



Bees Abroad

NEPAL



22 November – 6 December 2009

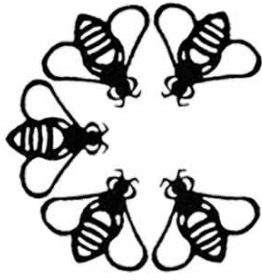
**A Bees Abroad holiday
to see the age-old honey hunting tradition,
trek through spectacular scenery
and be welcomed by the Gurung people**

*Kathmandu, Pokhara, trekking in the foothills of
the Annapurna range of the Himalayas*

Honey hunting on the bee cliffs

Chitwan National Park

Elephant safaris, white rhino, fascinating wildlife



Bees Abroad

*Supporting beekeeping projects
in developing countries*

Bees Abroad offers training and technical support for income generation from beekeeping and develop organisational, marketing and business skills and provide the funding needed to carry this out.

Bees Abroad takes care to ensure its projects are sustainable and not dependent on constant external input. This is done by supporting community group initiatives, setting up village-based field extension services, running training courses for beekeeping trainers and financing local trainers' wages.

Bees Abroad projects are designed to become self-financing after a defined time period. Its first two projects now employ over 30 beekeepers trainers and involve many more beekeepers who are self-employed farmers.

How does Bees Abroad work?

- ◆ Bees Abroad normally works with grass roots organisations that are strongly community based.
- ◆ Bees Abroad promotes sustainable and affordable beekeeping techniques using appropriate technology and indigenous bees. Once people learn the skill of beekeeping, can make their equipment from affordable local materials and understand how they can improve their income and their environment, they start up or improve their own bee farms very successfully.

Developing community groups and business skills

- ◆ Bees Abroad projects are designed to help foster business and organisational skills in community groups.
- ◆ Beekeeping can be used as the hook on which to hang many other ideas. Nutrition, health, business development and environmental protection are all part of our beekeeping training programme.
- ◆ The community group structure developed by beekeeping projects can be encouraged to enhance people's 'voice', improve their rights and influence government policy.

Where does Bees Abroad work?

Bees Abroad currently funds projects in Malawi, Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria. It is associated with a similar project in Romania. Several projects have been successfully completed in Nepal and Cameroon.

Come and join us

A small annual subscription brings you the newsletter updating you on the work of Bees Abroad and the knowledge that you are helping to support those who are less fortunate than yourself.

We could do even more with your help!

For further details, contact:

Veronica Brown
Bees Abroad Administrator
PO Box 2058
Bristol BS35 9AF
info@beesabroad.org.uk
www.beesabroad.org.uk

Honey Hunting – a Unique Experience in Nepal

Bees Abroad invites you to join a unique adventure to Nepal.

- ◆ Wonder at the nests of the giant honey bees hanging from cliff overhangs and watch as the fearless honey hunters descend ladders made from split bamboo to cut off the combs to harvest the honey.
- ◆ See log hives and wall hives which are home for colonies of the eastern honey bee, *Apis cerana*, as you trek through the stunning scenery of the Himalayan foothills.
- ◆ Be welcomed by the friendly Nepalese people and learn about them and their customs.
- ◆ Visit the cliffs that were climbed by Bees Abroad Patron, Jimmy Doherty, for his film 'Jimmy and the Wild Honey Hunters' shown recently on BBC television. Meet those who have been honey hunting for generations in this part of the Himalayan foothills.

Honey Hunting

The ancient tradition of honey hunting is still practised in Nepal. Colonies of *Apis laboriosa*, one of the two races of giant honey bee, build their single combs under cliff overhangs. The bees migrate with the seasons and the two honey harvests are linked with this behaviour. There are two traditional hunting seasons, one in November and the other in March.

To gather the honey, the honey hunters light a smoky fire at the base of the cliff in order to drive the bees off the comb onto the rock face.

The hunter himself then descends a bamboo ladder which has been suspended from the top of the cliff. He has a knife on the end of a bamboo pole and uses this to cut off the comb.

First the bottom (brood) area is detached and lowered to the ground. Then the honey comb is removed, caught in a basket and lowered to other members of the team, waiting below.

The hunters gather both honey and wax from the colonies. During the first Bees Abroad Honey Hunting in Nepal holiday in 1996, the group was concerned to learn that the number of colonies returning to the bee cliff was declining. We were told that all the colonies were harvested during each honey hunting event.

We suggested that the honey hunters might consider taking the combs only from the largest and smallest colonies, in the same way that skeppist beekeepers in the UK saved the medium-sized colonies to overwinter and build up the following spring. They followed our advice and we had reports that the number of colonies on the cliffs was increasing.

What is very encouraging is to hear Jimmy Doherty say that they are still leaving some of the colonies on the cliff, 12 years later. We will see how many colonies have returned this autumn.



