



# Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

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

## Cheers! An evening on making mead

Record turnout for mead-making presentation by Eric Fenner

Isn't it strange? Mention the possibility of a free taster of alcohol and you'll find yourself with a full house. That is a little cynical but, with around thirty attendees at our November meeting for Eric Fenner's talk on making mead, we are sure there were some who were hopeful of a sample or two of bee booze!

Eric's current mead brew was not ready for consumption so we had to imagine the variations of mead that Eric covered in his talk. With at least 18-months wait for mead to reach maturity in the bottle – it was simply not possible for Eric to put something together for the night.



Whilst the majority of those at the meeting were from the local beekeeping community, the numbers were bolstered by attendees from the local wine circle eager to pick up tips on the mead making process. We also had a great turnout from some of the new and potential members of the division. It was great to see so many new faces.

Eric's talk began with a brief introduction to his mead-making experience and moved on to explain some of the characteristics of the many varieties of mead. This ranged from the more common Sack Mead (basic, strong or sweet) – through to Melomel (with fruit), Cyser (with apple juice), Pyment (with red or white wine), Braggot (with hops or malted barley) and Metheglin (with herbs and/or spices).



Eric brought along a wide range of mead-making apparatus as well as the all important ingredients and additives needed for the brewing process. These included a vinometer, hydrometer and a variety of thermometers and heating devices for the all-important management of temperature at the various stages of brewing and maturing.

There was a lot to cover in one evening, but for those that want to start their mead making (and maybe even exhibiting) venture, Eric brought along a selection of books on the subject. His number-one choice for the beginner and intermediate was 'Mead Making, Exhibiting and Judging' by Harry Riches (ISBN: 090565241X).

We do hope everyone enjoyed this event. We also hope that we will get a similar attendance at presentations that are being planned for next year. ☘



## What's on this month...

Incredible as it may seem, we've reached the end of another year at EFBKA. And, as is customary, we'll be closing the year off with our usual Christmas social meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December at the Chingford Horticultural Hall, Larkshall Road, Chingford (7.30pm). Raffle prizes would be appreciated, but there will be the usual festive spread of sweets and savouries. ☘

## Local Hero

Ken Barker was very proud to present Ted Gradosielski with the Tremearne Cup which he won at the National Honey Show held at St George's College, Weybridge on 1<sup>st</sup> November.



Apart from the Tremearne Cup (presented for the best naturally crystallised or soft set honey from Essex), Ted picked up various prizes at the show, including: -

Class 181 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place  
*One Shallow Comb suitable for Extracting*

Class 184 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
*Two Jars Dark Honey*

Class 185 – 1<sup>st</sup> Place  
*Three Jars of different Honeys*



More details on the classes and National Honey Show in general can be found on their website -

[www.honeyshow.co.uk](http://www.honeyshow.co.uk) ☘

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