



# Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers  
November 2011

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

## Questions and Answers with Oonagh Gabriel

Our first winter meeting saw around 40 members of the division attend this informative session. Oonagh has kept bees for a number of years, and holds the National Diploma in Beekeeping, and the audience had plenty of questions from 'how to avoid wax moth' to 'how to prepare honey for

showing'. Amongst other useful tips, Oonagh reminded us that if you print your own labels for honey jars, as well as complying with the regulations, they must be printed in indelible and waterproof ink. There were also some helpful contributions from members of the audience who shared their own experience. We had a good number of new members in attendance, and Oonagh had some advice for them on equipment and starting out in beekeeping. She suggested that if you are planning to get bees next year, it's worth putting an empty hive on your proposed apiary site. If the neighbours complain that their children have been stung, you can demonstrate that no bees are yet in residence! The discussion also covered comb exchange, artificial swarms and varroa, and the rise of the Asian Hornet (see below) – of which more in a future edition. This was an extremely useful session for all those who took part. ✂

## If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

It may seem odd when we're just completing winter preparations, but the dates for next year's BBKA Spring Convention have been announced! Next year it will be held at a new venue, Harper Adams University College Campus in Newport, Shropshire. Put the dates of 20-22 April 2012 in your diary – tickets go on sale from January on the BBKA website at [www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk). ✂

## Beginners Course

Still not signed up? This is filling up fast, but there are still some spaces left – contact Membership Secretary Mary West on 01992 579408 to book a place. The course starts on Thursday February 23<sup>rd</sup> and runs for four weeks, followed by a visit to an apiary. ✂

## Christmas Social

As usual, our final meeting of this year on Thursday 15th December will be the Christmas Social. Held as usual at the Chingford Horticultural Hall in Larkshall Road, it's a chance to meet up and chat with old friends and for our newest recruits it's an opportunity get to know some of the Division members a little better. You can buy your ticket for the Christmas Social now for £3.00, but if you wait and pay on the door on 15<sup>th</sup> December it will be £5.00. Price includes buffet, drinks & raffle prizes. For more details or to book please contact Helen on 0208 523 5770 or Paola on 0777 3291153

## Chair's Corner

Don't forget that you can save £2.00 on the entrance fee for the Christmas Social if you book a ticket ahead! Contact me or Paola on the numbers above if you'd like to book a place.

## AGM

Looking ahead to our AGM in January, there will be a shake up of the Committee. After three years as Chair, I am standing down as Chair and making way for new blood! The positions of Treasurer and Secretary will also need filling. Have you got a few hours a week free to take up one of these positions? Would you like to get more involved in the Division? Have a think about it, and please do come along to the AGM on Thursday 19th January 2012 to vote for the new Committee. I will be skiving off work next month, so hope to see you all on 17<sup>th</sup> November. **Helen Chadwick** ✂



## Asian Hornet

You're not likely to see these till the spring, but they are a major threat to bees. ✂



## Traffic problems

A US trucker was transporting 460 beehives from South Dakota to California recently when his load toppled over. Approximately 25 million bees were not amused, and nor were the traffic police and ambulancemen who arrived at the scene of the accident. The road was closed for several hours and sadly but unsurprisingly most of the bees were lost. The truck driver reportedly says he'll stick to his usual timber deliveries in future. ✂

**Next meeting – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November** Our next meeting will be at Chingford Horticultural Hall, Larkshall Road, Chingford E4 6NH and as usual we will meet at 7.30 for an 8.00 pm start. The topic this month is 'Curios with Stuart Baldwin'. Stuart is an Essex beekeeper and a dealer in scientific books, and will bring along some bee-related artefacts and explain their historical uses. ✂

## Bee Craft Subscription

It's not too late to sign up for this award-winning magazine which is the official journal of the British Beekeepers Association. If you subscribe through the Division you can get 12 monthly editions for the discounted price of £21.60 instead of £24.00. You should already have received an email with a subscription form, or contact Ted Grad if you would like to sign up. Orders (and cheques) to Ted by 11<sup>th</sup> November, please. ✂

## John Gracey

It is with great sadness that we report the death of John Gracey on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2011. John was an Honorary Member of the Division, a beekeeper for many years, and also our auditor. He took up beekeeping when he retired after a long career with HM Customs & Excise, and in the words of our Treasurer Ted Gradosielski, "John was a gentleman whom it was a pleasure to meet up with on any occasion". Our condolences to his friends and family. ✂

## Tips from the Bee Man

Watch out for wax moth! Although this invasive insect is supposed to prefer brood comb, even supers with honey waiting to be extracted can be targeted. The larvae prefer warm, dark surroundings so the recent warm spell, while it's been good for the bees, may put your stored frames at risk. Damage can spread very rapidly – check any stored supers regularly, and protect with acetic acid or other deterrents. If you find wax moth present, put the frames in the freezer for 24 hours to kill any larvae, and then store securely. ✂

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