

Connemara Beekeepers Association Newsletter



Above: Two photos from our Connemara
Beekeepers Association/ NIHBS Joint Workshop
July 7th 2019

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Welcome from our Chairman

I hope you all had a peaceful Christmas and you are well rested for the New Year. When we as beekeepers think of the New Year, we have prepared our bees in the early Autumn and we hope we will have very few losses throughout the winter and will be rewarded with a bumper harvest of honey in the late summer!

Our bees are coping well so far this year with a very low mite count recorded in our Association Apiary in Maam. This is the first time that we did not treat the bees for varroa. Are we witness to something new in our bees and their coping mechanisms with this parasite? We will continue to monitor their progress with interest!

We had some interesting talks, demonstrations and lectures throughout the past year at our monthly meetings. The attendance at these however was disappointingly low. The topics are very relevant to our members and to the time of year but not all our members avail of the opportunity to attend. I know you are kept up to date by the emails from our Secretary Ken and the articles in An Beachaire which you receive each month from FIBKA. It is so important that we all keep up to-date regarding treatments of bees and outbreaks of notifiable diseases such as AFB and EFB. We all need to keep up to date with new guidelines from DAFM regarding honey production/sale and rules around food

hygiene. A few words with a fellow beekeeper over a cup of tea or coffee after our lectures could solve your problems and maybe save your bees! Please make your attendance at these meetings a new year resolution.

I have outlined in another article in this issue, our activities for 2019 and I spoke about them at our AGM in November '19.

Some committee members and ordinary members represented us at our EGM and AGM held by FIBKA last year. I want to thank those members for that. We need new blood and new ideas going forward. We have a number of projects up and running and will keep you informed of their progress.

I wish you all a Happy New Year and a special thanks to all the committee for their sterling work on your behalf throughout the past 10 years. Yes, we will be celebrating our tenth anniversary this coming year ...Happy Anniversary!

Thanks to Mary Keenan for this production of our annual E- Newsletter. Happy reading.

Go mbeirimíd beo ar an am seo arís.

Billy (Chairperson, CBC)



Cumann Beachairi Chonamara

Chairperson's Report , AGM 2020

Review of yearly activities since November 2018 AGM

December 2018 Lunch and Christmas party in the Boat Inn

January 2019 Lecture by Dr Mary Coffey on 'Recognising Diseases of the Honeybee'

February 10th Talk by David Geoghegan on 'His Beekeeping Methods.'

March Talk in Station House Hotel by Jeanne Sampier on 'Biodiversity.'

April Talk on 'Artificial Swarming' by Ger Coyne in Peacockes, Maam Cross

June Beginner's |Open Day in Maam Apiary.

July Open Day in Sean Osbornes when we hosted the NIHBS 'Queen rearing and Bee Improvement Workshop'

October Talk on 'Successful Overwintering' by Ger Coyne and Mary Keenan in Oughterard.

November 'Importance of Keeping Notes and Records' by Colm O'Neill in Oughterard

Regular, Monthly Committee Meetings.

-These were held in various locations in Connemara throughout the year

Beginners' Classes.

-Held in Peacocke's in Feb and March. Great turn out. 15 raw recruits!

Association Apiaries.

-We have 3 apiaries spread throughout Connemara region. (They are for every member's benefit.)

We try to supply nucs to our members, especially our beginners at a reduced rate. Not many take up the offer, though and they may purchase elsewhere.

Note: It is a source of income for our Association and goes a long way to pay for our lecturers and new equipment.

Extra Activities

- During the year, members of the committee visited local National schools and Secondary Schools to talk about honey and beekeeping.
- We also attended local festivals such as The Mussel Festival in Tullycross, Oughterard Agriculture show and the Green Festival in CNP.
- Colleen, Mary and I spoke at the Gardening Club in Clifden about bees and pollinators and what gardeners can do to help them.
- I was interviewed on radio Galway Bay FM during Heritage Week in August. Paddy and Jill have appeared on TG4 and R na G during the year to talk about the Native Black Bee.
- In March, Billy, Eoin, Frank and Felim attended FIBKA'S EGM in Tullamore.
- Frank and Sean attended FIBKA Conference and AGM in Athlone in Oct.

Subcommittees

Educational Committee Re: Galway Wind Park Funding– Felim, Tony, Billy and Colleen - leaflets, iPad and observation hive. New Plan due for implementation in year two.

Social committee - David (C), Colleen, Mary, Ger and Billy

Upcoming talks and events for 2020:

1. The planned 10th Anniversary celebrations for the CBC
2. Christmas Party on Sunday 15th of December.
3. January 12th, 2pm in Boat Inn Oughterard, "Keeping Bees" followed by a discussion and Q&A
4. Beginners' classes in Maam Cross - Tony, Ed Officer will take names (a great Christmas present).
5. A Social Visit to another association Apiary next summer?
6. Visit to David Geoghegan's Apiary (preferably on a Saturday)
7. Trip to Gormanston Summer 2020: a must for every beekeeper!

