



Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

March 2008

www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Everything you wanted to know about keeping bees and more!

That's how the February meeting was billed, and those members who attended got pretty much what was written on the tin!

Having attained the National Diploma in Beekeeping, Oonagh Gabriel was an excellent choice as presenter for this well attended and lively "Question & Answer" evening. All members were asked to come armed with a question about beekeeping which kept Oonagh on her feet for the entire session.



Questions kicked off by asking Oonagh to explain the official line on treating Varroa with Oxalic Acid. This was discussed in great detail, and Oonagh explained that whilst this is not an approved treatment for Varroa, she did understand that many beekeepers have had great success by using it. This then led on to questions on other Varroa treatments which Oonagh covered in detail – sharing her views on their success and how best to



implement them within your day-to-day beekeeping activities.

As this is a critical time of the year for bees, when their winter stores will be at their lowest point, questions were raised about the best method and practice to ensure that bees do not suffer from lack of food. Oonagh explained that whilst there are different practices and things that you can feed bees during this season, the most important thing is to make sure that they do not run out of stores. As the weather conditions are unusually mild at the moment, many bees are flying and therefore using up their stores more rapidly than usual.

There were many other snippets of wisdom from Oonagh before the evening ended – including some tips on how to make competition winning honey. One member commented, "that seemed like the quickest meeting we've ever had!" Our sincere thanks go to Oonagh for sharing her extensive knowledge. We look forward to seeing her again later in the year when she'll be judging the Honey Show this September. ☘

The Honey Show – use it or lose it!

Despite the fact that Epping Forest Beekeepers have been involved in the Buckhurst Hill Horticultural Show for over 60-years, there is talk that after this year we will not be provided with stand space to hold our annual honey show if it is not sufficiently supported by members.

There is a simple answer, and that's for more members to take part and enter into one of the many categories.

Having entered the competition for the first time this year, division treasurer, Tiffany Levi had these words of encouragement for any member thinking about whether they should enter or not...



"Both Kevin and I were only in our second proper year of beekeeping when last year's Honey Show came about. Whilst we knew the competition was going to be tough, we wanted to enter as it would be good experience and would enable us to see what

it takes to be amongst the winners. We entered into the "Beginners" section, and also entered one of our photographs for the B J Cooper Cup. Whilst our photograph did well, it didn't make it to a podium position. However, we were extremely proud to be announced winners of the Clarke Cup for beginners. Its certainly inspired us to enter into a few more categories this year, and hope that it inspires other members to give it a go. You've got nothing to lose!"

Later this year, Ted Gradosielski, who walked away with a cluster of trophies this year, will be sharing some of his secrets to producing competition-winning honey. Ted will give practical demonstrations on preparing competition honey at his apiary meeting on Saturday 5th July.

However, it's not all about honey at the Honey Show. There are categories for wax, mead and, as mentioned earlier, photography. Show secretaries, Peter Clarke and Ron Baldwin will announce details of the Honey Show later this year. Please show your support by entering at least one category and hopefully more! The Honey Show will be held on 13th September at St. Johns Church, Buckhurst Hill. ☘

What's on this month...

As you'll soon be heading into that really busy part of the beekeeping season, we thought that it would be good to have an evening talking about that most tricky of subjects – Swarm Control!

Jenny and Michael Johns will be delivering this presentation on 20th March and will share their views and experience on the various means of avoiding swarming.

If the weather continues with its current trend then we might have to take swarm prevention measures earlier and earlier each year. This is why this meeting was brought forward from its original April date.

Our meetings start at 7.30pm and are held at Chingford Horticultural Society Hall, Larkshall Road, Chingford E4. Please arrive in good time, and note that parking bays are limited at the venue. However, there is plenty of unrestricted parking in nearby streets. ☘

Website

Members are asked to keep an eye on the development of the new division website (see address at head of newsletter). If you have any suggestions for content on the site, please drop Kevin Cook an email at the address below. ☘

Bee Books

Joe Chadwick has recently traded in some of the less useful books from the division library, and will be replacing these with some more up to date publications in the coming months.

However, the library still contains a wide range of books covering all aspects of beekeeping. Joe brings these to every meeting for members to borrow and return. This is another great reason for making the meetings each month. ☘

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