



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers
September 2010

www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

On Saturday 14 August we were invited to Ted Grad's home to learn about honey extraction. To begin with we divided into two groups, one of which looked at varroa boards with Ken and learned about the monitoring of these parasites, while the second group accompanied Ted to the hives.



We emptied one super, which involved shaking the bees from the honey-filled frames and then placing the frames in a covered box. In the second hive we worked on, Ted had placed a clearing board under the top super to remove the bees in advance, which had been relatively successful. This super was also emptied and then we all crammed into Ted's marvellous Honey Room to witness the extraction of the honey.



Uncapping with a comb, knife and paint stripper – thanks to Chi Chan for photos

The first step was to clean the frames of propolis so that they were ready to be used again next season. Frames taken from the hive later in the season tend to require more cleaning as the bees are beginning to propolis everything in preparation for winter. Then the cappings were removed from the cells; Ted showed us three different ways of doing this, using a knife, an uncapping fork and an electric paint stripper. Various members of the group took it in turns to prepare the frames and once the honey was uncapped, the frames were placed in an electric extractor. This piece of equipment can hold up to 12 frames at once and has two speed settings. The frames remained in the extractor for around 10 minutes to extract the maximum amount of honey.

The honey was then filtered into the bottling tank, poured off into jars and labelled, with care taken to ensure that the weight of honey in each jar was correct. Following the demonstration, we were treated to refreshments, thankfully under cover from the pouring rain! Many thanks to Ted and Jackie for their hospitality and a very interesting afternoon. ☘

A diary date – the EBKA 130th Annual Convention

This year is the 130th anniversary of the Essex Beekeepers' Association, and the Annual Convention will take place on Saturday 23rd October at Foakes Hall, Great Dunmow. The day lasts from 10.00 till 4.00 and speakers will include Dr Peter Neumann, of the Swiss Bee Research Centre in Berne, and John Hall, Director of Essex Wildlife Trust.

There will be a presentation of some research on varroa mite and a talk from Bees for Development, and there will also be stalls for browsing, and some birthday celebrations! Cost for the day is £20, including lunch, and this is a great opportunity to hear some eminent speakers and to meet other Essex beekeepers. Please email Richard Ridler on richard.ridler@uwclub.net, or phone him on 01279 718111 if you would like to attend this interesting event. ☘

Saturday 11th September – Honey Show

This will be held, for the first time, at our winter venue, The Chingford Horticultural Society Hall, Larkshall Road, Chingford, E4 6NH

The forms to enter exhibits were sent out with the August Newsletter. They should be completed and returned to Eric Beaumont who is our new Show Secretary. His address is: 83 Prince George Road, London N16 8DL. Payment can be made on the day. All the entries need to be at the hall ready for judging by 10.00am. You are welcome to then stay and hear the judge's comments as he looks at the exhibits, an excellent way to learn as you see what he is looking for.

There is a wide range of classes including some for beginners so do just have a go and see how you get on, even if you are new to beekeeping. Please drop in, even if you are not exhibiting, to see this traditional event which has now been held annually for over 60 years. Light refreshments will be served during the morning. ☘

After the Honey Show, our next meeting will be on **Thursday 21st October** at the Chingford Horticultural Society Hall in Larkshall Road. See next month's newsletter for more details of the winter programme.

Sunday 5th September - The Forest Festival

This is now our third year at what has become an annual event. Many thanks to all of you who offered your help and support on that day. ☘

Topical Tips for September

This is the month to complete the winter preparations so the bees go into winter with a good supply of stores and free of disease.

Continue to feed, especially while the weather is warm, until they won't take any more down.

Ideally any Varroa treatment that you are going to use should be completed by now, except for oxalic acid, which is only used in mid-winter when there is no brood. ☘

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Chair's Corner

The Wanstead Directory will be printing an article about our Apiary at Langley Drive in their September edition due out on the 4th. Hope you enjoy it. Once again don't forget to support our Honey Show on September 11th.

Helen Chadwick ☘

