



# Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

November 2014

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

## Travels of a Beekeeper

October was our first winter meeting of 2014 and well-known local bee farmer Peter Dalby came along to give us a taste of beekeeping around the world, in places he and his wife have visited. The talk started with some different apiary sites in the UK and then travelled to Eastern Europe where bees are kept in painted 'bee houses'.

Peter also showed examples of an apiary site in Canada with 16,000 colonies where the bees are fed via a converted petrol tanker. He had slides from Slovenia, Belgium, Malta, Australia, South Africa and Trinidad and Tobago where he works every year. He also showed some pictures of stingless bees, sadly they are not as productive as *apis mellifera* otherwise we'd all keep them instead! This was an informative talk and explored some of the different ways in which beekeepers in other countries work and how their hives and apiaries differ from ours. ♪



Some of Peter's slides – extracting honey from stingless bees, and working 'killer' bees (note the bare arms of the beekeeper in the foreground!)



## Beginners Course

Are you new to beekeeping – or have you begun keeping bees, but feel you need to learn a bit more about them? The 2015 Beginners Course will start on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2015 and run for six weeks. Four classroom sessions will be followed by two lessons in one of the Division's apiaries so that you can handle bees under supervision. A beekeeping manual, all course materials and membership of the Epping Forest Division are all included in the price of £75.00. An application form can be downloaded from the EFBKA website. The course is filling up rapidly so don't delay if you would like to enrol. ♪

## The Essex Conference

This year's Essex Conference took place in October at Thundersley, near Southend. Speakers were Dr Nicola Bradbear of Bees for Development, Heidi Herrman of the Natural Beekeeping Trust and Terry Clare who spoke on Queen Rearing. These were some really interesting talks with food for thought for beekeepers of all levels of experience, and plenty of ideas to take away and mull over. There were stalls selling foundation and clothing, and the EBKA was also selling books from its library. Various prizes and awards were presented at the end of the Conference. We know how much work goes into organising the Conference after the Epping Forest Division hosted this last year, so congratulations to Southend for this year's event. ♪

## Membership Renewal

It's time to renew your membership again – if you'd like to carry on receiving this newsletter then you know what to do. A copy of the form will be emailed with this newsletter or sent by post, if you receive a printed copy. Please complete it and return to Mark Chambers either in person at the next meeting, or by post to the address on the form. Payment can be made online if you prefer, and again the details are on the form but please ensure you put your name as a reference, so that our Treasurer can identify who has paid! Membership of the Division includes membership of the BBKA and receipt of the monthly BBKA News, membership of the Essex Bee Keeping Association and membership of the Division together with Bee Disease Insurance. All subscriptions must be received by 31 December so please don't delay and make life easy for our Treasurer and Committee. ♪

## Chair's Corner

I am very pleased to be able to congratulate three more members of the Division on exam passes. The Basic Assessment is a really straightforward practical test, and it is a way of demonstrating to others (to neighbours near your apiary, for example) that you have the basic skills and knowledge to keep bees. It will also, of course, improve your beekeeping! If you have been keeping bees for two years then please ask me or any of the Committee for information about the Assessment procedure as we can help you with this. ♪

**Ted Gradosielski**



## Social – 8<sup>th</sup> November and Monthly meeting – Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November

We have another social event this month – a Bonfire Night party on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November** at Wanstead Apiary. There will be a few fireworks as well as a bonfire. The cost is £5 for refreshments and free raffle ticket and there is no charge for children. If you would like a vegetarian option please contact Mark Chambers. Bring your own wine, and if you'd like to have mulled wine then it can be warmed.

This month's meeting will be on **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November** at the Chingford Horticultural Hall, Larkshall Road, Chingford E4 6NH at 7.30 pm. The subject is 'Pollination and Plants'. ♪

## Examinations

Firstly, congratulations to Chris Branch on passing Module 2 of the BBKA Exams – this means Chris has achieved the Intermediate Theory level with credit. Congratulations also to John Dutney and Simon Roberts for passing their Basic Assessment this year.

If you have been keeping bees for two years, why not consider taking the Basic in 2015? It's a practical assessment of your skills followed by some verbal questions about bees and beekeeping, no written paper is required and there are Division members who can help you to prepare for this and even do a mock Assessment before the real thing. Ideally we would like all the Division members to have this qualification which shows we are competent beekeepers. Contact Chris Branch or Ken Barker if you would like to know more about the examination system and to find out how to enter for the Basic. ♪

## Tips from the Bee Man

The exceptionally mild autumn means bees have been gathering nectar right into October. In this region it's rare to get ivy honey, but that's the most likely crop now. If you intend to extract any of this honey do it quickly, because it sets very rapidly. The extended season means that some queens have gone on laying and the colony may be larger than normal for this time of year, so make sure to check for stores. ♪

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