Beekeeping Organisations

FIBKA clg - All members of CBC are members of FIBKA clg (This includes Insurance etc. 12 issues of An Beachaire)

NIHBS – A Separate organisation which promotes the preservation of the Native Irish Honeybee. We fully support them and encourage all our members to join the society. Further info. from Sean Osborne and Ger Coyne.

-We agreed at our last committee meeting to Sponsor a visiting lecturer next September, in Athlone at the International SICAMM* conference.

***Societas Internationalis pro Conservatione Apis melliferae melliferae**

Our WEBSITE

Thanks to Felim for all his work on the site. Well worth browsing!

Our NEWSLETTER

Thanks to Mary once again for a job well done. Any items, photos, poems, stories etc always welcome.



Colm O'Neill's slide presentation with useful pointers to improve beekeeping record keeping . (Our November 3rd Lecture)

My own wishes for the Association's 10th birthday year:



- That our membership would continue to grow
- That the beginners and all our members would attend the monthly lectures. It is a forum for discussing issues that we come up against such as diseases, DAFM regulations and where we can find help with problems that arise
- Not all beginners want to become beekeepers, but there are other aspects to beekeeping too and we should explore them more in the years to come! Workshops on making candles and cosmetics etc are just two ideas!!
- Reach out to all our lapsed members, especially those who still have bees. Perhaps conduct a survey on why did people did not renew/give up the hobby?

Billy

Nov 2019



We sampled some honey in a restaurant in Greece in Oct. -The tray might inspire someone to replicate it!

Community Matters to Connemara Beekeepers Association

We like to take part in as many local events as possible during the year to encourage and inform residents and visitors alike to Connemara. Here's a sample of some of the events which we attended this year:

- Visits to local schools to raise awareness of the importance of bees
- Visit to connemara gardening club to illustrate importance of pollinators
- An Open Day at Sean Osborne's apiary in Oughterard in association with NIHBS during June
- Oughterard Agricultural Show
- Connemara Green Festival in Letterfrack - An informative lecture given by our Gerard Coyne (with a new iPad slide presentation) took place on 12th October



Connemara Green Festival 2019

Gerard Coyne was introduced by Siobhan Geoghegan Krone from the Connemara National Park

Can modern Law follow the ancient precedent of Brehon (Early Irish) Law and rescue our Bees?

Justice for the bees (A Discussion document)

Along with cattle, the Brehons devoted much attention to the bee. Over twenty manuscript pages of laws governing beekeeping, honey production, and protection of bees survive.

1. According to Brehon law, “any bumble bee – ‘bumbóg’ in Irish, taking nectar from plants on a neighbour’s land could be accused of grazing trespass in the same way that a cow or sheep would be if they strayed on to neighboring land.”
2. Bees are a little harder to fence in than cattle and sheep, so the law granted a beekeeper “three years of freedom during which time his bees were allowed free reign; but on the fourth year the first swarm to issue from the hive had to be given to the neighbor as payment.”
3. Bee stings were also covered. Victims were entitled to a meal of honey from the bee’s keeper. If, however, they died as a result of the sting, two hives were paid in compensation to their family. This ruling was null and void, however, if the victim killed the bee in retaliation.
4. Moreover, if the bee-stung “victim” was found to have vandalized or disturbed the hive prior to the attack, the bees were considered justified and their keeper free from liability for any resulting injuries.



Could we consider and attempt to implement a more modern interpretation of the Law in order to protect our current bee stocks? Here is an extract of an article that was published on the RTE website and written by Ciaran Crowley, University of Lille, with some suggested legal proposals:

...Due to the fact that action is needed **now**, considering the importance of bees to our ecosystem and way of life. We could also make other arguments (that our children will have an increased chance of growing up seeing the beauty of bees, and so on).

It is then proposed that a list of possible "bee-friendly" legal obligations be placed on governments, multinationals, farmers, landowners, homeowners and city dwellers to help bees. I begin with farmers and landowners (including the government) as they own most land and can institute most beneficial change. Some of these could be:

(1) Ask the government to buy land and create more national nature reserves and native woodlands. Ireland currently has the lowest percentage of native woodlands in the European Union and such goals are in line with the EU's *Habitats Directive*

(2) Impose environmental taxes on cash-rich multinationals who, arguably, cause the most damage of all.

(3) Promote more biodiversity, habitat regeneration and "rewilding". Give grants to farmers, as has been done in Ireland with a degree of success under the GLAS scheme and in Australia by state governments in Victoria and Tasmania

(4) Ask landowners and farmers to give-up a small area of land (5-10%) to nature, if they have the means or to trim hedgerows in rotation.

(5) Request farmers not to knock hedges, ditches and woodlands that support wildlife, especially if such measures mean a comparatively small increase in short-term profits as against long-term benefits for nature. The cutting of or removal of hedgerows during the bird nesting season (March 1st to August 31st) is forbidden under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976. This is currently under review but stricter rules could be introduced. In England, the *Hedgerows Regulations 1997* were introduced to make it illegal to remove most countryside hedges without first getting the permission of your local council.

(6) A tax could be paid by landowners and farmers in each parish to help local nature projects. Contrary to national taxes, the benefits could be directly seen and reflect the redistributive model in Swiss cantons.

