



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

June 2017

www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Any questions answered

Our April meeting was a Q and A session, with the combined wisdom of Eric Beaumont, Peter Dalby and Chris Branch fielding the many and varied questions from the floor, very ably chaired by Katy Langley. As you might expect, they didn't all give the same

answers, but no blows were thrown. Questions ranged from whether it's better to combine a small colony with a larger one or try to overwinter it; what external factors upset bees, how to avoid honey robbing, and whether or not you should clip your queens? Space doesn't permit us to give all the answers, but one thing was clear – if you need help, then ask for it! While our three panellists sometimes had different conclusions, there will always be someone willing to offer advice or come and look at a problem. In particular, if you think that you might have a disease in one of your colonies, don't hesitate to ask for help. ✂

The Flow Hive

The Division has been lucky enough to be given a Flow Hive Super and on 1st May Stuart Anderson, inventor of the Flow Hive, came to the Wanstead Apiary to talk about this system.

Apparently the invention followed a day of hard work in Australian heat when his son Cedar commented 'There's got to be a better way!'

It remains to be seen how many beekeepers will adopt this method, but we have been very fortunate to hear about it directly from the designers, and we will be observing the super in use over this season so we can report further on it after the summer. ✂



May meeting

Last month's meeting took the form of a social event at the Wanstead Divisional Apiary. It was a great success, with more than 50 members attending; a light rain shower did not stop play. Mark Chambers and Peter Clarke cooked the barbecue, and lots of lovely cakes were donated. Jackie Clarke and Sheila Morrissey served the food and there was plenty of choice including vegetarian options. Thanks to all those who donated food – if you are bringing a contribution to future events, please make sure you hand it to the organisers. A very successful event, and thank you to all those who turned out to take part. ✂

Where there's Muck, there's Honey

I recently visited the Inner Hebrides and stayed on the wonderful sounding Isle of Muck. Within a few hours the conversation with our hosts led to beekeeping, and I met the host's mother, Jenny, wife of the Laird of Muck. A previous islander had left about four years ago and given her six hives of bees. These had been sourced from the Isle of Colonsay, which you may know is one of the few places in the U.K. without varroa. Jenny has little experience and had only harvested 10lbs of honey from each hive; they had swarmed many times and she had not done an inspection this year, so I offered to go through them with her. We found that the wax was filthy; the colour of mud, it was distorted with many holes. The bees however were amazing – the colonies were strong with absolutely no sign of disease of any sort. They were small and black and had the characteristics of true AMM without any interference from imported bees. With a delivery of new wax and frames these colonies will expand quickly and supply the visitors of Muck with a beautiful honey with flavours of heather and other island forage. **Robin Harman – Beekeeper to the Laird of Muck** ✂

Chair's Corner

Firstly, there was no newsletter in May, so apologies to anyone who has been searching their inbox and wondering if they missed it! Our Chairman is too busy beekeeping to provide his comments this month. We look forward to seeing you all at events over the summer, especially those members who have just completed the Beginners' Course.

Editor ✂



Monthly Meeting – Saturday 17th June at Wanstead Apiary Barrier Management

Our next meeting takes place on Saturday 17th June at 2.30 at the Divisional Apiary, at the rear of 24 Langley Drive, Wanstead E11. NBU Inspector Caroline Washington will talk about the importance of apiary hygiene and keeping your equipment clean. ✂

Pat Allen – contact details

If you need to contact Pat (who is Exam Secretary as well as the Essex President) please note that her email address has changed; it is now pat.allen7@icloud.com, and emails sent to her previous address will not be received. ✂

Teaching Aids

If you are asked to talk about bees or to give a demonstration to a group, don't forget that the Division has a 'virtual hive' with photos of combs, and an observation hive available on loan. Please contact Khalil Attan if you would like to borrow either of these for an event. ✂

Apiary Visit at Potters Bar

Barbara Dalby invites Epping Forest Members to an apiary meeting she and Peter are holding for the South East Herts Beekeepers Association on **Sunday 25th June at 3.00 pm**. The apiary site is just off J24 of the M25 near Potters Bar, and as well as Langstroth and National Hives there is a colony in a top bar hive. Contact Barbara on 01992 622645 to book a place. ✂

Asian Hornet

Please remember to be vigilant for Asian hornets; if any have arrived, they will be now be expanding their nests and you may see them looking for food. Email sightings to alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk ✂

Tips from the Bee Man

We are still in the prime season for swarming. A few dull or wet days followed by sunshine creates a very high likelihood of a swarm, so be alert and keep up your regular inspections. Remember if you take a swarm it will need feeding while it establishes itself. A strong swarm can build up quickly so keep checking to make sure they have enough space ✂

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