WBKA BASIC ASSESSMENT – SYLLABUS

1.0 MANIPULATION OF A HONEYBEE COLONY

The Candidate will be aware of:

1.1 the care needed when handling a colony of honeybees;
1.2 the reactions of honeybees to smoke;
1.3 the personal equipment needed to open a colony of honeybees;
1.4 the reasons for opening a colony;
1.5 the need for stores and how to assess them.

The Candidate will be able to:

1.6 open a colony of honeybees and keep the colony under control;
1.7 demonstrate the use of the smoker and hive tool
1.8 remove combs from the hive and identify worker, drone and queen cells or cups if present, and to comment on the state of the combs;
1.9 identify the female castes and the drone;
1.10 identify eggs and brood at all stages;
1.11 demonstrate the difference between drone, worker and honey cappings;
1.12 identify stored nectar, honey and pollen;
1.13 take or explain how to obtain a sample of worker bees for adult bee diagnosis;
1.14 state the number of worker bees required for an adult disease diagnosis sample;
1.15 demonstrate how to shake bees from a comb looking for signs of brood disease.

2.0 EQUIPMENT

The Candidate will be:

2.1 able to name the principal parts of a modern beehive;
2.2 aware of the concept of the bee space and its significance in the modern beehive;
2.3 able to assemble a frame and fit it with wax foundation;
2.4 aware of the reasons for the use of wax foundation;
2.5 aware of the spacing of the combs in the brood chamber and super for both foundation and drawn comb and methods used to achieve this spacing.
2.6 able to describe a safe method for moving a colony of bees.

3.0 NATURAL HISTORY OF THE HONEYBEE

The Candidate will be:

3.1 able to give an elementary account of the production of queens. workers and drones in the honeybee colony
3.2 able to state the periods spent by the female castes and the drone in the four stages of their life (egg, larva, pupa and adult)
3.3 able to give an elementary description of the function of the queen, worker and drone in the life of the colony
3.4 able to give a simple description of wax production and comb building by the honeybee
3.5 aware of the importance of pollination to flowering plants and consequently to farmers and growers
3.6 able to name the main local flora from which honeybees gather pollen and nectar
3.7 able to give a simple definition of nectar and a simple description of how it is collected, brought back to the hive and is converted into honey;
3.8 able to give a simple description of the collection and use of pollen, water and propolis in the honeybee colony;
3.9 able to give an elementary description of swarming in a honeybee colony;
3.10 able to give a description of the way in which the honeybee colony passes the winter.

4.0 BEEKEEPING

The Candidate will be:

4.1 able to give an elementary description of how to set up an apiary;
4.2 able to describe what precautions should be taken to avoid the honeybees being a nuisance to neighbours and livestock;
4.3 describe the possible effects of honeybee stings and able to recommend suitable first aid treatment;
4.4 able to give a description of the management of a colony throughout a season;
4.5 able to describe the preparation of sugar syrup and how and when to feed bees;
4.6 aware of the need to add supers and the timing of the operation;
4.7 able to give an elementary account of one method of swarm control;
4.8 able to describe how to take a honeybee swarm and how to hive it;
4.9 able to describe the signs of a queenless colony;
4.10 able to describe the signs of laying workers and of a drone laying queen;
4.11 aware of the dangers of robbing and how robbing can be avoided;
4.12 able to describe one method of uniting colonies;
4.13 aware of the reasons for uniting bees and the precautions to he taken;
4.14 able to describe a method used to clear honeybees from supers;
4.15 able to describe the process of extracting honey from combs and a method of filtration and bottling of honey suitable for a small scale beekeeper;
4.16 aware of good hygiene in the handling of honey for human consumption;
4.17 aware of the legal requirements for the labelling and sale of honey;
4.18 able to give an elementary account of the harvesting of beeswax.

5.0 DISEASE, POISONING AND PESTS

The Candidate will be:

5.1 able to describe the appearance of healthy brood**;**
5.2 able to describe the signs of the bacterial diseases American Foul Brood (AFB) and European Foul Brood (EFB) and the fungal disease chalk brood and describe their effects upon the colony;
5.3 able to describe methods for detecting and monitoring the presence of varroa (a mite) and describe its effect on the colony including awareness of the effect of associated viruses;
5.4 aware of acarine (a mite) and nosema (a microsporidian) and their effect upon the colony;
5.5 able to describe ways of controlling varroosis using one registered product and one recognised biotechnical method plus basic knowledge of the problems arising from pyrethroid resistant mites;
5.6 aware of the current legislation regarding notifiable diseases of honeybees;
5.7 aware of the national and local facilities which exist to verify disease and advise on treatment;
5.8 aware where to obtain assistance if any poisoning by toxic chemicals is suspected;
5.9 able to describe how comb can be stored to prevent wax moth damage;
5.10 able to describe how mice and other pests can be excluded from the hives in winter.

(Updated January 2014)