

## December Roundup

Our staff at Thorne have been busy tidying, cleaning, re-decorating and re-organising during the last month. Decorations were put up and Christmas gift vouchers prepared for sale.

We searched out any shop soiled, or second goods to add to our Winter Sale list and stacked up as many sale hive part, frames and equipment as we possibly could. Hundreds of you were online at 00.01am Saturday December 30th as we put the sale live. Hopefully you will be pleased with your bargains. **We got hundreds of orders within the first 24 hours alone so please bear with us as we despatch your equipment.** If you have any queries please email us at [sales@thorne.co.uk](mailto:sales@thorne.co.uk)

### Equipment Focus

When we opened our new shop at Rand seven years ago, we had a voucher available for the first customer.



It happened just by chance to be probably the biggest beekeeper in the UK, Willie Robson and his wife Daphne from Chain Bridge Honey Farm, Berwick-upon-Tweed. We think they used the voucher on candle moulds!

Willie brought with him a sample feeder to show us. He had developed it for feeding fondant and pollen to his bees. It was Smith hive size, very well insulated with Styrofoam and had two cavities each containing a small ice cream tub. The bees accessed the tub from the underside. Willie told us that because of the heat from the brood nest the feed was always moist, warm, accessible and attractive to the bees.

Taking Willies idea, we developed, with his permission, our own Robson Feeder Board. Our feeder also has two chambers and these can also take syrup. Each chamber will hold approximately 1kg of feed and they are also clear so you can see how the bees are taking the feed. The lids are hinged so replenishing the feeder is very easy as well. The feeder frame is made from cedar and the inner parts are Styrofoam and 6mm ply shaped on our CNC machines.



The top cavity above the double feeders holds a 25mm thick insulated quilt for added warmth. So give your bees a treat this New Year with warm feed from a Robson Feeder Board. (National size only)

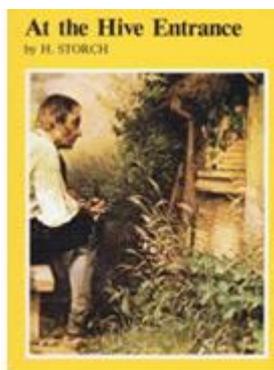
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## Ask our Expert

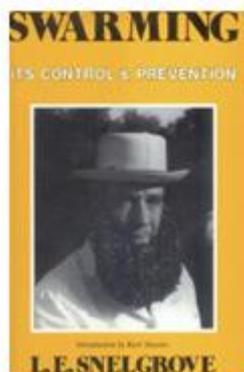
Please email us at [sales@thorne.co.uk](mailto:sales@thorne.co.uk) if you have a question for our experts.



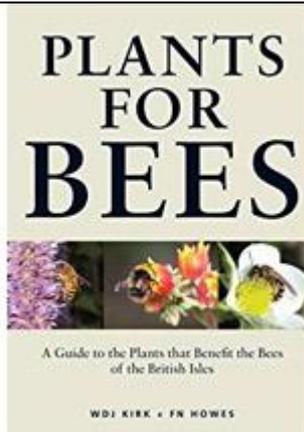
What to do while you wait for spring to arrive? Time for a good book! – The weather isn't allowing for much beekeeping at the moment. If you are just starting out, or are planning to start, the best book out there for a beginner is **“The Haynes Bee Manual”** by Claire & Adrian Waring. This takes you through all you need to know in the first few years, from deciding which kind of hive, how to position it, water sources, kit, basic inspections and manipulations; it takes you as far as harvesting your first crop. It is well written and the strength is in its visual depiction of the subjects covered.



If you have kept bees for a season or two, and want to know more **“At the Hive Entrance”** by H. Storch is a very useful slim volume. It stems from a time when bees were kept in Skeps. A skep doesn't allow physical inspection so the beekeepers of the time had to rely on visually inspecting their hives. The book suggests by season, what you observe happening at the entrance, with what is likely to be happening in the hive. If you spend some time observing your hive before you inspect, you can tie up the two, the observed with the actuality. In time as you are more able to “read” the hive you can be better prepared for what is likely to confront you when you open the hive.



