

# The Extractor



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My daughter gave me a Good Gifts birthday present of a beehive. It was to fund a project in Kotagiri in South India. I doubted that it would ever reach those it was intended to help. But a year on, this photograph seems to show that they are actually producing honey, and makes as much as £10 a week during the season.

The other project Good Gifts are funding is a bee project in Ghana. Here, stingless bees have colonised hives and are producing honey much prized for its medicinal value.



I love the idea of stingless bees! You can find out more at [www.goodgifts.org](http://www.goodgifts.org)  
[friends@goodgifts.org](mailto:friends@goodgifts.org)

Editor

## Sugar to the rescue!

**ROY BRUNSWICK**, *past president of the MBBKA, gives his bees a spring feed to get them through a crisis*

The lateness of spring is unprecedented in Roy Brunswick's 35 years of beekeeping. With a cold north wind keeping the temperatures hovering around freezing, the rape fields near his village of Oving have been browned by the frost and it has been too cold for the bees to forage.

By the end of March, Roy had not been able to make a full inspection of the brood nest because of the cold. To check for stores, he slides the cover board a little to one side, balancing it with a brick on top. Quickly he removes an outside frame to see if there are capped cells of honey. This March he was alarmed to find that the outside frame was empty, so he had to act or risk losing his bees from starvation.

This is the first time Roy has ever had to supply his bees with an emergency spring feed. He decided to give each colony about three pints of sugar syrup, made to the usual recipe of two pounds of sugar to one pint of water. He felt it was too cold to give candy: the bees would have needed water to dissolve it and might have become chilled carrying it back to the hive.

It is always difficult to gauge how much to feed in such a situation. Roy felt that three pints of syrup would be just enough to tide the bees over, without running the risk of bees clogging the brood nest cells with stores when the queen needs them for her egg-laying.

**Back in 29BC, the Roman poet Virgil wrote a series of “Georgics” about rural life. The fourth is about bees. Here is an abbreviated extract. In those days, the queen was thought to be a king.**

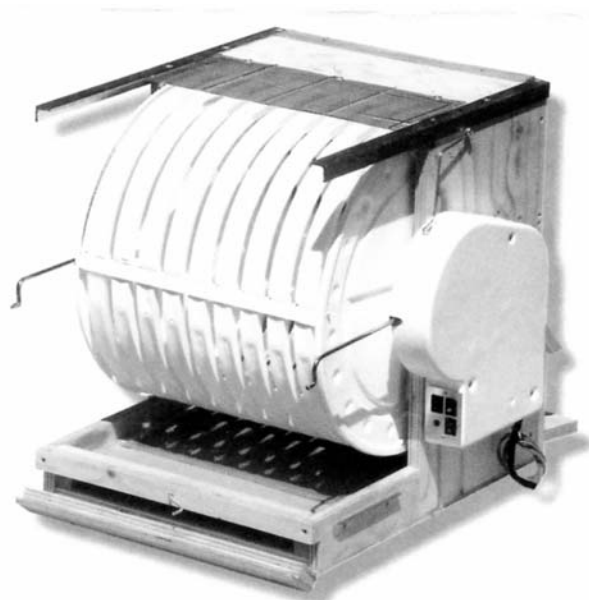
First find your bees a settled sure abode,  
Where neither winds can enter (winds blow back  
The foragers with food returning home).  
But let clear springs and moss-green pools be near,  
Some palm-tree o'er the porch extend its shade,  
Or huge-grown oleaster, that in Spring,  
Their own sweet Springtide, when the new-made chiefs  
Lead forth the young swarms, and, escaped their comb,  
The colony comes forth to sport and play.  
The neighbouring bank may lure them from the heat,  
Or bough befriend with hospitable shade.  
For the hive's self, or stitched of hollow bark,  
Or from tough osier woven, let the doors  
Be strait of entrance; for stiff winter's cold  
Congeals the honey, and heat resolves and thaws,  
To bees alike disastrous. Not for naught  
So haste they to cement the tiny pores  
That pierce their walls, and fill the crevices  
With pollen from the flowers, and glean and keep  
To this same end the glue that binds more fast  
Than bird-lime or the pitch from Ida's pines.  
Oft too in burrowed holes, if fame be true,  
They make their cosy subterranean home,  
Or in the cavern of an age-hewn tree.

But if to battle they have hied them forth -  
For oft 'twixt king and king with uproar dire  
Fierce feud arises, and at once from far  
You may discern what passion sways the mob,  
And how their hearts are throbbing for the strife.  
One with gold-burnished flakes will shine like fire,  
For twofold are their kinds, the nobler he,  
Of peerless front and lit with flashing scales;  
That other, from neglect and squalor foul,  
Drags slow a cumbrous belly.

This law of life, too, by the bees obeyed,  
Will move thy wonder, that nor sex with sex  
Yoke they in marriage, nor yield their limbs to love,  
Nor know the pangs of labour, but alone  
From leaves and honied herbs, the mothers each  
Gather their offspring in their mouths, alone  
Supply new kings and pigmy commonwealth.

Some say that unto bees a share is given  
Of the Divine Intelligence, and to drink  
Pure draughts of ether; for God permeates all -  
Earth, and wide ocean, and the vault of heaven.  
Yea, and that all things hence to Him return,  
Brought back by dissolution. Nor can death  
Find place: but, each into his starry rank,  
Alive they soar, and mount the heights of heaven.

## broodframe beehive



***Peter Smith, Extractor's foreign correspondant, has been out in the field discovering some amazing new bee equipment.***

The Kónya rotating broodframe beehive is a Hungarian invention that claims to do away with the need for chemical varroicides while preventing swarming!

Powered by a 12 volt battery, the circular brood frames rotate 180 degrees every day which apparently disrupts the breeding cycle of the varroa mite. Any queen cells, which hang downwards off the frame, find themselves sticking up in the air. The bees do not accept this and bite them off!

So a perfect solution is achieved at a stroke: colonies that do not swarm and bio-honey, free from chemical residuals. Check out the website on [www.anivet.hu](http://www.anivet.hu)

I have available two surplus colonies of bees. Please get in touch with me if you are interested. My bees seem to be robust, and are good honey getters.  
Netia Lascelles 01844 344007

## The Kónya rotating