(7) Require all people building a new home in the countryside or suburbs to plant a hedge and wildflowers

(8) Ask all city dwellers without a garden or land to pay an environmental tax. This is defined under Regulation (EU) No 691/2011 as "a tax whose tax base is a physical unit... of something that has a proven, specific negative impact on the environment". On the grounds of fairness, all members of society should be asked to help and not only those living in the countryside). Not all of these proposals will be greeted with open arms. People are concerned with making a living and are already tired of paying too many taxes. However, if proposals are discussed and implemented at local rather than national level, people may feel more implicated in the process and see the effects first-hand.

This challenge can be expressed as an inconvenience, but also an opportunity in sustainable land management for the next generation...

Bibliography

For the full article see:

<https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2019/0502/1047133-to-bee-or-not-to-bee-can-the-law-save-the-bee/>
written by Ciaran Crowley, Universite of Lille

The Apprentice

He started his beekeeping
He learned very well;
After a few good seasons
His knowledge did excel.

At first, the bees would sting him
And chase him from the field;
But now they seem to like him
To him they did concede.

He got to know the Worker,
The Queen bee and the Drone;
He understands the swarm
And when they will be going

He loves to see the honey
And the nectar coming in;
They need it for the winter
It's not all for him.

He learned from the master,
Something he can't forget
And as the years move onwards;
There's lots to learn yet.

He loves to save the Native Bee
From rooftop and hollow tree
-But the master has to be there
To watch and oversee.

He made some lovely mead
And gave us all a sip,
But as he left the building
He let the bottle slip!

By Gerard Coyne



Very simple queen rearing

In my eternal search to make my beekeeping as simple as possible, I have tried a number of methods of queen rearing. Through trial and error and a lot of time researching the web I have come up with a method that suits me very well and that I would like to share with you. I have found other methods to be too complicated and time consuming, need fancy gear and a lot of the time don't yield great results. They also seem to be very unnatural. The goal here is to make queen rearing successful and most importantly simple allowing the beekeeper to decide which hives they want to promote.

The fundamentals of the method I use is based around the work of a beekeeper called Mel Disselkoen who has developed a technique called "On The Spot queen rearing". His work is, in turn, based on the knowledge of a beekeeper at the turn of the 19th century called G. M. Doolittle. I also refer a lot to the booklet "Simple Methods of Making Increase" by Wally Shaw.

On The Spot queen rearing (OTS) is a method where you force the bees to make emergency queen cells but you dictate where those queen cells will be made on the frames using a method called "notching".

Very basically; the queen is removed, the bees make emergency cells on different frames and you move these frames to nucs, job done. This method can be used at different times of the year for different advantages. The beauty of this method is that your queen cells will be made naturally on frames which are easy to remove and placed in nucs with virtually no set up needed. Not only that but you will need no special equipment and because you will be forcing a brood break there will be a reduction in Varroa.

Choosing a colony

To start off you should work with colonies that have good characteristics such as productive, docile, and the ability to keep Varroa levels low and so on. The

colony should be strong and with multiple frames of brood, six or more ideally. If you want more frames with brood on them for notching you can add an extra brood box to the top of the existing box in advance and let the queen lay there too.

Removing the queen

You will need to find and remove the queen so it is easier to have your queen marked in advance early in the year when there are fewer bees in the hive.

Remove the queen along with two frames of mostly sealed brood with nurse bees and an additional shake of nurse bees (these are bees that will be on the frames of brood) and put them in a nuc. Move her at least 10 feet away and close up the entrance with grass for a few days. Be sure to feed her as there will not be enough foragers in the hive yet. Basically, you are taking the least amount of bees needed for the old queen to make a new colony leaving as many bees as possible in the existing hive to make emergency cells.

Notching the queen cells

The normal rules apply for when choosing larvae to make queens from; the younger (smaller) the better, definitely under 36 hours. -I find that the youngest larvae tend to be on the outer edges of the brood pattern. When you have found cells you think will be good you notch them. To notch take a sharp hive tool or something similar and cut into the bottom third the chosen cell at a right angle to the frame all the way to foundation (Figure 1). Then, keeping your hive tool at a right angle you draw down, cutting away the bottom third of the cell wall and removing the cell below it (Figure 2). Be sure not to damage the larvae in the cells you have notched. Bees love to make queen cells that hang vertically down so they will choose the cells you have cut the bottom third out of to make queens with.

