



Forest Beekeeper

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

This year's Essex Beekeepers' Association Annual Conference was enjoyed by 130 guests who came to hear Clive de Bruyn, Dr. Alison Haughton, Prof. Dave Goulson and Prof. Nigel Dunnett speak on the autumn equinox, Saturday 21 September 2013. I was told by Philip McCabe, President of Apimondia (European Commission), that we had "some heavy hitters" - we did. From the comments received I think we achieved our goal. I hope those of you who

were not there will seek out news on the speakers, look at the website and read the blog.

If you did come, you just have to try and remember it all! So much information was woven into the theme of "Plants, Pollinators & Pesticides". Clive de Bruyn, with props galore, gave an impressive talk. Did you know pollen is the key to good bees? Dr. Alison Haughton (Rothamsted Research), spoke on mass-flowering crops and bee health. She told us short rotation coppice (SRC) willow, is the new big thing for biofuel, uses no pesticides and is great for bees.

After a break for refreshments it was another of the big hitters, Professor Dave Goulson (University of Sussex), with his infectious enthusiasm and curiosity. His message sang out clearly and profoundly. DDT is 5,000 times less toxic than Neonicotinoids, which are also water-soluble. Only 2% of the pesticide, which coats the seed, is taken up by the plant, the rest goes directly into the land and ground water, leaching to surrounding trees, marginal plants, as well as hedgerows and accumulates in the soil each year. It was shocking information, particularly when related to the possible effect on bees that forage on oilseed rape.

Then came lunch, a chance to recharge, take stock and a woodland walk to clear the head. On reconvening Ted Gradosielski (EFBKA Chair), presented the speakers with a gift of honey from Divisional Members, which was met with surprise and delight. The afternoon lecture was by Professor Nigel Dunnett (University of Sheffield), who showed us his recent planting design projects, which turn urban wasteland and motorway central reservations into pollinator meadows and corridors for wildlife. The Olympic Park planting scheme, its legacy and development for future urban ecology with pollinators in mind, were all discussed.

Presentations of BBKA certificates to successful candidates were made and Essex Show trophies were awarded to winners from this year's event. We were fortunate to have many great sponsored raffle prizes this year, as a direct result of the Conference's new website, all related to the day's theme and our speakers. Both Dave Goulson and Clive de Bruyn kindly signed copies of their books, which were just some of the superb prizes on offer.

I want to thank EFBP for their pivotal role in our Conference as major venue sponsor and the Conference Committee team of Mark Chambers (Treasurer), Robin Harman (Secretary), Eric Beaumont, Sheila Morrissey, Andy White, Clare Nichols and Christine Harman for their help on the journey, as well as Ted Gradosielski (Chair) and our Members from Epping Forest who provided honey as gifts for the speakers. Thanks also go Paul Monk, Penny Learmonth and Mary West. We send our very best wishes and good luck to Southend Division, who will host next year's EBKA Annual Conference on Saturday, 11 October 2014. Save the date now!

Ian Nichols, Conference Chair ✂



Chair's Corner

Many thanks to all those who helped with the organisation of the Essex Conference last month - it was a real success, and we have had some very good feedback both from speakers and from those who attended the day. These events could not happen without a team of tireless workers, special thanks to Ian Nichols who co-ordinated the day, but there were many others helping before and after the day to make it all go so well. ✂

Ted Gradosielski

Next monthly meeting - Thursday 17th October

Our first indoor meeting of the winter season will take place at the Chingford Horticultural Hall, Larkswood Road at 7.30 pm. The speaker will be Dr Sara Robb, talking about making honey soaps and beeswax creams.

Apiary meeting - Sun 13th October, Redbridge Fishing Lakes

Join us at 1.00 pm for an meeting at the Divisional Apiary in Redbridge. Mr Hayden Sinanan of Trinidad Agricultural Ministry will talk about beekeeping in the Caribbean, there will also be an opportunity for informal discussion and Q and A with experienced beekeepers. We need to know numbers so please let Robin Harman know if you will be attending. ✂

Honey Survey

Alan Byham, Regional Bee Inspector for the South East is conducting the annual honey survey is taking place, and you should have received an email regarding this. Please complete the form if you can, as it helps to inform not only this area but all of England and Wales about honey crops. ✂

Honey Show

A detailed report on the Divisional Honey Show will follow in the next newsletter. It was well-attended, and there were some new names on some of the trophies! Congratulations to all those who took part, and thanks to Eric Beaumont for organising this event. ✂

Tips from the Bee Man

Mouse guards should be in place, and if your hives are in an out-apiary then it is well worth the trouble of covering them with chicken-wire or mesh, to prevent woodpecker damage. Not only will these lovely but pesky birds do significant damage to your valuable hives, but they will put your entire colony at risk and leave it open to invasion by other species. ✂

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