



The London Beekeepers' Association

LBKA News

June, 2021

After the rain of May, we have been seeing warm and sunny weather in June so far. This is lovely. There have been reports of badly-mated May queens. But swarms that waited for this warm weather appear to have been rewarded with quick and efficient mating, with a couple of queens in my apiary laying within a week of them swarming.

This month, Kathy continues her tour around LBKA's apiaries (p10) with Mudchute, Martin Kunz is offering a review copy of a book (p4), Simon tells us why he's cycling to John o'Groats (p9) and George and Richard have sent some nice bee photos. Thanks to the regular contributors for their regular contributions, including from Richard (p1), Howard (p7) and Mark (p8). We're also looking forward to summer, with an Open Day at our Holland Park Apiary on July 4th (p3).

We are still in desperate need of help on the committee, so if you can volunteer some time, please do contact us. We need volunteers who are reliable, enthusiastic, good organisers, good at writing, and/or good with people.

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Thank you to this month's contributors: **George Kobzolis, Richard Glassborow, Martin Kunz, Martin Hudson, Howard Nichols, Mark Patterson, Simon Saville and Kathy Stevenson.** Would you like to join these esteemed contributors? If so, contact me.

Happy beekeeping.

Aidan Slingsby, Editor, services@lbka.org.uk

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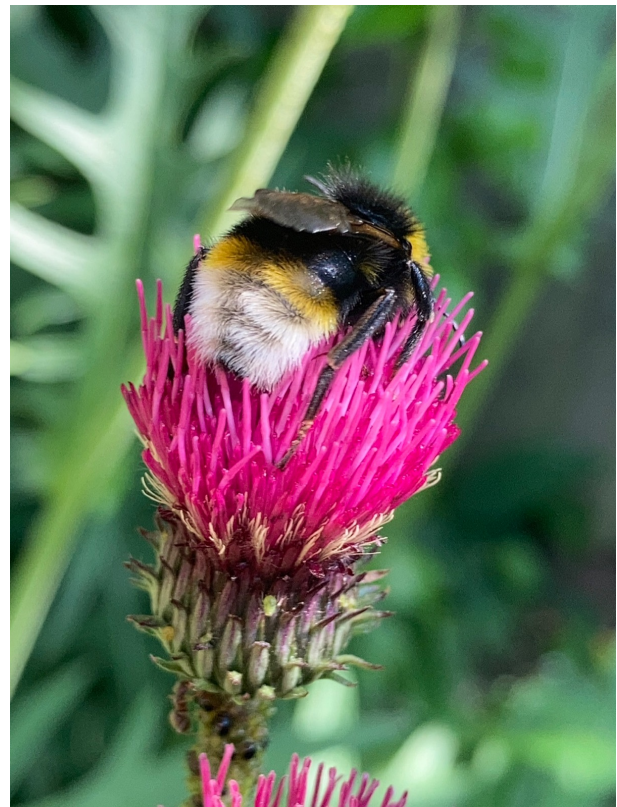
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From our Chair

Richard Glassborow
chair@lbka.org.uk

London is poised to unlock from most of the Covid-19 restrictions that have prevailed for so long it sometimes seems they are the normal. At the time of writing, there is still some uncertainty over exactly how much will happen on June 21st because of the delta variant but in the grand scheme of a lethal pandemic, whether these restrictions lift in June, July or August, all the signs are that they are going to be lifted. Then what? Return to "normal"?

Somehow, going back to the old normal doesn't quite fit any more, not just because, on reflection, some things just never were as good as they might have been if we are honest, but because necessity has shown us new ways and given us new tools and all this pain might just add up to an opportunity to do things differently and do them better.



Bumblebee straddling a thistle. Photo: Richard Glassborow.



Spotted by George. *The sudden change to a much finer weather brought all insect foragers/pollinators out so, I got a chance to get some photos. This honeybee is on a flower of an overwintered rocket plant. Photo: George Kozobolis*

I am not talking about wholesale replacement of old normal with something unrecognisable, simply re-evaluating strengths and weaknesses in what we do to see if improvements might be achieved by returning to some activities, such as face to face meetings, with a fresh eye on what the objectives are or could be if we integrate them with new practices we have discovered.

