June I am adding extra supers for the surplus honey being made.

We can all do our bit to help the bees and other pollinators during the brief June dearth by ensuring our parks and gardens are well stocked with appropriate plants.



*Blossom*



*Horse chestnuts*

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## Adventures in Beeland: What's flowering now: early May

Another guest post from Emily's excellent blog – <http://adventuresinbeeland.com/>.

*Emily Scott*  
LBKA member

Ealing is particularly beautiful in April and May. Many of the roads and parks near me are lined with white and pink blossom trees. On a sunny day you can stand under them and hear the hum of bees high above, and spot dark shapes flitting between the flowers. As the petals fall they become colourful confetti for the pavement, swirling gently in the wind.

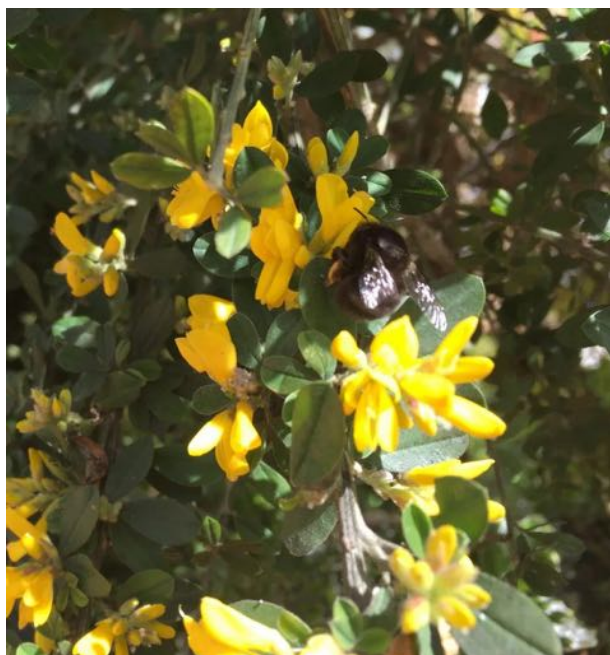
EDIT: Thanks to Honeymedic for his comment about the tree above. It may be another cultivar but your first tree looks very like *Eucryphia Nymansensis* which does

not generally flower until August but then the bees in my garden go mad on it. In its native Chile, *Eucryphia Cordifolia* is the source of the wonderful healing honey ULMO.

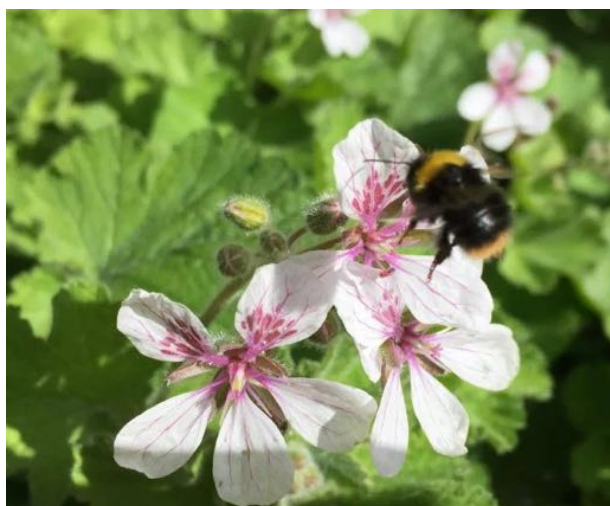
Ealing also has many horse chestnut trees, which are now covered with white candles of flowers. These are popular with honey bees.

Though from a distance horse chestnut flowers appear white, they have a touch of yellow within when their flowers are un-pollinated and excreting nectar. After a horse chestnut flower has been pollinated, the yellow blotch turns a red/pink magenta to let pollinators know. Additionally after pollination the flower has a change in scent that bees pick up, so that they avoid wasting their time visiting that flower. Have a look next time you're under a horse chestnut.

