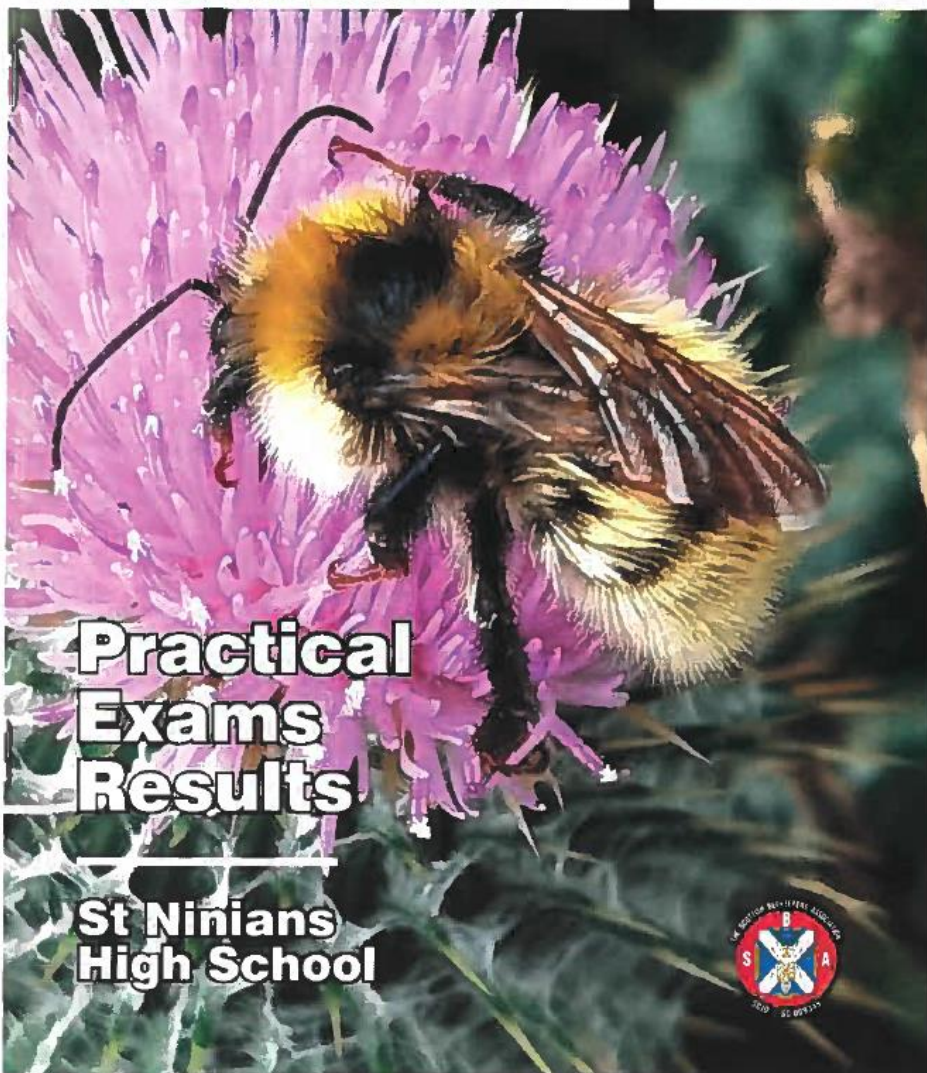




# THE SCOTTISH Beekeeper

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**Practical  
Exams  
Results**

**St Ninians  
High School**



## St Ninians High School, East Renfrewshire

Luke, Peter, Lochlann & Aaron

According to all known laws of aviation, there's no way a bee should be able to fly. Or so we were told, but since we started beekeeping, we have directly experienced the Dunning-Kruger effect, the more we learned, the more we realised we had still to learn. When we started our National Progression Award (NPA) in beekeeping, we immediately plunged into the vast, seemingly endless, field of pollen identification. For my friends and I who had never taken Biology, the prospect of preparing slides and operating a microscope was daunting and exciting. Once the slides had been prepared we embarked on the



Inspecting the hives

microscopic treasure hunt of locating and identifying pollen.

After a few lessons in the lab, we suited up and headed to the hives. We learned all about swarming and how to prevent it, by making sure that no queen cells were allowed to grow by scraping off any developments of them. We were taught all about how the smoker works and why it subdues the bees, and we even were given the experience to use the smoker ourselves!



Smoking the hives

We also learned how to identify capped brood, pollen cells, queen cells, honey cells and royal jelly.

Furthermore, we have become naturals (not foundations) at the operation and manoeuvring of frames in the hive as to not disturb the bees when examining their frames. However, there was also one tragic day when we peered into

new queen.

Over the summer a selection of the class volunteered at the park where the hives are kept. Among many tasks we began the refurbishment of a poly tunnel and look forward to its completion and hope

that soon, our bees have lots of new and interesting plants to pollinate, we also were involved in sprucing up the surrounding area to give the bees a more pleasant place to live in. As our education in the art of beekeeping continues, we look forward to our next honey harvest, learning more



Inspecting the Supers

the hive, we were taking care of and the Queen, "Queen Charlotte", seemed to be missing, presumed dead. All regicide aside, we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

My friends and I have been pleasantly surprised by the depth of the subject and how much there is to know about the proper care and handling of our little honey harvesting friends and we have been blown away by just how much fun we have had learning about them.

If we were to pick a favourite part of our time at the hives before summer, we would have to pick one of our first introductory lessons in the hives, when we were given the promise of being able to name the new queen if we were able to spot it before our classmates. The scavenger hunt came to no avail however, as nobody was able to find our



First visit in June 2021

about the differences between natural and foundation frames and learning, in great detail, how the hive functions as a whole including what goes on during the hives dormant phase in winter. All in all, the new NPA beekeeping course has been excellent and has exceeded all our expectations, as my friends and I think of what we could learn in this class, we're buzzing with excitement (that pun stung).