Let's take, for example, our monthly meetings. Until Covid prevented us from actually meeting, these have always been a major part of our ongoing learning and development as beekeepers but also played an important part in our social cohesion and sense of community. It is perhaps ironic but I am sure a year and a half or social distance and isolation has taught all of us a lot about the value of meeting people face to face, or perhaps will do when we get the opportunity to do so again.

At the same time, we have long recognised there are downsides to face to face meetings: London is a very big city and any geographical location has logistical challenges and requires considerable effort on the part of most members wishing to attend: in other words, a learning barrier.

In addition, the core educational content is inevitably constrained to the beekeepers' year, creating an innate repetitive tendency – probably a benefit when we are new to beekeeping but which, in turn we suspect, leads



Spotted by George. *Honeybee busy on small thyme flowers. Photo: George Kozobolis.*

to a tendency for beekeepers to stop coming once they have covered the curriculum two or three times. Add this all up and we have an educational constraint, an important platform for skills development reaching only about 10% of the membership and a social constraint in that the meetings are under-represented by our more experienced beekeepers. This looks like a good area to see if improvements could be achieved in new normal.

For a number of years we have stressed the importance of the "big four" subjects of beekeeping theory – Swarm Prevention and control, Disease recognition and management, Varroa management, and feeding. The fifth, bee handling, is not forgotten, just not part of this line of thinking because it requires slightly different treatment.

If our WhatsApp group, Beebanter, is a representative sample of membership, there does seem to be a demand for these subjects to be covered in depth, probably more than once and probably at different levels.

The idea is to cover the big four educational topics in a series of on-line modules which will remove the logistical challenges of travel and time. The modules will be presented live with Q&A an integral part, helping to personalise the learning experience for each participant. Elements will be accessible for subsequent online reference. The modules will be free to members but open to non-members for a fee.

We hope this format for what might be called "essential knowledge" will provide opportunities to meet beekeepers needs at different levels. At the same time, this will free up our Monthly meeting programme to cover more wide ranging and varied topics and formats which will sustain appeal to all members, new and longstanding.



Spotted by Richard. A mining bee (Andrena) on an allium. Photo: Richard Glassborow.

There is no reason why monthly meetings could not also include opportunities such as ten minute speakers corner or more prolonged debates. And of course, we sincerely hope these meetings will resume, face to face, with tea from a pot and cakes on plates very soon.

Stay well.

Announcements

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

June's online Monthly Meeting and Pub Social

This month's Monthly Meeting will be on **Sunday 13th June** at 11:00 on **honey extraction**, at the usual Zoom link (in the [Members' Area](#) and in your email).

The **Pub Social** will be on **Tuesday 29th June** from 18:30 (Zoom link in the [Members' Area](#) and in your email).

July's Monthly Meeting will be on Sunday 11th July on a relevant (and excellent) topic to be determined.

Please also note our Holland Park Open Day on Sunday 4th July (see below).



Showing children the wonders of bees as part of School Food Matters.

LBKA Holland Park Apiary Open Day and LBKA Honey Market

LBKA is hosting an Open Day at our Holland Park Apiary on Sunday July 4th as part of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea's Bee Superhighway initiative.

We will have two stalls, one by the apiary itself with an observation hive and other bee related props and literature and a team of LBKA volunteers to talk to the public about bees. There will also be beesuits so the public can dress up and take a guided walk up to the hives and flying bees.

The second stall, the LBKA Honey Market, will be in front of the Holland Park Café. This is an exclusive opportunity for members to sell their London honey directly to the public. We hope too to allow the public to taste and try before they buy.

If you have honey to sell and or would like to get involved with the running of these stalls, please get in touch with Annie at events@lbka.co.uk using "Open Day" in the subject line.

School Food Matters

We are going to be teaching in schools again this summer, in partnership with School Food Matters. We've run a highly successful programme of going to carefully selected schools in London, and teaching primary schoolchildren about the importance of bees. After tremendous success in 2019, last summer we switched to virtual deliveries via Zoom. This year we're recruiting volunteers to go to 20 schools throughout the city, supporting teaching, and showing bees (in an observation hive) to the children. On past experience we are often in need of drivers with vehicles. If you'd like to



“Keeping Bees Simply and Respectfully” by Johannes Wirz and Norbert Poeplau.

get involved and help out (in any capacity), we'd be keen to hear from you at events@lbka.org.uk.

Would you like to review a book?

