

A GOLDEN TRIAD: DRUIDS, BEES AND TREES



Amergin, Bard of the Milesians, lays claim to the Land of Ireland

I am a stag: of seven tines,
I am a flood: across a plain,
I am a wind: on a deep lake,
I am a tear: the Sun lets fall,
I am a hawk: above the cliff,
I am a thorn: beneath the nail,
I am a wonder: among flowers,
I am a wizard: who but I
Sets the cool head aflame with smoke?

I am a spear: that roars for blood,
I am a salmon: in a pool,
I am a lure: from paradise,
I am a hill: where poets walk,
I am a boar: ruthless and red,
I am a breaker: threatening doom,
I am a tide: that drags to death,
I am an infant: who but I
Peeps from the unhewn dolmen, arch?

I am the womb: of every holt,
I am the blaze: on every hill,
I am the queen: of every hive,
I am the shield: for every head,
I am the tomb: of every hope.

*Song of Amergin translated by Robert Graves,
from **The White Goddess**.*

<http://www.amergin.net/songofamergin.html>

Druids, bees and trees form a golden triad, each sharing in a relationship of vital mutualism, cooperation and symbiosis. Bees pollinate trees, and trees feed and house bees. Druids interpret, protect and nurture both trees and bees as sources of health, wealth, wisdom, and access to the faerie world. Alan Watts, in the Tao of Philosophy, asks us to see beyond our 'skinsacks' to the outside which is part of our inside. I believe we need to apply that to our understanding of the natural world and our ancestors in interpreting the natural world, the Druids.

This interaction between bees and Druids is preserved in the Scottish adage: "Ask a wild bee what the druids knew." In Celtic society, bees were thought to have secret knowledge, and transmit communications between ours and the otherworld. Bees, with their secret language, were traditionally the messengers from the faery world. In some of the earliest know literature of Ireland, bees hold a prominent position. Bee references appear twice in **Song of Amergin**: (1) "I am a tear the Sun lets fall", a metaphor for bees and honey that also was used in ancient Egypt, and (2) "I am the queen of every hive". Among the natural wonders of Ireland to which Amergin was laying claim, no other receives two mentions.

In all of the social functions of Druids: artist, mystic, scholar, healers, advisers, magicians, poets, seers, leaders, teachers, historians, jurists, shaman or priest, and most importantly truth seekers, bees demonstrate their relevance, as Druids mediate our knowledge of this world and the next. The literature on the association between Druids and trees is highly developed, but the final leg of the golden triad, the druidic consanguinity with the golden honey bee and her many golden gifts are not as well developed. The primary endeavor of this presentation is to gather together enough information about bees from ancient and modern sources to allow us to infer the Golden Triad between Druids, bees and trees.



Bee Goddess, 5000 BC – Neolithic Spain

http://www.andrewgough.co.uk/bee1_1.html

From *Cave of the Spider* near Valencia Spain, a
15,000 year old painting

THE ANTIQUITY OF BEEKEEPING

The fondness of humans for the products of bees predates the written record, Celtic civilizations and Druids. Wild honey gathering is an ancient practice, a dietary and inspirational source since prehistory, and is depicted in neolithic art from southern Spain 15,000 years ago.

Bees are 100 million years old and there are more than 20,000 species of wild bees. Three species produce honey. Two originate in Asia and Southeast Asia, including the largest honey bee from the Himalayas, but these have minimal distribution. There are no honey bees native to the Americas, Australia or New Zealand. *Apis mellifera* is the common western honey bee, originates from eastern tropical Africa and is found in Egyptian pyramids. *Apis mellifera* has since been transported by human beings to all continents, except Antarctica.

Beekeeping, or apiculture, is the domestication of bees, which involves the creation of artificial hives made from hollow logs, wooden boxes, pottery vessels, and woven straw baskets or "skeps". The earliest known depiction of beekeeping appears on a carving from an Egyptian temple that dates to 4,500 years ago. It shows men collecting honeycombs from cylindrical containers, pouring honey into jars and possibly separating honey from beeswax on the walls of the sun temple of Nyuserre Ini from the 5th Dynasty, before 2422 BCE.

Scientists have unearthed the remains of a large-scale beekeeping operation at a nearly 3,000-year-old Israeli site, which dates to the time of biblical accounts of King David and King Solomon, at a huge earthen mound called Tel Reho.



The ancient Chinese writer, Shi Jing wrote about honey in the 6th century BC. Traditional Chinese medicine states that honey is governed by the Earth element and effects mainly the stomach and spleen. It also possesses characteristics of the Yang character.



Honey Hunting in Spain ,approx. 13,000 BC

Bees in the Bible: The 'land of milk and honey'

Deuteronomy XXXII, 13: "...and he made him to suck honey out of the rock."

Samuel XIV 27: "But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath...and dipped it (the stick) in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened."

Solomon's songs (Song of Songs IV, 11): "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb, honey and milk are under your tongue" and later (V, 1): "I have come into my garden, o my sister/spouse... I have eaten honeycomb with my honey."

Judges XIV, 8: "...and he turned to see the carcass of the lion: and behold there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion". Samson turned this into a riddle (XIV, 14): "And he said unto them - out of the eater came forth food, and out of the bold came forth sweetness" for which the answer was (XIV, 18): "What is sweeter than honey, and what is bolder than a lion?"



Honey can be found in India around 2,000 – 3,000 BC. in references to honey found in several passages of the Vedas:

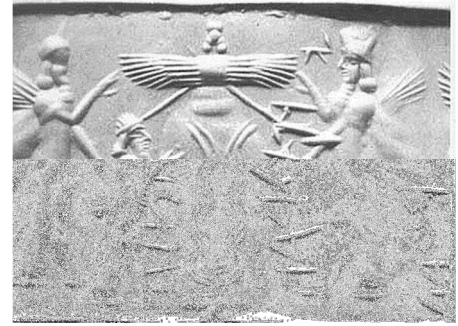
“Let every wind that blows drop honey
Let the rivers and streams recreate honey
Let all our medicines turn honey...”

The bowstring on Hindu love god Kamadeva's bow is made of honeybees. Sealed pots of honey were found in the grave goods of Pharaohs such as Tutankhamun, approx. 1341 BC – 1323 BC. In the texts of ancient Egypt, bees were born from the tears of Râ, the Sun God. When the tears fell onto the soil, they were transformed into bees that built honeycombs and produced honey.

The religious significance of bees extended to an association with the goddess *Neith*, whose temple in the delta town of Sais in Lower Egypt was known as *per-bit* - meaning 'the house of the bee'. Honey was regarded as a symbol of resurrection and also thought to give protection against evil spirits.



During the Unification of Egypt (3050 BC), by Menes, a local ruler of Thebes, the bee and the sedge (or papyrus) were symbols of unification through the next 3000 years. The sedge is the symbol of Upper Egypt and the bee is the symbol of Lower Egypt. This example is taken from the Kings List in the Mortuary Temple of Seti I, constructed 1500 years after Menes.



