

THE BUZZ

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INVERNESS-SHIRE BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION



A major hive and frame cleaning operation taking place this Summer at the Knocknagael apiary. A very difficult, time consuming and sticky job so thank you to Charlie, Alan, Moira, Jed and Jess for getting stuck in.

Inside This Issue:

Current Covid-19 Guidance for Beekeepers	2
IBA Meeting and Events Calendar.....	5
The Honey Show is Back!!!.....	6
IBA Member's Survey Results.....	10
Can Honey Bees Recognise Human Faces?.....	14
Notice Board	16
The Back Page	19

Coronavirus (COVID-19): advice for beekeepers:

**Scottish Government
Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate
19th July 2021**

As beekeepers, you should act responsibly and ensure that you continue good beekeeping practices, effective stock management and health checks whilst observing [guidance on COVID-19](#).

You must follow the rules on physical distancing, gatherings and any other required measures in place in your area to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. Read more about: [Scotland's protection levels](#).
General advice for beekeepers is as follows:

You should continue to work and care for your animals in the normal manner, as far as possible. You should not take measures that compromise the welfare of the animals in your care.

You should:

- maintain good [biosecurity](#) at your apiary
- do not share beekeeping equipment with other beekeepers, particularly hive tools and other handheld devices and protective clothing
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and hot water before and after you come into contact with any animal. Use hand sanitiser if that's all you have access to

There are currently no restrictions on the movements of bee colonies – for example, moving bees to fulfil pollination contracts. You should observe the guidance to prevent the spread of COVID-19 when carrying out these activities, including the guidance on physical distancing and travel.

If you are required to visit premises other than your own, you should familiarise yourself with the guidance on [infection prevention and control](#) and take measures to minimise the risks from contaminated surfaces

You are required to self-isolate when:

- you have symptoms of coronavirus and [get tested](#)
- you have tested positive for coronavirus – this means you have coronavirus
- you live with someone who has symptoms or tested positive

- someone in your support bubble has symptoms or tested positive
- you're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Protect
- you have been abroad and told to quarantine on your return

If you are responsible for looking after bees, you should make alternative arrangements for their essential care if you, your family or your staff become ill or are unable to look after their welfare. If this is not possible, we would advise that you only attend to the basic needs and welfare of your bees where you can ensure you do not have contact with other people and you are able to follow all government advice on actions to minimise the risk of spread of COVID-19.

Local associations should consider how they can support those shielding, in isolation or otherwise unable to attend their bees at this difficult time for all of us.

Read more:

- [self and household isolation](#)
- [travel and transport guidance](#)

Bee inspections:

If your bees are due an inspection by a government inspector, and you are in a high-risk group, or are in any of the categories requiring self-isolation, you must let your inspector know ahead of the inspection.

Arrangements will be made that will limit the chance of COVID-19 being spread. This may include the inspection proceeding without the beekeeper being present or delaying the inspection.

For all inspections, 2 metre distancing will be considered the minimum and so the beekeeper will not be able to stand at the hive side with the inspector while the inspection takes place.

Imports of bees are still permitted. There is no evidence to support restrictions to international movement or trade in bees, and the UK has no additional rules for bee imports with respect to COVID-19.

Report any suspicion of notifiable diseases or pests to the authorities in the usual way – please see the [bee health page](#) for further information.

Use husbandry techniques to minimise swarming. If you have to respond to collect a swarm, ensure that you adhere to the guidelines on distancing when collecting the swarm. If that is not possible, then the swarm should not be collected. Trying to prevent swarms is the best approach. Similar arrangements are also in place in England and Wales – information can be found at: [National Bee Unit - News](#).