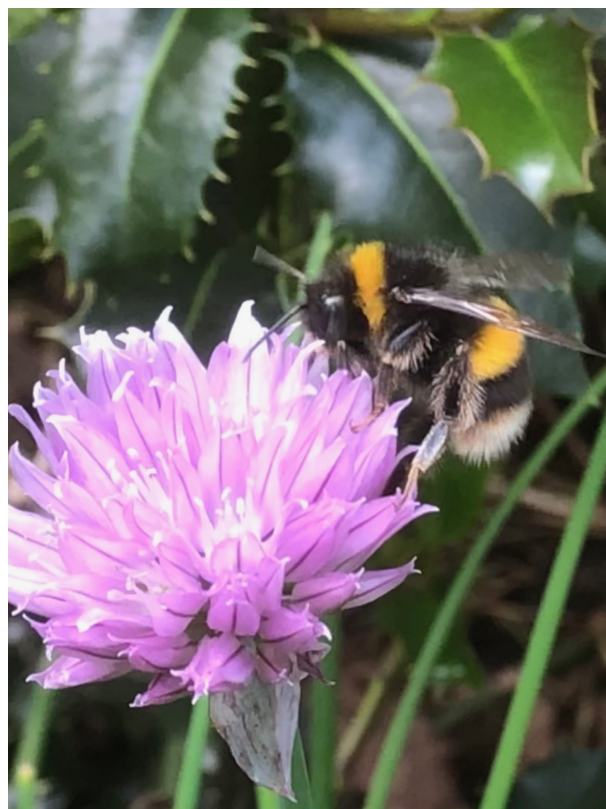
LBKA member Martin Kunz recently translated the book “Keeping Bees Simply and Respectfully” (from German) by Johannes Wirz and Norbert Poeplau. He is willing to give a review copy away to an LBKA member willing to write a review for the LBKA News. Email services@lbka.org.uk if you're interested.

Fill out the COLOSS 2020 Winter Hive Loss Survey

The epidemiological working group at COLOSS have developed a standardised questionnaire to identify the underlying causal factors of losses and provide beekeepers with sustainable management strategies. You can [find the questionnaire here](#) and we now invite you to fill in the questionnaire for 2020. This will enable us to compare your answers with other beekeepers. With your data we can estimate the relative risk of colony losses for beekeeper decisions such as Varroa treatment, migration of colonies and comb replacement. We also aim to identify differences in relative mortality risk between regions. This will enable follow up research projects in specific regions.

Beekeepers wanted to try a feed supplement

“Diversity Honeys” (Martin Kunz) is looking for one or two beekeepers, with a few hives each, ideally near W3 (or at least in easy public transport distance from W3), to try out a novel bee feed supplement from the US which has been shown to increase colony health and resilience and as an alternative to smoking. If you are interested, please contact m.kunz@beefriendlybeesuits.com.



Spotted by George. Bumblebee collecting nectar from chives. Photo: George Kozobolis.

Summer Social

With COVID cases decreasing and restrictions easing, we're tentatively starting to plan a Summer Social at Holland Park in August. Watch this space!

Log your NBU disease notifications and swarm collections!

We're collecting data to help build a better picture of what's going on in London. Please save and use the following links:

- **NBU EFB/AFB notifications:** Please log the EFB/AFB notifications from NBU so help us understand the geographical spread of bee diseases: <https://tinyurl.com/4vxszk8n>
- **Swarm collections:** Tell us where and when you collect a swarm, so we can compare swarming seasons across years: <https://bit.ly/2RvbXzx>

These data will be kept anonymous and will only be published as highly aggregated data with no personally-identifiable data.

Join the committee!

LBKA is a reasonably-sized organisation with (currently) over 200 members that is building a good reputation for its stance on beekeeping, the quality of its outreach activities and the quality of its advice. We need more committee members to enable us to do more. Don't worry if you don't know quite what role you might be able to fill. You'll find your place! Please contact



Spotted by George. Honeybee loaded with pollen from strawberry blossom. Photo: George Kozobolis.

any member of the committee (see back page) for a chat.

Paid opportunities for members

Every now and then opportunities for paid work relating to beekeeping come to the committee's attention. It is policy to make these opportunities available to all members. However, from experience, the process of advertising the opportunities in the monthly Newsletter is not always timely for the work required. We are therefore proposing to use a "framework agreement" type process to identify members who are interested, able and have the relevant experience, skills/qualifications and resources (including insurances where relevant) to respond to different categories of services required on a hypothetical basis in advance of real opportunities arising. This will allow a more appropriate response time when specific requests for services come in but retain the openness and fairness to potential member suppliers.