Sumerian Bee Goddess

VIRGIL's Georgics (29BC)

BkIV:149-227 The Nature and Qualities of Bees

Come now and I'll impart the qualities Jupiter himself gave bees, for which reward they followed after the melodious sounds and clashing bronze of the Curetes, and fed Heaven's king in the Dictean cave. They alone hold children in common: own the roofs of their city as one: and pass their life under the might of the law. They alone know a country, and a settled home, and in summer, remembering the winter to come, undergo labour, storing their gains for all. For some supervise the gathering of food, and work in the fields to an agreed rule: some, walled in their homes, lay the first foundations of the comb, with drops of gum taken from narcissi, and sticky glue from tree-bark, then hang the clinging wax: others lead the mature young, their nation's hope, others pack purest honey together, and swell the cells with liquid nectar: there are those whose lot is to guard the gates, and in turn they watch out for rain and clouds in the sky, or accept the incoming loads, or, forming ranks, they keep the idle crowd of drones away from the hive. The work glows, and the fragrant honey is sweet with thyme. And like the Cyclopes when they forge lightning bolts quickly, from tough ore, and some make the air come and go with ox-hide bellows, others dip hissing bronze in the water: Etna groans with the anvils set on her: and they lift their arms together with great and measured force, and turn the metal with tenacious tongs: so, if we may compare small things with great, an innate love of creation spurs the Attic bees on, each in its own way. The older ones take care of the hive, and building the comb, and the cleverly fashioned cells. But at night the weary young carry back sacs filled with thyme: they graze far and wide on the blossom of strawberry-trees, and pale-grey willows, and rosemary and bright saffron, on rich lime-trees and on purple hyacinths. All have one rest from work: all have one labour: they rush from



Mallia, Crete circa 2000 BCE

The use of bee products, whether harvested from wild bees or from apiculture, was widespread in the ancient world, as was the veneration of the bee goddess. So widespread in the societies that were precursors to the Celts that it would be difficult to argue that the Celtic civilizations lacked either in some form.

SACRED BEE GODDESS AND DIVINATION

From artifacts we can infer that the bee goddess predates written history. Between 3000-2500 BC, the Celtic and the Greek languages were still one proto-European language and therefore emanating from a common cultural and linguistic ancestor. Only after this time did the Celts separate from what became the proto-Greeks. In Minoan Crete, the Goddess and her priestesses, dressed as bees are shown dancing together on a golden seal found buried with the dead. In Crete also the bee signified the life that comes from death, as did the scarab in Egypt.



Gold seal ring, c. 1450 BC. From a tomb at Isopata, near Knossos
<http://www.thebeegoddess.com/>

Early Greeks, as documented by Homer, gathered only wild honey and did not participate in apiculture until later. In the

the gates at dawn: no delay: when the evening star has warned them to leave their grazing in the fields again, then they seek the hive, then they refresh their bodies: there's a buzzing, a hum around the entrances and thresholds. Then when they've settled to rest in their cells, there's silence in the night, and sleep seizes their weary limbs. If rain's threatening they don't go far from their hives, or trust the sky when Easterlies are nearing, but fetch water from nearby, in the safety of their city wall, and try brief flights, and often lift little stones, as unstable ships take up ballast in a choppy sea, and balance themselves with these in the vaporous clouds. And you'll wonder at this habit that pleases the bees, that they don't indulge in sexual union, or lazily relax their bodies in love, or produce young in labour, but collect their children in their mouths themselves from leaves, and sweet herbs, provide a new leader and tiny citizens themselves, and remake their palaces and waxen kingdoms. Often too as they wander among harsh flints they bruise their wings, and breathe their lives away beneath their burden. so great is their love of flowers, and glory in creating honey. And though the end of a brief life awaits the bees themselves (since it never extends beyond the seventh summer) the species remains immortal, and the fortune of the hive is good for many years, and grandfathers' grandfathers are counted. Besides, Egypt and mighty Lydia and the Parthian tribes, and the Median Hydaspes do not pay such homage to their leader. With the leader safe all are of the same mind: if the leader's lost they break faith, and tear down the honey they've made, themselves, and dissolve the latticed combs. The leader is the guardian of their labours: to the leader they do reverence, and all sit round the leader in a noisy throng, and crowd round in large numbers, and often they lift the leader on their shoulders and expose their bodies in war, and, among wounds, seek a glorious death. Noting these tokens and examples some have said that a share of divine intelligence is in bees, and a draught of aether: since there is a god in everything, earth and the expanse of sea and the sky's depths: from this source the flocks and herds, men, and every species of creature, each derive their little life, at birth: to it surely all then return, and dissolved, are remade, and there is no room for death, but still living they fly to the ranks of the stars, and climb the high heavens.

earliest recounting of the lives of the Greek gods, the infant Zeus is fed only on honey. Honey was the nectar of the gods. According to the ancient Greeks, all of natural phenomena, including bees, had divine origins. Artemis, daughter of Zeus and Leto, and twin sister to Apollo, was the Bee Goddess.



Gold plaques embossed with winged bee goddesses, perhaps the Thriai, found at Camiros Rhodes, dated to 7th century BCE (British Museum)

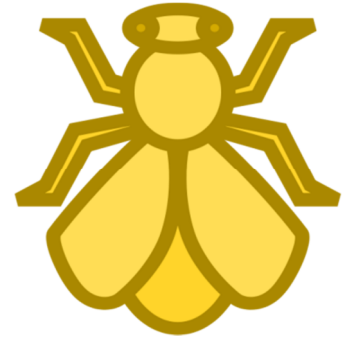
The 6th-8th century BC *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* referred to *melissae* or bee oracles from Delphi's Mount Parnassos, who could prophesy only after ingesting *meli chloron* or 'green honey'. Divination was a key function of the bee goddess as documented below in the Homeric hymn to Hermes:

From: THRIAE <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thriae>

"The Homeric Hymn to Hermes places them in Mount Parnassus, where they have taught the art of divination to the youthful Apollo who addresses Hermes in the hymn:

"There are three holy ones, sisters born[3] - three virgins gifted with wings: their heads are besprinkled with white barley meal, and they dwell under a ridge of Parnassos. These are teachers of divination apart[4] from me, the art which I practised while yet a boy following herds, though my father paid no heed to it. From their home they fly now here, now there, feeding on honeycomb and bringing all things to pass. And when they are inspired through eating yellow honey, they are willing to speak the truth; but if they be deprived of the gods' sweet food,[5] then they speak falsely, as they swarm in and out together. These, then, I give you; enquire of them strictly and delight your heart: and if you should teach any mortal so to do, often will he hear your response - if he have good fortune. Take these, Son of Maia ... ' So he spake. And from heaven father Zeus himself gave confirmation to his words, and commanded that glorious Hermes should be lord over all birds of omen ... and also that he only should be the appointed messenger to Aides, who, though he takes no gift, shall give him no mean prize." —Homeric Hymn IV, to Hermes, lines 550-563, Hugh G. Evelyn-White, tr., 1914.

They are in a word 'Melissae', honey-priestesses, inspired by a



FROM: BEE MYTHOLOGY

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bee_\(mythology\)#cite_note-elderkin-0](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bee_(mythology)#cite_note-elderkin-0)

"The bee was an emblem of *Potnia*, the Minoan-Mycenaean "Mistress", also referred to as "The Pure Mother Bee".[1] Her priestesses received the name of "*Melissa*" ("bee").[1] In addition, priestesses worshipping *Artemis* and *Demeter* were called "Bees".[2] The Delphic priestess is often referred to as a bee, and *Pindar* notes that she remained "the Delphic bee" long after *Apollo* had usurped the ancient oracle and shrine. "The Delphic priestess in historical times chewed a laurel leaf," Harrison noted, "but when she was a Bee surely she must have sought her inspiration in the honeycomb." [3][4] Ernst Neustadt, in his monograph on *Zeus Kretigenes*, "Cretan-born Zeus," devoted a chapter to the honey-goddess *Melissa*.