At the time of releasing this Buzz, this information is up-to-date. However, this advice is being constantly reviewed and may change at any time. For the most recent advice for beekeepers relating to Covid-19, visit:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-beekeepers/>

Inverness Beekeepers Association Calendars

Inverness-shire Beekeeping Association Events Calendar			
Date	Event	Host	Location
11/09/2021 – 12/09/2021	The Honey Show	N/A	Simpsons Garden Centre, Culloden Road, Inverness, IV2 5BA

Inverness-shire Beekeeping Association Meetings Calendar		
Date	Talk Title	Host
12/10/21	Buzz Pollination – A Striking Bee Pollination Phenomenon	Mario Vallejo-Marin
09/11/21	Rational Varroa Control	David Evans

Although Covid is still with us, we are trying to get back to normal as much as we can. Therefore, we propose to have hybrid meetings for the autumn months, where you can either attend in person or if you prefer to be online it will also run through Zoom. Our speakers will be on Zoom for both meetings.

The Smithton Hall is unavailable to us as it has been booked for vaccinations for the immediate future and they are not taking bookings apart from that.

We have instead arranged with **Craigmonie Hotel** that we will use their Moffat Suite. If you've not been to the hotel before, the address is

Craigmonie Hotel · 9 Annfield Road · Inverness · Inverness-shire · IV2 3HX

The meetings will start at 7.30pm. For those attending through Zoom, Charlie will send joining details as usual.

The Honey Show is Back!!!

IBA Committee

28th July 2021

After the cancellation of last year's Show due to the Covid pandemic, we are pleased to confirm that the Show will go ahead this year, at Simpsons Garden Centre, on the weekend of 11-12th September. We hope you'll have lots of entries to challenge the current trophy holders.

Date: 11th and 12th September 2021

Held at Simpsons Garden Centre, Inverness Judge: Enid Brown

HONEY SHOW RULES:

1. Entry to the Inverness-shire Beekeepers' Association Open Honey Show is open to any beekeeper.
2. The entry fee is £1 per class up to a maximum of £5 per exhibitor. An Entry Form is available from the Association Secretary or can be downloaded from the Association website.
3. Entries are to be the property of the exhibitor and to have been derived from the products of the exhibitor's own bees.
4. Class number adhesive labels will be collected at the Show and must be fixed to each item as indicated:
Jars of honey – 10-15mm from bottom of jar which must be standard squat glass honey jar only.
Mead – 10-15mm from bottom of clear glass punted bottle of 70-75cl capacity with top flanged white cork.
Sections of honey – On top bar of section and container at top right hand end.
Cut comb honey – On top surface at right hand side.
Frames of honey – On top of right hand corner of face of container and on top of frame.
Block of beeswax – On underside of block and on top surface of container when used.
Honey cake and Tablet – On edge of white paper plate and clingfilm supplied by the Show Secretary. Photographs – On the top right of the back of the page.
5. Exhibits should be brought to the hall between 5pm and 6pm on the day before the Show or between 8.30am and 9.30am on the day of the Show. On request, grading glasses will be available for the correct placing of exhibits in the liquid honey classes. Misplaced entries are likely to be rejected by the judge.

6. The judge's decision is final and the judge is empowered to withhold awards in the case of insufficient merit. Judging will start at 10am on the day of the Show.
7. All exhibits are entered at exhibitor's risk and while all reasonable care will be taken no responsibility will be accepted for any loss or damage from any cause before, during or after the Show.
8. Exhibits must not be removed from the Show until authorised by the Show Secretary.
9. The Association reserves the right to cancel the Show in the event of insufficient entries or for any other reason.
10. Show classes 22 to 28 inclusive constitute the GIFT SECTION for which entries are invited. It should be noted that points gained in this section can go towards certain trophy aggregates. Gift section exhibits are retained for disposal to deserving parties as judged by the Association committee.
11. Only one entry is permitted for any Show classes, with the exception of the Gift Section and the Photography Section, where two entries per class are permitted. Properly presented honey may be taken to the Show for sale to the public but this service is restricted to Inverness-shire Beekeepers' Association exhibitors only. Selling prices will be fixed by the committee prior to the Show and a small contribution will be levied for Association funds. Sale items should be marked with their weight where appropriate.
12. In respect of Show classes 18-20, a novice beekeeper is one who has kept bees for less the five seasons.

