



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

July 2011

www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Willow Cottage Meeting

The rain stayed away long enough at Willow Cottage for Clive Cohen to give an entertaining and illuminating talk on swarming. Having kept bees in Maida Vale above his Rootes car dealership in the 1960s, Clive has significant experience of beekeeping, and today keeps bees in Mill Hill.



Photos by Kevin Cook

The reasons for swarming were explained, together with suggestions for anticipating bees' intentions: watch the entrance for drones. Clive's colonies are not inspected unless he sees drones appearing. This reduction in colony disturbance was an example of Clive's philosophy of a gentle interaction and 'reading' of the natural world, and as a founder member of the London Wildlife Trust, his commitment to this was clear. The taking of swarms in buildings was one of Clive's specialities, and he showed a box designed to be fixed over a feral colony entrance, through which the bees could exit the wall cavity, but not re-enter.

This is successfully used to collect feral colonies which would otherwise be destroyed, and Clive's services were employed by his local Council to the benefit of bee, beekeeper, and client.

Clive left us with several whimsical ideas, one of which was that bees have evolved to expect to be collected, and hang where it is most convenient for the beekeeper! This alternative view was much appreciated, and after questions from the audience, conversation continued over tea in the garden of this idyllic rural setting. ✂



Thanks to Christine Williams, seen here with Helen, for allowing us to use the beautiful grounds of Willow Cottage once again. ✂

More details about this month's meeting:

Due to the popularity of this event we have decided to have a morning and an afternoon session: Session one - **10-30am to 1-00pm** and Session two – **2-30pm to 5-00pm**

Please let Ted know which session you would like to attend so that he can provide refreshments and make sure there is enough car parking space. Parking space is limited so if you can share a lift to reduce the number of cars that will help.

You will have the opportunity to remove frames from a super, so clean bee suits will be needed, but don't bring any other equipment with you. The divisional bee suits will be available for use by new beekeepers who don't yet have their own equipment. Uncapping of the frames will be done by various methods which you can try out then decide which suits you best. The honey is extracted in a centrifuge, filtered and poured into jars giving exactly the right weight.

Thanks to Ted and Jackie for hosting this session, and please do make sure you have booked a place so they know how many people to prepare for.

Chair's Corner

We all wish Ted well, and hope for a speedy recovery from his recent eye operation, take care, Ted!

Several Committee members are starting to think about the running of next year's Beginners Course. If you would like to help or have any suggestions, please contact me.

If anyone would like to borrow the divisional extractor it is free at the moment, again please give me a ring to book it.

Helen Chadwick ✂



Next meeting – Saturday 9th July – Honey Extraction at Chapel Barn

Ted and Jackie Gradosielski have invited us to observe honey extraction at their home: Chapel Barn, Waltham Road, Nazeing, Essex EN9 2EB Please see the paragraph on the left about timings and parking – please ring Ted on 01992 890 986 to book a place on one of the sessions. ✂

Winter losses

The BBKA has just published the annual survey of colony losses. They show a national loss rate of 13.6%, this is worryingly high and experts consider that the likely cause is poor nutrition. Read more about this on their website www.bbka.org.uk ✂

The Thornwood Apiary

We have now established a second divisional apiary at Thornwood in Epping and three hives have been installed. If anyone is interested in placing a hive here, please contact Peter Andrews, the apiary manager, on 01992 572905. ✂

Exam Success

Division Members Eric Beaumont and Olivia Burren have both recently passed the Basic Beekeeping Assessment. A short practical test followed by some questions about bees, beekeeping and disease, this is a useful assessment of your skills and a prerequisite for taking any further exams. More information can be found on the BBKA website, or contact one of the Committee. ✂

Tips from the Bee Man

Lay old carpets around the hives to keep down the vegetation; it makes working more comfortable. Lay carpets up-side-down because the pile is slippery when it's wet.

To get the best beeswax for making polish, candles and foundation, put all cappings, brace combs and broken frames in a tub of water with a lid. Leave soaking for a few days, drain and put wax in a muslin bag in your Solar Wax Extractor. Use an ice cream container to catch the molten wax with a little water in the bottom. ✂

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