

SBKA EPSOM DIVISION NEWSLETTER MAY 2012

*Apiary at: Upper Mill, Kingston Road, Ewell, Surrey KT17 2AF
Registered Charity No 1026386*

Committee News

Finally the weather was warm enough for the Saturday Beginners group to start hands on beekeeping on April 14th! The apiary colonies were all put onto to new foundation comb using the shook swarm method, queens marked and clipped and all the old combs and frames burned. The previous Saturdays had been spent cleaning and preparing all the fresh equipment, sorting and tidying sheds, learning how to light the smokers etc so that everything was ready to go. Thanks to Steve, the Beginners and tutors for ensuring this went smoothly. Weekly inspections for disease and swarm control will continue throughout the season.

The shop opened on 31st March and is proving as popular as ever. Members will also have the opportunity to purchase equipment on selected Tuesday evenings – those on which no specific lectures or talks have been arranged. Thanks to Steve and Kimberley for organising and running this valuable facility.

At the Bee Clinic on the 1st April we tested 21 colonies (belonging to members and the apiary) for Nosema. Two showed minimal level of infection, all the rest were negative. These are fantastic results as this time last year 90% of those tested showed moderate to high levels of infection. For up to date information on pests, diseases and beekeeping advice please look at the National Bee Unit website and take the time to register your colonies on BeeBase.

Thanks to all those who attended the working parties last month. The site was tidied, grass cut, beds weeded, windows washed, sheds sorted etc. Thanks especially to David Chartres and Neil Manley for organising and working so hard to achieve this. We will be planning more in the future.

The Tuesday Club Night diary of events is regularly updated – please view the website calendar for updates/shop opening. We would like to encourage experienced beekeepers to visit the apiary on these nights to allow beginner and novices to access their wealth of knowledge. We would like to promote proactive rather than reactive beekeeping and having the opportunity to discuss problems, trouble shoot and explore different approaches will support beekeepers to do this.

Thank you to those who have completed our electronic survey – your views matter and we can only improve with your support. We will publish the results once completed.

Look out for your British Beekeepers Association membership card in the May edition of Beecraft.
Next full committee meeting Monday 21 May at the Apiary

Training Opportunities

Basic Food Hygiene Certificate- There hasn't been enough interest to set up our own course so we will make enquiries with other Surrey groups to see if we can put together a joint course.

Dates for Your Diary

Club Tuesday Nights- Club nights are free for members. When there is a named speaker the session will run from 7 for 7.30pm until 9.30pm. The hut will be open from 6.30pm on non speaker nights.

May 8th 'Interactive evening' - Finding, marking and clipping the queen, swarm control, questions. The apiary shop will be open to members to purchase equipment.

May 15th Refresher session for Basic Exam – focus on disease – all welcome

May 22nd Refresher session for Basic Exam – focus on inspections, life cycle, review of syllabus – all welcome

July 17th- NO CLUB MEETING - facility booked out for Divisional meeting

Talks

May 1st- 'Top Bar Hives and Beekeeping around the world' with David Dennington from Farnham Beekeepers Association. Entrance is free but donations would be appreciated to go towards David's work providing TBHs to

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orphans in Malawi. 7 for 7.30pm until 9.30pm

June 12th- 'Preparing Honey and Wax for a Show' with Marysia Owsianka. 7 for 7.30pm until 9.30pm

July 3rd- 'Judging Honey and Wax in a Show' with Mollie Bonnard. 7 for 7.30pm until 9.30pm

Oct 23rd- Dr Michael Keith-Lucas 'Pollen in forensic science'. 7.30 - 9.30pm. Dr Keith-Lucas is a CPS expert witness from Reading University. His speech at the Surrey Bee Day was fascinating and thoroughly entertaining! 7 for 7.30pm until 9.30pm

