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THE ESSEX BEEKEEPER



MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE E.B.K.A

NO:523

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**JULY
2008**

Registered Charity number 1031419

ESSEX BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION is an association of nine regional divisions each with its own officers and responsible for its own activities. For information concerning the divisions, please contact the Honorary Secretary of the appropriate one. They are:-

BRAINTREE: Nobby Clark-01277 220561 **CHELMSFORD:** Jean Smye: 01621 850605
COLCHESTER: Lydia Geddes-01206392226 **DH&MALDON:** Nan Field-01621 773297
HARLOW: Paul Weeks-01279 413326- **EPPING FOREST:** Ted Gradosielski
ROMFORD: Pat Allen-01708 220897. **SAFFRON WALDON:** Robert Egger-01279 850092
SOUTHEND: David Blackwood-01702 207078

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The Essex Beekeepers Magazine is free to members of the Essex Beekeepers Association.

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That you saw their advertisement in *THE ESSEX BEEKEEPER*

WATCH OUT! THERE'S A THIEF ABOUT!

A beekeeper in the Old Harlow area has written to say that he had 3 empty hives pinched from a field, earlier this year, in Spellbrook.

one hive had 2 supers on and one had a super and empty brood box

with a feeder in it. These 2 were both on their own stands. The 3rd one was just a brood box base and a roof, with about 6 frames.

These were all in the centre of this overgrown field, so could not be seen from the road and the only way in, was over a bar fence and along a pathway, through brambles and nettles. Someone must have seen me go in & out of the field, or they saw the path, which is a little overgrown and decided to go in and have a look, seen the hives and taken them.

This comes as a warning so beekeepers can watch out and perhaps even mark their hives.

...from page 11

- Remember the queen has longer legs than workers and therefore stands higher than the workers on the comb.
- Repeat this with all the frames in the brood box, pushing them all close together, without gaps.
- *or re-examine, as follows:-*
- Put the frames back in pairs, with gaps between the pairs. This will cause the queen, if present, to go on the facing surfaces of the frames, in the dark.
- Then go through the frames again.

- Of course she may not be there (unlikely) Are there eggs? or queen cells?
- She has been missed (highly likely)
- She has run off, onto the walls of the brood box or doubled back to a previous frame.
- Repeat this procedure.

Letter from Nobby Clark - Secretary Braintree Division.

I am writing as Secretary of Braintree Division, after receiving an enquiring from an EBKA member about the possible supply of queens from the late Les Ridgwell's apiary.

As you know, I have only quite recently taken on the duties of Secretary but the situation, as I understand it is as follows:- Les conveyed the apiary site in perpetuity to Braintree Beekeepers but his bees and equipment were left to Chris Chilver.

Les, since his retirement from work, had been running an almost full time queen rearing activity, although this had been scaled down in recent years, due to his health.

Chris, as you may not be aware, now lives in Suffolk and has a full time occupation. So the prospects of him engaging in queen rearing, on anything other than a small scale are minimal, at the moment.

If any changes in the situation occur, I will of course, let the EBKA Divisions know. Yours sincerely, Nobby (Clark).

Book of Commemoration.

The EBKA Book of Commemoration has become very out of date. I have volunteered to collate information so that we can bring it up to date and not forget the wonderful Essex members who have contributed to the craft of beekeeping.

If you have any records within Divisions, Records and photos of your own, or would like to write about any past member, then please send me contributions, Either by post or email. Many thanks.

Penny Learmonth, (Saffron Walden Trustee)
the Watch House, Watch House Green, Felsted. CM6 3EF

Email:
penny.learmonth@mail.ads14less.com



JULY 2008

BRAINTREE

Sun.27th.3pm. 'What is Normal!' Chris & Jo's apiary
Tel: 01284 789589

CHELMSFORD

Sat.12th.2.30pm - 5pm..Garden Meeting - Making up a Nuc for Winter. @ Links Drive Chelmsford. Practical demonstration- Refreshments - and a short talk on an innovative queen rearing hive by Richard Alabone.
Tel: 01245 490843 Brian Spencer to reserve a place at this popular meeting.

