

Harlow Bees-letter April 2015

Bee quote of the month:

"Beekeeping is not for fools, it turns out pretty soon"

Karl Weiss

Upcoming Meetings

2nd April - Techniques, tricks and inventions, then Swarm Control - various techniques

7th May - Queen Breeding & How to successfully introduce queens



Secretary Notices

Last meeting we had a lesson in Spring Preparation from Danny Nicoll and Martin Cavalier. Also last month we had the Essex AGM - where Ian Nichols of Epping Forest was made county Chairman and Pat Allen was voted in as Education Secretary and EBKA President. Jane Ridler moves to another education role to support county members as her term has come to an end.

Apiary news

Dear all, I'm happy to report that we have an apiary; thanks to the ongoing efforts of committee members. It is at Parndon wood and has room for 4 division owned hives for exhibition and education purposes. Danny Nicoll is going to be lead of the apiary support team and needs volunteers. We hope to have bees in place as soon as possible.

Apiary support team

We need volunteers, please, to get the apiary off the ground and inspect bees on a rota. Volunteers MUST :

- have some experience of keeping bees
- have been on a recognised beekeeping course (site requirement)
- be able to recognise disease and swarming signs
- be willing to undertake regular inspections as part of a rota
- be able to work as part of a team to make the project and ongoing support a success.

Apply to Nick on wwwcight@cight.com or 077 307 357 52 (to be forwarded for committee consideration)

Auctions

There are number of Beekeeping auctions upcoming for those who may be interested

- 11th April - Reigate Beekeepers, Mickleham, Surrey
- 25th April - West Sussex BKA, Pulborough, RH20 1DL

This month elsewhere

Honeybee Health Initiatives Award launched by Vita - open to any beekeeping group.

Chemical giant Bayer has failed in its attempt to sue Friends of the Earth Germany over its claims that its pesticide Thiachlopid harms bees.



Bayer labelled neonic products as 'Bee-safe' which were proved not to be. Beware Provado contains Thiachlopid.

Nearly one in 10 of Europe's wild bee species face extinction, says study

First ever assessment of all Europe's 1,965 bee species finds them in dramatic decline, with intensive farming, insecticide use and climate change blamed

One of the UK's top bee researchers claims that a study quoted two years ago by UK ministers to justify opposing a European Union ban on neonicotinoids actually shows that the pesticides can harm the insects.

Honey bees use different sets of genes, regulated by two distinct mechanisms, to fight off viruses, bacteria and gut parasites, according to researchers at Penn State and the Georgia Institute of Technology.

The findings may help scientists develop honey bee treatments that are tailored to specific types of infections.

- May 10th - Yalding Bee Fayre between Maidstone and Tonbridge in Kent

Winter Losses

Many of us have suffered significant losses this year, I have lost 2 hives to nosema and 2 to crystalised stores/isolation starvation. With this in mind we would like to look to how people have got on across the division - I have made this form for those on the internet <http://harlowbees.co.uk/division/winter-losses/> or you can tell me at the meeting or call me on 077 307 357 52.

Used Jars by Roy Cropley

When an elderly beekeeper retired I bought his jars. I paid for them before I saw them. They were in old cardboard boxes in a dusty, spider-infested shed. The metal lids on the jars were rusty and the jars were dirty. I threw the lids away and washed the jars. I dried them and baked them in the oven to sterilize them. An expensive lesson.

An Essex beekeeper died and I bought 3 boxes of his jars. Each had his label stuck on with waterproof glue. After soaking to remove the paper I used solvent to get rid of the glue. It was hours of work and several cups of hot chocolate.

Recently our elected MP's in Brussels decided that used jars that had contained jam, pickles and honey should not be reused. A strange idea but typical of our politicians. Only milk bottles could be used again because the companies had excellent washing facilities.

I think I will use the jars I have cleaned after all the hours I spent on cleaning them. And I will be more careful when offered old jars.

Many hives are full of solid honey and dead bees. Bees like to live on empty combs and starve when their stores are rock hard. Last autumn was mild and ivy honey was produced. It tastes awful and sets hard. The bees love it whilst it is runny. Soon it sets hard and bees cannot uncap it. It's no good hefting the hive, it will feel heavy and give the impression that all's well.

Recycle your old wax. Foundation can only be made from it. Wax from cappings is easiest to turn into blocks of clean wax. The black brood combs need a bit more attention but it is difficult to tell what was cappings and what was brood. The black is due to the six skins that each larva/pupa sheds. Foundation is made from pure wax, free of disease and contamination. Please recycle.

Researchers have characterized the gut microbiome of honey bee queens - this may lead to techniques to improve her health or reproductive success.

French Honey production lowest in 20 years, 1/3rd of 1995 levels.

Some beekeepers are skeptical about the 'revolutionary' IndieGoGo Flow hive - one said "It's a rather expensive gimmick, and it would not behoove any serious beekeeper to buy this product."

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

Nosema testing

Martin Cavalier has offered to test anyone's bees for Nosema get in touch on 01279 422975

For sale

- Wax for sale
- recycle wax with Roy
Roy Cropley (01992 626668)

Division committee

President, Spray Liaison & Swarm

Liaison Danny Nicoll

Chairman & Librarian

David Tyler

Vice Chair

David Tidmas

Secretary & Web Editor

Nick Holmes

Treasurer Pauline Tidmas

Divisional Trustee Martin Cavalier

Training Liaison Mike Barke

Council Liaison Brian Bull

Mailing Officer Zena Wilkins

News Letter Nick Holmes & Roy Cropley