

## Harlow Bees-letter March 2015

**Bee quote of the month: *Emily Dickinson*;**  
"His labor is a chant, His idleness a tune;  
Oh, for a bee's experience, Of clovers and of noon"

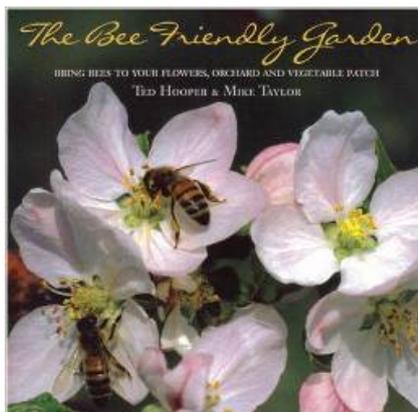
## Upcoming Meetings

**5th March** - Spring Preparation  
**2nd April** - Techniques, tricks and inventions, then Swarm Control - various techniques



## Secretary Notices Meeting news

Last meeting we had Professor Mick Lynn come from East Sussex to talk to us on Gardening for Honey Bees. While giving an engaging talk, he also recommended those interested in choosing beneficial plants for year round bee forage would benefit from Ted Hooper's Book "The Bee Friendly Garden" as pictured here.



## Events

As appointed at the AGM Pauline is our new **Show Secretary** and she's definitely not been napping on the job. **26th July** we are booked for the *Great and Little Hallingbury Flower Show* as last year; this year it is in Little Hallingbury (last year was Great Hallingbury's turn). On the **1st & 2nd August** we are booked to return to Parndon wood for an event there. With another 3 events potentially happening,



we are hoping for sunny event days like last year, and like last year will be looking for volunteers to help out handling bees, engaging with the public or just helping to set up, whatever time people can spare to help us "promote and further the craft of beekeeping" through engaging with the public. Volunteers, as last year, are invited to sell their honey (etc) at the events

## Beekeeping Course

Number of paid up attendees are building nicely, there are still a few spaces left if you would like a refresher or know someone who would like to be a beekeeper. "Introduction to Beekeeping" course starts Tuesday 10th March - for details please go to the website <http://www.harlowbees.co.uk/course> or contact Pauline (01279 411941)

## This month elsewhere

The European Union has declared the Isle of Man as being officially free of the Varroa bee pest - the result of efforts since 2008.

Conversely in South Australia, Bee industry leaders say regulations aimed at stemming the spread of small hive beetle into their state are expensive and ineffective.

A recent study shows as pollinators decline, Human health could be impacted dramatically in areas that are already troubled like parts of Mozambique.

A study has found that starving bees lose their self-control and act impulsively, choosing small immediate rewards over waiting for larger rewards.

In California Almond growers are planting wildflowers to help bees - building the numbers up to pollinate the crops

It had been noted that In addition to fuel, nectar from various plant species contains chemical compounds that reduce the numbers of a common gut parasite in bumblebees.

## Swarms

As we approach swarm season, how ready are you to cope?  
Do you know what your plan of action is to :

- dissuade the bees from wanting to swarm in the first place
- recognise the signs the bees are planning to swarm
- prevent them from swarming with techniques such as artificial swarming
- cope if (when) you bees do swarm to
  - try to retain your bees
  - prevent them from causing a nuisance to others?

For answers to questions like these we have our yearly "Spring Preparation" talk on March 5th - this year hosted by Danny Nicoll and Martin Cavalier. Then next month, after tea, we will be looking at some of other techniques of swarm control.

If it all goes a bit wrong - Harlow Swarm collectors can be found on <http://harlowbees.co.uk/swarms/>.

### Half-an-hour before sex

Since I hatched out I have been fed Royal Jelly, a mixture of honey, amino acids and pheromones, although the composition varied as I grew. I was in a mating nuc box with a frame of honey and one of pollen and another of brood. There were masses of bees, most of them young. All I did was eat, eat, eat. No wonder I'm so big. When I emerged as a virgin queen I was again made to eat. Now after five days my ovaries have developed and I am ready to mate.

### Half-an-hour after sex

That was hectic. A warm, sunny noon and I flew up 50 feet and went a mile to escape closely related drones (I did not want to produce diploid drones). I had my sting chamber open to release a pheromone which drives the males crazy and within five minutes thirteen had mated with me. I now have thousands of sperm to put in my spermatheca. In a few days I will start my egg-laying career and soon I'll be laying 1500 every day. I'll produce Queen Mandibular Pheromone which every bee needs. We won't swarm but build up to fill a brood chamber. That will require lots of honey and pollen.

*Roy Copley*

A new study by Dundee and St Andrews universities "demonstrates for the first time" the presence of the insecticides in plant pollen and nectar — even in tiny amounts — is having a catastrophic impact.

"Rapid behavioral maturation accelerates failure of stressed honey bee colonies" i.e. when bees move on to tasks while too young, due to forager loss, then hives fail.

The Great British Bee Count is back! From 1-31 May 2015  
[www.greatbritishbeecount.co.uk/](http://www.greatbritishbeecount.co.uk/)

Other EBKA divisions have talks that **you** can attend <http://ebka.org/whats-on/ebka-programme/> or in the Essex Magazine each month

### Starving Bees

Don't forget March is when most hives are lost. Stores are at their end, overwintered bees are getting old & dying, its often too cold to fly to get more forage AND there are thousands of new mouths to feed.

### For sale

**David McCorkindale**  
(01279 442509)

Is selling a 'Fragile Planet' observation hive - fits 2 national brood & 1 super frame  
- would like £80 for it

## Flow™ Hive

Highlighted in the news recently is the story of the innovative Flow™ Hive. The result of 10 years of research it claims to allow honey to be harvested directly from the hive without opening the hive and with little disturbance to the bees. It does this by having the bees build comb on special foundation which is mechanically split to allow the honey to drain down between the



cells into a trough below and then piped out of the hive. The foundation is then rejoined allowing the bees to start refilling cells again.

While some say this is revolutionary, others say it is a fad. Some are concerned that people will have hives and not inspect them, because this solution means that they can get the honey without the 'trouble' of opening the hive.

One thing for sure you get a really good view of bees filling the cells with honey. Personally I can't see how it will be cleaned, for the sake of the bees and the honey, but otherwise I can appreciate not having to clear bees from supers and taking more frequent harvests with less processing. Still, solidifying rape may well and truly mess up plans.



The Flow hive was put up on a 'crowdsourcing' site, indiegogo, which allows the public to invest in start-up companies. It went on sale at midnight Monday 23rd Feb, 4½ days later they have made \$3.5million US. At \$400 for a full set of frames or \$600 for a full hive, its not the faint of heart (or wallet rather).

### Small Hive Beetle update

SHB has been found it a total of **60 apiaries**. No more incidents have been found since 23rd December. While more sites have been explored no further infestations have been found.

<http://goo.gl/OBnhU0>

**Roy Cropley (01992 626668)**

- Quality Wax at rock bottom prices
- Remember to recycle wax with Roy

### Division committee

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David Tyler

**Vice Chair**

David Tidmas

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**News Letter** Nick Holmes & Roy Cropley