



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers
May 2013
www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

I'm ready for my close-up ...

The Beginners' Course has concluded with two visits to the Wanstead Apiary – the first in cold and chilly weather, but as Ted put it 'we will go ahead, even if the bees are shivering!' The day was not dull however, as Fig Tree Films visited the apiary with permission to film some of the work. Member Khalil Attan and his family are the subjects of a short film about urban beekeeping in the UK, and will be filmed throughout this season. We'll let you know if we hear any more about the eventual screening of the film, the working title is 'Making a Buzz'. ☘



Photos by Khalil Attan

Spring Convention

A few Division members visited this year's BBKA Spring Convention at Harper Adams College in Shropshire. In addition to visiting trade stands and seeing new products, those attending had the chance to hear some interesting lectures, including one from Ged Marshall on 'Beekeeping without Swarm Control' – as a busy commercial bee farmer, Ged relies on requeening in the autumn, ensuring bees have plenty of space, and the use of bait hives. There were several speakers from overseas and US scientist Maryann Frazier delivered a thought-provoking lecture on 'The Pesticide Conundrum'. Research in the USA shows that 95% of wax foundation is contaminated with pesticides (including those used by beekeepers!) and that the synergistic effect of combining different products and inert ingredients can be far more deadly than a single product on its own. There's insufficient space here to relate all the detail, but more information can be found at <http://www.maarec.psu.edu>. The sun shone at Harper Adams, a welcome change from last year's weather, and as usual there was something for everyone, whatever their level of knowledge. ☘

Summer meetings

Meetings through the summer will be held on Saturdays and out of doors. The first is on 18th May – please see details above. On 15th June, the annual trip to the beautiful gardens of Willow Cottage is not to be missed. On 20th July we will have a meeting with a summer barbecue, and on 27th July a meeting on honey extraction. The last outdoor meeting will be on 24th August to look at winter preparation. Details of speakers, times and venues will be publicised here and by email, so look out for more news. The first indoor meeting will be the Divisional Honey Show on 8th September so please keep this in mind when extracting honey, why not prepare a few jars for entry and see if you can stop Ted Grad's unbroken prize run? A couple of other dates to note – 14/15 September is the Essex Show, and on 21st September it will be the Essex Conference, hosted by this Division. ☘



Chair's Corner

It feels as if spring has come at last, and we'll now be holding our monthly meetings on Saturdays and out of doors until we move back inside in September with the Honey Show. I know there are other commitments at weekends, but I hope to see as many of you as possible at apiary meetings over the summer, and we'll be holding social events as well so please come along if you can. ☘
Ted Gradosielski

Next meeting – Saturday 18th May – Swarm Control

This meeting will take place at the Wanstead Apiary, and will focus on swarm control. The meeting will start at 2.30, and please bring a clean bee suit if you have one. The apiary is in a residential area, so please show consideration for neighbours when parking there. ☘

Queen Rearing lecture

Essex Division is holding a course on queen rearing, it is fully booked but the first session on theory is open to all. Clive de Bruyn will be speaking at 7.30 pm on 23rd May at Links Room, Trinity Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, CM1 2XB. This should be useful for anyone who has some beekeeping experience and is interested in finding out more about this subject. ☘

Check your stores

It's been a hard winter for all sorts of creatures. If you have super or brood frames in store, check them now before you need them. One Division member went to get spare super frames out of the shed, and discovered that hungry mice had been at work on them! ☘

Neonicotinoids

The EU voted to restrict the use of these pesticides in April (the UK voted against the move). The restriction will last for two years, and is likely to start in December. The details of the suspension are not yet known, but it will not apply to cereal crops or others that are not attractive to bees. ☘

Tips from the Bee Man

You should have inspected your bees by now, and with recent warm weather they have been very active. Is the queen laying, and do they have enough stores? A sudden cold or wet spell could leave them short if a lot of brood hatch out and they are unable to fly for a few days. Is there enough space, and are there any queen cells? Last year we saw swarms by the third week in April, spring is a little later this year but drones are already emerging. Add a super if necessary, and be ready to carry out an artificial swarm as soon as queen cells appear. ☘

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