

BeePlus 2012 Report



A visit to the local BBKA Apiary

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Following the resounding success of BeePlus 2011 many people continued to make this project a success by participating in 2012. They included the 20 schools and Brownie Packs that participated, their head teachers and staff, and the Soroptimist Clubs who sponsored schools, worked with them, and helped to bring about some interesting outcomes.

We are very grateful to **Rowse Honey Ltd** for allowing us to continue using their branded material from 2011.

The **British Beekeepers Association**, in particular Chris Deaves who is in charge of Education and Husbandry, continues to support the project; and we are indebted to the beekeepers who went into schools demonstrating the working of a hive and encouraging the children to dress up in the gear and to have fun.

The project is now managed by Phoenix2 Network, a consortium of dynamic women working virtually. As the Project Co-ordinator, I would like to thank the team, and several other partners, who have continued to work tirelessly and with enthusiasm and humour, to accomplish everything we have continued to do. So thanks a million! We are:

Carole Atkinson
Joyce Boorman
Tracy Gardiner
Liz McConnell
Mary Stratton
Sue Waters, Project Co-ordinator



Phoenix2 Network

www.phoenix2network.co.uk

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary

After the initial success in 2011 this project continued into 2012, but on a reduced scale. Without the sponsorship from Rowse Honey Ltd to provide the materials and goodies for each child, a pack of just the essential teachers' resource materials was produced. This was offered to schools and clubs at cost, for use as widely and as frequently as they liked. We sent materials to 20 new schools, some of which were planning on taking the entire school year to work on the project. We believe that others have also participated because we hear that when staff move to new schools they sometimes take the materials with them. One such example is Dairy Meadow School in Ealing that inherited materials from Murrayfield School, Ipswich. The Deputy Head of a school in Colwyn Bay in 2011 has since become a head teacher in another school and plans to introduce the project, with the help of Soroptimist International (SI) of Rhyl. This is the story of some of those participants.

1.2 Background

The original project was the result of collaboration between Soroptimist International Virtual One (pilot) Club, the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA), and Rowse Honey Ltd., to produce educational materials aimed at Key Stage 2 (ages 7 to 9 years). After a pilot in 4 schools during 2010 it was rolled out more widely. In 2011 it was successful beyond our wildest dreams, reaching our target of 10,000 children, not only in schools but also a few Girl Guide companies and Brownie packs. The feedback from schools was overwhelmingly positive and encouraged us to continue, under the banner of Phoenix2 Network, a consortium of dynamic women working virtually. Schools, SI Clubs, and our partners have all gained something from this, and hopefully the honeybees will also continue to benefit.

1.3 Objectives

Our ultimate aims were to save the honeybee, or at least educate children and their parents and teachers about the small things that would make a difference, and stimulate an interest in sending hives overseas so that impoverished women and girls in less developed countries would have a source of income. We hoped that along the way we would introduce the topic of bees and beekeeping to children at an age when they are curious and can get excited, and might eventually want to be beekeepers. We wanted them to be aware of the seriousness of the problem, and show them how little things, such as planting a bee-friendly garden or window box, and gardening organically, might help.

1.4 What we did

The resource materials from the previous year were still available to be used, with agreement from Rowse Honey Ltd to retain their branding. Each pack consisted of:



- The Teacher Resource, a full colour manual;
- A sample of the complete pupil workbook;
- A CD as the ultimate resource to enable the teacher/facilitator to print out any of the material as needed. The CD also included a PowerPoint presentation to complement some of the information and 6 posters from BBKA.