The *Homeric Hymn* to Apollo acknowledges that Apollo's gift of prophecy first came to him from three bee maidens, usually identified with the *Thriai*. The *Thriai* was a *trinity* of pre-Hellenic Aegean bee goddesses. The embossed gold plaque (*illustration above right*) is one of a series of identical plaques recovered at Camiros in *Rhodes*[5] dating from the archaic period of Greek art in the seventh century, but the winged bee goddesses they depict must be far older."



OMPHALOS STONE at Delphi, Greece

From the Mythology of Bees:

honey-intoxicant; they are bees, their heads white with pollen."

In Python: a study of Delphic myth and its origins, Joseph Eddy Fontenrose states that "The reference to honey eating is significant. Pindar called the Pythia Delphic Bee. Pausanias says that the second temple at Delphi was made by bees of honeycomb and feathers ... for the souls of the dead were often identified with souls of the dead in antiquity. ...The tiny winged Keres or ghosts seen in vase paintings resemble bees." Also, "Bee Dances and the 'Sacred Bees'" in *The Classical Weekly*, Vol 47, No 7 (Feb 15, 1954), pp 103-106, by Lillian B. Lawler gives a very thorough review of the Bee Goddess in Greek Tradition.

Worship of the Bee Goddess is evident in the Mediterranean cultures of around 3,000 years ago at the temples of Artemis. She is one of the oldest and most popular aspects of the Divine Feminine.

Born on the Greek Island of Delos, Artemis was sister of Apollo and daughter to Zeus and Leto. When she was a young girl, her father, Zeus, asked her what was her dream? She answered that she wished to never have to marry a man and to always be free to roam in the wild forest. Artemis was known as a patron of young virgins, and a powerful protectress of the natural world of fertility.

As with other early Goddesses, ceremonies to invoke Artemis were held in groves of trees, at places of special rock outcroppings, at sacred sites along rivers or at quiet springs. Artemis was and is to be known as one of the most powerful mistresses of magic and shape shifters.

There are several in the Celtic Pantheon that are manifestations of Artemis, for example, the Irish Goddess, *Flidais* (deer), is a Celtic Artemis; a huntress figure associated with archery, the sanctity of forests and the wildlife therein, and the chase. Unlike Artemis, however, her lustiness and sexual appetite is legendary. She can be seen in forest, driving a chariot pulled by deer, and accompanied by stags.

SACRED GEOMETRY

Later Greek Philosophers thought of Druids as Pythagoreans in part because of their belief in reincarnation or the transmigration of souls. Yet **Abaris the Druid** was Pythagoras's mentor, so it would be more correct to say that Pythagoras was a Druid. Like a Druid, Pythagoras (570 BC) did not write anything down; his was an oral tradition, which is why he is the most enigmatic of Greek Philosophers. He and his followers renounced their wealth, lived communally, and did not eat meat or beans. In fact in Greek tradition, Pythagoras ate only honey. Both Hippocrates

<http://www.lunedemiel.tm.fr/anglais/06.htm>

"Aristæus, the son of the god Apollo, had a beehive. But he wanted to seduce Eurydice, Orpheus' wife, who died from a snake bite because she had refused Aristæus' advances. In revenge, Orpheus destroyed Aristæus' hive. To appease the wrath of the gods, Aristæus sacrificed four bulls and four heifers. From their entrails, new swarms suddenly appeared, so Aristæus was able to rebuild his hive and teach beekeeping to men."

THE BEE GODDESS




<http://www.thebeegoddess.com/>

These sacred bee-maidens with their gift of prophecy, were to be Apollo's gift to Hermes, the god who alone could lead the souls of the dead out of life and sometimes back again. The etymology of the word 'fate' in Greek offers a fascinating example of how the genius of the Minoan vision entered the Greek language, often visibly, as well as informing its stories of goddesses and gods. The Greek word for 'fate', 'death' and 'goddess of death' is *e ker* (feminine); the word for 'heart' and 'breast' is *to ker* (neuter); while the word for 'honeycomb' is *to kerion* (neuter). The common root *ker* links the ideas of the honeycomb, goddess, death, fate and the human heart, a nexus of meanings that is illumined if we know that the goddess was once imagined as a bee.



and Pythagoras prescribed bee pollen for its healing qualities. Much of Pythagoras's work in mathematics had to do with a sacred geometry.

To make a hexagram, Mark a circle with a fixed radius, then using that same radius, mark an arc from any point on the circle. From the point created by the arc, mark an arc on either side. If you continue around the circle in the same manner, the result will be six equally spaced arcs which when connected with straight lines, form a hexagram. When a bee constructs a honeycomb, its torso forms the fixed radius.

Within a hexagram are two overlapping equilateral triangles. Pythagoras attributed Solomon's seal (sometimes referred to as the Star of David), a "magical" symbol of two interlocking equilateral triangles forming a star with six rays, to the hexagonal design of the honeycomb. Pythagoras saw this symbol as  a sign for combinations of  which meant water, and  a symbol for fire. There are other magical mathematics associated with bees. When looking at bee genealogies, the generations form a Fibonacci sequence:



The bee ancestry code

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fibonacci_number#The_bee_ancestry_code

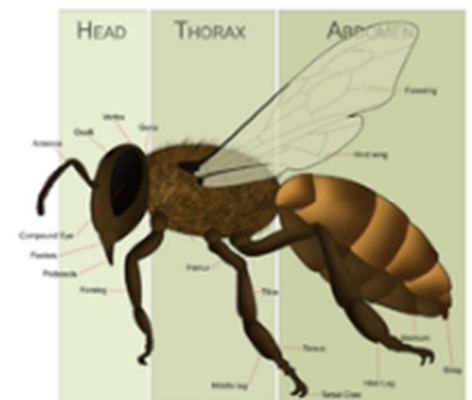
Fibonacci numbers also appear in the description of the reproduction of a population of idealized honeybees, according to the following rules:

- If an egg is laid by an unmated female, it hatches a male or

From **World Mysteries - Cosmic Blueprints**
by Christine Stern:

http://www.world-mysteries.com/newgw/sci_blueprint3.htm

"Pythagoreans perceived the hexagon as an expression of the spirit of Aphrodite, whose sacred number was six (the dual Triple Goddess), and worshipped bees as her sacred creatures who understood how to create perfect hexagons in their honeycomb. Seeking to understand the secrets of nature through geometry, the Pythagoreans meditated on the endless triangular lattice, all sixty degree angles, that results from extending the sides of all hexagons in the honeycomb diagram until their lines meet in the center of adjacent hexagons. It seemed to them a revelation of the underlying symmetry of the cosmos. Moreover, since honey and salt were the only commonly known preservatives at the time, both were symbols of resurrection or reincarnation. The dead were often embalmed in honey, especially in the large pithoi or burial vases, where they were placed in fetal position for rebirth. Demeter was "the pure mother bee" who governed the cycles of life, as was the biblical Deborah whose name means 'bee.' Honey cakes formed like female genitals figured prominently in worship of the Goddess. The bee was usually looked upon as a symbol of the feminine potency of nature, because it created this magical, good tasting substance and stored it in hexagonal cells of geometric mystery. "



Divination of Irish Druids

From [A Smaller Social History of Ancient Ireland](http://www.libraryireland.com/SocialHistory/AncientIreland/II-V-2.php) 1906

<http://www.libraryireland.com/SocialHistory/AncientIreland/II-V-2.php>

"**Druidesses.**—The ancient Irish had [druidesses](#) also, like their relatives the Gauls. A druidess was called *aban-druí* [ban-dree], *i.e.* a 'woman

drone bee.