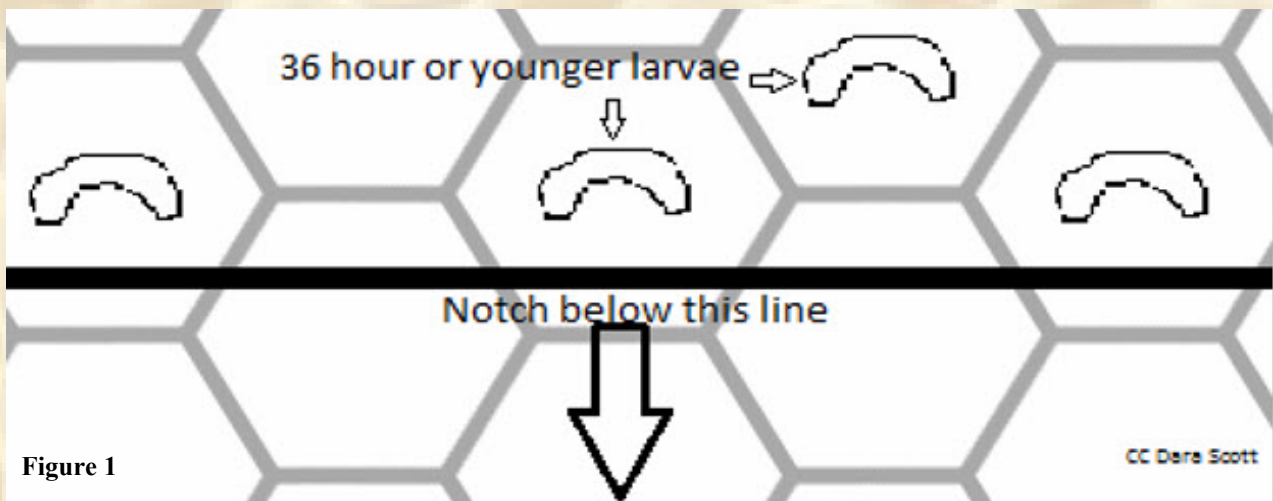


Figure 1

CC Dara Scott



Figure 2

You can then go on and do the same thing on as many frames as you think the bees have the strength to make queen cells from. In as strong hive 4 to 6 frames is plenty. In summary what you are doing is removing the queen so that they are forced to make a new queen and by removing the bottom half of your chosen cells you are determining which frames the cells will be on. I find notching more cells than I need gives the bees lots of options to choose and I if I have extra queen cells I can cut them out and use them elsewhere if needed. It has been shown that there is no difference in the quality of queens made by either emergency cells or swarm cells.

Splitting

After notching return to the hive 7 days later where you should find multiple frames with queen cells. Leave it any later than that and you will probably find only one queen and lots of destroyed queen cells. You can now split up the box into as many nucs as you have frames and bees for. Be sure to be very gentle with the frames so as not to damage the developing queens. If nucs are too weak you can add a shake of nurse bees from another hive, just make sure a queen isn't on these frames. The nucs can be left in the original position but facing different directions. I am experimenting with stacking them which is working okay so far. Be sure to feed theses nucs until they have sufficient foragers. By the way there is no need to break down the extra queen cells as the nucs will be too weak to support a cast swarm.

Varroa

One advantage of this method is that there will be a natural brood break. This naturally sets back Varroa but a treatment with oxalic acid at this time really drops the Varroa levels.

Timing

Making splits at swarming time is ideal. Any earlier and there may not be enough drones and the colonies may not be strong enough. If you like, you can then have 4/6 new queens working for you and they can be combined later when there is a flow to make a super strong hive.

If you just want to make one new queen you can do this just before a flow. Remove the existing queen and let them make a new one. In this case it is a good idea to check back in 7 days to remove excess queen cells to prevent a cast swarm. Because there will be very little brood left when the flow comes in there will be more bees available to bring in the nectar. Queens that have emerged after the summer solstice are very prolific late into the summer and autumn. I hope it has been of some use to you to learn about a different way of raising queens. I find it very useful and will continue to use this method always trying to refine it. -Best of luck with it should you give it a go.

Dara Scott



L A C	B G X
T R T C I N	T V H J A J
L I L Y I M X O W	R R D Y R B O X F
V O N O S A N L D	L D G V V Y I Z F
M E T S Y S O C E Q	O I R D E T I U X T
V R U S I N C E R E	X O J K W K F H E U
J Z F V E Y V L J G N	H S Q J G I P V O Z I
G C F M R A W S L A I C I F I T R A Q P X O	
L M Z N P Y R W S O A I D I T A M M O Q	
U W W P X E P N C G L Q K N P	
F I I H R O I U S	
P P R C Y E C C T M P O O	
C B A J V G R E G I E P C A Z	
L A I T U A Y F O D R L P L T W S V S	
S H W C R F E Q T M S A X M O E W P F S F	
C K E J O N M O K O U N F N Y R K B R A P	
F Q N V A W P G F L N P U W W G T T S I K O O	
R H I J C G E Q Y	E E L Z V X G O O O Q R
D S A E I A W T P	S R A H V Q P A X X Q U
Q G G T R R W G	G S T D H X C L I E G
K G V B E L Q	H E I S A H N I H L
A O J C B	U D O G J C M O
Y Q N	W U N O C Z
	Y R L
	T E J

ARTIFICIALSWARM	ECOSYSTEM
EXOSKELETON	GRANULATION
HYGROSCOPIC	IVY
NECTARIES	OMMATIDIA
RAGWORT	SINCERE
PHEROMONES	THIXOTROPIC
NASONOV	ERICA
SUPERSEDURE	

CLOVER WORDSEARCH

Mayo BKA / NIHBS Summer Workshop 2019

On a fine morning on 14th July, Gerard C. and myself embarked on a trip to Bonniconlon, Co. Mayo. It was a brilliant opportunity for me to attend and experience an alternative Native Black Bee workshop; having previously attended and enjoyed the annual one which is hosted in Oughterard at Sean Osborne's apiary, by the Connemara Beekeeper's Association and NIHBS.