1.5 Spreading the word

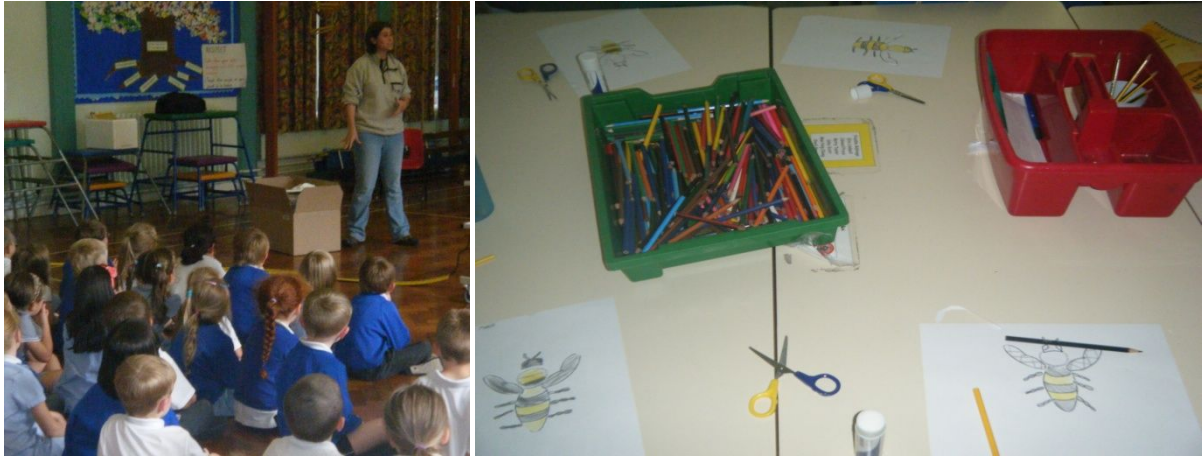
The publicity about BeePlus also paid dividends, with most Soroptimist clubs in the UK having heard about the project. For instance, clubs from Soroptimist International of Southern England host a project-related lunch in March each year. One of the featured projects in 2012 was BeePlus. The following extract is from an article *'Bookmarks, bees and brains!'* that appeared on the SI Gosport and Fareham website, alongside other speakers on the club's project to put bookmarks into secondary schools, showing on one side the characteristics of a loving relationship and on the other the indicators of abuse, and a speaker from the Alzheimer's Society who spoke about the support available to sufferers, through such as the memory cafes in the local area, and showing the difference in activity between scans from a healthy brain and from one diagnosed with dementia.

"Tracy Gardiner then talked about the BeePlus project that had been developed by the SI Virtual One (pilot) club that Gosport and Fareham took up on behalf of Oak Meadow School. The children took part in various activities, tied in to different parts of the curriculum: art, science, cooking and gardening. BeePlus will continue in 2012, although without the sponsorship from Rowse Honey Ltd. Details can be found at <http://www.phoenix2network.co.uk/>"



The presentation included a summary of activities and some photographs from Oak Meadow School, showing how the pupils enjoyed the activities of BeePlus. The project has been integrated across each level of the school. The children did art work, stories (literacy), the bee life cycle (science), cooking (using the honey) and planting the Lavender seeds for their newly developed sense garden.

The children were captivated by their visiting expert, who showed them how to be a beekeeper, and particularly enjoyed their art class.



1.6 Take-up of the resources in 2012

With the reduced scale of the project it was difficult to predict how many schools and groups would need the teaching resources for BeePlus 2012. An initial print run of 50 packs was made. There were schools on the waiting list from 2011, some of which took up the opportunity in 2012. Others also heard of the project (from other schools, groups, Clubs, websites) and got involved.

As mentioned earlier, 20 new schools took part, 7 of them plus one Brownie pack were sponsored by SI Southampton who were celebrating their Diamond Anniversary year.

From SI Southampton's website:

'So far seven junior and infant schools as well as one Brownie pack have been provided with "Goodie Bags" to help the children with this educational and environmental project.

In more detail:



This educational project aimed at Key stage 2, has specific aims of;

- 1. Raising awareness of the decline in the honeybee population.*
- 2. Making children and their families aware of the small things they can do to make a difference.*
- 3. Stimulating interest and excitement about beekeeping.*
- 4. Influencing good practice.*
- 5. Encouraging schools to support bee charities, adopt hives and send hives overseas.*

The materials are a user friendly flexible resource, that fit into the science curriculum. Teachers can take a “pick and mix” approach, to suit their requirements. They can take a week or a term, involve the whole school, or just 7 – 9 year olds.

The topics covered are:-

1. All about bees
2. Honeybee colonies
3. Beekeeping
4. Honey and beeswax
5. Problems and solutions

Participating schools receive a comprehensive resource pack, CD and workbook with all the materials needed, at no cost to the school. For more information visit the website,

www.phoenix2network.co.uk

We will also visit the school to help them get started with a goody bag e.g. lavender seeds, honey spoon, honey recipes.

