

COLOSS and EurBee Meetings

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Most of the delegates at the Eighth COLOSS Conference, Halle, Germany.

The COLOSS (Prevention of honey bee Colony LOSSes) network was set up in 2008 to coordinate international research efforts into understanding the causes of worldwide honey bee colony losses, and most importantly to facilitate the transfer of information. It has led to unprecedented cooperation between bee researchers throughout the world, and the network currently consists of 320 members in 60 countries. One hundred of those members recently attended the eighth COLOSS conference held at the Martin-Luther Universität, Halle an der Saale, Germany, from 1st to 3rd September 2012, ably organised by Prof. Hannes Kaatz and his team.

I presented a talk at the conference about disseminating the results of the network. Many methods for disseminating information have been used, and to date, the network has published over 130 papers in refereed scientific journals and authored by cooperating COLOSS members. In addition, COLOSS members have written many book chapters and popular articles aimed at beekeepers and the general public. In addition it has produced the standardised questionnaire for evaluating colony losses which has now been adopted in more than 25 countries worldwide. COLOSS members greatly contributed to the Special Issue of the *Journal of Apicultural Research* on "Colony losses" published in January 2010.

As the first phase of the network reaches its conclusion the major output will be:

The COLOSS BEEBOOK: standard methods for Apis mellifera research.

The first part of this work will be published as a Special Issue of the *Journal of Apicultural Research* before the end of this year. It will be the definitive guide to carrying out

research on honey bees. It is being written by a team of approximately 150 bee scientists, which include all active bee scientist members of IBRA Council and with Keith Delaplane, Jamie Ellis, Jay Evans, Dirk de Graaf, and Peter Neumann being lead chapter authors. The hard copy edition will follow next year, and should find a place on the bench of every bee research lab worldwide.

The COLOSS network has been funded by COST Action FA0803 and by the Ricola Foundation. Although the first phase of funding is now coming to an end, various options for continuing funding were discussed, and it was unanimously agreed to continue the network with the next meeting to take place before the Apimondia meeting in Kiev, Ukraine in September 2013.

The conclusion of the COLOSS meeting led seamlessly into the EurBee meeting. Ten years after the session discussing "The Euro Bee Forum" which took place at the IBRA conference "Bees Without Frontiers" held in Cardiff, UK, which led to the foundation of the European Association for Bee Research (EurBee). The fifth European Conference of Apidology was also held at the Martin-Luther Universität from 3rd to 7th September 2012.

The conference was attended by approximately 300 bee researchers, mainly from Europe, but also some travelling from further afield including Africa, America and Thailand. It was very smoothly organised by Prof. Robin Moritz and his team. The aims of EurBee have been to bring together scientists working on basic and applied research on diverse aspects of the biology of bees, honey bee management and honey bee products. Three parallel lecture sessions took place: a total of 130 talks and 170 posters were presented,

many by young scientists and students. Highlights of the conference included sessions on neurobiology, chemical ecology, physiology, behaviour and colony function, pathology, population genetics, and genomics, together with further sessions covering the two major EU funded projects BEE DOC (BEes in Europe and the Decline Of honey bee Colonies) and STEP (Status and Trends of European Pollinators).

On the Tuesday evening an IBRA Members Meeting was held, and those who attended, including IBRA Council Members Jamie Ellis and Fani Hatjina, made many constructive suggestions for future plans. Although initially in a poor position, the IBRA stand manned by Julian Rees attending his first EurBee meeting, together with Sarah Jones and Richard Jones, did much to raise IBRA's profile



The Audimax complex in the centre of Halle which was the venue for the EurBee Congress in September.

with the international audience. "Plants for Bees" was particularly well received, and the copies available sold out very quickly.

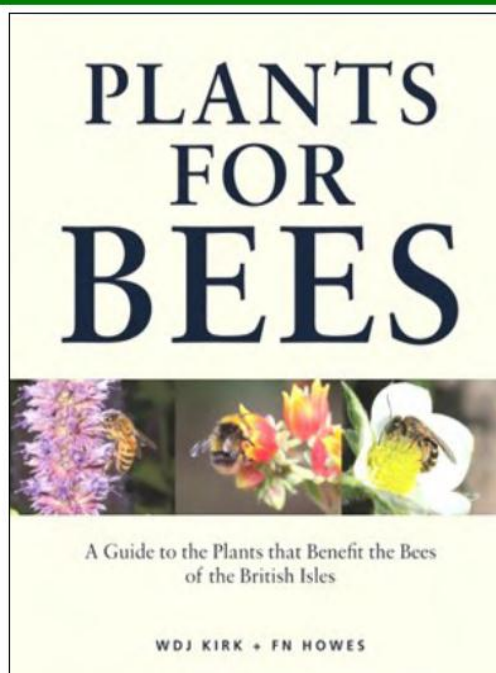
The Wednesday afternoon was occupied by a boat trip on the River Saale to the Schloss Wettin, and the conference concluded with a well attended and enjoyable banquet.

Both occasions provided good opportunities for renewing old friendships and making new contacts. The unprecedented interest in bees over the last few years has resulted in many new young researchers being present at the meeting for the first time, and they were well represented amongst the speakers and poster authors. The next EurBee Conference will be held in 2014 in Murcia, Spain.



Julian Rees, on his first visit to EurBee, and Sarah Jones, were kept busy on the IBRA stand once it was relocated to the foyer of the Audimax complex.

IBRA News



IBRA Talk At The National Library Of Wales Aberystwyth

Dr William Kirk, author of 'Plants for Bees' and Senior Lecturer in entomology and ecology at Keele University, will present a talk at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth on **Wednesday 27th February 2013, at 1.15 pm.**

Dr Kirk will provide information about our various native bee species and expert guidance on the level of importance of certain plants to specific bees. This is a great opportunity to learn how to enrich the landscape for bees by choosing the right plants.

Purchase your signed copy at the talk, or via the IBRA Bookshop: www.plantsforbees.org

Please note that admission will be free of charge but by ticket only. Tickets can be obtained in January 2013 from the National Library of Wales, either online: www.llgc.org.uk/drwm or by phone (01970) 632 548.

We look forward to seeing you on Wednesday 27th February.

Sarah Jones, Publications Manager