In the first instance we are therefore inviting "expressions of interest" from members for the following categories of paid services should they be requested by potential client businesses, organisations (potentially including the LBKA), or individuals:

- Beekeeping, apiary management, consultancy and delivery, etc.
- Bee related ecological, environmental, land management, planting consultancy, design and delivery services
- Bee related educational consultancy and support, including content development and supply, etc



Spotted by George. The amorous courtship of a ladybird couple. Photo: George Kozobolis.

Any member wishing to respond to this invitation please contact Simon Saville in writing to development@lbka.org.uk, clearly stating which category/categories you are interested in and a brief CV of relevant experience and or qualification and any insurances held (if relevant). You may then be invited to respond in further detail to specific hypothetical requirements.

Are you "good" with social media?

If you are good at communicating with social media, then you could help LBKA!

LBKA has a presence on all the main social media channels - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram - but we aren't currently using these channels as effectively as we could. We are looking for a Social Media Officer to take the lead in how these channels are used. Ideally, we would co-opt you onto the committee so that you're up-to-date with the latest discussions on key topics of interest.

Our social media channels already have an impressive reach, but we aren't using them very proactively to manage our communications. This is a good opportunity to help develop a profile of a local charity and its charitable objectives.

- Twitter: [@LondonBeeKeeper](https://twitter.com/LondonBeeKeeper)
"Serving bee keepers & conservation enthusiasts in London"
7,000+ followers
5,000+ tweets since 2012
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/londonbeekeepersassociation/>
Recently set up; little activity so far
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2512721609/> (open site)
"Welcome to the open group London Beekeepers Association page. This page is not an official LBKA page but is managed by LBKA members as a means of public engagement, sharing of information and for discussion about beekeeping in

London.”

Public group, 2,800+ members

These channels have excellent potential to help us get our messages to key audiences, especially to non-members who have an interest in bees and beekeeping. Along with our excellent website, they are the public face of the Association – who we are, what we do, and what we stand for.

Please get in touch with Simon if you have an interest in getting involved: development@lbka.org.uk and 07572 612722.

Contribute to the Newsletter

You'll see a few gaps in our regular contributions. If you can help with any of these (not necessarily every month) please drop me line. We'd welcome contributions from more members and would love it if you could propose a new regular feature. We usually end up with 300 or so members and the newsletters are [available to all on our website](#). Do email me if you can contribute anything including articles, photos and recipes.

We're looking for members to summarise the issues discussed in a digestible way. Please contact services@lbka.org.uk if you may be able to help in some months.

Old announcements from May

Check our [previous newsletters](#) or contact services@lbka.org.uk for more details.

Winter Lectures. Members can catch up on our Winter Lectures at [available here](#).

Old announcements from April

LBKA Pollinator Fund: still inviting members to apply for grants to help support small community groups to improve their local environment for the benefit of bees and other pollinators. For comprehensive guidance on the application process, and an application form, please contact treasurer@lbka.org.uk.

Old announcements from March

Christmas Quiz winner: Congratulations to **Mark Patterson** for winning the Christmas Quiz. Elliot arranged a very special prize – a bespoke glass bee by [#CrazedPurpleGlass](#).

Allotment Agreements with Beekeepers: Our proactive strategy for **responsible urban beekeeping in London** seems to be working as we have been helping advise Lewisham Borough Council on allotment beekeeping policy.

Old announcements from February

BBKA Bee Basic: If you're a beekeeper and haven't yet done the BBKA Bee Basic certification, please consider doing it. We will help you prepare for it. See Howard's piece on page 7 of [January's newsletter](#) which also outlines other aspects of LBKA's education programme.

Old announcements from January

“Bee Banter” WhatsApp group: The join link is in the [Members' Area](#) and in your welcome email and **you can turn off notifications, if the traffic becomes too much for you.**

Do you have any announcements?

If you've any announcements for the next issue of LBKA News, please send to Aidan at services@lbka.org.uk.

June's Committee meeting

Here, we keep you up to date with what the committee discuss at our monthly committee meetings (and what keeps us awake at night). Let us know if you can help or have any suggestions that might help.

