



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

October 2011

www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

The Honey Show

The Divisional Honey Show took place on 17th September this year, and was judged by Oonagh Gabriel. Division members entered classes ranging from honey, to mead, to honey cookery and there were some worthy winners. There will be more details of the prize winners in a future newsletter.

If you thought about entering the Show this year but were a little daunted or unsure of the requirements, then come along to this month's indoor meeting where you will be able to ask Oonagh about the characteristics that make for a prize-winning exhibit, as well as many other questions. We would love to see more competition at the Honey Show – there are classes for new beekeepers, as well as the more experienced, so everyone has a chance of winning.

It's also the National Honey Show this month, held on 27-29th October at Weybridge in Surrey. This is well worth a visit, there will be lectures, demonstrations and beekeeping equipment and of course honey for sale! To find out more, go to www.honeyshow.co.uk – entry is £15 and there is a lot to see. Lectures are not just about honey, this year they cover Queen rearing, selective breeding and honey bees in the wild, amongst other subjects. It's a useful day out for anyone wanting to learn more about beekeeping. ✂

Taster Day

The Beekeeping 'Taster' afternoon on 24th September was very successful, with fourteen prospective new beekeepers visiting the Wanstead Apiary to find out about the wonderful world of bees. After a short talk from Helen, Ted and Eric Beaumont on the three big issues – Time, Money and Commitment – the visitors were kitted up in protective clothing, and were able to see inside a hive and ask questions.

This was the first time that most of those attending had seen inside a beehive, and they were given a brief explanation of the parts of the hive, the different types of bees and their behaviour, and could then see how the bees behave. Many of those who came along have booked on to the Beekeeping for Beginners course which starts on February 23rd – places are still available on this course, but it is filling up fast. Please contact Membership Secretary Mary West on 01992 579408 if you would like to book a place. Many thanks to all those who attended at the apiary and helped with the introduction, hive inspections and refreshments. ✂

Your Newsletter

This newsletter is for all members of the division, whatever their beekeeping experience. Have you got a story you'd like to share, pictures of a recent event, or a subject that you'd like to know more about? We would be delighted to hear from you – please contact the Editor (details on the right) if you have any comments on the newsletter or if you'd like to suggest any topics to cover in future editions. ✂



Mesh wrapped around a hive to protect from 'peckers'!

Photo: Ted Gradosielski



Chair's Corner

Its 29 degrees but I want to mention the first of our Winter meetings in just a couple of weeks – "Question Time with Oonagh Gabriel".

The "Winter" meetings in Larkshall Road are always a good way of getting a chance to chat to other beekeepers away from the buzz of the bees and to learn a few tips for the start of next years season, so come along!

Helen Chadwick ✂

Next meeting – Thursday 20 October. 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. This month the topic is 'Questions and Answers with Oonagh Gabriel'. Oonagh holds the National Diploma in Beekeeping and has kept bees for over 30 years – she was also the judge of our recent Honey Show! Come along prepared with any questions, and look forward to a lively discussion. ✂

Exams

If you've been keeping bees for at least a year, then why not think about doing the Basic Assessment next summer? Division Members Ken Barker and Roy Cropley are willing to offer free instruction to help prepare for this. Contact Ken on 020 8506 2236 or Roy on 01992 626668 for advice.

If you've already done the Basic Beekeeping Assessment, would you like to tackle one of the written modules next year? If so, please contact Ken for the necessary paperwork – you will need Ken to sign the forms, and he also likes to keep a record of Division Members' progress in these modules. Don't forget that you can borrow books from the Divisional library, and if enough people are taking the exams we may even be able to get a study group together. The exams will be held in March next year – all the information including fees is on the BBKA website at www.bbka.org.uk, and you can download a syllabus and reading list here as well. ✂

Tips from the Bee Man

Your feeding should be almost completed by now, but keep giving syrup until all the frames appear full. If you haven't applied varroa treatment yet, do so before the weather is too cool. This is also the time to place mouse guards in the hive entrance. If your hives are in an exposed site which is not visited frequently, then consider protection against woodpecker damage – wire mesh wrapped around the hive is usually sufficient to deter them. ✂

Contacts

Chairman - Helen Chadwick
Tel: 0208 523 5770
chairman@eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Secretary – Paola Munns
Tel: 01707 873 984
secretary@eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Treasurer – Ted Gradosielski
Tel: 01992 890 986
treasurer@eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Newsletter – Olivia Burren
editor@eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk
Tel: 020 8504 0664

Website - Kevin Cook
Tel: 0208 532 1584
webmaster@eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk