



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



BEEKEEPING EDUCATION MODULES

Responsible Beekeeping

These presentations are funded by the Scottish Government as part of Scotland's Honey Bee Health Strategy



Aims & Objectives

- To provide advice and information on responsible beekeeping
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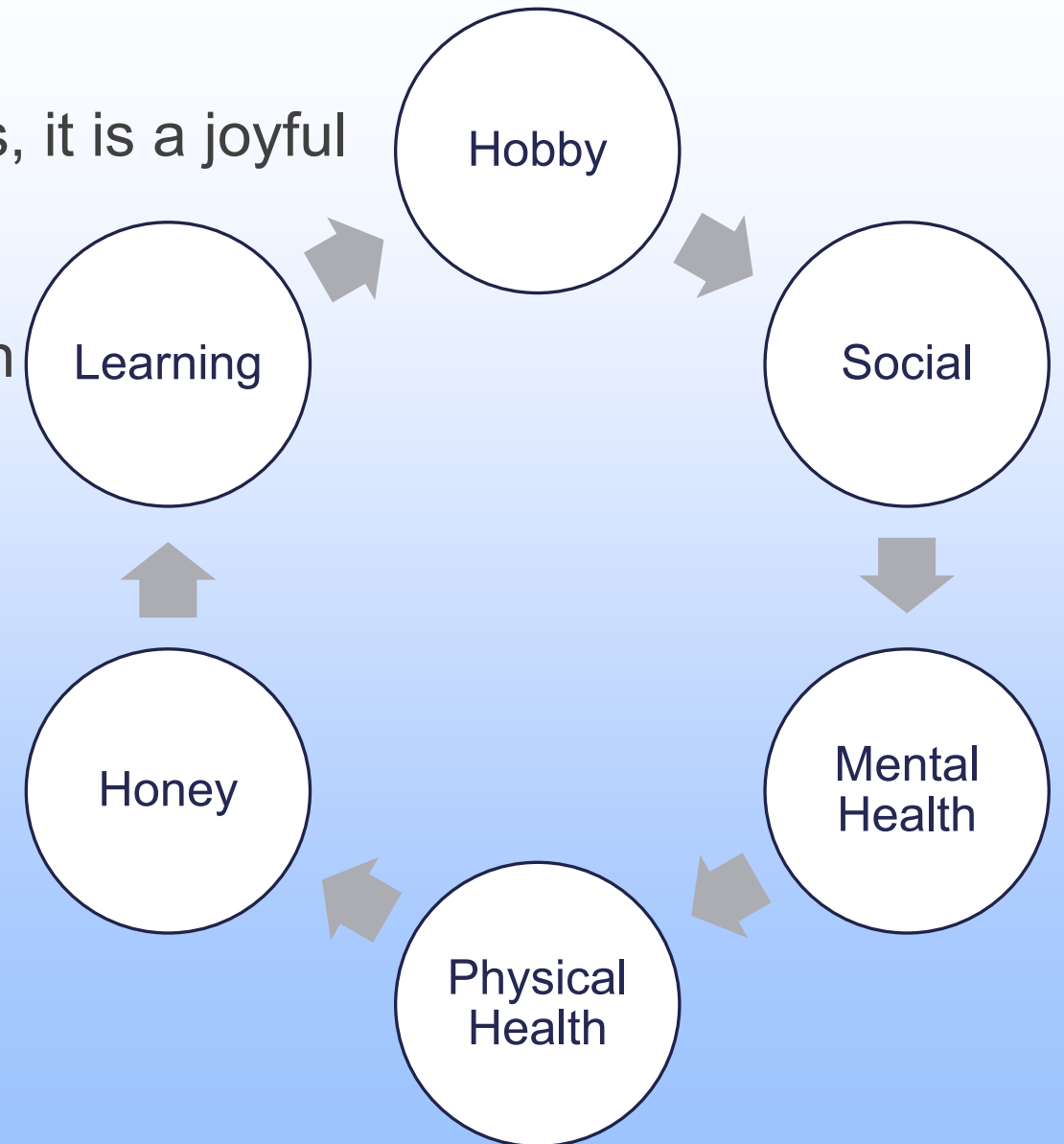
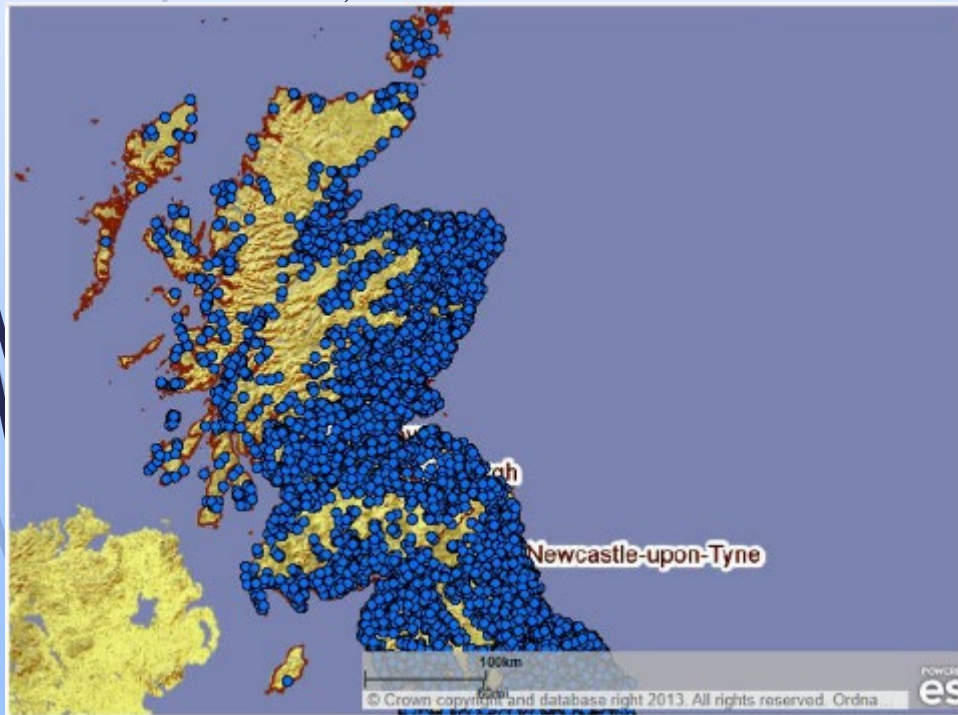