Me and Tom have been going for walks together and doing some bee spotting. Well, I walk and Tom gets pushed. We have four parks in walking distance and pretty gardens to walk past too. There are still a few front gardens which haven't been turned into car parks.



*Hairy Footed Flower Bee on Gorse*



*Bumble on pink flower*

Can you see the bee above on gorse? Sorry for the bad photo but I have been using my phone as it's light and I have so much baby stuff to carry.

I believe this gorse visitor is the beautifully named Hairy-Footed Flower Bee. It likes nesting in old walls and its favourite flower is lungwort (pulmonaria).

This might be an Early bumblebee (*Bombus pratorum*)? If anyone knows what the pink flower is, please let me know.

EDIT: Thanks to Lucy Garden, Julie, Amelia, Mark and WesternWilson for commenting that the pink flower may be a geranium. Amelia added "There are a lot of different perennial geraniums and I find them very useful in the garden as some are very tough and can smother anything in rough sites yet the bumble bees love them."



*Green alkanet (evergreen bugloss)*



*Carder bee white nettle*

I have been disappointed as I've not been seeing as many bumbles as I'd expect at this time of year. Was the mostly mild winter bad for them? I've been walking past sunny banks of green alkanet (evergreen bugloss) and not seeing a single bee.

I did see a few honey bees on the green alkanet but not many. Perhaps they are distracted by the magnificent horse chestnuts.

Nettles are such great plants for wildlife and I find them pretty too.

People go crazy for big showy flowers like tulips, but arguably the delicate forget-me-nots behind are just as beautiful. A bee would prefer the forget-me-nots.

Daffodils are still around, but they're not a great flower for honey bees. If you look at p.26 of the BBKA News April 2011 edition you will see a couple of letters about daffodils. Daffs contain toxic chemicals (known as alkaloids) that include lycorine. The wild daffodil is pollinated principally by bumblebees – *Bombus terrestris*, *B. muscorum*, *B. hortorum*, *B. lapidarius* and *Anthophora plumipes* (hairy footed flower bee). How-



*Tulip and forget-me-nots*



*Daffodils*



*Anyone know what this unusual purple flower is?  
EDIT: Thanks to Lucy Garden and Julie for commenting  
that the purple flower is an aquilegia aka columbine.*

ever honey bees are rarely seen on daffodils, and Adrian Davis from Canterbury BKA suggests that this is because they store food for longer than bumbles. Possibly by not collecting daffodil pollen (or nectar) they avoid the build up of lycorine in the hive.

## Upcoming events

### Sunday 12th June: Monthly meeting: Bee health day

*10:00-16:00 at The Ecology Centre, Holland Park, Kensington, W8 6LU.*

Howard, Richard, Mark and others will run this day about brood diseases including how to inspect bees for signs of disease using bees from our Holland Park apiary. Bring your own lunch, but tea and biscuits are provided. **Members only and limited to 40 places on a first-come-first-served basis. Email [services@lbka.org.uk](mailto:services@lbka.org.uk) to book your place.**

### Friday, 1st July: Determining the most attractive plants for bees and other flower visitors

*13:00-17:00 at Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects, University of Sussex, Falmer.*

This workshop is run by LASI in Sussex. More details at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/lasi/newsandevents/events/plantsforbees>.

### Saturday, 2nd July: Determining the most attractive plants for bees and other flower visitors

*13:00-17:00 at Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects, University of Sussex, Falmer.*

This workshop is run by LASI in Sussex. More details at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/lasi/newsandevents/events/plantsforbees>.

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## Committee

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with a member of the committee if you have any questions, requests, suggestions (and offers of help)! We are:

- **Chair:** Richard Glassborow, [chair@lbka.org.uk](mailto:chair@lbka.org.uk)
- **Treasurer:** David Hankins, [treasurer@lbka.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@lbka.org.uk)
- **Secretary:** Emma Nye, [admin@lbka.org.uk](mailto:admin@lbka.org.uk)
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Our website is <http://www.lbka.org.uk/>.

