



Essex Beekeepers' Association

Forest Beekeeper

The monthly newsletter of the Epping Forest Beekeepers

May 2010

www.eppingforestbeekeepers.co.uk

Wax production

Thursday 15th April was our last Winter meeting of the season at Chingford Horticultural Hall, and Roy Cropley talked to us about wax with the aid of stacks of equipment and a slide show.

There were fewer people attending than at recent meetings which was a shame as they missed out on a very informative talk which Roy made entertaining in his own unique fashion.



Roy explained that the hexagon shape of the honey comb cells is extremely strong. A frame of wax foundation weighing 1.25 ounces can hold 6lbs of honey. Roy showed us ways in which foundation could be made, by a press, plastic sheet moulds that could pass through a mangle and sheet wax being passed through large rollers. Extracting pure wax was discussed the most economical way being a solar wax extractor with a net curtain containing all the wax and debris. Even the blackest brood frames can produce pure yellow wax.

Roy's parting pearl of wisdom was: don't be like a beekeeper he knows who keeps 50 year old frames; he is more than willing to sell new foundation to you at a reasonable price. Thanks, Roy! ☘



Thanks to Dan Green for the pictures

Read all about it

Here's a picture of Division member Chi Chan's bees which swarmed on 18 April – a little earlier than expected. He was able to retrieve them from his neighbours' fence with the help of Jenny and Mike Johns. The second picture is of Chi recapturing the bees – on the second occasion that they swarmed, a few days later!



Chi has been writing a blog since he started keeping bees last year. You can read about his experiences at www.chisbees.blogspot.com, and this is a very entertaining site, as well as having lots of information for new bee keepers. ☘



Our next meeting is on Saturday 8th May 2010 at 2.30pm. This is our first apiary meeting of this season and we are meeting at the **Wanstead apiary**. The address is at the rear of 24 Langley Drive, Wanstead, E11 2LL. Parking is available in the surrounding streets. The main subject for this session will be **Apiary Hygiene** and will be led by Ken Barker with the help of other members of the group. There will also be an opportunity for any beginners to open a hive. If you have them, please bring your bee suits but, if not, we do have some that we can lend out for the afternoon. Simple refreshments will be available and it would be advisable for you to bring a chair. Ted has sent out an email about this event including a map. It can also be found in a London A-Z if you are unsure where to go. Let's hope for good weather. ☘

Topical Tips

The swarming season is upon us! Make sure that your bees have plenty of room by adding supers before the bees are overcrowded. Regular weekly inspections are needed to check for the presence of queen cells which are a strong sign that the bees are about to swarm. If these are found appropriate action should be taken to stop this happening, e.g., an artificial swarm method, details of which can be found in most books. ☘

Some dates for your diary

A reminder of the dates for the summer meetings:
Saturday 12th June – Willow Cottage
Saturday 10th July – Reading the Hive at Peter Dalby's Apiary
Saturday 14th August – Honey Extraction with Ted at Chapel Barn
Saturday 28th August – Preparation for Winter at the Wanstead Apiary
Sunday 5th September – the Epping Forest Festival at Chingford Plains
Saturday 11th September – Honey Show at Chingford Horticultural Hall
☘



Chair's Corner

We have bought a double pop-up gazebo for the Division. We will use it at our next meeting at Wanstead Apiary on May 8th and at the Forest Festival in September. If any member of the Division would like to borrow it for a function we will hire it out at a very low charge. At least we no longer have to worry about the weather.

Helen Chadwick ☘

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