Responsible beekeeping

- ▶ How would you describe a responsible beekeeper?
- ▶ Is it easier to describe an irresponsible beekeeper?

Reasons To Keep Bees

- There are many reasons to keep bees, it is a joyful practice.
- BUT:
- Honeybees are not at risk of extinction
- Honeybees don't need saving



Responsible husbandry



Responsible Apiary Siting



- Secure
- Accessible
- No near neighbours
- Barriers from walk ways
- (eg hedges/ fences/ trees)
- Plenty forage
- Landowner permission
- No more than 10 in a good site
- Low apiary density
- Public liability insurance
- Risk assessments

Responsible Hygiene

- Disease is caused by pathogens and stress!!
- Clean bee suits and other clothing
- Clean disposable gloves,
- Clean hive tools etc.
- Clean hive equipment
- Replace brood comb regularly
- Apiary Bio-Security:
- Disinfectant / Washing Soda
- Bucket or container for brace comb.
- Old Comb removal.



Beekeeping and the Law

Please see the Legislation
PowerPoint for more details



Responsible Registering



Reasons to sign up to BeeBase



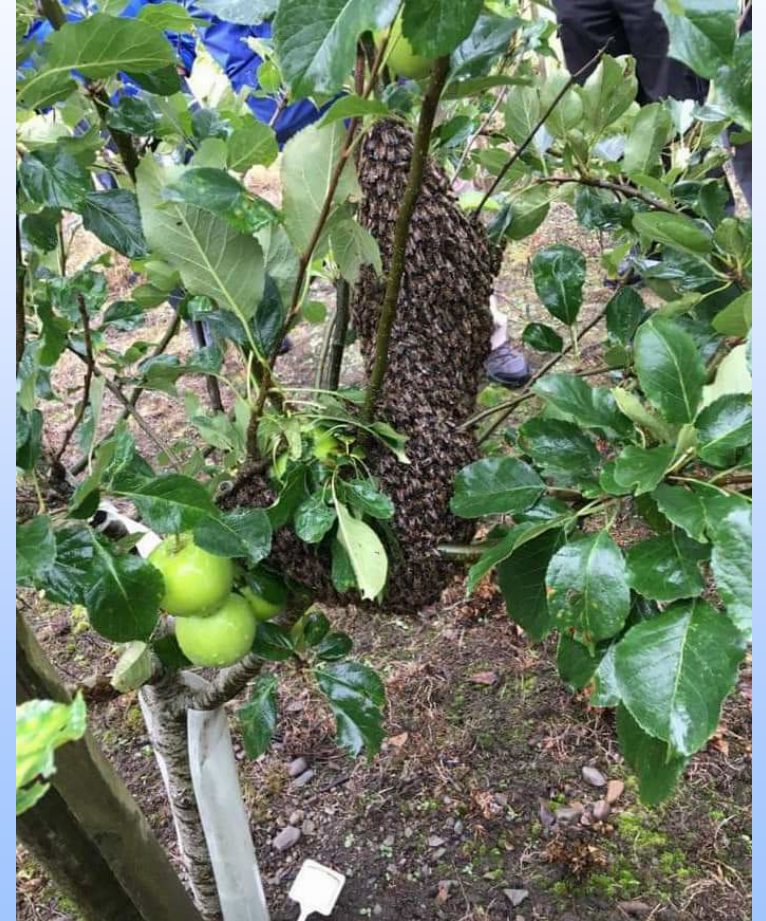
- ▶ Disease control purposes
- ▶ Keep your bees/neighbours' bees/Scotland's bees safe
- ▶ Keep apiaries up to date – can't alert you to outbreaks if we don't know where your bees are
- ▶ Keep an eye on public pages with maps/charts
- ▶ You are being a responsible beekeeper

Swarming



Importance of swarm management for bee health

- Swarming from infected hives spreads disease.
- Most swarms in the wild die.
- The potential of feral colonies becoming disease reservoirs
- Swarming from infected hives spreads disease.
- Colonies weakened through swarming are more susceptible to disease
- Further cast swarms can make the problem worse.
- They can become a public nuisance.



Responsible swarm collecting

- Safety first
- Education
- Practice
- Experience
- Bee partner
- Bee removers



Swarm Collecting

What to do:-

- If inexperienced get help & advice
- It is responsible to collect swarms
- Isolate for 6 weeks (2 brood cycles)
- Treat for varroa before any brood is capped
- Put on fresh foundation
- Feed after 2-3 days
- Do a disease inspection



Nucleus method- A simple method

- ▶ 2 frames food with bees
- ▶ 2 frames bees(hatching brood) with bees
- ▶ Queen
- ▶ 1 or 2 frames of clean drawn comb or foundation
- ▶ Shake in 2 frames of nurse bees if keeping in the same apiary
- ▶ Move away from apiary or stuff entrance with grass
- ▶ Check three days later
- ▶ Must be fed as small foraging force and could die if not fed.
- ▶ Be ready to provide space

In the main hive reduce the queen cells to one. Don't forget to reduce queen cells to one in the original hive 7 days later!





