



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

April 2014

www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

March Meeting – Swarm Control

There was a good audience for our usual spring reminder about how to reduce the risk of bees swarming – very timely since this is likely to begin early this year. Chris Branch and Eric Beaumont explained the chain of events that cause bees to swarm, how to recognise the signs of preparation, and some steps you can take



to avoid this happening. Left, Eric explains the steps in carrying out an artificial swarm.

Follow Eric's tips and you may never need to use the swarm collection method being demonstrated by beginners class graduate Pam Jackson on the right. As we all know, swarms don't always land at a convenient height for easy recovery and this device is one way to collect a swarm from a high branch.



The key to swarm control is regular inspection and being prepared to act promptly when queen cells are discovered. Don't despair if your bees do swarm, however – even experienced beekeepers can get caught out! ☘

Beginners Classes

The Beginners Beekeeping class, led by Chris Branch, has now concluded. Seven students took part and we hope to see them at Divisional Meetings over the summer. ☘



Chair's Corner

Congratulations to all those who completed the Beginners' Beekeeping classes, you should have the basic knowledge to start keeping bees and there is plenty more to learn from this summer's meetings. You never stop learning about bees and congratulations are also due to Chris Branch who has passed the Microscopy section of the BBKA examinations. Any members interested in taking these exams can speak to me or Chris, or to Ken Barker for advice. ☘

Ted Gradosielski

Monthly Meeting - Thursday 17th April

This month's meeting will be held at the Chingford Horticultural Hall, Larkshall Road, Chingford E4 6NH at 7.30 pm.

Our newly-appointed Regional Bee Inspector **Julian Parker** will talk about '**Diseases and Pests – Threats and Mitigation**' as a precursor to 'Healthy Hive Month' in May.

This is the last indoor meeting until October – please note that future monthly meetings will be on the third Sunday of each month at outdoor sites, details will be provided in the Newsletter and by email. ☘

Appeal for help – tea-making

As you will know, tea and coffee at our monthly meetings is ably provided by Don McHale. Poor Don has a bad back at the moment, and we are looking for a stand-in while he recovers – could anyone offer to help? The urn, teabags and coffee are provided, just add hot water! If you might be able to help please contact Robin Harman ☘

Free Film Screening

Wanstead & Woodford Friends of the Earth are holding a screening of 'More than Honey' at 19.00 on 25th April at Wanstead Library, E11 2RQ. This is in the context of a Bee Cause project entitled 'Seeds for Snaresbrook'. This project involves working with the local community to plant up all the tree pits in Snaresbrook Ward with wildflower seeds to create a healthy environment for bees and other pollinators. ☘

Tips from the Bee Man

Drones were seen flying before the end of March, so swarms can be expected from the third week in April – be prepared to take swarm control measures as soon as you see sealed queen cells. Recent weather has encouraged rapid growth and in spite of good forage some smaller colonies may struggle to keep up so check for sufficient stores and feed if necessary. ☘

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