COLCHESTER

Sat.12th. Tending Show. Lawford Hall Park , near Manningtree Divisional Honey Show & Beekeeping Display - Tel: Show secretary, Penny Barker, 01255 830713.

Fri.18th.7pm. Barbeque - £4. per person. Bring your own drink & glass, if you can, please bring a chair. phone Penny Barker: 01255 830713, to book before Wed.16th July. Ask for directions if you do not know the way to Rowan Lodge.
Sat.26th. 3pm.Garden meeting, Gt.Bromley Tel: Martin Frostick : 01206 250263, to book & directions to Grove House

DH & MALDON

Sat.19th.11am.-5.30pm.Southminster Flower Show - Help needed..RSVP. Nan - 01632 773297
Sat.26th.Noon - 5pm.Tillingham Flower Show.
RSVP. Nan - 01632 773297

EPPINGFOREST

Sat.5th. Apiary meeting at Ted's - Extraction.

HARLOW

Thurs.3rd. at 7.45pm. Kings Church, Red Willows

ROMFORD

Fri.4th.8pm. Chadwick Hall, Main Rd.Gidea Park. .
Practical: HONEY PROCESSING - led by Jim McNeill

SAFFRON WALDON

Sat.5th.Noon. Annual BBQ & Apiary meeting by kind permission of Deryck Johnson, Meadowcroft, Wimbish. CB10 2BY

SOUTHEND

Wed..23rd.7.30pm. Preparation of Exhibits for Honey Show by Jim McNeill

CEC Meeting: Thursday 31st July.7.30pm.Chelmsford Methodist Church Hall.

AUGUST 2008

BRAINTREE

See next magazine.

CHELMSFORD

Mon.18th.7.30.-9pm. Trinity Hall, Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford. 'Preparing for Honey Shows' Techniques to produce some of the finest honey & honey products.

COLCHESTER

DH & MALDON

Sat.9th. Garden Meeting at 'Home Farm' Southminster - Skep Making : RSVP: Nan, 01632 773297

EPPING FOREST

.....**No Meeting**.....

HARLOW

Thurs.7th.7.45pm. Kings Church, Red Willows.

ROMFORD

Sun.3rd.3pm. Garden Meeting & BBQ @ Pat's Place.
'Winter Preparation' by Eileen Marrable.
Sun.24th/Mon.25th. Havering Show - Divisional Stand.

SAFFRON WALDON

Sat.30th.2.30.pm. 'Bee Safari' around apiaries in the neighbourhood of Saffron Waldon.

SOUTHEND

Wed.27th.7.30pm. Hawkwell Village Hall, Main Road, Hawkwell.. @Preparation for Winter' by Marlene Harris.

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE 20TH
SEPTEMBER 2008**

{The views expressed herein are not necessarily
those of the Editor or The EBKA}

CHELMSFORD DIVISION'S DISEASE TOUR.

Saturday 14th June 2008.

This was such an interesting day. It started at 8.30am and ended about 4pm.

The weather was perfect, lovely sunny blue skies and a gentle breeze. We visited apiaries in the villages surrounding Chelmsford, with about five car loads of beekeepers in the caravan.



Peter Heath (pictured on the left) was the Inspector and it was fascinating to watch Peter and Jean working their way together, through the hives where the frames were in 'cold mode', explaining their findings along the way.

The hives were all very healthy with only a trace of Wax moth & Varroa occasionally seen.

It certainly is a perfect way to learn 'reading the combs' and follows on from the work within the division.

We ended up at Brian Spencer (pictured above with Paul Harris), home, where his wife had prepared a delicious lunch for us. Thank you all for a memorable day....Ann Tillbrook

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Epping Forest Open Evening on 17th April 2008.

by Helen Chadwick.