- If, however, an egg was fertilized by a male, it hatches a female.

Thus, a male bee will always have one parent, and a female bee will have two. If one traces the ancestry of any male bee (1 bee), he has 1 parent (1 bee), 2 grandparents, 3 great-grandparents, 5 great-great-grandparents, and so on. This sequence of numbers of parents is the Fibonacci sequence. The number of ancestors at each level, F_n , is the number of female ancestors, which is F_{n-1} , plus the number of male ancestors, which is F_{n-2} . [53] ... The Fibonacci sequence is also found in nature, such as branching in trees, arrangement of leaves on a stem, the fruitlets of a pineapple, [7] the flowering of artichoke, an uncurling fern and the arrangement of a pine cone, as well as in the Golden ration, mean, and section.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_section



BEE LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The queen bee is created by the worker bees by feeding a larva with Royal Jelly. There can be only one queen bee so when more than one is produced a battle ensues to the death. A queen bee because of her special diet, can sting more than once without dying. Therefore she is the epitome of the female warrior. The queen bee in the hive was a similar social structure to Celtic kingship. Celtic kings were elected and held office only at the will of the people. The Queen bee is selected by the hive and works tirelessly for the benefit of the hive.

It is well known that bees communicate using a dance that correlated with the position of the sun in relation to the resource being reported. In the now famous "waggle dance", a bee stands facing in one direction and waggles her abdomen back and forth; each waggle represents a certain distance. Then she turns in a figure-eight and waggles again. She repeats this dance over and over, and the other workers watch her carefully. The "round dance" is a circular dance that says "hey, there's food near the hive!", a "vibrating dance" that tell lazy workers "hey, get up and do something!", and even a shaky, staggering dance tells other

druid': and many individual druidesses figure in the ancient writings. Amongst the dangers that St. Patrick (in his Hymn) asks God to protect him from are "the spells of women, and smiths, and druids," where the "women" are evidently druidesses. In one of St. Patrick's canons, kings are warned to give no countenance to magi (i.e. 'druids'), or *pythonesses*, or augurers, in which it is obvious from the context that the *pythonesses* were druidesses. The Greek word 'pythoness,' which corresponds to the Irish *ban-druí*, was the name of the priestesses of the oracle of Apollo at Delphi."



Animal Allies

(taken from "[By Oak, Ash, & Thorn](#)" by D.J. Conway)



Bee (Beach): The bee is usually mentioned in connection with honey and mead, which was made from honey. The bee is industrious, single-minded when performing a task, and fearless when defending its home.

Neith and the Two Biblical Deborahs: One and the Same

Presented at the annual meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt, Atlanta 1995

<http://ggreenberg.tripod.com/writings/w-neith-deb.htm>

The bible makes reference to two separate women named Deborah. One was the nurse to Abraham's son Isaac and the other was, in the much later period of the Judges, a military leader referred to as "a mother in Israel". Both seem to have mythic images and both are identified with a particular Tree of Weeping. The Egyptian goddess Neith has a reputation as both a military figure and as a mother goddess and nurse, characteristics that caused the Greeks to identify her with the goddess Athena.

bees “somebody please clean me!” It was even believed that druids danced like Bees in celebration of the sun’s vital life force.

Bee communication includes other senses as well. The big queen is surrounded by her “court” of about twelve bees. The queen’s court feeds her and cleans her, but if you look closely, you can also see them brushing their antennae against the queen’s body over and over again. They’re doing this because a queen produces something called pheromones, which are smelly chemicals, and different pheromones tell the bees in the hive to do different things. A worker bee in the queen’s court picks up the pheromones from the queen, and then uses her antennae to spread that smell around the hive. Soldiers are older worker bees who guard the entrance to the hive from any insects or other animals who might threaten the hive. If a soldier senses danger, she releases a pheromone that alerts the other bees.

HEALING BEE PRODUCTS

Healing with bee products is called apitherapy and was widely practiced by the ancients, including Egyptians, Greeks and Celts. “Egyptian physicians valued its medicinal value in many important procedures. In other words, they too practiced Apitherapy. Egyptian medicine men were often indistinguishable from sorcerers, and Beeswax was an essential ingredient in the creation of effigies used in rituals. In her 1937 book, *The Sacred Bee*, Hilda Ransome recounts several examples, stating that “*One of the earliest instances of the magical use of wax is in the Westcar Papyrus.*” In her example, Ransome recounts how a Beeswax effigy of a crocodile comes alive and eats the lover of mans wife as revenge for violating his marriage agreement.

Honey was frequently mentioned in papyri and was even a vital ingredient in Egyptian beer. This linked the Bee to commerce, for beer was often used as a form of wages. In fact, the versatile nectar was so cherished that promises of honey from husband to wife were included in marriage contracts, and even the Pharaoh Ramses III offered up 15 tons of honey to the Nile God Hapi, in the 12th Century BC. The *Health Benefits of Honey* web site sheds further light on honey’s unique role in Egyptian society:

“The oldest hieroglyphic carvings in temples, on sarcophagi and obelisks sufficiently prove that bees and honey had a vital significance in the daily life of the population of Egypt...Honeycombs, honey cakes, sealed jars of honey and lotus blooms were placed next to the sarcophagi as food for the souls of the dead. In the tomb of Pa-Ba-Sa, in Thebes, the entire wall is decorated by rows of bees. A man is shown pouring honey into a pail, another is kneeling and praying before a pyramid of honeycombs. On the wall of the tomb of Rekh-Mi-Re all phases of the honey industry are depicted; how the combs were removed

In Hebrew, Deborah means “Bee” and that symbol is closely identified with Neith. A Temple to Neith was called “House of the Bee”, and the Bee was the symbol of kingship in Lower Egypt.

In this paper I will argue that both Deborahs were mythological figures based on Hebrew recollections of the goddess Neith, the goddess who ruled in the area of Egypt where Israel dwelled in earlier times. In support of this argument I will draw upon some materials in Plutarch’s account of the Osiris myth, which suggests that Neith may have been associated with a Tree of Weeping. I will also make other mythological comparisons between Neith and the two Deborahs.



“ The honey-making insect with distinctive black and yellow colouring (order [Hymenoptera](#)) has attracted a small body of lore in Celtic languages. In both [Ireland](#) and [Wales](#), bees are thought to hail from heaven and bring secret wisdom with them. Honey is listed among the attributes of [Munster](#). OIr. bech; Modir. beach, seillean; ScG beach; [Manx](#) shellan; W gwenynen; Corn. gwenenen; Bret. gwenanenn. See H. M. Ransome , [The Sacred Bee](#) (London, 1937).”



from the hives with the aid of smoke, the baking of honey cakes, the filling and sealing of jars, etc.

