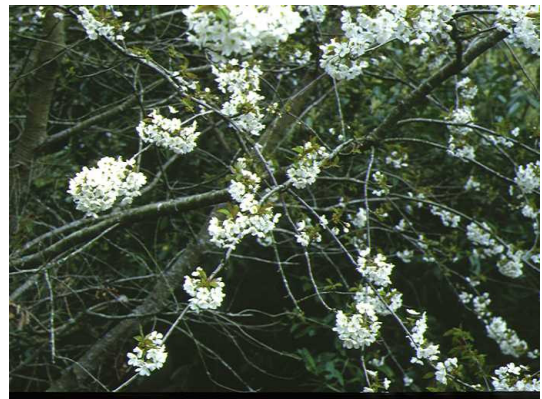


## Beekeeping in Scotland - No 2 - Forage

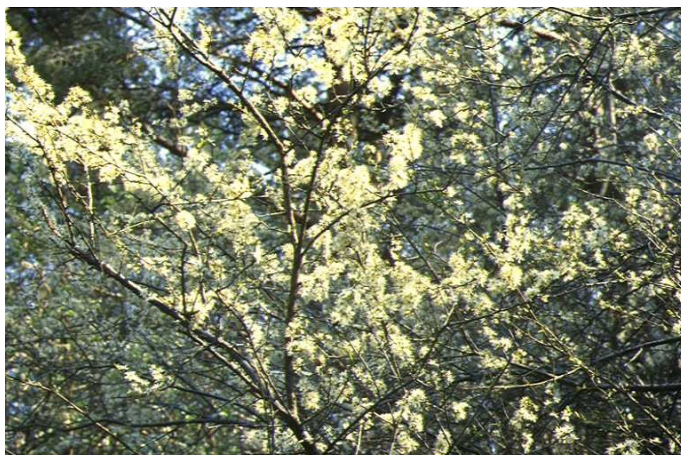
Much of the land in Scotland - particularly in the North and West, and on the higher ground - is predominantly moorland and rough pasture. This land sustains mainly sheep and hill cattle, deer, and forestry. The most fertile and productive arable land is concentrated around the East coast, and through the central lowlands between the Forth and Clyde valleys. However this is a very generalised picture, and there are excellent areas for beekeeping throughout most of Scotland. Even much of the less productive moorland can, with some intervention by careful beekeeping, sustain productive colonies of bees and provide a worthwhile crop of honey. Traditionally some of the principal (but not the only!) honey-producing plants in Scotland are as follows:



Sycamore



Wild Cherry



Blackthorn



Lime



Clover



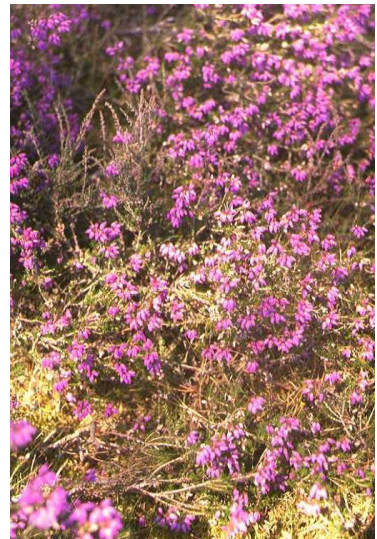
Blackberry



Willowherb



Bell Heather





Ling Heather



A number of agricultural crops are important in the areas where they are grown; for example:



Oilseed Rape



Raspberry

In addition, other plant species, though not important as a source of nectar, are important pollen sources and therefore commercially important to the beekeeper:



Willow



Gorse



Broom



Apple



Dandelion

There are of course a host of other plants - wild, garden and agricultural/commercial - which are important as sources of pollen and nectar, many of which in places are economically important to the beekeeper. At least, their combined contributions, in varying proportions from place to place and from year to year, result in a range of blossom honeys which in variety, quality and flavour are second to none and prized throughout the world.

The variable nature of the Scottish weather, and the resulting variability of the Scottish honey crop, makes a regular and uniform supply of product, as demanded by the wholesale food industry, an almost impossible goal. However most Scottish beekeepers argue that the quality of the honey they produce is such that the wholesale food industry would never do it justice. As a result, much of the best quality 'home grown' product is sold through specialist food outlets, and directly by the beekeepers themselves, to discerning customers who demand the finest product.