Our journey crisscrossed the beautiful scenery of Co. Galway and Co. Mayo and I noted the many contrasts in the terrain in a relatively short distance. The steep mountains of Leenane eventually gave way to the patchwork of arable fields and minor twisty roads and T junctions; containing bountiful hedgerows and bee habitats interweaved with greater numbers of livestock evident, than within our own local domains. The journey went quickly with interesting 'bee chat' and we had even took time to have a quick refreshment stop I, what I believe to be a fast disappearing rural "all-in-one" pub/shop/meeting room/dancehall, where we were greeted by a friendly face and some chatty Bonniconlon locals who lightly enquired as to the purpose of our green beekeepers teeshirts!



Gervase Padden hosted and welcomed everyone and allocated groups to workstations

Gerard manned the Apidea demonstration post and I had the opportunity to meet some of the local bee enthusiasts and interested learners. It's always good to watch others demonstrating their beekeeping practice and I enjoyed and learned some new queen rearing ideas to try to replicate.

The only 'drawback' was the heat of the sun! I am so "not used" to higher temp/sun and really appreciated the lend of a straw hat; an item I would not possess in my current wet/workwear wardrobe!

Post demonstrations, we were given some BBQ treats and welcome refreshments. There was a raffle and Gerard was lucky to win some Queens of the potato species!

It was a lovely outing and highly recommended; maybe a group visit idea for next summer.



Maurice Cassidy, Digges BKA

Pat Finnegan, Treasurer NIHBS

Gerard Coyne, CBA/NIHBS

By Mary Keenan



L A C	B G X
T R T C I N	T V H J A J
L I L Y I M X O W	R R D Y R B O X F
V O N O S A N L D	L D G V V Y I Z F
M E T S Y S O C E Q	O I R D E T I U X T
V R U S I N C E R E	X O J K W K F H E U
J Z F V E Y V L J G N	H S Q J G I P V O Z I
G C F M R A W S L A I C I F I T R A Q P X O	
L M Z N P Y R W S O A I D I T A M M O Q	
U W W P X E P N C G L Q K N P	
F I I H R O I U S	
P P R C Y E C C T M P O O	
C B A J V G R E G I E P C A Z	
L A I T U A Y F O D R L P L T W S V S	
S H W C R F E Q T M S A X M O E W P F S F	
C K E J O N M O K O U N F N Y R K B R A P	
F Q N V A W P G F L N P U W W G T T S I K O O	
R H I J C G E Q Y E E L	Z V X G O O O Q R
D S A E I A W T P S R A	H V Q P A X X Q U
Q G G T R R W G G S T	D H X C L I E G
K G V B E L Q H E I	S A H N I H L
A O J C B U D O	G J C M O
Y Q N W U N	O C Z
	Y R L
	T E J

CLOVER WORDSEARCH

(SOLUTION)



A Date for your Diary



Apis mellifera mellifera

Native Irish Honey Bee Society

Honey Bee Improvement Seminar & AGM

Date : Saturday, 7th March 2020

**Location: Kilcoran Lodge Hotel, Cahir,
Co. Tipperary (Exit 11, M8)**

“Protecting our Native Honey Bee Heritage”

More Info: www.nihbs.org



Christmas Party 2019



Thanks to everyone who organised and contributed to our Christmas party to make it another annual, successful favourite once more. The meal was excellent and there were many excellent choices on the menu; which made it so difficult to decide!

There was a very festive, relaxed atmosphere, as always. After dinner, our Chairman led the way and opened with his unique, seasonal party-piece.

We were also delighted that John Summerville was able to accept our invitation and, after dinner he received a presentation in recognition of his support and assistance to our association.

Tony Murphy and David Canavan also surprised us all with their vocal talents and Neansai also shared her musical skills with us by playing a beautiful version of "*Christmas Eve*" on the tin whistle.



Neansai and Margaret enjoying the festive atmosphere



Billy enthraling everybody with his powerful song



Our 2019 Christmas Festivities in full progress!

Dandelions in Spring

We are just little dandelions
That pop up in the Spring
We love to feed the birds and
bees
And brighten up the fields

We like to grow up in the lawn
Or on the roadside verge
Maybe in the flower patch
Or there amid the veg

Please do not dig or spray us
We will not stay too long
No haste to weed the garden
Take time to mow the lawn

With pollen and nectar
The bees we will befriend
Our seeds will go to feed small
birds
Some blow off with the wind



An original poem written by

Gerard Coyne



Connemara Beekeepers Association 10th Anniversary

The year was 2009 and the varroa mite was spreading rapidly throughout the country. This brought about uncertainty and worry to our beekeeping activities; we did not know to what extent the new pest would damage our existing colonies. Though the pest had not yet reached Connemara, we needed to prepare ourselves and be ready for the time when, inevitably it would arrive. The other significant problem at the time was that a lot of bees were being imported into the country and causing havoc within our native bee population. On the back of one of those imported bees, the varroa mite arrived first; so we now needed to gather together to organise our local beekeeping approaches to deal with the emerging threats.