May 7th - May Fayre Beddington Park- Mollie Bonard and Jill Forbes will be running a honey stall on Monday 7th May 2012, 11 am - 4pm Beddington Park, Wallington. Help still required, set up 9am. Also required a gazebo and 3 tables. Help will be required to collect and erect the gazebo (from 9am), run the stall, tidy up and pack away at the end of the day. If you could offer some help with any of these or to find out more about the day please email Mollie (moleandbee@gmail.com) or Jill (jf.honeybee@myself.com)

May 12th. 2012 Fair at Ewell Court - Details to follow, help required on the day. If you could offer some help with any of these or to find out more about the day please email Mollie (moleandbee@gmail.com) or Jill (jf.honeybee@myself.com)

May 20th Sunday Epsom Taster Day - (£40 per person) - day course for members of the public wishing to find out more about beekeeping

June 4th Surrey County Honey Show- at Stoke Park Guildford. Entries must be in by 4 May.

June 7-9th South of England Show- Entry forms & schedules of the show classes for the Bees & Honey Section are available from Pauline Sparkes Show secretary after 10 April from Mrs P Sparkes, 4 Chalmers Close, Charlwood, Horley, Surrey, RH6 ODP. E-mail sparkes-1@tiscali.co.uk Phone 01293 862063. The show runs from Thursday 7 June to Saturday 9 June. Entries must be delivered to the show ground Wednesday or before 8.00am Thursday morning

June 9th 2012 Carshalton Carnival, Carshalton Park, Ruskin Road, Carshalton. Set up 8.30am. Help required manning the stall, also a Gazebo plus 3 tables. If you could offer some help with any of these or to find out more about the day please email Mollie (moleandbee@gmail.com) or Jill (jf.honeybee@myself.com)

July 14th Saturday Apiary Open Day- to coincide with Ewell Village Fair - further details to follow

Other Items

Message from Andrew Barnett (ex-Treasurer-Hon)- As the 2012 season gets under way and I review my stock of beekeeping equipment I realise that at the end of the last season I was given a wonderful gift from the club of a polystyrene nuc hive. Wowser! All clean and pristine unlike the rest of the junk I have accumulated over the years. This is a belated thank you for that present and all the happy memories I have of Epsom Beekeepers. The last few years have been a very interesting phase in my journey and the club and its members meant a lot to me. Anyway, nothing stays the same- so on with new broods, life and futures. It is looking bright from where I am now. Thank you for your generosity and a good beekeeping season to you all.

Neonicotinoid Research- Jill Forbes has sent a link to an audio interview with US Niwot Beekeeper Tom Theobald about three new studies that have recently been published regarding the ways that neonicotinoids harm bees.

The studies include one from Purdue, and two from Europe, and all three indicate that these new pesticides are causing more harm to bees than previously thought. Its quite long at 32 minutes but worth listening to.

<http://howonearthradio.org/archives/1807>. Also attached a Sunday Times article from April 8th 2012 by Charles Clover also from Jill.

Petition for a National Bee Action Plan- British bees do a huge amount for wildlife, our food supply and the economy. Changes to town planning, farming and our use of pesticides could prevent even more bee species from becoming extinct. The Prime Minister needs a plan to make these changes now.

[Sign the petition for a National Bee Action Plan.](#)

Spring Checks- Please find attached the Bee Units guidance on spring checks.

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Bookings for Honey Extraction- A new calendar has been put up on the wall in the Apiary's Honey Extraction Room for booking the room to extract honey.

Vita funds ground-breaking varroa control research- Vita (Europe) Ltd is helping to fund innovative varroa control research to try to turn the mite's natural defences against itself. The "gene knockdown" research has just started at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland and will involve the UK's National Bee Unit. Dr Max Watkins, Technical Director at Vita, said: "Vita hopes that an effective and environmentally sensitive treatment can eventually be developed at a cost that is affordable to beekeepers across the globe."

Read more about the research on the new Vita website:

<http://www.vita-europe.com/new-money-for-research-to-halt-honey-bee-killer/>

EBKA Questionnaire- Last chance to reply. Please look out for an electronic survey in your inbox. The committee is keen to make the association fit for your purposes and would like some feedback on the direction its going or where you would like it to go.

