



# Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

August 2016

[www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk](http://www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk)

## July meeting and social event

Healthy bees and starvation are the main risks to the survival of an overwintering colony of bees, and the beekeeper has the power to improve those chances by treating for varroa in late summer and ensuring the colony has adequate stores for winter. On a glorious July

day at Wanstead forty beekeepers met to discuss the first of these issues: the parasitic mite *varroa destructor*.

An overview of varroa since its arrival into the UK in 1992 and its damage to bees naturally led to an inventory of treatments which enable beekeepers to reduce the varroa population to levels at which the colony will not collapse. The chemicals in Bayvarol and Apistan were initially effective; resistance was inevitable but may be overcome by their intermittent use. The 'soft' chemicals based on organic products such as thymol, camphor, eucalyptus and formic acid - Apiguard, ApilifVar, Thymovar and MAQS - were demonstrated. The option of doing no treatment was discussed: the survival of the fittest colonies is an admirable long-term goal provided short-term losses are accepted. The Varrox sublimator of Apibioxal (oxalic acid) was on display and its value emphasised: research indicates that it is the most effective tool at the beekeeper's disposal and causes least disruption to the bees.

The product reserved for last? Cake, and plenty of it, thanks to the baking skills of those attending. A tortilla turned up with numerous picnic pieces, and essential tea and sandwiches gave all of us options for effective treatment. ☘

## Hitching a ride

The owner of this bicycle got a shock when he returned to find a swarm of bees had taken up residence! He was taking part in a rugby tournament and had parked his bike next to the pitch – around 200 people were playing or watching the matches, and there was considerable interest as the bees were carefully shaken into a nuc box. The owner was later able to ride home without any extra passengers. ☘

Photo credit: Peter Dalby



## The Honey Show 2016

Our own honey show will be on **9<sup>th</sup> October** this year at Copped Hall near Epping. We'll be sharing the date with the annual Apple Day, so we expect a high volume of people visiting the show. There will be opportunities to sell honey but the main object of the day is to have as many exhibits as possible – if you are extracting honey now, please think about preparing a few jars for the show. Don't forget that there are also classes for frames, mead, wax, candles, photographs and cakes and some are only open to novices, so there really is something for everyone. Check the website for the schedule of classes. ☘

## Monthly Meeting – Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August

**Feeding for Winter** – when, why and how much? These and other answers will be given on 20<sup>th</sup> August at **Wanstead Apiary**, rear of **24 Langley Drive, E11** at **2.30 pm**. Join us to discuss the merits of honey and sugar syrup, preventing overfeeding and robbing, and how to avoid making your kitchen sticky. ☘

## Exam Success

Congratulations to Christine Poerschke who has passed her Basic Assessment with credit. She is the first of many members taking the Assessment this year. ☘

## Winter feed

Apikel invert syrup will be available for collection imminently and those beekeepers who have ordered stock will be contacted directly with further instructions. This must be paid for on collection – cash or cheque only, please. ☘

## Ted Hooper Books

There are still some copies of **The Beginners Bee Book** at £6 and **The Bee Friendly Garden** at £9, both substantial discounts on the published price. Bring your money to the August meeting if you'd like one. ☘

## Nail gun for sale

A Tacwise 35 nail gun, ideal for making up frames. Only used a few times - £80 new but will accept £40. Please contact Richard Smith on [richardsmithmsci@gmail.com](mailto:richardsmithmsci@gmail.com) ☘

## Divisional Extractor

If you need to borrow the extractor between 23 August and 13 September, please contact John Dutney (treasurer@eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk) – Mark Chambers will be resuming custody of it after these dates. ☘

## Tips from the Bee Man

If you've been fortunate enough to get a honey crop, remove it now before you begin varroa treatment. Many varroa treatments are temperature-sensitive and so need to be carried out before autumn. Look out for wasp nests near your colonies, and consider reducing the hive entrance to make it easier for the bees to guard. ☘

## Essex Honey Show

The Essex Honey Show will be held at Barleylands on **10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> September** – the Schedule and entry forms are available on [www.ebka.org/whats-on/essex-honey-show/](http://www.ebka.org/whats-on/essex-honey-show/) There are classes for all levels, so why not have a go?

Essex Division is looking for volunteers to help man the stalls and talk to the public about the joys of beekeeping. All levels of experience are needed as the more knowledgeable helpers can assist with explaining to the public what they see in the Observation hives. All members can help with the candle rolling, the central exhibition display and honey sales.

Volunteers will need to arrive before 9.30am and will be given a free Show Pass. All helpers will be given a two course lunch with tea, coffee, cold drinks and biscuits available throughout the day. There will also be a break time for helpers to look around the Show.

If you think you could help, please contact Richard Alabone on 01245 259288. ☘

## Chair's Corner



A Committee meeting can be an onerous and dreary affair but I am pleased to report that your Committee has other ideas: a lively and humorous group gather round Robin Harman's dining table every three months to discuss the quality of biscuits on offer, polish his small but noisy dog, process the work of the association, gossip, and dance late into the afternoon.

The result of these shenanigans is that our monthly meetings run (almost) on time and much good work is achieved. Next time you bump into a Committee member, please join me in giving thanks for such dedication to the craft of beekeeping.

**Eric Beaumont** ☘

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