A small number of beekeepers in Connemara were already members of the Galway BKA; so we were familiar with how these associations function. We were also rearing some of our own native queens and improving our bee stock and trying to breeding out any of the hybrids strains that were appearing in Connemara back then.

One a cold January morning in 2010, we met in the woods high above Oughterard, Sean Finnerty, Sean Osborne, David Geoghegan and Neil Spelacy and myself; at first we were planning to breed some queens (which we did!), as a breeding group was one of the ideas. Then, we decided to form a Connemara Association.... That was the day Cuman Beachairi Chonamara was born;



Decision made!

LtoR David Geoghegan, Sean Finnerty, Neil Spelacy, Sean Osborne

the new Association was soon proven to be the right way to go; Galway is a big county and renewed interest in beekeeping was on the increase. We next set out to contact as many beekeepers as we could find; I contacted a fellow that I had known for many years, near Rosmuc: Paddy Finnerty. Dara Scott was also with and supporting us but often spent most of the year overseas attending to business.

We were now taking a big leap forward in Connemara in trying to organise our beekeeping. There was never a BKA in Connemara before, many beginners were understandably very reluctant to travel to Athenry to join the Galway BKA, which was one of the oldest associations in the country; only a few hardy souls braved that journey.

A public meeting was planned and posters were printed and placed all throughout Connemara, from Cleggan to Clonbur and down by the Corrib and as far as Spiddal in the south. The date was now fixed for the first public meeting Sunday 21st February 2010, in the Boat Inn, Oughterard. The public meeting was a great success, over sixty people turned up! There was great interest and lots of newbees, many questions were asked and answered that day. We moved forward and before long, had well over the minimum of ten required to affiliate to FIBKA.

The date was next set for our AGM, the first AGM. This 'historic event' was to take place on the 14th of March 2010. The meeting was attended by the President of FIBKA, Denis Ryan and the Secretary, Michael Gleeson. In addition, our good friend, John Summerville from Tullamore attended. John was/is a great help to our group with his vast knowledge of queen rearing and, indeed, all aspects of beekeeping practice.

Ten years on, we now know it was the correct decision; many beginners have come to our classes and some have gone on to become good beekeepers. Others have come, saw,

learnt and said “not for me”, but have retained a knowledge and respect for the importance of the bees. Good friendships have also been gained and great ideas have been exchanged between one another; even today. All beekeepers in the local area have benefited over the past ten years and we are all still learning new skills and appreciating each person's abilities.

But most of all, I think that our Native Honey Bee has been the main beneficiary. Our ethos from the start was focussed on the conservation of our native honey bee; this was written into our constitution at the beginning and we are now ten years a Voluntary Conservation Area for the Native Black Bee.

Written by

Gerard Coyne



Connemara Beekeepers' Association

Cumann Beachairí Chonamara

Public Notice

A public meeting will take place in The Boat Inn, Oughterard, with a view to form a Connemara Beekeepers' Association. The meeting will take place on Sunday 21st of February at 2.30pm.

Everyone is welcome.

Beidh cruinniú poiblí, sa Boat Inn, Uachtar Ard, maidir le Cumann Beachairí Chonamara a bhunú. Tá an cruinniú socraithe le haghaidh Dé Domhnaigh an 21ú lá do Feabhra ag 2.30 i.n.

Beidh fáilte roimh cách.



www.connemarabeekeepers.ie



Our 1st AGM 2010



SICAMM

Societas Internationalis pro Conservatione Apis melliferae melliferae
International Association for the Protection of the European Dark Bee

SICAMM Conference 2020 **4th - 6th September, Athlone Springs Hotel, Athlone, Ireland** **Going Native – The Potential of the Black Bee**

The Native Irish Honey Bee Society (NIHBS) are proud to host this International Black Bee Conference on behalf of SICAMM, featuring speakers from home and abroad, including:

- ☐ **Professor Tom Seeley** -World authority on honey bees, Cornell University;
- ☐ **Andrew Abrahams** - Master Beekeeper & Scottish Native Bee Breeder, Colonsay, Scotland
- ☐ **Raffaella Dall'Olio**, BeeSources Beekeeping Consultancy (Bologna, Italy)

The conference starts 9.00 am, Friday 4th until Sunday lunchtime, followed by excursions to visit native black bee apiaries, Sunday afternoon and Monday.

Full schedule of presentations will be available on the NIHBS website www.nihbs.org

Conference and meals Booking: Advance booking strongly recommended! Generous 50% early discount applies if booked **before 30th June 2020**. To book and pay online - <http://nihbs.org/sicamm-conference-2020/>

On-site registration from 8.00 a.m. each day **BUT** note that **payment after 30th June and on the day will cost 50% more**, so please save time/money and book early.

Accommodation Booking: Contact Athlone Springs hotel directly +353 (0)90 644 4444 and quote NIHBS for special B&B rates, **if booked before 30th June 2020**, otherwise see athlonespringshotel.com

For a list of some other local accommodation - see SICAMM tab on our website.

