



# Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers  
November 2013  
[www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk](http://www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk)

## Soap making

The speaker for the October meeting was Dr Sara Robb, who is well-known for her soap making and cosmetic production using beeswax and honey. Sara is not a beekeeper herself, in fact her background is in pharmaceutical research. She has experimented with various ways of making soap and was able to demonstrate this to us within the time frame of the meeting, using just a

microwave, an electric blender and a foil tray. The recipe would take up more space than we have available here, but if you would like a copy please contact the editor who can pass it on. Sara's method requires careful measuring to create the appropriate chemical reaction, but by the end of the meeting she had produced a tray of soap, which everyone attending was able to try. She also had suggestions for adding colour and flower petals to the soaps, and had copies of her book on sale, which she signed. All the ingredients Sara used could be bought from local 'ethnic' supermarkets or over the internet but you'll need a spare blender rather than the one you usually use for soup! This was a very interesting meeting and several members left with plans to produce some practical Christmas presents using their own beeswax and honey.



## Redbridge Apiary meeting

An extra apiary meeting was arranged in October at the Redbridge Fishing Lakes site. We were lucky enough to have as speaker Hayden Sinanan, an extension officer with the Trinidadian Government's Ministry of Food Production. Hayden, who is both a beekeeper and a trainer, was introduced by Peter Dalby who has worked with him in Trinidad. Hayden explained some of the difficulties of keeping 'Africanised' bees, which can't be approached without full protective gear and can't be kept within 200m of a house by law. (He was rather



alarmed to see Division beekeepers (including a very young member) approaching their hives without protective clothing!) Due to these restrictions, beekeepers often have to carry equipment quite a distance to their apiaries, and sometimes they will extract honey on site in a mesh tent rather than carrying full supers back to the nearest road. Trinidad also has a very warm climate with no winter, and so their beekeeping is much less seasonal than ours. When training beekeepers he encourages them to learn what forage is available (including coffee and rubber plants), and to plan feeding and swarm control in relation to this, rather than by the time of year. This was an excellent talk and it was fascinating to hear the differences between beekeeping in the Caribbean and the UK.



## Chair's Corner

The last month has been packed with activities, and we were very lucky to have two excellent speakers in Dr Sara Robb, and our visitor from Trinidad Hayden Sinanan. We are planning more speakers for next year, if there's a particular subject you would like covered then please speak to a Committee member, and do come along to the meetings as there is always something to learn. I hope to see as many of you as possible at the Christmas Social.

Ted Gradosielski

## Next monthly meeting – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November

Our next meeting will take place at the Chingford Horticultural Hall, Larkswood Road at 7.30 pm. Come along for a quiz about beekeeping.

## Christmas Social Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December

The Christmas Social will take place at the Chingford Horticultural Hall. This year hot food will be supplied, bring your own festive spirit, there will be music and a Christmas tree. It's a chance to chat to fellow beekeepers, children are of course welcome to attend. Price to be announced, but contact Robin Harman to book a place.

## Membership renewal

It's that time of year again – time to renew your membership of the Division, which brings with it membership of the BBKA and Bee Disease insurance. You should have had an email from Mark Chambers with the renewal form, if not then please see him or Ted at the next meeting. You can also subscribe to Beecraft Magazine if you wish, or have this newsletter posted to you, by filling in the appropriate parts of the form.

## Beginners Course

Do you know anyone who wants to take up beekeeping – or maybe you already have bees, but have not had any formal teaching about them? We will be running the Beginners Course again in February, if you would like to put your name down please contact Robin Harman in the first instance, or Chris Branch who will be tutoring.

## Tips from the Bee Man

After the recent storms, check any out-apiaries to make sure there is no damage to hives. If your apiary is in an exposed area, try weighting down the hive roofs with a brick or stone. Now is also a good time to clear any vegetation, so you'll find it easy to inspect your hives in winter if necessary.

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