



# Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

May 2014

[www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk](http://www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk)

## April Meeting

Our April monthly meeting was a talk given by our new Regional Bee Disease Inspector, Julian Parker. He covers the South East including Buckinghamshire, Essex and Hertfordshire and was appointed in January on the retirement of Alan Byham. Julian explained that the focus is on good husbandry and disease

prevention. The beekeeper's best tool is their eye – when inspecting a colony, look for brood patterns, unusual signs or abnormal behaviour from the bees. He showed the meeting a number of slides and invited us to guess the problem – foul brood, chalk brood and heavy mite infestation were correctly identified as well as laying worker bees and a drone-laying queen. If you detect a problem on inspection, then close up the hive, restrict the entrance to prevent robbing and disinfect all equipment before doing any further work in the apiary. Julian said that if the Bee Disease Inspectors receive a call, they will try to 'triage' it because 95% of calls turn out to be something other than an infectious disease – contact one of the Division officials for a second opinion if you think you have a problem. Varroa is a significant problem, and many callers have a heavy mite infestation rather than a disease – in Julian's view as many as 50% of beekeepers are not tackling varroa effectively. The number of mites in a colony can double every three weeks so if treatment is not carried out. It's very important to follow the instructions on any treatment – thymol for example will only work if used at the right temperature. You must also keep a record of what you have used, when you used it and how any remaining product was disposed of. Julian finished with a description of the Asian hornet, which is expected to reach the UK this year or next, following its rapid progress through France and northern Spain. ✂



**Beginners Of 2014** This year's Beginners Class has concluded, and pictures above show the final session at Wanstead Apiary. The rain held off until the end of the meeting and many inspections and queen marking were carried with the help of a lot of hot air, from the smokers! Tim Green, Andy Butcher, Oleg Khrenov and Ben Qureshi are pictured above. Many thanks to Eric Beaumont, Chris Branch, Ted Grad and others who have helped to run the class and organise the training sessions – we are pleased to welcome these new beekeepers to the Division, and look forward to seeing them at future meetings. ✂



## Chair's Corner

The summer season is here already and we will be having monthly meetings outdoors at the Division's two apiaries and elsewhere. This is a chance to practise some of the theory that we cover in the winter meetings, and also an opportunity to socialise so please come along to any meetings that you are able to attend – details will be on the website and in the newsletter each month.

**Ted Gradosielski**

## Monthly Meeting – Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May at Wanstead Apiary

A practical session on swarm control – please bring clean beesuits and appropriate footwear. The meeting will begin at 2.30 and the apiary is at the rear of 24 Langley Drive, Wanstead E11 2LL. If you have a hive at the apiary, please attend this meeting so that all the colonies can be maintained in the same way. ✂

## Spring Convention

A few Division members attended the BBKA Spring Convention at Harper Adams College this year, one taking the microscopy course and another learning about queen rearing. There was a good programme of lectures and the trade fair was busy although some exhibitors opted for the earlier Tradex exhibition instead. ✂

## New website

The Division has a new website – same address, but a new look with a diary, downloadable forms and information about the Division. [www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk](http://www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk)

## Get well soon

We'd like to extend our best wishes to Division Member Ken Piper who is currently recovering after a hip replacement. Recovery has been complicated by Ken suffering a fall – sorry to hear it Ken, we all wish you a speedy recovery and hope you'll be able to join us at a Divisional Meeting again before the end of summer. Other Division members have kindly stepped in to ensure that Ken's bees are looked after. ✂

## Tips from the Bee Man

A member hived a swarm on 13<sup>th</sup> April this year, even earlier than predicted last month! Inspect your bees regularly for queen cells and be ready to act. If you are hiving a swarm, don't feed it for 24 hours. This reduces the risk of disease, and as swarms sometimes abscond you don't want them to do so with a full stomach at your expense! After this time, feed with syrup to enable them to start building up the colony. ✂

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