For more about Athlone - places to stay and things to do: <https://www.athlone.ie/>



Bees don't slack on the job, even when they are ill!

Struggle to get into work when you feel under the weather? You should take inspiration from the hard-working honeybee and spring out of bed.

New research has shown that honeybees remain excellent searchers even when they are ill.

The bees are hardwired to search the landscape efficiently, allowing them to continue working for the greater good of their hives.

Scientists in Cornwall used radar technology to track individual bees and were able to show they remained nimble and travelled hundreds or thousands of metres even when they had infections or viruses.

Honeybees tirelessly commute between rewarding flower patches and their hive and their remarkable navigational skills rely on distinct landmarks, such as trees or houses, which they very efficiently find and memorise on orientation flights.

Experts fitted a transponder – a tiny dipole aerial much lighter than the nectar or pollen normally carried by the bee – to the thorax.

Tracking each bee individually allowed them to pick up a radar signal from the transponder showing where and how it was flying. The aerial is harmless to the bee and removable.

Bees, like humans, can fall ill and getting around during periods of sickness can become very challenging.

The study shows that even very sick bees are still able to search their surroundings optimally in so-called Levy flight patterns.

Lead author Dr Stephan Wolf, from Queen Mary University of London, said: "The honeybees we observed had remarkably robust searching abilities, which indicate this might be hardwired in the bees rather than learned, making bees strong enough to withstand pathogens and possibly other stressors, and allowing them to still contribute to their colony by, for example, foraging for food."

During the study the team monitored 78 bees, some of which were unwell.

The researchers discovered that the unhealthy bees did not fly as far or for as long as the healthy bees but they continued to search in the same manner, suggesting that the pattern was inbuilt.

Bibliography

<https://www.breakingnews.ie/world/bees-dont-slack-on-the-job-even-when-they-are-ill-754497.html>

Traditional Cold Remedy

2.5cm piece of root ginger

3 cloves

½ tsp turmeric powder

4 tblsp cider vinegar

1 tblsp honey (home-produced!)

Lemon slices to taste



Method

1. Peel and grate the ginger
2. Place in a small saucepan with all the other ingredients, except the honey. Add 60ml water and bring to the boil.
3. Simmer this mixture for 10mins.
4. Remove from the heat and stir in the honey until dissolved.
5. Strain into glass/mug, add lemon and drink whilst still warm.



Why not get yourself the latest stationary accessory that's available from CBC; it's a great quality, pen with a mobile device touch stylus!!! Only £2

Contact us to get yours, while stocks last!!

Humming in Tune

‘A fine calf’, says my neighbour Gerard Coyne. ‘Thanks to you’ I said, ‘I would never have got him out on my own’. The mother made a couple efforts to rise and eventually made it. She turned and made acquaintance with her fine son.

Gerard and I left the shed and stood on the concrete platform outside, ‘some view’ says Gerard, ‘surely’ I said as we gazed at Inishbofin to the west and The Beanna Beola to the east with the vast Cloon, Sheenaun and Ballinakill townlands in between. ‘It would be a mighty place for a few hives’ says Gerard. I often thought the same and reflected on the times that Mikie Coyne from Renvyle came and checked my fathers hive back in the ‘fifties’.

‘Get a spot ready and I will set you up’ said Gerard. ‘It may take a bit of time as it’s not a good year but have a place ready’.

We parted company and I returned to check on mother and son.

Over the following weeks, I fixed on a spot that was suitable, open to the east and sheltered by a fine ‘flax’ hedge to the south west and west. A hardstand was installed. A year passed and staying in touch with Gerard, I knew the chances were not good as it had been wet and cold, not good bee weather.

Some distance from my hardstand, I had a small garden and one evening in July 2018, while doing ‘a bit of weeding’, I noticed quite a bit of insect activity around me. Recent media coverage was stating at the time that there was a scarcity in bee numbers, ‘not here’, I thought to myself. After a few minutes I noticed that the activity had increased greatly and took stock of my surroundings. Within ten feet of me and hanging from a fuchsia bush was a fine ‘swarm’. I could not believe my eyes, I had heard so often that people interested in bee keeping had waited for ‘yonks’ for this moment and here it was at my door.

I immediately rang Gerard. ‘I am in the middle of a calving problem, said Gerard, what a coincidence I thought, thinking back to the previous year and our conversation re. bee keeping, ‘I will get my apprentice, David Canavan’, this said in jest, ‘to get to you, you need to attend to this straight away’.

David duly arrived and took stock of the scene. ‘I brought a hive with me’ said David ‘and our job is to get what’s hanging there into the hive’. I watched with great interest as David got to work. He donned his bee suit and proceeded to set up the hive immediately under the swarm. I didn’t have a suit but the bees didn’t seem to notice me. ‘Now’, said David, ‘I am going to shake the bush and hopefully the swarm will drop into the hive’, this he did and everything went to order. ‘Let us make sure herself is in there, otherwise these boys won’t stay’. He confirmed her presence, ‘all good’ says he. We left them to settle and within a short space of time, almost all had entered their new home. David gave me names of hive suppliers and I got to work.