Once you have bees (and would like to keep them, or raise a few Queens), the book **“Swarming its control & prevention”** by L.E. Snelgrove is a must for any keepers library. The book covers the use of Snelgrove boards to control and artificially swarm colonies, the boards can also be used to raise spare queens by splitting the colony. Because the colony is split vertically it requires a minimal amount of kit, and the colony can be re-united very easily if you make a mistake.



Finally, for beekeepers or non-beekeepers, Kirk & Howes book **“Plants for Bees”** is a wonderful guide to the best plants to put in the garden to benefit all kinds of pollinators. By plant the guide give a breakdown as to whether the plant yields Pollen or Nectar or both, and if the flowers allow access for Honeybees, Long-tongue or Short-tongue Bumbles, or Solitary bees. It is by far the best book out there as a planting guide for encouraging nature into your garden.

I hope you enjoy at least one from the above selection, you never know where a good book can take you.

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## Beekeeping Blog

### Welcome to the new Thorne Bee Blog!

This year, our beekeepers Anthony and Alexandra will be keeping you updated on what they get up to in the apiary here at Rand in Lincolnshire.

We have a new Beekeepers Cabin! This is situated on our apiary at Rand and provides convenient storage and work areas for all the necessary beekeeping jobs. Anthony has done a great job making work benches and shelving units and with a lick of paint we have a fully functioning Beekeepers Cabin. Here is Anthony hard at work:



We are currently preparing for a treatment of oxalic acid which will be carried out by vapourisation when we are certain there is no brood present in the colonies. More of this in next month's edition!

If you have any general beekeeping queries then please send an email to Alexandra at [sasha@thorne.co.uk](mailto:sasha@thorne.co.uk) who will be happy to help or call one of our sales team on **01673 858555**.

## Bees for Development Update

A tremendous Thank you to everyone who supported our Big Give Trees for Bees Christmas Challenge in December. **We raised a whopping £46,492!**



These funds will be used in Ethiopia to restore forest and train young beekeepers. The whole team at Bees for Development is delighted and heartened by this fabulous response to our Appeal. Beekeepers are indeed generous supporters of our work and we could not continue without you! Please do get in touch if you would like to become more involved.

The year ahead is a special one for Bees for Development as we celebrate 25 years of working to support beekeepers in the world's poorest countries. We are planning a programme of special events: first off is a two-day Symposium at Reading University to reflect upon research in beekeeping and sustainable development. More details [here](#)

### The BfD Birthday Giveaway

In celebration of BfD's 25th year we are delighted to announce The BfD Birthday Giveaway which will give you the chance to win a fabulous BfD Birthday prize - every month of 2018!

January's prize is a fully assembled UK National frame hive, complete with stand, generously donated and delivered to you by E H Thorne (Beehives) Ltd. This prize is worth over £400! To take part in The BfD Birthday Giveaway, just enter your details [here](#)

## National Honey Show News

The winning Class 100 video and seven lectures to date - of the 2017 lecture videos have been uploaded and are now ready to view on the **National Honey Show YouTube Channel**.

There have been over 11,000 views for this year's lectures already but no limits on numbers able to view nor time when they will run out. This is the fifth year of our lecture videos, and those from 2013 are still both viewed, and popular.

The National Honey Show, 25 to 27 October 2018, Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher, KT10 9AJ [www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk)

### Upcoming Events

- **Winter Sale Now live** – Ends 31st January
- **Ordering begins for collection at the Spring shows** – 5th February
  - **Bee Tradex** - 3rd March
- **Ulster Beekeepers Convention** - 9th and 10th March
- **Welsh Beekeepers Convention** - 24th March
- **BBKA Spring Convention (Trade Show)** - 14th April



Thorne's have helped and assisted Bees for Development in all sorts of ways throughout our 25 years and we are delighted to enjoy continued, super support again this year!

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