The Bee is featured prominently in many Egyptian temples, including the pillars of Karnak, the Luxor obelisk now erected on the Place de la Concorde in Paris, the 20th Dynasty sarcophagus of Rameses III, a granite statue of Rameses II, the sarcophagus of a 26th Dynasty priest and on the Pyramid of Unas, to name but a few. Additionally, at the temple of Dendera an inscription recounts how Osiris emulated the Bee and provided instructions for *knowing* the “hsp”, or the sacred garden of the Bee in the other world - a domain believed to contain the tree of the golden apples of immortality....

Honey was also regarded as an elixir in Mediterranean societies; a magic potion that ensured a long and healthy life. The Roman Emperor Augustus once asked a centenarian how he managed to live to the ripe old age of 100, only to have the man reply, “*Oil without and honey within.*” The legendary Greek mathematician Pythagoras, whose life spanned the greater part of the 6th century BC, attributed his longevity to a steady diet of honey. In addition to being an elixir, honey was a healing substance with a variety of medicinal uses. Legend states that the Greek sea god Glaucus, the son of Minos and Pasiphae, was restored to life when buried in a jar of honey. The story reminds us of Alexandra the Great, who requested that he be wrapped in honey as part of his burial preparation for the same reason. Each example reinforces the belief that honey preserves the remains of the deceased, and in fact honey discovered in ancient tombs has remained edible thousands of years after it was first processed.”
http://www.andrewgough.co.uk/bee1_1.html

The healing properties of honey and other bee products are legendary and ancient. Bee remedies were undoubtedly utilized by Druid and Ovate healers in ancient Celtic society.

Medicinal Uses for Honey, Pollen, and Other Bee Products

<http://www.honey4allergies.com/medicinal.htm>

“The Healing Benefits of Honey

About 2500 B.C. the Egyptians had a standard wound salve consisting of grease, honey and fibre. The Assyrians, Greeks, Chinese and Roman employed honey for wounds and diseases of the bowels. Honey was also the most popular Egyptian drug.

Hippocrates prescribed a simple diet using honey, and vinegar (oxymel) for pain, or honey and water (hydromel) for thirst. To treat fevers, honey was also used with other medicinal substances.

Honey received endorsement by both Christianity and Islam. Modern medicine uses honey in medicinally and surgically. *Candida alba* is inhibited in undiluted honey. Honey diluted to 40% was bactericidal to *Salmonella shigella*, *E. coli* and *vibrio cholera*, making honey both an anti-bacterial and anti-fungal agent. These diseases are the causes of millions of deaths worldwide.



Worker bees
in the process of forming a wax chain

Bees and Honey

[A Smaller Social History of Ancient Ireland](#) 1906

CHAPTER XVII....continued

<http://www.libraryireland.com/SocialHistory/AncientIreland/III-XVII-7.php>

7. Honey.

Before entering on the consideration of honey as food, it will be proper to make a few observations on the management of bees by the ancient Irish. From the earliest times Ireland was noted for its abundance of honey.

[Giraldus](#) expresses the curious opinion that honey would be still more abundant all over Ireland if the bee-swarms were not checked by the bitter and poisonous yews with which the woods abounded.

The management of bees was universally understood; and every comfortable householder kept hives in his garden. Wild bees, too, swarmed everywhere —much more plentifully than at present, on account of the extent of woodland. Before cane-sugar came into general use—sixteenth century—the bee industry was considered so important that a special section of the Brehon Laws is devoted to it. The Irish name for a bee is *bech*: a swarm is called *saithe* [saeha]. The hive was known by various names, but the term now universally in use is *corcog*. Hives stocked with bees were sometimes given as part of a tribute to a king. The Brehon Law tract on "Bee-judgments," of which the printed Irish text occupies twenty pages, enters into much detail concerning the rights of the various parties concerned, to

Used in concentrations of 30% to 50%, honey is superior to several well-known and currently prescribed antibiotics. Honey inhibits the growth of pathogenic organisms isolated in urine samples of patients with urinary tract infections. Honey has been valued in treating infected surgical wounds, ulcers, post-operative treatment of patients who had undergone radial treatment for vulvae cancer, post-operative wound breakdown, and skin grafting.

Honey also shortened the duration of bacterial diarrhoea in 169 infants and children. It was concluded that honey could be used as a substitute for glucose in electrolytes. However, reports of unprocessed honey contaminate with spores of clostridium botulinum, resulting in botulism, has tarnished honey's traditional role of feeding infants.

Honey is extremely viscous and contains enzymes like catalase. Besides its antibiotic properties, honey is able to absorb water from its surrounding, which is useful when honey is placed on wounds. Honey absorbs the fluid and protects the wound from further infection. Further studies need to be conducted to evaluate the healing properties of honey.

The therapeutic potential of uncontaminated pure honey is grossly under utilized. Honey is widely available in most countries, and although all the truths of honey's properties remain undiscovered, its time for conventional medicine to give honey the recognition it deserves.

The Benefits of Pollen

Bee pollen is derived from the anthers of flowering plants. It is a source of regenerative power for those in the quest of eternal youth. Early humans used pollen as food and medicine, knowing intuitively that bee pollen contains many nutrients.

The benefits of honey and pollen have been documented by several civilizations and religions. Britain was named by early Druid writers as, "The Isle of Honey". Welsh legends are full of references to honey and pollen. Pollen is mentioned in the Bible, the Talmud, and the Koran. Hippocrates, the father of western medicine, believed pollen ensured good health, helped defend against the problems of aging.

Palynology, the study of pollen, has found that pollen lasts forever. Grains of pollen millions of years old have been removed from archaeological digs. From these pollen grains, the flowers and plants of our ancient world can be identified.

Pollen can be a beneficial addition to any diet. It energizes, restores weakened nervous systems, and helps nervous disorders and emotional conditions in the young and old. It is a treatment for Alzheimer's disease.

The Benefits of Royal Jelly

Royal Jelly has been used since ancient times in China for successfully treating many conditions. Generally, royal jelly is taken for the same reasons for taking pollen. Royal jelly is a combination of honey and pollen that has been re-ingested by the worker bee that processes these substances, and with the addition of six more enzymes produces from the hypopharyngeal glands, located above the bee's eyes, creates royal jelly.

The Benefits of Propolis

Propolis is produced from tree sap collected from trees. Tree sap covers the buds of the tree in order to act as a sunscreen and protect the tender buds from the sun. The sap is brought back to the hive where it is used as a means of keeping the hive sterile and disease free. Propolis is an antibiotic, and is effective against bacteria, viruses, and fungi.

Propolis is used to treat oral infections and stomach ulcers. It is taken daily as a means of guarding against colds and influenza."