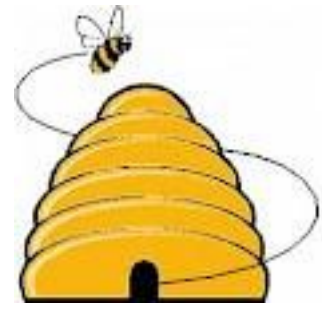


Photos from a visit to a Brownie Pack for BeePlus



Judy McCormack from SI Kingston and District
with pupils at Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School, Richmond upon Thames

And SI Bournemouth had a write-up for their website, under the heading of Programme work relating to the Environment:



In 2011, this group worked with the Bee Plus Project at a school in the New Forest. A resource pack was provided to Year 2 pupils and the materials were easily incorporated into a Summer Term's work.

The staff enjoyed the quality of the materials, and this helped the children learn about the importance of the role of the bee and the need to improve our environment by creating a good habitat for them.

As part of the project every child was given a hessian bag, workbook, honey spoon, lavender seeds and some honey. This helped make the learning experience great fun for the children.

In 2012 Queens Park Junior School was involved - a failing school with an allotment. We look forward to hearing how the pupils responded.

2 FEEDBACK

2.1 Feedback from Teachers

Teachers wrote to us with enthusiastic comments that were more enlightening than the information given on the feedback forms. The following are a selection of those comments:

'The children really enjoyed tasting honey and making honey buns. Very excited seeing real bees in the observation hive that Mel the bee keeper brought in.'

'We opened a bee-themed cafe which parents and visitors were invited to.'

'We organised for a beekeeper from the area to talk to the children. They loved it, and he was impressed with the children's knowledge, thanks to the project.'

'Two children in my class were very scared of bees and now they are not.'

'Easy to use resources – they were flexible and also gave us ideas for follow up activities.'

2.2 Other Feedback

Unlike 2011, we unfortunately had no specific feedback from the children in 2012, the main reason being that schools and groups did not undertake the project during a specific set period. Whilst this would have been a good indicator of the impact of the project, even without it BeePlus can be judged a success.

3 SUMMARY

We reached around 1000 children in 20 schools and Brownie packs.

As in 2011, schools in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland took part: ranging from Bournemouth and Southampton on the South Coast, along to Windsor and Ealing, north to Jarrow and South Shields, and on to Glasgow, over to the west to Llandudno and across the Irish Sea to Newry.

As far as the participating schools were concerned, this project was again enormously successful, and some have embedded it in their curriculum, and can go on using it as long as they wish because of the delivery of materials on CD.

One of our original aims was to raise awareness of a problem, and to show children, their families and teachers, how they can make a difference to bees and the environment - that we have certainly continued to do. It also ties in with the wider public awareness of the problem, with TV programmes, online petitions and print media taking up the issue. We hope that this will foster a greater interest in the environment and potentially inspire some beekeepers of the future.

The project has also proved the enduring success of a 'painting by numbers' approach to project design: once the idea has been piloted with a small sample of subjects, it can be repeated as widely as there is interest. A good example of how this approach can be successful is with the take-up of the project in the Republic of Ireland, as shown in the poster below.



“Biggest kick was when a bee came into the room and they fell over themselves to release it to get back to work...”

“Bee” part of the Soroptimist BeePlus Project for Schools

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL REPUBLIC OF IRELAND in partnership with BOYNE VALLEY HONEY

The Soroptimist BeePlus Project for Schools was created with the aim of raising awareness of the decline of the honeybee population. This project shows children and teachers how they can make a difference to bees and the environment.

A teacher's guidebook and pupil's workbook are supplied. Also supplied is a CD, a packet of bee-friendly seeds for the school garden and with the kind sponsorship of Boyne Valley Honey, Bizzy Bee goody bag with mini honey pot for each pupil.

The pilot project was rolled out to 10 schools based on 30 students per class and aimed at the 3rd class range. In two schools the teachers expanded the project, thus far it has reached over 400 children. This project is educational, aimed at young future beekeepers, and will hopefully have an effect on the environment.

Soroptimist International is the world's leading women's voluntary organisation with close to 90,000 members in more than 3,000 local clubs in over 100 countries. Using our global voice to promote education, empowerment and enabling initiatives.

If you would like to be a part of the **Soroptimist BeePlus Project for Schools** please contact: **Rosalie Muir Byrne**
e beeplus2013@gmail.com m 087 900 5023

The 'painting by numbers' approach has become a trademark of the Phoenix2 Network.



A collaboration between the Phoenix2 Network, the British Beekeepers Association, and Rowse Honey Ltd.



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