The hive arrived a few days later and David returned to help with its assembly. As a matter of coincidence, my son Sean, based in California, was home with family on holiday and as a result of being present at this event, took a keen interest in beekeeping and is now the proud beekeeper of two hives in Belmont, California.

In the past year, with the help of Gerard, I have a now got a second hive up and running and took our first “runoff” of beautiful honey as well.

A big Thank You to Gerard and David, I will be humming a tune to their good health while time allows.

Written by

Eamonn McLoughlin

CBC – Galway Wind Farm 'Community Fund 2018 & 2019'

To-date CBC has been fortunate to have received two separate grants over the past two years from the GWF Community Fund. In 2018 we received €1000 and in 2019 the amount received was €2500.

-So, where's the money going then? Let's take each amount in turn. Three spends account for the €1000:

1. New CBC Information Leaflets for distribution to the general public and, for instance, as handouts when speaking to students, Tidy Towns, Flower and/or Residents' Groups.

2. A new Tablet/iPad for us to do admin, take photos and video, as well as archive older material about our Association.

3. A new Observation Hive for use at Shows and Fairs to illustrate how things work on the inside!

Grant No. 2 - €2500. -Here the spend is a work-in-progress. What is planned is the erection of 4/5 'Information Notice Boards' promoting the Native Irish Dark Bee throughout Connemara. There will also be suggestions about how people can plant bee-friendly plants and shrubs. Ultimately, the greater Connemara area could become an exclusive 'Dark Bee' region. Education is a key element in this strategy.

The second component includes a proposal to establish a new apiary in the Wind Farm. We visited the area with John O'Sullivan (GWF) last October and acknowledged there were important consideration before proceeding: What is a suitable location with the Wind Farm? How do we plan for enough forage? Who will look after the hives in the long run? There is no doubt, planting is priority – that could take 2/3 years to achieve. However, a practical first step would be for some GWF staff to attend our upcoming Beginners Course (Feb. – Mar. 2020). That is currently under consideration by GWF. Local involvement and ownership will contribute significantly to the success of any future apiary.

As you can see both grants are enabling CBC to promote and advance its work on behalf of members and the people of Connemara. There will be more positives to report in due course. Long live the bees!

Article written by **Tony Murphy**



Beginners' Courses in Beekeeping 2020

organized by

Connemara Beekeepers Association

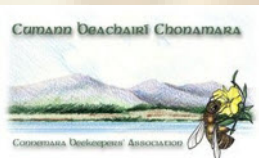


**Starting at the Peacock's Hotel on 18th February 2020 at
7:30pm**

- Course fee of €30 for members or €100 for non-members includes:
 - Three weekly evening lectures [18th & 25th February & 3rd March]
 - Visit to an apiary including practical demonstrations and hive inspections (This will take place during the summer months when the hives are at their busiest. Date to be confirmed depending on weather conditions.)
 - 12 months membership of the Connemara Beekeepers' Association (The Association meets monthly and hosts lectures and discussions on various aspects of beekeeping.)
 - Advice and guidance from experienced beekeepers through our mentorship programme (invaluable help when you establish your first hive!)
 - 12 months subscription to *An Beachaire*, the monthly journal published by the Federation of Irish Beekeepers' Association
 - Indemnity insurance

Limited places are available now. Please contact us via our website, Or for bookings and enquiries, please contact the secretary, Education Officer, Tony Murphy or any committee member (e-mail: secretary.connemarabeekeepers@gmail.com).

Please spread the word about our upcoming courses and encourage everyone to get involved in beekeeping and the importance of pollinator conservation!



Committee Members 2020

Chairman: Billy Gilmore

Secretary: Frank Conroy

Treasurer: Rod Teck

Education Officer: Tony Murphy

Apiary Manager: Gerard Coyne

Website Manager: Felim Burke

Facebook Manager: David Canavan

PRO/Newsletter Editor: Mary Keenan

Social Secretary: David Canavan

Inventory Officer: Frank Conroy

Committee members: Colleen Gilmore, Paddy Finnerty, C  il  n Faherty, Donal McLoughlin



2020 Upcoming Lecture Series:

January 12th, 2pm in Boat Inn Oughterard, "Keeping Bees" followed by a discussion and Q&A

CBC Membership renewal for 2020

Euro **70**; Membership of Connemara Beekeeper's Association (includes beekeepers insurance, monthly copy of An Beachaire)

Euro **30**; Additional family membership (as above, but to include another named household member)

Euro **100**; New member (includes membership, insurance and beginners beekeeping course)

-Please ensure your membership subscription is up to date for 2020 (please send/give the membership form to the treasurer) and ensure that your email and Eircode is with the Secretary of the Connemara Beekeepers Association. (for An Beachaire delivery)

Treasurer: Rod Teck, Clifden, Co Galway

For further information and all the latest News & courses:

visit: www.connemarabeekeepers.ie

and our facebook page [Connemara-Beekeepers](https://www.facebook.com/Connemara-Beekeepers)