MEAD IN CELTIC SOCIETY AND THE BREHON LAWS

Honey and the products of bee, including beeswax, were highly

swarms, hives, nests, and honey: of which a few examples are given here. If a man found a swarm in the *faithche* [faha], or green surrounding and belonging to a house: one-fourth of the produce to the end of a year was due to the finder, the remaining three-fourths to the owner of the house. If he found them *in a tree* growing in a *faithche* or green: one-half produce for a year to the finder: the rest to the owner. If they were found in land which was not a green: one-third to the finder and two-thirds to the owner of the land. If found in waste land not belonging to an individual, but the common property of the tribe, bees and honey belonged to the finder, except one-ninth to the chief of the tribe. As the bees owned by an individual gathered their honey from the surrounding district, the owners of the four adjacent farms were entitled to a certain small proportion of the honey: and after the third year each was entitled to a swarm. If bees belonging to one man swarmed on the land of another, the produce was divided in certain proportions between the two. It is mentioned in "Bee-judgments" that a sheet was sometimes spread out that a swarm might alight and rest on it: as is often done now. At the time of gathering the honey the bees were smothered.

A mixture of milk and honey was sometimes drunk; a mixture of lard and honey was usual as a condiment. Honey was sometimes brought to table pure, and sometimes in the comb. Often at meals each person had placed before him on the table a little dish, sometimes of silver, filled with honey; and each morsel whether of meat, fish, or bread was dipped into it before being conveyed to the mouth. Strabon was very generally eaten in the same way with honey as a delicacy. Honey was used to baste meat while roasting, as well as salmon while broiling. In one of the old tales we read that Ailill and Maive, king and queen of Connaught, had a salmon broiled for the young chief, Fraech, which was basted with honey that had been "well made by their daughter, the Princess Findabair": from which again we learn that the highest persons sometimes employed themselves in preparing honey. It has been already stated that honey was the chief ingredient in mead; and it is probable that it was used in greater quantity in this way than in any other.



prized and used as a medium of exchange on a par with gold. The earliest archaeological evidence for the production of mead dates to around 7000 BC. Mead was the ritual drink in Celtic society. It would be difficult to overstate the importance of mead in Celtic society. Mead's influence was so great that the halls of Tara, where the High Kings of Ireland ruled, were called the house of the Mead Circle.

In Ireland, druids kept sacred commandments known as the Brehon Laws and 20 pages were dedicated to regulating bees, and an ancient Irish text suggests that residents from the county of Munster were likened to Bees, as many of their family crests suggest. Bees could be used as an augury: When a swarm of bees suddenly quits the hive it is a sign that death is hovering near the house.

The Brehon Law tract on "Bee-judgments," of which the printed Irish text occupies twenty pages, enters into much detail concerning the rights of the various parties concerned, to swarms, hives, nests, and honey: of which a few examples are given here. If a man found a swarm in the *faithche* [faha], or green surrounding and belonging to a house: one-fourth of the produce to the end of a year was due to the finder, the remaining three-fourths to the owner of the house. If he found them *in a tree* growing in a *faithche* or green: one-half produce for a year to the finder: the rest to the owner. If they were found in land which was not a green: one-third to the finder and two-thirds to the owner of the land. If found in waste land not belonging to an individual, but the common property of the tribe, bees and honey belonged to the finder, except one-ninth to the chief of the tribe. As the bees owned by an individual gathered their honey from the surrounding district, the owners of the four adjacent farms were entitled to a certain small proportion of the honey: and after the third year each was entitled to a swarm. If bees belonging to one man swarmed on the land of another, the produce was divided in certain proportions between the two.

Heather honey is widely accepted as the best for making mead because of the qualities imparted to the mead from heather. Apples and apple cider also make a fermented drink separately or in conjunction with mead. Which helps augment our understanding of the connectedness of bees and trees.

TREES AND BEES

In the Tao of Philosophy, Alan Watts asks us to not just see ourselves as skin sacks. Instead, he says, for every inside there is an outside which as much a part of us. This is the same for all entities, including both bees and trees. Trees planted near agricultural land offer many environmental benefits: they stabilize the soil, prevent erosion, enhance the land's capacity to store water, increase the water-retention capacity of land and improve



Similarly, many stone houses across the ancient world were designed in the shape of Beehives, including some notable Bronze Age huts in southwest Ireland, called Clochán's. Not surprisingly, Ireland's Beehive inspired huts recalls the thalamus tombs in ancient Mycenae.

http://www.andrewgough.co.uk/bee2_2.html



The following information was first published nearly 100 years ago in Sophia Morrison's collection, *Manx Fairy Tales*:

Bee Lore

WHEN the head of the house dies, the bees must be told of it, or else they will go away and never return. The way to tell them is to rap three times on each hive and say, 'Himself is dead' or 'The mistress is jus' gone,' as the case might be. A confused murmuring of recognition may be heard in the hives in reply. Some people convey the news by tying a bit of crape to their hives, but to rap is best. One woman told 'Yes yah! all me bees are dead and gone. Ye see, no one give a thought to tell them when me man died, for he went so sudden like that we war all knocked fud-y-cheilley (through others). Bees always sarve ye that way, they tell me, if they are not toul' of the death; they did me, anyway.'

water quality, all this in addition to creating oxygen. Trees are part of their “outsides.”

An extraordinary kinship of mutualism exists between bees and trees - bees pollinate trees thereby making it possible for them to reproduce, and bees harvest pollen and nectar from the blossoms of trees for making both honey and wax, plus trees provide the best habitat for bee hives.

Bees have different needs during the seasons, and as winter is ending, the colony is getting to the end of their resources. They need to get the most fuel back to the hive with the least energy expenditure. Trees are their best resources because the greatest quantity of blossoms is concentrated in the least distances in trees. Five to six trees provide more forage for bees than an acre of wildflower meadow. Bee nutrition has to contain amino acids that are not available in every type of pollen, plus they need steady pollen that blooms at different times within their 2 mile foraging radius. Single crops can therefore be problematic. Bees need diversity in their grove.

I have connected the trees and shrubs of the Celtic Druid Calendar to their blooming period and the nutritional needs of bees during the seasonal cycle. Most of the trees species are not fruit or crops which humans harvest, but all of them produce blossoms which bees pollinate and provide nutrition to bees. Bees need a diverse grove from which to harvest so that new blossoms are available as others fade. Modern mono-cropping are not the optimum environment for bees.

Freemasonry and Bees

<http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/symbolism/bees.html>

The bee and the hive have long been symbols of industry and regeneration, wisdom and obedience, with a place in Egyptian, Roman and Christian symbolism. The hive is often seen in Masonic illustrations of the 18th and 19th century and both Clovis and Napoleon adopted the bee as their symbol. Although "the bee was among the Egyptians the symbol of an obedient people, because, says Horapollon, 'of all insects, the bee alone had a king.'", its use in Freemasonry was secondary to any number of other symbols based on the working tools of a stone mason.

"Looking at the regulated labor of these insects when congregated in their hive, it is not surprising that a beehive should have been deemed an appropriate emblem of systematized industry. Freemasonry has therefore adopted the beehive as a symbol of industry, a virtue taught in the instructions, which says that a Master Mason 'works that he may receive wages, the better to support himself and family, and contribute to the relief of a worthy, distressed brother, his widow and orphans...' The ark has already been shown to have been an emblem common to Freemasonry and the Ancient Mysteries, as a symbol of regeneration - of the second birth from death to life. Now, in the Mysteries, a hive was a type of the ark. 'Hence,' says Faber (Origin of Pagan Idolatry, volume ii, page 133), 'both the diluvian priestess and the regenerated souls were called bees; hence, bees were feigned to be produced from the carcass of a cow, which also symbolized the ark; and hence, as the great father was esteemed an infernal god, honey was much used both in funeral rites and in the Mysteries. This extract is from the article on the bee in Evans' Animal Symbolism in Ecclesiastical Architecture.'"