Responsible buying

Sourcing of Bees

Responsible Sourcing of bees

- Be aware of illegal imports
- Source bees locally where possible
- Be aware of foulbrood situation in Scotland
- Inspect bees before purchase if possible/ask a mentor
- Use quarantine apiaries where possible



Responsible treatment



See Veterinary
medicines
PowerPoint for
more details

Protecting Pollinators





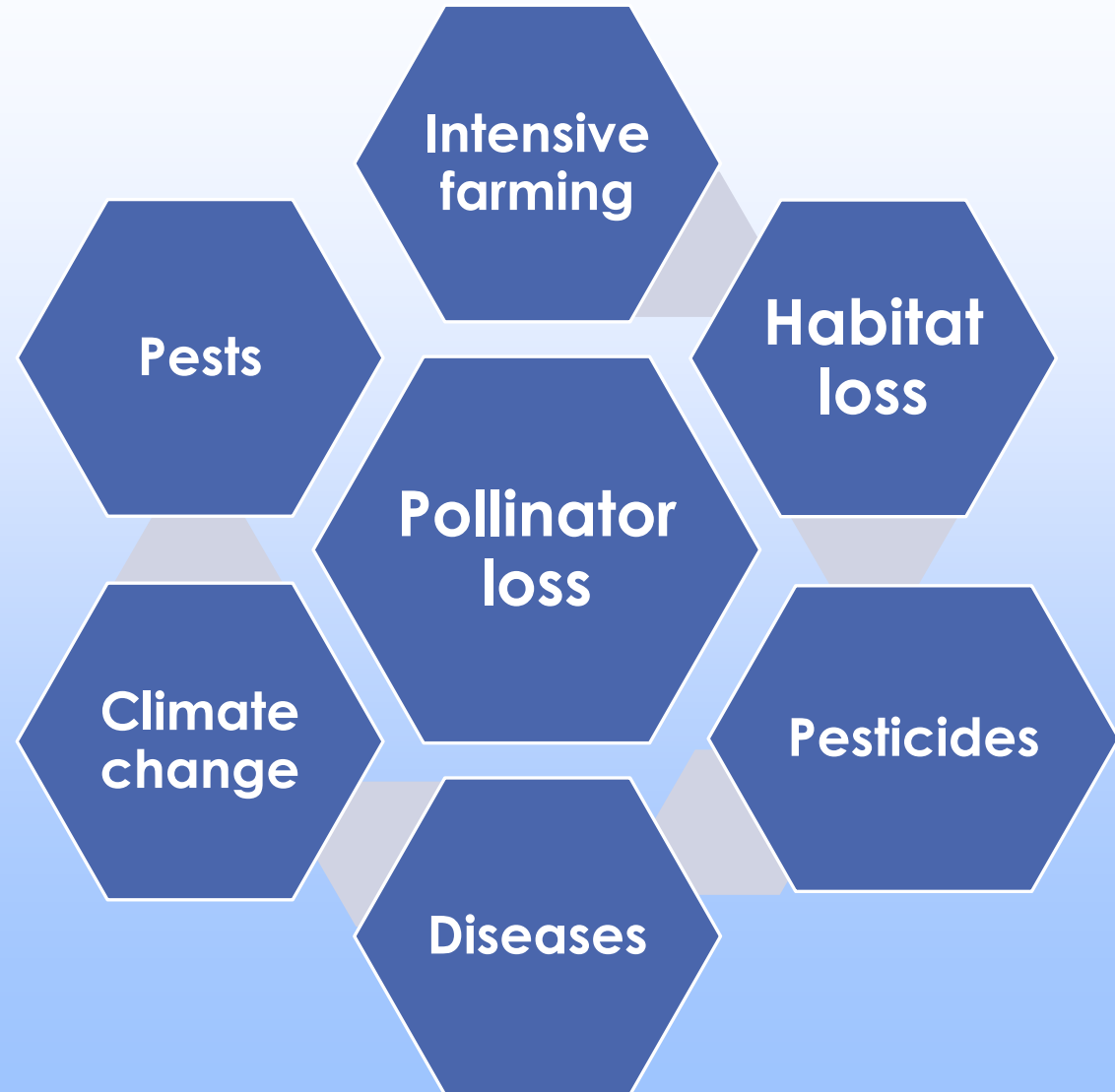
Impact on Pollinators

Responsible beekeeping means being aware of the competition for forage.