Aidan Slingsby
services@lbka.org.uk

We are still desperately sort of committee members and other people to take on roles and responsibilities. We plan to identify members who might be willing to help and approach them, but we also hope that people will see our calls in the newsletter and come forward. However, we are not getting volunteers. For example, we've been looking for someone to lead on our social media presence for many months. However, Annie reported that we have quite a few members who've volunteered to help with School Food Matters.

Richard gave another update on the London Bee Situation and the various activities we have been planning, including an open day at our apiary in Holland Park (see page 3).

We discussed mentoring and how we might monitor the quality and better support mentors, will some suggestions made.

To improve training for members with intermediate skills, we discussed the idea of having “refresher modules” for key topics such as disease management, swarms, varroa and feeding. These would be free to members, but we may consider opening them to non-members for a small fee. These would be recorded and then reused by us. We agreed to not run any Introductory Courses this year so that we could prioritise training our members with intermediate skills, but that we'd aim to restart courses in spring 2022 if the situation allows. Will offered to do a talk about bee stings.

Will spoke about our equipment. Will and Elliot will design some summary instruction sheets for how to use the extractors safety (e.g. not to open the door whilst

the frames are still spinning.) He also updated us on the suggestion that we store some extractors in North London (we agreed in principle, but haven't found a volunteer to store them yet.

Last month's Monthly Meeting: Bee health

What happened at our meeting last month.

We need volunteers willing to help write these sections. Please contact services@lbka.org.uk if you may be able to help in some months.

Aidan Slingsby
services@lbka.org.uk

This month's meeting was about bee health. We recorded the meeting and it's available to members on our [website](#).

June in the Apiary

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

Howard Nichols
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 open queen cells, 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 excellent 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. This year we have had a cold spring and I am not aware of our own members reporting spring honey. Personally, I do not remove spring honey but leave it until July when I remove it with the summer honey. 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 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 actions to be taken this month

Add supers. 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.

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

Do brood disease inspection. Carry out a specific brood disease inspection. The essence of this is to know what is normal and healthy and so to look out for anything that deviates from this. It is good to do this with a beekeeping friend as you may be looking for only 1 or 2 infected cells in the whole colony.

Have spare frames. Ensure you have sufficient frames to deal with the honey flow when it arrives. It is a lot easier to simply add a super than having to extract a super and put it back in the middle of the honey flow. This may not even be possible as the water content may still be too high for extraction.

Enjoy your June beekeeping activities. It is a short season and June is an integral part of the season.



Red tailed bumblebee on bramble blossom.



Sedums blooming on a roof top in Chancery Lane.

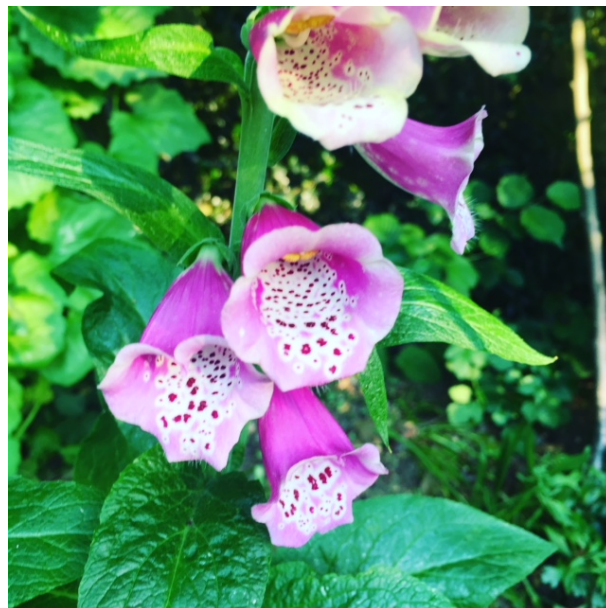
Focus on Forage

Mark tells us what's in flower at this time of year. This article is reprinted from last year.

Mark Patterson
forage@lbka.org.uk

Early summer – June in particular – is a time of the year which brings uncertainty for many a beekeeper, and 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 larvae to feed. A reduction of 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 to fill supers with surplus honey for the beekeeper.



Foxgloves are out now.



A bumblebee on field scabious.

Fortunately in urban areas like London the June Gap is rarely felt because our towns and cities contain an abundance of exotic plants which bloom throughout June, filling the gap in forage availability.