"Honey is used to illustrate moral teachings. A man is exhorted to eat honey and the honey comb (Pr 24/13), but warned against surfeit (Pr 25/16.27). It was a simile for moral sweetness (Ezk 3/3), and for the excellence of the law (Ps 19/10), of pleasant words (Pr 16/24), and of the lips (Ca 4/11), and as a figure of love (Ca 5/1). The LXX adds to Pr 6/8 'Go to the bee, and learn how diligent she is, and what a noble work she produces; whose labour kings and private men use for their health. She is desired and honoured by all, and, though weak in strength, yet since she values wisdom she prevails.' This quote exists in the Arabic version, and is quoted by ancient writers." 3.

That the newly converted Clovis would use a bee as his symbol is not surprising. It aligned him with the Christian Roman Empire without alienating those of his subjects who still maintained non-trinitarian or pagan sympathies.

Napoleon was initiated, passed and raised into an

TREE SPECIES	CELTIC CALENDAR	BLOOMING MONTH	ROLE IN BEE NUTRITION
Birch	January	Early Spring	produces good propolis
Rowan	February	May-Jun	
Alder	Feb-Mar	Feb-Apr	
Willow	Feb-Mar	Feb-Apr	Major/Good
Ash	April	May-Jun	
Hawthorn	May	Apr-May	Fair
Oak	June	May-Jun	Minor
Holly	July	May-Jun	Wonderful

Hazel	August	Early Spring	Fair/Good
Apple	Aug-Sep	Apr-May	Very Good
Vine	September	Early Summer	
Ivy / Field	October	Sep-Oct	late blooming
Broom	November	Apr-Jun	
Blackthorn	Nov-Dec	Spring	Good
Elder	December	Jun-Jul	Excellent
Yew		Apr-Jun	problematic
Fir / Pine		May-Jun	low protein
Gorse		Autumn	Good Timing
Heather		Jul-Aur	Good
Poplar		Feb-Mar	produces good propolis
Spindle		May-Jun	
Honeysuckle		Winter	difficulties
Gooseberry		Apr-May	
Beech		Apr-May	produces good propolis

APPLE TREES AND BEES

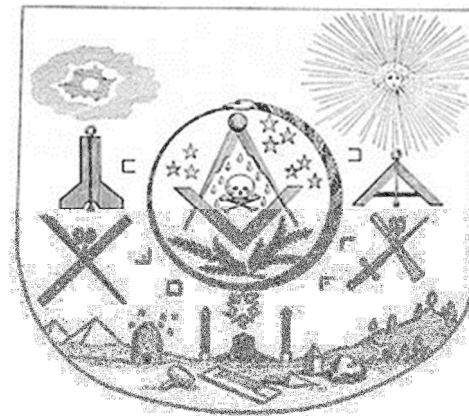
The healing properties of apple trees are extraordinary. One can only imagine the potency of combining bee products and apple products. <http://www.qualitybookslibrary.com/apples.htm>

“Researchers now tell us that grandma was right when she said an apple a day would keep the doctor away! The apple is now being called the all-round health food.

Nutritionists suggest that eating two or three apples a day can boost the body's protection against heart disease, thanks to the fruit's amazing ability to reduce blood pressure and lower dangerously high cholesterol levels. In fact, they say, the higher

Army Philadelphie Lodge of the Ecosais Primitive Rite of Narbonne between 1795 and 1798.4. Considering Napoleon's interest in things Egyptian, his reason for adoption of the bee symbol can only be a subject of supposition. When Napoleon had embroidered bees sewn on his robes it was not as a claim of legitimacy directed at any of his contemporaries; certainly not the aristocracy whose roots were not Merovingian nor sympathies masonic. Certainly not the freemason revolutionaries of the USA who were then embracing republicanism. The bee is a symbol of systematized industry, an obedient people and of rebirth. It is easier to accept that the Merovingians, freemasons and Napoleon found their way to the symbol by their own path than it is to create a convulated and undocumented connection between them as some conspiracy theorists have tried.

"The bee hive is an emblem of industry, and recommends the practice of that virtue of all created beings, from the highest seraph in heaven, to the lowest reptile of the dust. It teaches us, that as we came into the world rational and intelligent beings, so we should ever be industrious ones; never sitting down contented while our fellow-creatures around us are in want, when it is in our power to relieve them, without inconvenience to ourselves. When we take a survey of nature, we view man, in his infancy, more helpless and indigent than the brutal creation: he lies languishing for days, months, and years, totally incapable of providing sustenance for himself, of guarding against the attack of the wild beasts of the field, or sheltering himself from the inclemencies of the weather. It might have pleased the Great Creator of heaven and earth, to have made man independent of all other beings; but, as dependence is one of the strongest bonds of society, mankind were made dependent on each other for protection and security, as they thereby enjoy better opportunities of fulfilling the duties of reciprocal love and friendship. Thus was man formed for social and active life, the noblest part of the work of God; and he that will so demean himself, as not to be endeavouring to add to the common stock of knowledge and understanding, may be deemed a drone in the hive of nature, a useless member of society, and unworthy of our protection as masons.



the cholesterol, the greater the benefits will be if you increase your consumption of apples.

Apples are known for many potent healing powers and they contain chemicals scientists believe may fight certain types of cancer. The reason appears to be that apples are loaded with natural acids that have successfully blocked cancer formation in laboratory studies.

Remember that to get the best health benefit, you have to eat the whole thing, skin and all. The skin contains the high level of pectin fiber, which seems to be the basis for the fruit's amazing power to lower cholesterol or blood pressure, balance blood sugar content and fight off cancer.

Apples are an excellent food source for diabetics and others who need to control blood sugar levels. They rank high among foods that best control blood sugar. Even though the apple is a rich source of natural sugar, something about its content does not cause a rapid, often dangerous rise in blood sugar. also, it prevents the body from pumping out too much insulin which, in turn, helps bring down blood cholesterol and blood pressure.

Whole apples (as opposed to just the juice) are great for dieters. They suppress appetite without robbing the body of necessary nutrients. The rise in blood glucose levels that occurs when you eat an apple makes you feel fuller.

Apple juice also helps keep you healthy and helps the healing process - especially if you're suffering from colds or viruses. People who eat apples regularly have far fewer colds and upper respiratory problems. And researchers have noted that apple eaters also suffered far fewer stress-related illnesses.

The apple may also be the only healing food capable of taking care of two opposite complaints at the same time - constipation and diarrhea.

First apples or applesauce have been used for centuries to help people get back on a regular diet after suffering bouts of diarrhea. The pectin in the apple fiber apparently is the healing factor, which explains why it is included in one of the popular over-the-counter diarrhea remedies. Also, that same fiber is what dietitians have been telling us for decades is necessary to keep us regular and to prevent constipation.

Finally, apples are not only a super healing food, but, as nature's original toothbrushes, they may even prevent cavities, a fact that many of our ancestors probably learned through trial and error, but that modern day researchers have confirmed in the laboratory.