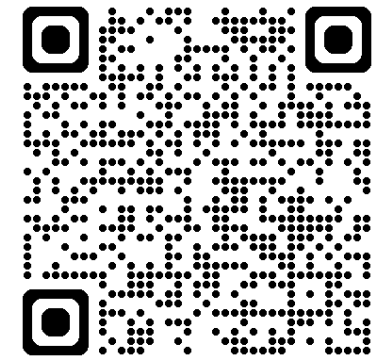
Issues

- Habitat loss
- Enough forage
- Density of hives
- Disease spillover

Are managed bees the problem?



Research in progress



The UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme in Scotland

Miranda Bane, Martin Harvey, , Claire Carvell
and Robin Hutchinson

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@PoMScheme

Dipterists Forum, 18 November 2023



- POMS - <https://ukpoms.org.uk/>
- SASA - PhD proposal to assess potential forage conflict between managed & wild bees
- Survey & monitor disease in managed and wild bees
- Optimise apiary density & disease control



Treatment free/ Natural beekeeping

Treatment free doesn't mean doing nothing.

Many beekeepers will still use bio management methods such as an open mesh floor, queen trapping and drone brood removal.

Some beekeepers may wish to use more organic based treatments such as VMD approved Oxalic and Thymol based products.

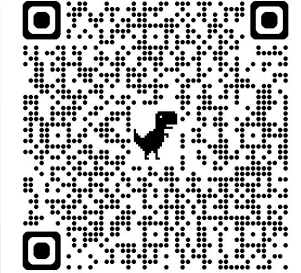


Natural Beekeeping Issues

- Difficult to inspect
- Poor biosecurity – difficult to replace comb etc
- Potential source of disease and pest infection to other beekeepers
- Can't carry out swarm control – nuisance to neighbours and potential source of infection

Resources

➤ [Starting Right 2025](#)



➤ [BPG05 Advice for obtaining bees](#)

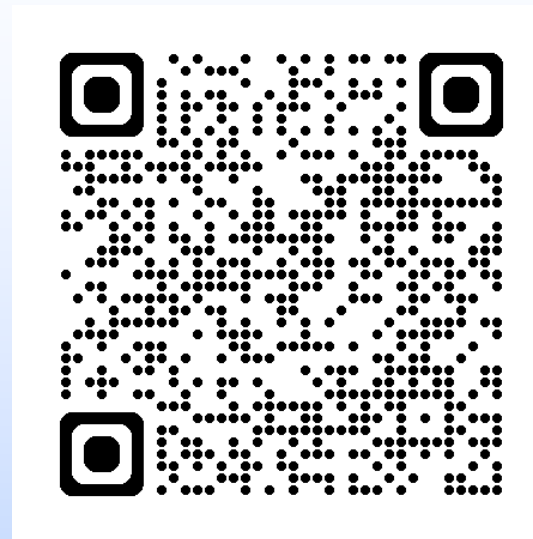


➤ [Importing bees into Scotland | SASA \(Science & Advice for Scottish Agriculture\)](#)



Understanding legal responsibilities

<https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/bees-and-the-law/>



<https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/information-for-beekeepers-in-scotland>



Resources available: Scottish Government and SRUC

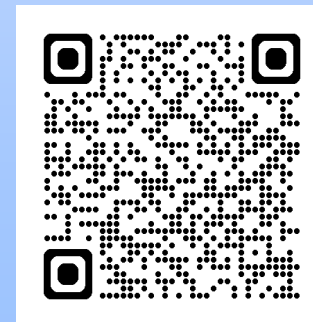
Contact: Bees_Mailbox@gov.scot



[Scottish Government Honey Bee Health Strategy 2022-2032](#)



[Scottish Government Honey Bee Implementation Plan](#)

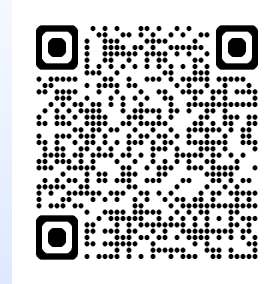


[SRUC Bee Podcasts](#)



Resources Available – Others

[BeeBase – Information for Scottish Beekeepers](#)



[Scottish Beekeepers Association](#)



[Bee Farmers Association](#)



Bees_Mailbox@gov.scot



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