



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

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www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Preparing to win Prizes

Jim McNeill has a fine reputation as an exhibitor of honey and hive products from local to national level, and at our June meeting at the Wanstead apiary demonstrated the practical methods he has developed over many years to compete, and rather often, win prizes.

It is not always clear to the outsider or novice that preparation of honey begins at the hive: Jim's advice to remove supers first thing in the morning prevents the addition of fresh nectar, which would otherwise dilute honey ready for extraction.

Other important steps – filtration, storage, warming, and bottling – were all described in ways that revealed the depth of Jim's experience. The art of preparing a jar, for example, was explored in detail: the need to polish *inside* the jar would not be a novice's first thought.

The culmination of such craft is the Show, and Jim took us through the essentials of entering. Talking of which, Jim will be the judge of the **EFBKA Honey Show** on **9 October** at **Copped Hall Apple Day, Epping**, and it will be a pleasure to see in action again the skills and good humour which Jim brought to our meeting. ⚡



Jim McNeill divulging the secrets of the honey show

Mann Lake ceases trading

Beekeeping equipment supplier Mann Lake UK has ceased to trade with effect from 1st July 2016. Existing orders will be fulfilled, and going forward the company will be known as Bee Equipment Ltd, a separate entity from Mann Lake USA. Any product warranties or returns will be handled by Bee Equipment Ltd. ⚡

Are you covered?

If you are a member of the BBKA, you will be covered by their public liability insurance up to £10 million. However there are some limitations to this cover that you may not be aware of. It does not cover commercial activity – so if for example you are collecting swarms and charging anything more than reasonable expenses for the service, you are not insured. You must also not act recklessly, so please don't climb trees or lampposts to try to get a swarm down!

The policy will only cover the sale of primary hive products – honey, wax and propolis - so polish, cosmetic products and any other foods are excluded. If you attend Farmers Markets or similar events, did you know that you could get a Verification Certificate through the BBKA Website? There is also a 'Swarm Disclaimer' that you can download. Claims against the policy are few and far between, and responsible beekeepers should have no problem but it is important to be aware of the facts – if you are carrying out any activities other than those of a 'hobby' beekeeper you may need to look for separate insurance cover. ⚡



Chair's Corner

Bees are easy enough to make: catch a swarm or split a colony. More difficult is the raising of quality queens and nucleus colonies, which requires dedication to the craft, stockmanship, and experience. Ted Gradosielski has supplied such quality to members for several years and it is timely to acknowledge his skills. At Wanstead Khalil and Salma Attan have worked productively and keenly and I acknowledge their organisation and success. Contact Ted at teds.honeybees@gmail.com and Khalil at showsecretary@eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk.

These two sources of good local bees at reasonable prices are a great asset to our Association and I thank them warmly for their commitment to the cause.

Eric Beaumont ⚡

Monthly Meeting – Saturday 16th July, Picnic and plans for Varroa

The discussion will explore why some beekeepers treat for varroa and some do not, which product to choose to use, and how to apply it effectively. Robin Harman will demonstrate the Varrox vapouriser, a tool which is currently the most effective method and causes least disturbance to bees. After this exciting performance, tea and a picnic will be served and we ask that you bring a contribution of food. Naturally, cake will be most welcome.

The meeting is at the **Wanstead Apiary**, rear of **24 Langley Drive, E11** at **2.30 pm.** and we look forward to seeing you there. ⚡

Bee Connected

Do you have an apiary on or near farmland? If so then the Bee Connected scheme is for you. This voluntary scheme links farmers with nearby beekeepers so that they can warn them when crop spraying is scheduled. Alerts will tell the beekeeper if spraying is to take place up to 5km from their hives. You can register now on www.beeconnected.org.uk and the system is planned to go live in September in time for the next spraying season. ⚡

Bees for Sale

Five-frame nucleus colonies of bees raised locally are now available for £100. Please see the Chairman's Corner for contact details. ⚡

Tips from the Bee Man

This has been a theme throughout this year – check your hives for stores! June's wet weather has led to some colonies consuming significant amounts of stored honey. Nucs or recently hived swarms may need feeding if it is too wet for the bees to fly. Regular inspections are still essential, as swarms have been delayed by the rain but may emerge on the first sunny day, and even if honey is not being produced, make sure that supers are in place to allow room for colonies which will still be expanding at this time of year. ⚡

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