Apiary Site in Stoke D'Aberron- The Executive Head Chef at the Woodlands Park Hotel would like to offer an apiary site to anyone who may be interested. Please contact him directly at MAShton@handpicked.co.uk "

Members BDI Insurance Certificates

These are held centrally. If a member needs a copy please contact Hilary Livesey

NESCOT

Sites are now allocated so there are currently no spaces available.

Bee Base

If members have not already registered on BeeBase (FERA National Bee Unit website) then please take a moment to look at it and register your hives. <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/>

Items for Sale/Hire/Wanted

For Sale- Mordant leather gauntlets, size is about 7 to 7.5 (ladies size): £13.13. Bee brush: £4.67, both from Thornes and brand new. If anyone is interested, they should phone Eileen on 07796 405752

For Sale Whilst sorting through the equipment shed, we identified Langstroth and Smith hives which we can no longer use. If any member would like to take these, for a donation to the Epsom Division they are yours!

Langstroth – floor, brood box, 2x supers, 2x queen excluders, cover board, roof

Smith – 2x brood boxes, 4x roofs, 6x cover boards, 7x queen excluders, 13 x supers

For Hire We would like to take this opportunity to remind members that you may hire the kitchen for honey extraction at a cost of £10 per session. There are also a number of honey extractors for hire, again at £10, which can be used on site or taken home for use. We kindly ask that the kitchen and all equipment used are cleaned thoroughly ready for the next person and equipment taken off site is returned asap. There is a calendar displayed on the wall in the kitchen for completion if you want to book the kitchen/equipment and a book to note down name and contact details. Please liaise with Liz Knee or Steve Secker for access.

2x motorised 12 frame honey extractors (on site use only)

1x motorised metal 4 frame extractor

1x manual metal 9 frame (or takes 3 deep frames) extractor

1x plastic 9 frame extractor

Various honey buckets, strainers, settling tank (large), honey warming cabinet (on site use only)

...and finally- Honeybees 'cleverer in the morning'

By Victoria Gill Science reporter, BBC News

The earliest rising bee catches the best flower and ultimately the best meal, according to research.

A study has found that bees are better at learning new odours in the morning. This early brain power may have evolved to help the insects sniff out flowering plants and forage for nectar more efficiently.

An experiment in which a team tested more than 1,000 bees is described in the journal



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Behavioural Ecology and Sociobiology.

Previous research has shown that most flowers accumulate their nectar during the morning, so this would be the period during which learning many new odours would be most useful to the bees.

The process of memorising the new odours released by flowers is very energy-intensive for the bees' brains, so being a little "less clever" later in the day could help the insects to conserve that energy.

To study the bees' ability to learn, the scientists captured 1,000 forager honeybees. They trained groups of the insects at different times of the day to associate a new odour with a food reward.



The team, led by Professor Giovanni Galizia from the University of Konstanz in Germany, could then test each bee to see if it responded correctly to the odour.

The "correct" response to a smell was for the bee to extend its proboscis - the long appendage many pollinating insects use to draw nectar from flowers.

When the bees were trained early in the morning, they were much better at remembering which odours meant that they would receive a reward of sugary nectar. This, the researchers say, is the first study to show that bees are better able to learn in the morning.

In their journal article, the team wrote that this effect was probably a result of bees and the flowers they pollinate "co-evolving".

"It might be evolutionarily advantageous to be the 'early bee' and to 'catch' the flower in order to out-compete possible competitors such as butterflies, flies and [bees from] other hives," the researchers wrote.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-10892913>

Newsletter Items

If you have any news, items of interest, book or course reviews for the news letter please send them to our **new email address** newsletter@epsombeekeepers.co.uk. If you change your email address please let us know

Please check in from time to time with our new look website, its being updated all the time @ www.epsombeekeepers.co.uk

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