

Cymdeithas Gwenynwyr Conwy Conwy Beekeepers' Association

Information for new beekeepers.

What do I need to get started?

- All in one bee suit, gloves, Wellington boots. Approx £120.
- A 5-frame nucleus of bees, approx cost £85.
- A beehive. We recommend a Thorne's second quality National hive from Wynne Jones, Ruthin.
- Smoker and hive tool. Approx £25.
- £250 should get you started.
- Plus, later... 4-frame stainless or food grade plastic honey extractor, honey settling tank and a second hive. We do not recommend buying secondhand galvanized or tinned extractors from auction websites.

Where do I get my bees?

We recommend starting with a 5-frame nucleus of local bees with a young queen, which will develop into a full colony as you gain experience. Conwy BKA members Geoff Critchley, Mold, Tel: 01352 740991, <http://honeyhouse.delfryndesign.co.uk/>; or Arwyn Davies, Abergele, Tel 01745 826291 are both highly recommended bee breeders.

Equipment:

- The UK's main supplier is EH Thorne, Lincoln, Tel: 01673 858555, www.thorne.co.uk Ask for a catalogue. The best prices are in January during the winter sale.
- Our local Thorne's agent is Wynne Jones, Ruthin, Tel: 01978 790279. www.beesupplies.co.uk Wynne Jones is a member of Conwy BKA.
- Also, ask for a catalogue from National Bee Supplies, Okehampton, Tel: 01837 54084, www.beekeeping.co.uk

The Association sometimes has secondhand hives and bees for sale.

How do I learn how to keep bees?

- Conwy BKA evening course.
- We run hands-on training sessions with the bees at the Association apiary at Tal y Cafn, every third Saturday afternoon, from April to July. Protective clothing available.
- We hold evening meetings at St Davids College, Llandudno, from September to April, on the last Monday of the month.
- South Clwyd BKA weekend course at Coleg Llysfasi, Ruthin,: Friday evening, all day Saturday, three weekends in summer. Details from secretary.

Beekeeping books:

- Local libraries, especially Colwyn Bay, have a good selection of bee books, classification 638.1.
- Northern Bee Books, Tel 01422 882751, <http://www.beedata.com/beebooks.htm>

Magazines:

- *Beekeepers' Quarterly*, published by Northern Bee Books.
- *BeeCraft*, monthly. Ask for a free copy. Tel: 01733 771221, www.bee-craft.com

Consumables:

- The Association stocks honey jars, beeswax foundation and frames, and varroa treatments.

Protective clothing:

- We recommend full bee suits from:
Bbwear Tel: 01872 273693, www.bbwear.co.uk
B.J.Sherriff, Tel: 01872 863304, www.beesuits.com
- Gloves from Thorne's.

Local events:

We are at the following shows and we are always keen to meet new beekeepers:

- Conwy Seed Fair, every 26th March.
- Conwy Honey Fair, every 13th September.
- Eglwysbach Show, 2nd Saturday in August.
- Llanrwst Show, 3rd Saturday in August.

Support for new beekeepers:

- It is important that new beekeepers attend the apiary meetings at Tal y Cafn, until they are confident to work their bees. We do not want new beekeepers to struggle alone with their bees, and to lose interest.
- Mentoring. We have over 70 members, and we can put you in touch with your nearest beekeeper.

Other information from Conwy Beekeepers' Association:

- "22 reasons to join Conwy Beekeepers' Association".
- "Frequently asked questions".

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