Class Description (one entry per class)

1. 2 sections of honey (not ling)
2. 2 sections of heather honey (ling)
3. not in use
4. 2 pieces of cut comb honey (not ling) with a gross weight between 200-255g each
5. 2 pieces cut comb heather honey (ling) with a gross weight between 200-255g each
6. 2 @ 454g jars light honey (liquid)
7. 2 @ 454g jars medium honey (liquid)
8. 2 @ 454g jars dark honey (liquid)
9. 2 @ 454g jars heather honey (liquid ling)
10. 2 @ 454g jars set honey (not ling)
11. 2 @ 454g jars set heather honey (ling)
12. 2 @ 454g jars creamed honey (any)
13. 1 deep or shallow frame of honey (not ling)

- 14.1 deep or shallow frame of heather honey (ling)
- 15.1 cake of beeswax not less than 454g and 25mm thick
- 16.1 display of a variety of hive products (2.5 to 4.1kg, min. 5 items) assembled by exhibitor and presented in any form of container with own label if desired (but excluding name and address) ready for marketing.
- 17.1 bottle mead
- 18.2 sections any honey (confined to novice beekeepers)
- 19.2 @ 454g jars any honey (confined to novice beekeepers)
- 20.2 pieces cut comb honey (confined to novice beekeepers)
- 21.1 skep made by the exhibitor

GIFT SECTION (Two entries per class allowed)

- 22.1 section of honey (not ling)
- 23.1 section heather honey (ling)
- 24.1 @ 454g jar light honey (liquid)
- 25.1 @ 454g jar medium honey (liquid)
- 26.1 @ 454g jar heather honey (ling liquid)
- 27.1 @ 454g jar set honey (any)
- 28.1 @ 454g jar creamed honey

PRODUCTS MADE WITH HONEY (recipes supplied in the schedule must be used)

- 29. Devonshire honey cake
- 30.6 squares of tablet to be displayed

PHOTOGRAPHY (to have Honeybee or Beekeeping related theme, 2 entries per class allowed)

- 31.1 printed colour photograph, unmounted, not more than A4 size
- 32.1 printed black and white photograph, unmounted, not more than A4 size.

Honey Cake Recipe:

Ingredients:

250g clear honey plus about 2 tbsp extra to glaze. 225g unsalted butter. 100g dark muscovado sugar. 3 large eggs, beaten. 300g self-raising flour.

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to fan 140C/conventional 160C/gas 3. Butter and line a 20cm round loose bottomed cake tin. Cut the butter into pieces and drop into a medium pan with the honey and sugar. Melt slowly over a low heat. When the mixture looks quite liquid, increase the heat under the pan and boil for about one minute. Leave to cool for 15-20 minutes, to prevent the eggs cooking when they are mixed in. 2. Beat

the eggs into the melted honey mixture using a wooden spoon. Sift the flour into a large bowl and pour in the egg and honey mixture, beating until you have a smooth, quite runny batter. 3. Pour the mixture into the tin and bake for 50 minutes-1 hour until the cake is well risen, golden brown and springs back when pressed. A skewer pushed into the centre of the cake should come out clean. 4. Turn the cake out on a wire rack. Warm 2 tbsp honey in a small pan and brush over the top of the cake to give a sticky glaze, then leave to cool.

Tablet Recipe:

Ingredients: 1kg sugar, 50g butter, 1 tin evaporated milk, 175g honey.

Method: Place all the ingredients in a pan and dissolve slowly. Boil until showing some signs of setting. Beat well with a wooden spoon until creamy. Pour into a greased tin and mark into squares when cool.

TROPHY RULES OPEN TROPHIES:

Peterkin Cup - Best honey exhibit in Show. (Excluding beeswax and Display).

Mcintosh Grigor Cup - Most points in ling heather classes (2,5,9,11,14,23,26)

Margaret Logan Trophy - Best display of hive products (class 16)

Hugh Chishlom Cup - Best exhibit in Gift Section (classes 22-28)

Newcomer's Shield - Best exhibit by novice beekeeper (less than 5 seasons) classes 18-20

INVERNESS-SHIRE BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION TROPHIES:

Mackenzie Challenge Cup - Best sections of honey in class 1

Peter Brown Shield - Best exhibit in ling heather classes 2

Novelty Spoon - 5 Best exhibit in baking classes 29

Donald Matheson Quaich - 30 Best 2 jars of blossom honey

All trophies to be retained for one year.