As mentioned in the editorial last month, Epping Forest held an Open Evening in April. We wanted to introduce the honeybee and the enjoyment and benefits of beekeeping to the public.

We had never done anything like this before but we were determined that the evening should be a success.

Everyone put in hours of preparation to produce six presentations.

Jenny & Mike Johns produced a beautiful display demonstrating the life of the honeybee, using a vase of fresh flowers, diagrams, photographs and a microscope pollination and the anatomy of the bee, were very clearly explained.

Kevin Cook & Tiffany Levi displayed over 25 pieces of beekeeping equipment, each one labelled. It was quite amazing to see how much equipment we use.

Peter & Jackie Clark had a stand with moulded and rolled candles. Peter also had a couple of bottles of mead on show, which were a great hit with everyone who tasted it.

Ted Gradosielski displayed products of the hive, on his stand and although he was not selling honey, everyone who wanted to could have a taste of what is to come this season.

Ken Barker had a complete hive on show and Roy Cropley had a DVD playing on his laptop.

A never ending supply of tea and coffee was supplied by Emma Hewitt & Jackie Gradosielski, which was really welcomed by Ken who, spent the entire evening answering the many visitors questions.

The demonstration hive which was the central attraction in the hall had people 'swarming' round it and kept Ken very busy. For such an open evening, this was an essential item.

With over 30 members of the public attending and about 20 beekeepers present, the hall was really buzzing. It was a learning experience for the visitors and divisional members alike. To date Epping Forest have 3 new signed-up associate members and very many potential buyers for our honey. If just a few people understand the importance of honeybees & have come to tolerate them, then the evening was definately a tremendous success.

Essex Beekeepers Association

Present a one day seminar for the continuing Professional Development of Beekeepers of all levels & experience at Great Saling Village Hall on Wednesday 23rd July 2008. Picotts Lane, Great Saling Essex CM7 5DW

“Managing Health - Not Coping with Disease”

With Regional Bee Inspector Andy Wattam

This relaxed and friendly day will be a mixture of Presentations, Discussion Workshops

&

a Practical Bee Demonstration to include; Group Discussion & Recognition of Disease and Exotic Threats.

Apiary Health Planning - ‘Looking at the Big Picture’

Effective Sample Gathering

Pesticides & Beekeepers, The Wildlife Investigation Service

Assessment & Examination of Actual Diseased Combs.

(Under Safe Conditions - Disposable gloves & aprons provided and removed by National Bee Unit Personnel).

This is a Full Day Seminar from 10am - 4.30pm

Important: You will need to bring a packed lunch and also Clean Beekeeping Protective Clothing.

Tea & Coffee provided. Certificate of Attendance.

Booking Essential Please Contact Eileen Marrable: 01708 229441.

EDITORIAL



I have seen so many changes, since I joined the EBKA, nearly five years ago but before that everything went on the same, for many, many, years. It seems that there has been a revolution in beekeeping.

In this time. we have gone from Varroa being a disease in other countries, to nearly being overcome by it, to conquering it. And this has all been turned around by our Senior Beekeepers, who have all worked so hard to bring about change in a most dedicated way. However, Varroa is just the first of very serious bee diseases to reach our shores and others are waiting 'in or on the wings'.

June was such an interesting and busy month, with Queen Rearing, Disease Tours, Fetes & Garden Meetings all going on as well as inspecting ones own hives.

I have put the two months dates back to back, so that they can be cut out and carried in a wallet or handbag. Thank you all for the work you put into these dates.

Do any of you have photos of bees and beekeepers which you could let me have, particularly coloured ones? I spend ages in the garden trying to catch a bee on a flower, often to no avail!

Well that's all for now Folks. I hope you enjoy this edition.

Ann Tillbrook.



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www.beedata.com

6

EBKA Display Boards

Two sets of display boards are available
For Divisions to borrow for Shows, etc.

One set is retained in North Essex,
The other in South Essex.

