



Editor's Annual report for 2011.

The magazine enters 2012 in a stronger position than 2011. A redesign is the most noticeable change but there has also been concentrated effort to focus on content, to widen the approach and attempt to involve more people.

The new design has been welcomed by most although some readers would like me to change the typeface to a sans serif font and increase the point size. I am open to change although I don't think there is enough support to re-visit this. However, I invite emails and letters aimed at persuading me otherwise.

Former editor Nigel Hurst did a great job in progressing the magazine during his five years in charge and I, along with the SBA, also owe him a debt of gratitude for not only introducing more colour and never shrinking from confronting issues head on, but also for his timely advice and help in seeing me through my first year as editor.

Also, my thanks go to Alan Riach for continually producing thought provoking, humorous, and informative copy in his role as Beemaster and also elsewhere within the pages of the magazine; his Christmas and New year quizzes were well received and he has been a font of knowledge throughout 2011.

The Beemaster was part of a few new regular features which included Wildlife and Nature, an attempt to broaden the editorial content. I was very glad to receive the help of Scotsman writer Peter Ranscombe who agreed to write 12 columns, free of charge. It is fair to say some of Peter's articles contained a fair bit about birds, but, after a few months I think, by writing about other animals and plants, the column was a good addition to the magazine. I know it had its critics, but on the whole I think it was a success and I will endeavour to continue it in some way. However, it is very difficult to find writers of Peter's calibre free of charge.

Eric McArthur, a former editor, has also been persuaded to write a regular monthly column and there is no doubting his beekeeping expertise, as well as his appetite for stirring up controversy.

I don't wish this to sound like an Oscar acceptance speech, but others who have provided good counsel have been John Durkacz, Ian Craig, Phil Moss, Una Robertson and, of course, our very hardworking President Phil McAnespie. Indeed, I have been heartened by the support of the whole of the SBA exec committee who very clearly have the magazine, and the Association, at heart.

Myself and Gavin Ramsay, who runs the SBA forum, have discussed the idea of sharing content in some way and I hope I can put this on a firmer footing this year because there certainly is plenty of good advice on the forum.

Finally, I cannot finish without thanking Iain Campbell at Rannoch Press for working so hard to help me produce the magazine which would be a lot poorer without his efforts and advice. I think the magazine works out at about £1.40 an issue, which, in my view, remains extremely good value.--

**Nigel Southworth**  
**Editor**