IBA Member's Survey Results

**Barbara Sandbach,
August 4th 2021**

Last month we sent a survey out to all of our members, to get an idea if we are doing the right thing for members at a time when we've not been able to physically meet up. We had responses from 28 members only. We do have concerns that emails are received and read, rather than going into spam, and we are testing emails using Mailchimp as an option as well as from secretary@inverness-shirebeekeepers.org. If you haven't received at least one email each month, it would be worthwhile checking your spam folder.

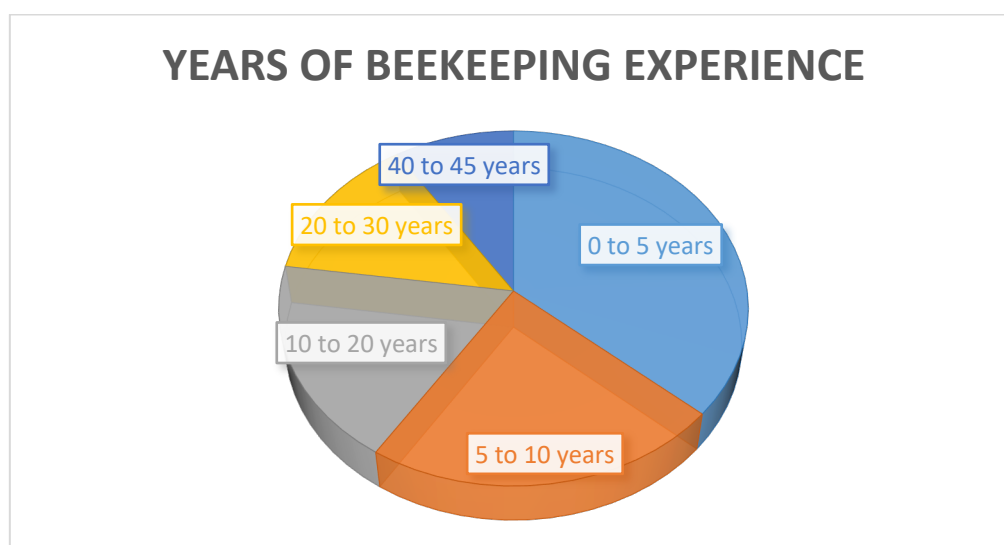
From the 28 members who took part in the survey, we have some interesting results. The questions and responses were as follows.

1. Inverness-shire Beekeepers Association is affiliated to the Scottish Beekeepers Association, founded to support Scotland's bees and beekeepers. Beebase is an invaluable source of information to beekeepers and registration is essential to receive notifications of disease or other threats. Are you a member of the following? Please tick all that apply.

21 of the 28 respondents are members of SBA and Beebase, 6 are members of other associations. This answer ties into the next question.

2. Do you keep bees, and if you do, for how long have you had bees?

22 of the 28 respondents keep bees, 3 can't keep bees and 1 hoped to have them soon. We are happy that those keeping bees have joined SBA and Beebase. We have a very wide range of experience, as this chart shows –



3. Separately from your level of beekeeping experience, have you taken any exams or modules, from Basic Beekeeping onwards, or are you interested in doing so?

Answers to this showed an even split between those 9 who have taken exams, those 8 who intend to do so, and those 9 not planning on taking any exams. Some have taken modules after the Basic Beekeepers certificate so there is a wealth of knowledge we can draw on.

4. Inverness-shire Beekeepers Association is a membership organisation, directed by a committee of the members. We have over 100 members, but less than 20% have joined the online Zoom meetings held during the pandemic. Would you (a) like to join the committee and have a direct say in events and talks, and (b) tell us how you would like meetings to be held in future? Please give one answer for part (a), and one for part (b) below.