North: Robert Pickford 01371 870351

FINDING THE QUEEN - Excerpts from 'Practical Beekeeping' by Clive de Bruyn.

The 10 day routine inspection does not always require the queen to be found. It is sufficient to see eggs laid in a regular pattern, which will indicate her presence in the colony within the last 3 days. It is sometimes far from easy to find her, due to difficult circumstances or a negative attitude to the job in hand.

- Always have a positive attitude, **THINK QUEEN** - imprint her in your memory - Construct a picture of her in your mind - focus on her, she may be amber or black.
- Ignore all the others.
- mature queens in full lay have a long heavy abdomen, which is a rounded torpedo shape (not blunt like a drones).
- She moves about the comb in a sedate, graceful and elegant manner.
- Her attendant bees form a court around her, facing her in a circle, sweeping outwards as she moves.
- The virgin queen is more active than a queen in lay, her abdomen is more pointed and slightly smaller.
- Worker bees pay her no attention.

OPENING THE HIVE & LOOKING FOR HER.

- Use smoker sparingly - remove supers with inner cover on - gently smoke across queen excluder to encourage her to go down. She will run from both light & smoke.
- Lift queen excluder & check she is not on it - most queens in lay stay on the brood comb all the time, in the dark.
- Have an empty nuc box handy to put 2 frames in after examining them & also the frame with the queen when you find her. these 2 frames will expose the face of the next frame.
- Carefully lift the next frame out, directly up, in its vertical position, so as not to touch the sides of the brood box.
- Quite often the queen is seen scurrying away on the surface of the next frame, if this happens, lay the frame down and lift out the frame with the queen on it and put the frame in the nuc box, to keep her safe.
- If the queen is not seen at this point then carry on examining the frames, picking up where you left off.
- Always keep the frame vertical over the brood box, scan the frame, thinking queen all the time, keep focused.
- Replace the frame towards the side of the hive, keeping the big gap. This prevents the queen from moving onto the other frames if she has been missed.
- Do not be distracted by bees emerging, queen cells or anything else - Think queen!
- Look all over each frame, especially round the edges of the frame and at any holes in the comb, where the queen might run to the other side.....continued on page 15



THE ESSEX BEEKEEPERS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

20th September 2008.

**The Langham Community Centre
Langham, Near Colchester.**

Hosted by Colchester Division of EBKA.

SPEAKERS:

Selwyn Wilkins - DEFRA

Professor Ted Benton - Bumblebees

Essex Wildlife Trust - A Treat in Store

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SPRAY & DISEASE Report from **Eileen Marrable**

(notes from East Anglia Bee Industry Forum

Friday 2nd May 2008 - Bedfordshire).

Over the Eastern Counties, EFB has increased by about 50%

AFB is about the same over the year. The policy of destruction seems to be working well.

Very little disease seems to be found by beekeepers, who need to be more vigilant.

Exotic pest surveillance is ongoing with random tests and the number of inspections for Exotic Pests are increasing.

Beekeepers need to be aware of the care needed when importing queens, even from the EU. The risks are even higher for anyone importing nucs.

Continuing Professional development for beekeepers- (7 events were held last year with 2857 beekeepers attending).

Varroa - There are not many places where mites are not resistant.

The DLC course at York is fully booked for this year and bookings are being taken for next year.

It is hoped to increase the number of inspections for AFB and EFB in 2008.

Giles Budge from the CSL gave a presentation about EFB. T

There is good evidence of symptomless infection in colonies and the fact that resistance is genetic.

Abnormal colony loss- It was felt that percentage colony losses have a lot to do with the weather and maybe failing queens, due to poor mating last year and also if colonies have both Chronic Bee Paralysis virus and Nosema cerana.

There is a European project gathering data on the subject.

Deformed Wing virus is the best indicator of a weak or failing colony.

Deformed Wing virus + Chronic Bee Paralysis virus doubles risk of death.