Apis laboriosa



Apis laboriosa colonies



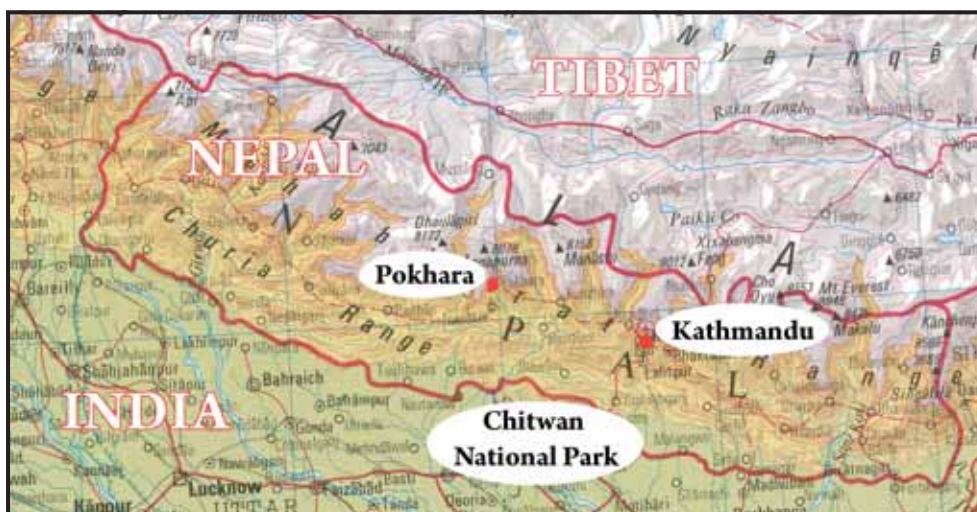
Cutting the brood away



The brood comb



Filtering the wax

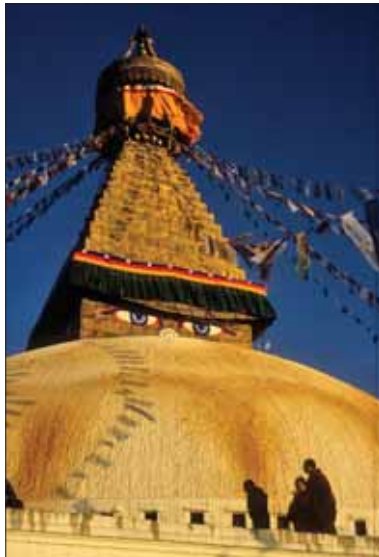




Durbar Square, Kathmandu



Local transport



Boudhanath temple



The Kathmandu Beekeeping Shop

Kathmandu

Our trip will start and finish in Kathmandu, with an opportunity to explore this fascinating city, including the temple of Swayambunath. Other optional visits may include Boudhanath temple, the Royal Botanical Gardens at Godavari and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), nearby. From Kathmandu, we transfer to Pokhara by road.

Pokhara

From Pokhara, we begin our trek in the Annapurna region of the Himalayas. We will be walking at a leisurely pace for around 5–6 hours per day. Porters will carry all our camping gear, food and supplies. We will use tents that sleep two, and sleeping bags and foam mattress pads will be supplied. All our water will be boiled and the food will be varied and excellently prepared.

As we travel through the wonderful countryside, we will meet the local people and be welcomed to their villages, with dancing and entertainment by the local bands. The itinerary will include a visit to the Bee Cliff where we hope to see the honey hunting. It must be remembered, however, that the number of colonies on the bee cliff and the optimum time for cutting the combs varies from year to year. The weather should be good, with clear blue skies.

Royal Chitwan National Park

Accommodation on this three-day trip will be in lodges which sleep two. We will have the chance to take an elephant safari into the jungle, across the river. We are almost certain to get close to Asian rhinoceros. Obviously, no guarantees can be given, but there is abundant wild life in the area. According to the time of year, the programme may include a visit to an elephant breeding centre. Guided nature/bird watching walks can usually be arranged.

Locally, there are bee trees where colonies of *Apis dorsata*, the other race of giant honey bee, return each year and build their combs, hanging from the branches some 50 feet up. Hopefully there will be some colonies in residence during our visit.

The Itinerary

The trip will start and finish in Kathmandu. Participants are responsible for arranging their flights to and from Nepal.

The actual itinerary will be confirmed nearer the date as this will depend on where the bees are and where the honey hunting may be taking place.

The cost includes all accommodation, transport and meals.

Any extra tours in Kathmandu or a flight around Everest will be at an additional cost. Insurance is not included.

The price excludes air fare, a visa to enter Nepal and travel insurance. Single accommodation is available at a small additional cost.

Himalayan EnvPro Adventures

Our trek is organised by Himalayan EnvPro Adventures, a trekking organisation formed by a group of like-minded ex-Gurkha officers. They are committed to help villagers improve their environment and living standards. During the trek, we will visit schools and villages where there will be an opportunity to support the communities through small gifts, such as notebooks and pens.



Bees Abroad and Nepal

Bees Abroad is a UK-based charity (No 1108464) committed to supporting specific beekeeping projects in developing countries.