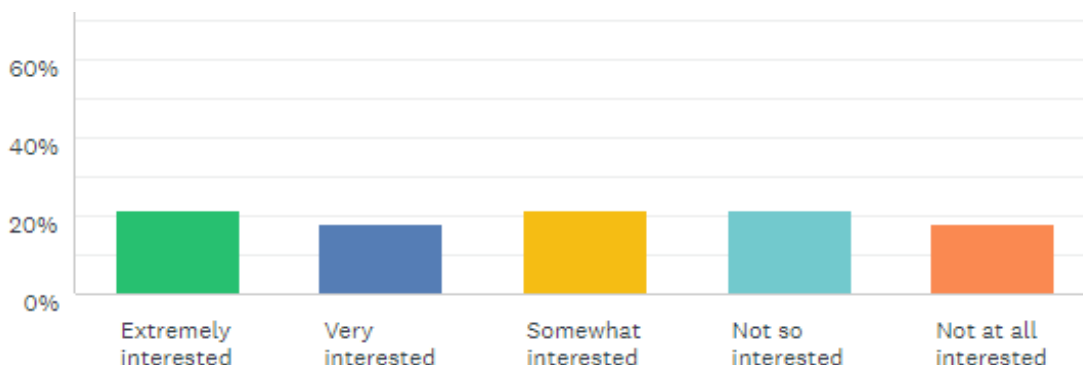
Not surprisingly most people are reluctant to join the committee though I can promise it doesn't have a huge commitment on time, but for the member who wanted more information, do please get in touch! The majority, at just over 60%, supported hybrid meetings with Smithton Hall being open for people to attend in person, but also online for anyone more cautious or distant.

5. Are you happy with the topics and speakers that we have had at IBA meetings in the last year, and are we hitting the mark? Please tick all that apply from the choices below, and if there's any particular area of help/advice that you'd like IBA to provide please add this in the comments box.

65% liked the topics we have been running so far. There were requests for more practical, seasonal talks to help less experienced beekeepers, as well as scientific and advice-based topics. We'll bear that in mind as we source speakers for next year and beyond.

6. The IBA Annual Honey Show is held every September, but was cancelled last year due to the pandemic. This year it will go ahead and it is scheduled for 11-12th September at Simpsons Garden Centre. Ahead of the show there will be a talk in August about how to get the best out of the show and what you could aim for. Apart from submitting entries for the competition, it is a good opportunity to sell honey. How likely are you to submit an entry to the show?

A curiously even split to the answers for this question, as the graph shows –

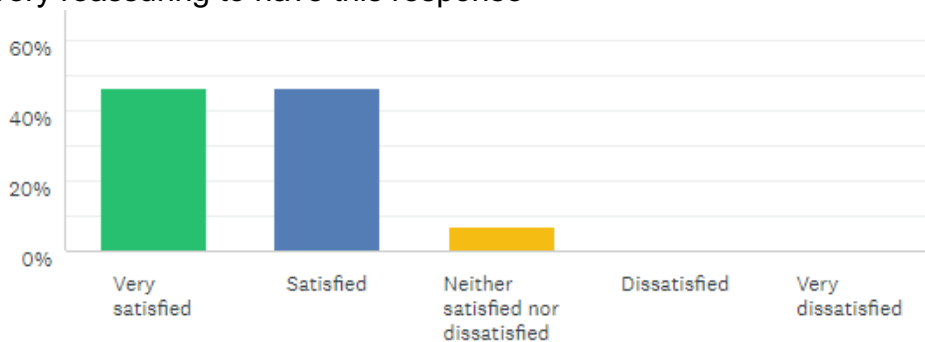


7. Have you (a) used the IBA website and members pages in the last year, and (b) do you follow IBA on Facebook

60% have used the website and members pages, which reinforces the need for direct email communication to ensure we reach all members. Only 28% follow IBA on Facebook, while 36% don't use Facebook at all, but it will be useful to reach a different audience by continuing on both platforms.

