

Peeblesshire Beekeepers Association  
AGM 29th April 2022  
Secretary's Report

March 2021 saw the coldest start to March for years, and the lowest rainfall – only c.30% of the usual rainfall. The early part of the year suggested nectar yields would be poor – the cherry blossom was 2 weeks late, then after a couple of warmer days, all the cherry blossoms opened over a couple of days. This was followed by a prolonged cold spell with snow pellets. In common with many other forage plants, the cherry's flowering season was briefer than normal. April was the coldest, frostiest on record, and the Borders had less than 30% of normal rainfall for April. May began, accompanied by heavy rain and low temperatures, but by Mid May temperatures recovered, temperatures rose, and a hot dry summer followed.

The nectar yield over the summer months was good, and the honey yield was the best it had been for years. There were slightly fewer call-outs to swarms, perhaps swarm prevention has been working well! It is noticeable that non-beekeepers have the welfare of bees at heart, and ask for swarms to be removed with minimal casualties. The Association was able buy a bee vacuum, and train 4 members in its use; bees have successfully been removed from several premises.

Covid was still very much in evidence throughout the year, and restrictions in place: the association apiary at Barns was managed by a small core of experienced beekeepers, with a limited number of helpers/beginners. Winter lectures could not take place in person, but several talks were delivered online by Zoom, thanks to Peter Stevenson for organising this. Similarly, the beginners were introduced to beekeeping via online talks, and then practical sessions at the apiary, in small numbers.

Particular thanks are due to Shirley Barrett, Janet Dutch, David Ferguson, Linda Haldane, Bill Jack, Richard Leeman, Wilma MacLean, Shirley Sharpe and Peter Stevenson for unflagging help during the year, and bravery in the face of swarms!