Early summer flowers like **lime**, **sweet chestnut**, **oriental chestnut**, **pseudo acacia**, **bramble** and many of our flowering **hedgerow herbs** and **meadow flowers** have already begun to bloom. In the meadows around Tower Hamlets Cemetery and Mile End Parks in East London, **weld**, **scabious**, **sainfoin**, **lucerne**, **bugloss**, **rest-harrow** and **bird's foot trefoil** are in full bloom attracting **honey bees**, **cuckoo bumble bees**, **flower bees** and **leafcutter bees**.

Last week whilst inspecting my city centre roof top bees I noticed that the **sedums** on the green roofs are just starting to come into flower. Whilst of limited usefulness to bees generally the sedums' brief few weeks of bloom do provide some much needed respite to pollinators in the very heart of the city where good forage is hard to come by. **Honey bees** and tiny **short-tongued solitary bees** are particularly frequent visitors



Honey bee on *sedum ocre*



Campanula blooms

to sedums on green roofs. Other plants important to city centre bees include **pyracantha (fire thorn) cotoneaster** and **ceonothus** which are often grown as amenity shrubbery, the blooms of which provide much needed pollen and nectar.

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 is a good source of forage. Other garden shrubs important as sources of nectar in urban areas include **hebe**, **choisya**, **pyracantha** and **cotoneaster** – all are popular with bees and are widely planted in urban car parks, and amenity areas around housing developments. The latter two have already by-and-large finished flowering now, but **choisya** and **hebe** often have a second flush of blossom and will continue to bloom well into summer.

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**. Along railway embankments, **fire weed**, **thistles** and **teasel** are also blooming.

Right now in my garden, **nepeta**, **geraniums**, **campanulas**, **thyme**, **sage**, **valerian**, **perennial corn flower**, **wall flowers**, **escalonia**, **osteospermums**,

teucrium, **lamb's lugs**, **oriental poppy**, **knifophia**, **eremus** and **giant echiums** are in bloom attracting large numbers of bees. Soon the **lavender**, **echinops**, **cardo** and **echinacea** should follow.

This month is a good time to 'Chelsea chop' late flowering perennials to extend the flowering season later in the year and ensure there are still flowers well into autumn for bees. Plants like **helenium**, **belianthus**, **golden rod (solidago)**, **asters**, **dahlias** and **leucanthemum** can be chopped back by about half. This will encourage multiple new flowering shoots from lower down the stem producing a larger mass of slightly smaller flowers later in the season, extending the forage for the bees and ensuring there is colour in your garden late in the season. Now is also a good time to take green cuttings from plants like **penstemon** which will root fast as long as they are kept moist – their deep tubular flowers are popular with longer tongued bumblebees.

Other plants like **perennial cornflower**, **oriental poppy**, **cat mint**, **sage** and **teucrium** can be chopped back very close to the ground once flowered at the end of this month, fed, watered and mulched they often produce a second flush of new growth and later flowering blooms. Other plants can be encouraged to continue flowering for longer by simply dead heading – removing the fading flowers before they have an opportunity to set seed. The plants desire is to reproduce so it will keep on sprouting new blooms until it does so or the season ends.

Bike for Butterflies

Simon tells us why he's cycling for butterflies.

Simon Saville
development@lbka.org.uk

On 22nd June I will set off on a 1,200 mile cycle ride across the length of the UK, from Land's End to John o'Groats. I'm doing this to highlight the environment and climate crisis and to raise funds for Butterfly Conservation.

I grew up in rural Dorset, where there were wildflower meadows teeming with insects, and this triggered my interest in butterflies and moths as a young boy. Cycling has always been an interest of mine, and I have long held a fascination with the Land's End to John o'Groats ride – or LEJOG as it is called. I was aiming to do this ride last year, but was scuppered by Covid – I have fingers crossed that it won't happen again this year.

My ride is based on the National Cycle Network set up by Sustrans, taking 30 days. I am visiting as many nature reserves as I can to highlight their special wildlife and to promote the fantastic work done by volunteers.



Simon getting ready for his charity bike ride.



Skyline view from Mudchute City Farm

I aim to raise awareness of the crisis that faces our wildlife, to promote Butterfly Conservation, and to get people to engage with nature near where they live and work.

Details of my ride are on my [website](#). I will be tweeting as I go from @sbsaville with the hashtag #BikeForButterflies.

I'd love it if you could support me. Donations are always welcome, but it's arguably more helpful if you can promote my Bike for Butterflies through your own social media and other channels.