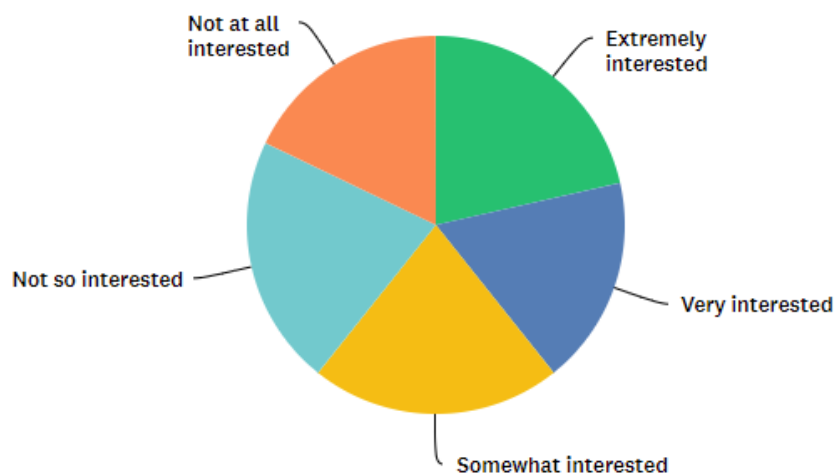
8. Are you happy with communications received by email about IBA events and talks?

It was very reassuring to have this response –



9. In December, we hold an Annual Dinner as a social gathering and to present the trophies won at the Honey Show. There is usually some form of entertainment as well as the dinner. Assuming that Covid-19 restrictions permit such a gathering, are you interesting in attending this year?

This was another question which gave equal responses to all options. As the dinner is our meeting for December as well as an opportunity to congratulate those who did well at the Honey Show, it is a set feature, but may not attract a great number of members.



10. At our AGM in March, members voted to increase the membership fee which had remained static for a very long time. This is now set at £16, which will be due in January 2022. Are you (a) aware of the increase, and (b) have you updated your standing order or online banking details.

Most did know about the increase in membership fee, but for 25% it was a surprise, and we must assume that those 25% did not join us at the AGM in March when this was discussed. Our treasurer is keen that everyone is aware and that she doesn't have too much reminding to do in January 2022.

Having read of the results to our survey, if you missed it and have any particular comments you wish to add, please email secretary@inverness-shirebeekeepers.org

Can Honeybees Recognise Human Faces?

Story based on research published in *Journal of Experimental Biology*

8th February 2010

Going about their day-to-day business, bees have no need to be able to recognise human faces. Yet in 2005, when Adrian Dyer from Monash University trained the fascinating insects to associate pictures of human faces with tasty sugar snacks, they seemed to be able to do just that. But Martin Giurfa from the Université de Toulouse, France, suspected that that the bees weren't learning to recognise people.

"Because the insects were rewarded with a drop of sugar when they chose human photographs, what they really saw were strange flowers. The important question was what strategy do they use to discriminate between faces," explains Giurfa. Wondering whether the insects might be learning the relative arrangement (configuration) of features on a face, Giurfa contacted Dyer and suggested that they go about systematically testing which features a bee learned to recognise to keep them returning to Dyer's face photos.

The team publish their discovery that bees can learn to recognise the arrangement of human facial features on 29 January 2010 in the *Journal of Experimental Biology* at <http://jeb.biologists.org>.

Teaming up with Aurore Avargues-Weber, the team first tested whether the bees could learn to distinguish between simple face-like images. Using faces that were made up of two dots for eyes, a short vertical dash for a nose and a longer horizontal line for a mouth, Avargues-Weber trained individual bees to distinguish between a face where the features were cramped together and another where the features were set apart. Having trained the bee to visit one of the two faces by rewarding it with a weak sugar solution, she tested whether it recognised the pattern by taking away the sugar reward and waiting to see if the bee returned to the correct face. It did.

So the bees could learn to distinguish patterns that were organised like faces, but could they learn to "categorize" faces? Could the insects be trained to classify patterns as face-like versus non-face like, and could they decide that an image that they had not seen before belonged to one class or the other?

