



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

May 2012

www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

The Beekeeper's Toolbox

The last indoor meeting of the spring saw Ken and Ted bringing out some of the tools of the bee keepers trade. Ken reminded us that foundation did not always come wired and showed how the frames themselves were wired first. He also

passed on a foundation making press. It's to be noted that both of the skills are still on the BBKA module 1 syllabus. He also brought along a beautifully made model of a hive complete with mini-frames, which he uses to illustrate his talks on beekeeping. Ted's tools came more from the hive side, starting with a pollen trap. Stored dry pollen can provide a dietary supplement for us or our bees. But we were reminded not to be too greedy as the nurse bees need this protein rich food to make brood food. Other smaller pieces of kit included match boxes, clip catchers, Butler cage, scissors and paint for isolating, clipping and marking the queen. This year's colour is yellow! Even drawing pins have a place in the toolbox; for marking frames that have queen cells on them, which reminded us that some colonies are already swarming. They obviously don't read the weather forecast or the book. ✂

Contributed by Chris Branch

Beginners Course

The Division's course for new beekeepers has nearly concluded, after four classroom sessions the first apiary visit took place on a very wet Saturday in April. A gazebo helped to keep the rain off the hives, and those members who attended were lucky enough to see a swarm (see picture, right). Although the course covered swarm collection, we weren't expecting to be able to put on a practical demonstration!

Twenty three people have attended the course overall, it will conclude with a further apiary visit on 19th May. The plan is that all those who have attended will know have sufficient knowledge to buy a hive and equipment, and start keeping bees this year. ✂



BBKA Spring Convention

This year the BBKA Spring Convention was held at a new venue, Harper Adams College in Shropshire. The new site offers much better teaching rooms for workshops and lectures, as well as two exhibition halls – the disadvantage of course is that it's rather further to travel from the Epping Forest area. This didn't deter one Divisional Member, who made her way there by train and bike!

There were the usual stands from manufacturers and suppliers of beekeeping equipment, as well as from organisations such as Bees for Development, Bees Abroad, Fera and the BBKA itself. The college covers a wide area, and unfortunately the weather meant the risk of a soaking when moving between different parts of the Convention. There were some excellent workshops and training sessions, and this was a good opportunity to find out about new products and buy beekeeping items. ✂

Queen Rearing Study Group

This group led by Ted Grad has now begun meeting. start. Kevin Cook is writing a regular blog about the group, and you can read about it at <http://beemovies.net/queen-rearing-study-group/> Kevin is also producing some video and stills, with a view to producing a resource to teach other beekeepers in the division. ✂



Chair's Corner

One of my objectives this year as Chair is to get more members involved in training, not only for beginners but also for 'improver' and experienced beekeepers. The next apiary meeting will be a talk about queen rearing – even if you don't see yourself taking this up, there will be some useful information about bee behaviour and bee improvement. Please bring your beesuits – and an umbrella might be useful!

Ted Gradosielski ✂

Next meeting – Apiary Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Saturday 5th May at the Divisional Apiary at 24 Langley Drive, Wanstead, at 12.30. There will be a talk on Queen Rearing by Roger Patterson. Please consider the tenants at Langley Drive when parking and arriving at the apiary.

Diary note: Saturday 9th June will be at Willow Cottage, when Dr Tricia Moxey will be the guest speaker. ✂

Honey Jars

Treasurer Robin Harman has found a supplier of standard jars for approx. 27p each, provided the order is large enough to qualify for free delivery. He is willing to put in a bulk order and the jars could then be collected from his home in Buckhurst Hill. Alternatively, anyone wishing to combine an order with friends can get free delivery if the order is for more than £200 in total. The supplier is C Wynne Jones (www.cwynnejonas.com) Jars will be available through Essex Beekeeping Association later in the year, at a price of approximately 22p each but these need to be collected from Stock. If you would like to order jars through Robin, please contact him as soon as possible. ✂

A date for your diary

This year we are going to hold a summer BeeBQ at the Divisional Apiary in Wanstead – so please put the date in your diary now, it will be on Saturday 14th July at 12 noon. All members and their families are welcome. Let's hope it has stopped raining by then! Tickets will be available shortly, and further details will be in next month's newsletter. ✂

Tips from the Bee Man

After a few weeks of exceptionally warm weather, of course we have now had weeks of cold and rain, with the forecast for May not much better. Check that your bees have enough stores during this time, and feed if necessary – brood laid during the good times may be hatching now, and there may not be enough opportunities for foraging. ✂

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