JustGiving page: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/bikeforbutterflies>.

Thank you!

LBKA Apiaries

What's happening in LBKA's apiaries.

Kathy Stevenson
LBKA member

In May I went to the Isle of Dogs to meet with the volunteers at the Mudchute apiary.

But first, a little bit of the fascinating history of The Isle of Dogs, because it is a place of rapid and ongoing



A pre-season visit to the Mudchute apiary, mid-April.



The apiary in May

transformation. From marsh to mills, from wilderness to financial district, 'The Island' was the least visited part of London right up to the mid-20th century, unless you were going for the 'Dark Tourism' view of the many ruins left by WWII bombings. It was only approachable by swing bridges, which gave everyone living there an excuse for being late to work!

Today, you have to explore farther than the trendy Docklands to see the 32 acres which has been preserved as Mudchute Park and Farm. Established by the local Island community, the park was originally a piece of derelict land created from dredging Millwall Dock. This hidden natural wilderness of flora and fauna had remained untouched until 1974 when the site was earmarked for the construction of a high rise estate. The resulting public campaign against these plans was a success and secured it as the "People's Park" for the area. It is now a community charity comprising a city farm, free for all to visit, with stables and paddocks housing



A brother beekeeper; a helping hand.

over 100 British rare breed animals. Head up to a lovely meadow on the northern border and you will find the bee hives in a screened enclosure.

The LBKA volunteers meet at the apiary every Monday at 1:30. Over lockdown there have been four regular attendees looking after three colonies in standard national hives. Some of the volunteers are working towards their Bee Basic exams and are applying their newly-learned skills here. On the day of my visit, we split colonies and make up nucs for the students to look after.

When the work was completed, we tidied up the apiary by moving unused WBCs to the storage shed. Our trek to the shed took us through what is currently a water pipe excavation site. The barrier was opened, the digger was stopped and a conversation ensued about bees - the digger driver was a beekeeper! The driver offered to load the boxes onto the digger and transport them to the shed door. Just then, like any other day in May this year, the heavens opened with one of the daily downpours. The roof I was carrying made a decent umbrella, so I didn't get quite as drenched as the others!

You are welcome to visit the Mudchute apiary and in fact there is a need for more volunteers as well, so do contact the association if you are interested. The DLR drops you at the Mudchute station which is adjacent to the park. You will definitely enjoy the experience, the camaraderie and the amazing city views!



Frank's hive stands.

Members' marketplace

This section is for members offering beekeeping items or services to members or requesting items. Items could include nucs, wax and honey. Email services@lbka.org.uk to add something here.

Frank Ryan: I make beehive stands from strong premium-grade materials, painted an attractive holly colour using bee-friendly paint. Each stand is made to measure a for comfortable working height and has the option to expand from a single stand to a double. The dimensions allow for ratchet-strapping. Contact Frank on 07877388933 or frankryan60@hotmail.com.

Upcoming events

Sunday 13th June: Monthly meeting: Honey Extraction

11:00-13:00 at Same zoom link as usual (in the Members' Area of the website and sent to your email).

Demonstration and tips on honey extraction.

Tuesday, 29th June: Pub Social

18:30 onwards at via Zoom (see your email for a link)

Our ONLINE pub social in the historical surroundings of your own home. Bring your own beer. Using the usual Pub Social Zoom link in the Members' Area of the website and sent to your email.

Sunday 11th July: Monthly meeting (topic to be determined)

11:00-13:00 at Same zoom link as usual (in the Members' Area of the website and sent to your email).

Demonstration and tips on honey extraction.

Committee

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with a member of the committee if you have any questions, requests, suggestions. We are:

- **Chair:** Richard Glassborow, chair@lbka.org.uk
- **Treasurer:** David Hankins, treasurer@lbka.org.uk
- **Secretary/Events:** Annie McGeoch, admin@lbka.org.uk
- **Education:** Howard Nichols education@lbka.org.uk
- **Membership:** Aidan Slingsby, services@lbka.org.uk
- **Apiaries:** Tristram Sutton, apiaries@lbka.org.uk
- **Development:** Simon Saville, development@lbka.org.uk
- **Mentoring:** Elliot Hodges, mentor@lbka.org.uk
- **Resources:** Will Fry, resources@lbka.org.uk

Our website is <http://www.lbka.org.uk/> and the pictures are in the same order as the names above.