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3giFDIRZigE&feature=player_embedded

Follow this link to view a trailer on the problem of Colony Collapse Disorder and the Bee Crisis affecting the pollination of our food crops.

Link to help the Bees:

https://secure.avaaz.org/en/save_the_bee...442&v=8117

Quietly, **billions of bees are being killed off** across the country threatening our crops and food. But **a ban of one group of pesticides could save bees from extinction.**

Four European countries have begun banning the poisons and bee populations are recovering. But chemical companies are lobbying hard to keep all killer pesticides on the market. **A global outcry now for a ban in the US and EU, where debate is raging, could provoke a total ban and a ripple effect around the world.**



Possible Causes of Colony Collapse Disorder (shortened version)

Theories Behind the Sudden Disappearance of

One group of scientists doing a recent study found that apples actually helped clean teeth among a control group of children and therefore significantly cut down on the risk of tooth decay.“

Understanding healing herbs is only part of the story, Druidry puts you back in communication with all plants and the saying “you are what you eat” takes on a whole new meaning. So much of learning herbal remedies has to do with hands on experience that it is not something that can be mastered strictly through book learning.

Apple blossoms are one of the early spring nectar sources for bees, and therefore one of the most important. The time when a hive is most vulnerable is coming from late winter and early spring. Their food resources are exhausted over the winter so when the apple blossoms (as well as maple and willow, among others) the hive comes alive again.

Trees produce more blossoms in a denser array than field crops. The bees do not have to expend as much valuable energy to bring a greater harvest of nectar back to the hive. Trees also provide the best location for the hive. The synergy is complete because the apple could not produce fruit if the bee did not cross pollinate the blossoms.

Modern Druidry wants to view the world holistically and therefore needs to extend their understanding of plants, herbs, and trees to the entirety of the environment. The connection did not escape our Druidic ancestors. The transformation of nectar into honey is alchemy.

BEES, TREES AND DRUIDS - Ask the Wild Bee what the Druids knew.

From these ancient references, I believe we need to infer the interconnectedness existing between bees, trees and ancient Druids. Various patterns observed in a bee’s flight have demonstrated a keen sensitivity to the position of the sun, and communication through movement to demonstrate the location of a newly found source of food for the hive. Honey and honeycomb were treasured and utilized in Ireland’s Druid communities, the bee was attributed by them both a solar and spiritual significance, seen as a magical creature linking the sky to the earth. Some even see the passage tombs as beehive-like structures. Bees have long been considered divine messengers from the faerie world.

When we discuss druids and their consociation with trees, we need to include bees as part of the “outside” that is integral with our being and the being of trees. Because we, as a society,

Honeybee Hives By [Debbie Hadley](http://insects.about.com/od/antsbeeswasps/tp/CausesofCCD.htm)
<http://insects.about.com/od/antsbeeswasps/tp/CausesofCCD.htm>

In the fall of 2006, beekeepers in North America began reporting the disappearances of entire colonies of bees, seemingly overnight. In the U.S. alone, thousands of bee colonies were lost to [Colony Collapse Disorder](#). Theories about the causes of Colony Collapse Disorder, or CCD, emerged almost as quickly as the bees disappeared. No single cause or definitive answer has yet been identified. Most researchers expect the answer to lie in a combination of contributing factors. Here are some possible causes of Colony Collapse Disorder.

Malnutrition

Wild honeybees forage on the diversity of flowers in their habitat, enjoying a variety of pollen and nectar sources. Honeybees used commercially limit their foraging to specific crops, such as almonds, blueberries, or cherries. Colonies kept by hobbyist beekeepers may fare no better, as suburban and urban neighborhoods offer limited plant diversity. Honeybees fed on single crops, or limited varieties of plants, may suffer nutritional deficiencies that stress their immune systems.

Pesticides

Any disappearance of an insect species would implicate pesticide use as a potential cause, and CCD is no exception. Beekeepers are particularly concerned about a possible connection between Colony Collapse Disorder and neonicotinoids, or nicotine-based pesticides. One such pesticide, imidacloprid, is known to affect insects in ways similar to the symptoms of CCD.

Genetically Modified Crops

Another suspect in the case is the pollen of genetically modified crops, specifically corn altered to produce Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) toxin. Most researchers agree that exposure to Bt pollen alone is not a likely cause of Colony Collapse Disorder. Not all hives foraging on Bt pollen succumbed to CCD, and some CCD-impacted colonies never foraged near genetically modified crops. However, a possible link may exist between Bt and disappearing colonies when those bees had compromised health for other reasons. German researchers note a possible correlation between exposure to Bt pollen and compromised immunity to the fungus *Nosema*.

Migratory Beekeeping

Commercial beekeepers rent their hives to

have ignored this interdependence, now, a condition known as Colony Collapse Disorder is causing bee populations to plummet, which means these foods are also at risk. In the United States alone, more than 25 percent of the managed honey bee population has disappeared since 1990.

Some of the unsustainable commercial bee keeping practices include taking too much away from the bee colonies, including not only honey but also pollen, propolis, royal jelly, bees wax, and bee venom (used to treat arthritis and rheumatism, as well as allergies). When the bee keepers take away too much of these products, they "feed" them with sugar water, which does not have the same nutritional values as honey and pollen which include natural immunities, minerals, vitamins, protein and fat. Propolis is also have immunities and is used by the hive as protection. Royal jelly is the only food consumed by the queen. And, finally, the bees wax not only holds the honey and larva, but also helps insulate the hive. In addition to all this, commercial bee keepers also will move the hives - packing them onto 18 wheel trucks and shipping them from Florida to Washington for the apple crop and then to California for the almond crop.

Bees are the "Canary in the Mine" - a warning about the unsustainable practices that are endangering the environment in which we live. Many bee colonies have "collapsed" in a mysterious disorder called Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). But natural or organic bee keepers have not experienced these problems. There is an old saying: "Ask the wild bee what the Druid's knew" - one could add to that "Ask the captive bees what knowledge we have lost!"

In ancient times, Druid protected groves and all that they contained, like beehives, not just trees. Groves are integrated living entities, not separate pieces. We should learn from the Golden Triad: Druids, Bee and Trees that our existence is dependent on nurturing our environment of which we are an integral part.

farmers, earning more from pollination services than they could ever make from honey production alone. Hives are stacked on the back of tractor trailers, covered, and driven thousands of miles. For honeybees, orientation to their hive is vital to life, and being relocated every few months must be stressful. Additionally, moving hives around the country may spread diseases and pathogens as honeybees intermingle in the fields.

Beekeeping Practices

Studies of how beekeepers manage their bees may determine trends that lead up to the disappearance of colonies. How and what bees are fed would certainly impact their health directly. Splitting or combining hives, applying chemical miticides, or administering antibiotics are all practices worthy of study.

Toxins in the Environment

Honeybee exposure to toxins in the environment warrants research as well, and some suspect chemicals as a cause of Colony Collapse Disorder. Water sources may be treated to control other insects, or contain chemical residues from runoff. Foraging bees might be impacted by household or industrial chemicals, through contact or inhalation.

Climate Change

Rising global temperatures cause a chain reaction through the ecosystem. Erratic weather patterns lead to unusually warm winters, drought, and floods, all of which affect flowering plants. Plants may blossom early, before honeybees can fly, or may not produce flowers at all, limiting nectar and pollen supplies.