Further details of Bees Abroad and membership are available from Veronica Brown, PO Box 2058, Bristol BS35 9AF.

One of the first projects undertaken by Bees Abroad was in the Gachok area of Nepal and it arose out of the first Honey Hunting trip in March 1996. The Kwe Danda Bee Project (now known as Beenpro) aims to encourage beekeeping in the villages, using the native bee, *Apis cerana*. Major Ramprasad Gurung, who runs Himalayan Envpro Adventures, played a major part in establishing and supporting this project.

Bees are traditionally kept in wall hives or log hives, which we will see during the trek. Training courses are being held for existing and potential beekeepers in the Pokhara region. Beekeepers are being shown how to improve the quality of their honey harvest and methods of using beeswax for candles and salves.

Bees Abroad has also supported the Maiti project, based at a hostel in Jhapa district, eastern Nepal, which provides sanctuary and help to women and girls who have been rescued after being trafficked into India. The residents have been instructed how to make their own bee hives out of local materials and have been taught to keep bees and to harvest honey and wax which they can sell to generate income for the hostel. The bees pollinate fruit and other food crops grown by the women.

Bees Abroad has undertaken a similar project in Nakhu Jail in Kathmandu. Here prisoners have learnt beekeeping skills which they can use to generate income upon their release.

This holiday is designed to give you a unique experience of Nepal, its people and its traditions. Any surplus from this trip will be used by Bees Abroad to support these and other projects in developing countries.



Village welcome



Wall hive for *Apis cerana*



Log hive for *Apis cerana*



Bee tree at Chitwan with colonies of *Apis dorsata*



Elephant safari



Major Ramprasad Gurung



Endangered white rhino at Chitwan



Sunset over Ghale Kharka

Bees Abroad – A Unique Adventure in Nepal

Thank you for your interest in our 16-day trip to see Honey Hunting in Nepal.

To reserve a place, please return the booking form overleaf, together with a deposit of £150 per person (Cheques payable to BEES ABROAD).

The trip requires a minimum of 6 and has a maximum of 12 persons. Applications will be taken in strict order of receipt.

Price: £1350

(Please note, the price does **not** include international flights. Single accommodation is available on payment of a supplement of £200)

The price includes:

- ◆ All accommodation (on a twin-share basis)
- ◆ All meals
- ◆ All road transport
- ◆ All internal flights
- ◆ Trekking permit
- ◆ Trekker's Information Management System (TIMS) permit
- ◆ A donation to Bees Abroad

The price does not include:

- ◆ Travel insurance
- ◆ Nepal entry Visa
- ◆ International and domestic airport taxes
- ◆ Personal items such as laundry, alcoholic and other drinks, etc
- ◆ Any additional trips or meals during free time

Please note

You are responsible for arranging your own insurance to cover the trip, including cancellation/curtailment, loss of baggage/money, personal accident, etc.

Cancellation by you

If you wish to cancel your travel arrangements for any reason, we must be notified in writing. The cancellation will take effect from the day we receive written confirmation from you. In the event of cancellation by you, we will retain your deposit and you will also be liable for any resulting cancellation charges levied on us by the hotel, car-hire company or other supplier involved. Charge for cancellation 30–59 days prior to departure will be 50%. Charge for cancellation less than 30 days prior to departure is 100%.

Further Information

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Claire Waring, Stoneycroft, Back Lane, Little Addington, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 4AX, UK (01933 650297; claire@backlane.demon.co.uk).



Bees Abroad – A Unique Adventure in Nepal

22 November–6 December 2009

Booking Form

Please complete and return this form, together with the non-refundable deposit (£150 per person) to:
Veronica Brown, PO Box 2058, Bristol BS35 9AF.

Please book the following on my behalf:

Surname: Initials: Title:

Address:

.

Telephone:

e-mail:

Details of each person in your party:

Surname	First name	Other name(s)	Passport Number	Special dietary requirements	Single supplement

Details of your travel insurance (it is advisable to take a copy of your policy documents with you):

Insurance company:

Policy Number: Insurance Emergency Telephone No:

Emergency contact in the UK:

Name: Relationship:

Telephone (Private):

Telephone (Business):

Remittance:

I enclose a cheque, payable to **Bees Abroad (Trading) Ltd**, for £. as a deposit for those listed above.
 I understand that the balance is due by **1 October 2009**.

Signed:

Date:

Disclaimer: By signing this form, travellers with Bees Abroad should be aware and acknowledge that Bees Abroad (Trading) Ltd is NOT a travel agent and is acting solely as intermediary on your behalf with the tour operator and cannot be held liable for any changes to, or deficiencies in, the itinerary, nor any accident or injury arising during the course of the journey. Travellers should ensure that they have adequate travel insurance cover (including cancellation).

The details given on this form will be kept confidential. They are intended to ensure your safety. One copy will be kept in the UK, another by the tour leader in case of any emergency. Please inform us if you are aware of any specific pre-existing medical condition that may give rise to a medical emergency whilst travelling with us.