To answer these questions, Avargues-Weber trained the bees by showing them five pairs of different images, where one image was always a face and the other a pattern of dots and dashes. Bees were always rewarded with sugar when they visited the face while nothing was offered by the non-face pattern. Having trained the bees that 'face-like' images gave them a reward, she showed the bees a completely fresh pair of images that they had not seen before to see if the bees could pick out the face-like picture. Remarkably they did. The bees were able to learn the face images, not because they know what a face is but because they had learned the relative arrangement and order of the features.

But how robust was the bees' ability to process the "face's" visual information? How would the bees cope with more complex faces? This time the team embedded the stick and dot faces in face-shaped photographs. Would the bees be able to learn the arrangements of the features against the backgrounds yet recognise the same stick and dot face when the face photo was removed? Amazingly the insects did, and when the team tried scrambling real faces by moving the relative positions of the eyes, nose and mouth, the bees no longer recognised the images as faces and treated them like unknown patterns.

So bees do seem to be able to recognise face-like patterns, but this does not mean that they can learn to recognise individual humans. They learn the relative arrangements of features that happen to make up a face-like pattern and they may use this strategy to learn about and recognize different objects in their environment.

What is really amazing is that an insect with a microdot-sized brain can handle this type of image analysis when we have entire regions of brain dedicated to the problem. Giurfa explains that if we want to design automatic facial recognition systems, we could learn a lot by using the bees' approach to face recognition.

Reference:

Avargues-Weber, A., Portelli, G., Bénard, J., Dyer, A. and Giurfa, M. **Configural processing enables discrimination and categorization of face-like stimuli in honeybees.** *Journal of Experimental Biology*, 2010; 213: 593-601

Article Source:

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/01/100129092010.htm>

Notice Board.

MURDER AT THE APIARY

Police are appealing to anyone who may have witnessed any suspicious activity at the IBA Knocknagael apiary last Saturday (14/08/21) to please come forward.

Winnie the Pooh has been brutally murdered! – and his eyes and nose have been removed.

DCI Charlie Moir was quickly on the case, however, there was little anyone could do.

WARNING: DISTURBING IMAGE BELOW.



AT THE MOMENT OUR PRICES FOR JARS, AMBROSIA AND FONDANT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Item	Price
Ambrosia (12kg, non-refundable container)	£15.00
Fondant (2.5kg pack)	£4.00
Fondant (full box – 5x 2.5kg packs)	£20.00
Jars (72 x 1lb jars with lids)	£30.00
Jars (96 x ½lb jars with lids)	£35.00
Spare lids (for both sizes of jars)	£2.00 per dozen

Please contact Jed Russell (jed.k.russell@googlemail.com) if you would like to purchase any of these items or would like to borrow equipment from the association.

Please visit our website <https://inverness-shirebeekeepers.org/>

for more exciting information and resources such as:

- The beekeepers blog
- Beekeepers library catalogue
 - Help with swarms
- Details of upcoming events and meetings
 - Helpful beekeeping hints and tips
 - Backdated issues of the Buzz

Don't forget to visit the exclusive **MEMBERS SECTION** for extra goodies!!!

EASY FUNDRAISING SUPPORT

The Inverness-Shire Beekeepers Association needs your help!!!

If you would like to help the association financially,

PLEASE VISIT: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause/step-1/?char=208763>

YOUR SUPPORT WILL GO TOWARDS:

- **NEW TRAINING EQUIPMENT – USED TO TRAIN THE NEXT GENERATION OF BEEKEEPERS**
- **APIARY IMPROVMENTS AND REPAIRS – ENSURES ALL OUR FACILITIES ARE SAFE AND PLEASURABLE PLACES**
- **CLUB ADVERTISMENT – SPREADING THE BEEKEEPING WORD**

YOU CAN PUT AN ADVERT IN THE BUZZ!!!

Anyone wishing to advertise the sale of bees or beekeeping equipment can advertise in the Buzz.

The Buzz is distributed to every member of the Inverness Beekeeping Association.

If you are interested in filling this space with your advert contact Jed Russell via:

jed.k.russell@googlemail.com

The Back Page.

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