Chronic Bee Paralysis virus is not vectored by Varroa - it is just present in the colony.

There is evidence that Varroa damage persists long after the Varroa has been treated.

Nosema cerana is present in England and Wales - there is no dysentery visible with Nosema cerana infections, but a slow build up.

The instructions for administering Fumidil 'B' have completely changed.

Continuing work at CSL includes-

Estimating the value of honeybees as pollinators.

Molecular methods for detection of viruses.

Work on Exotic pests.

Varroacides - there is a gap in the market but CSL was pleased to report that there had been approaches from commercial firms about the problem - So perhaps there is hope.

These are just my general notes jotted down as the meeting progressed - Eileen Marrable.

Summary of CEC Meeting 29/5/08

1 Membership register

The BBKA is managing the membership register in house. New members are insured as soon as your treasurer informs the Essex Membership Secretary and this information is sent to the BBKA. Each Division will be receiving a list of members twice annually in May and September, so check with your local treasurer to ensure your details are correct.

2 Bee Health Day

About 40 people have registered to attend the Bee Health Day to be run by Andy Wattam on the 23rd July. Enjoy the course; remember to bring your own lunch.

3 Food & Farming Day

Writtle College has hosted a day on Food and Farming in May. About 3,000 children between the ages of 8 and 11 attended and enjoyed the bee stand manned by Chelmsford Division.

4 Courses

Most Divisions have had beginner practical classes during the spring. Romford and Southend have had Disease Bee Tours headed by Seasonal Bee Inspectors. All participants felt they learned a lot. (Maldon will be holding one.)

5 EBKA Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund was set up years ago by Essex Beekeepers to help sponsor one-off projects. Please use this fund if you are hoping to do some local research or a one-off project. Check with your Trustee on whom to approach for this funding.

6 BBKA Research Funding Campaign

Support the BBKA Research Funding Campaign and lobby your MP for an increase in funding for bee research.

7 Propositions for ADM 2009

Discuss proposals to take to the Annual Delegates Meeting of the BBKA next year. Here is one proposed by the Essex Delegate:

“ The BBKA shall endorse the use of an antibiotic approved for the treatment of EFB *only* where it is –

- 1 found late in the season, *and*
- 2 subject to an agreement to shook swarm in the following spring.

Supporting information:

In April, Defra released 5 files regarding *Consultation on a draft strategy for protecting and improving the health of honeybees in England and Wales*.

The Draft was produced in consultation with the Bee Farmers Association of the UK, the BBKA, CONBA, BDI, NDB and other beekeeping organisations, and the National Beekeeping Unit. It outlines a 10-year strategy and approaches to its implementation.

Responses are required before 29th August 2008. Besides organisations, individual beekeepers are invited to respond. The strategy will profoundly affect our lives: it is therefore worth reading the draft and responding.

For more information see <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/bee-health/>

The following appears on page 31 of the main Consultation document, setting out why the presumption will be against treatment of EFB with antibiotics.

18. In relation to EFB:

a) DEFRA & WAG will continue with current statutory controls for EFB to further reduce its incidence to the lowest levels achievable, including notifiable disease status and disease control by compulsory destruction of infected hives and destruction or sterilization of associated equipment and materials, or by appropriate husbandry controls, or by treatment with antibiotics supplied under veterinary prescription.

b) As the most effected control method, compulsory destruction of infected hives and destruction or sterilization of associated equipment and materials will be the preferred option, although decisions on methods would be subject to the time of year and the number of infected colonies. The second option is appropriate husbandry controls and integrated pest management. The presumption will be **against treatment of EFB with antibiotics** due to their poor effectiveness, potential residue in honey, the possible development of resistance by the causative bacterium, and the risk that treatment could mask the incidence of AFB infection in the hive.

The purpose of the proposition to the 2009 BBKA ADM is to enable the BBKA to state their support for the Bee Health service's strategy for minimising the incidence of EFB.....end of report.