

## RDBKA Beekeeping for Improvers' Course 2023/24

An evening course of 10 x theoretical/practical sessions, from **7.30pm - 9.30pm every other Wednesday (but see programme), 15 Nov 23 - 17 Apr 24, at Colburn Church Hall** in preparation for the forthcoming bee season.

Previous beekeeping experience is essential. Ideally this is for those who have completed both the RDBKA Beginner' Course and the RDBKA Novices' Course (or equivalents) and/or individuals should **hold the BBKA Certificate of Proficiency in Apiculture**. It is an ideal course for those who wish to progress along the theoretical and practical aspects of beekeeping in line with the BBKA Training Qualification and Assessment Framework.

The aim is to develop a deeper beekeeping knowledge and demonstrate practices sufficient to support elements of **BBKA Modules 1 and 2 and the BBKA General Husbandry Certificate**.

<b>Session 1</b> 15 Nov 23	Introduction	Hives and Frames Design of hives, bee space Apiary hygiene Correct use of equipment Personal protective equipment
<b>Session 2</b> 29 Nov 23	Apiary Location & Management	Siting of Apiaries Layout of hives and equipment Temperament and aggression Natural food sources for an apiary Drifting and problems that may occur Annual cycle of management of a hive Prep of hives for winter Spring management Reasons for regular comb changing Opening a hive Time/reasons for adding supers Principles of feeding honeybees Robbing and causes/prevention
<b>Session 3</b> 13 Dec 24	Natural History & Biology	Differing races of honeybee Other honeybees and problems Features of queens, drones and workers Life cycles Natural mating of queens Seasonal variations in hive strength Work carried out by worker bees Summer and Winter bees Basic function of exocrine glands Detection & use of alarm pheromones Bee dances
<b>Session 4</b> 24 Jan 24	Foraging	Benefit of local forage crops Special requirements of some crops

Undesirable sources of honey  
Composition of nectar  
Source and characteristics of honeydew  
Conversion of nectar to honey  
The use of pollen to identify honey  
Other forage, water, pollen and propolis

**Session 5**  
7 Feb 24

Pests & Diseases

How to examine a brood comb  
Visual symptoms of EFB/AFB  
Other notifiable pests  
Action on notifiable pests and diseases  
When a bee inspector calls  
Monitoring varroa  
Recognitions of Nosema infection, Acarine infestation, chalk brood, sac brood, virus infections  
Integrated Pest Management  
Other methods of disease management  
Mice, woodpeckers and larger animals.

**Session 6**  
21 Feb 24

Honey Removal  
& Processing

Legal and hygiene requirements  
Extraction and bottling facilities  
Removal of Supers from hives  
Storage before extraction  
Prep for extraction  
Types of extractor  
Extractions  
Storage after extraction  
Melting, straining and bottling  
Labelling and legal requirements  
Selling honey, sections and cut combs

**Session 7**  
6 Mar 24

Swarm Prevention  
& control

Biology of swarming  
Prep for swarming  
Swarm prevention  
Basic elements of swarm control  
Basic swarm control methods  
Taking and hiving a swarm

**Session 8**  
20 Mar 24

Other Products  
Nuclei & Packages

Reclamation of wax  
Prep of wax for sale  
Collection and uses of pollen  
Collection of venom  
Collection and uses of propolis  
Nucleus and a package  
Method of making nuclei  
Standards of nuclei for sale  
Prep & standards and packages  
Showing

**Session 9**

3 Apr 24

Advanced  
Beekeeping  
ProceduresPrep for moving colonies  
Artificial swarming and equipment  
Queen Introduction  
Queen marking  
Queen colours  
Queen clipping  
Bailey comb change  
Shook swarm  
Uniting colonies**Session 10**

17 Apr 24

Summary

Dealing with an aggressive colony  
Normal reaction to stings  
Anaphylaxis  
Preparing for further study  
Learning to teach others  
Getting involved with organisations  
The national beekeeping scene  
BBKA and NBU

**Cost £80** Please return completed **Application Form** to RDBKA Treasurer together with payment.