

Harlow Bees-letter - July 2015

Upcoming Meetings

2nd July - "Photographing bees" - in nature & down the microscope, then Preparing for the Harlow Honey Show

6th August - "Harlow Honey Show"



Secretary Notices

Last meeting we had a great talk from Danny all about wasps - I can't speak to it too much as I was busy in the kitchen making the tea - but I'm told that it was very educational.

Events

We have 3 events coming up and we will need people to come and help. <http://harlowbees.co.uk/events/>

26th July : 12-4pm - Great and Little Hallingbury Flower Show

1st & 2nd Aug : 11-4pm - Bee Weekend at 'Parndon Wood' Nature Reserve

19th September : 12-4pm - St Mary-at-Latton Church - medieval event to celebrate 1000years of the church

We hope to have an observation hive, bee leaflets, a demonstration hive, candle rolling and lots of other fun things. But we can only engage with the public in this way if we have enough helpers; and that means you!

We will need people to sell honey, to talk to the public about bees, to show kids and adults alike how to do candle rolling, do bee demonstrations and 'knit' skeps. And if you are a helper then you can bring your honey along to sell (subject to it having suitable labels information). Last year those bringing honey did rather well out of honey sales and some sold out.

Becraft Hangouts

<http://www.bee-craft.com/beekeeping/hangouts/>

Becraft has been doing 'hangouts' where members of the public can mail in questions on a theme to be answered by expert beekeepers on video.

The next one is on "*Beekeeping Photography - all the latest tips and tricks from producing photos to print and frame to photos you want to share on social media.*" **and is 15th July at 8pm.** If people have questions this should provide a nice follow up to our talk this month.



This month elsewhere

New research has found that if a hive is raised to 40C for 2 hrs the varroa are destroyed but the bees are unharmed.

Honey-based mead may curb antibiotic resistance. A Swedish recipe has been shown to kill every bacteria they have tried with it so far.

In America EPA is proposing to prohibit the applications of pesticides that are highly toxic to bees when crops are in bloom and bees are under contract for pollination services. These restrictions would prohibit application of most insecticides and some herbicides during bloom.

Researchers at the University of Cologne have successfully trained honey bees to tell the difference between heroin and cocaine.

They claim the insects could eventually replace sniffer-dogs at airports.

The Presidential Task Force Report on Bee and Pollinator Health has been widely condemned for failing to address the primary cause of bee-deaths in America: pesticides.

Alaskan bumble bees, for example, are so well adapted to their environment that they have been observed in temperatures as cold as -3.6°C during snowfall, during the night, and above the tree line. Many of the berries, nuts, and seeds consumed by birds, mammals, and other insects are also a result of bumble bee pollination of native woody and herbaceous plants.

While insecticides are a known deadly threat, two studies find that bees exposed to fungicides are smaller, sickly

Most years oil-seed rape provides a great harvest of honey. We used to have a honey which was honey-coloured and took months before it thought of going solid. But OSR has a high glucose content and this readily crystallises out to produce white solid honey. Combs of OSR on the hive are often ignored by the bees. A colony will starve in the winter in the midst of plenty. So beekeepers should follow the the advice of the old music hall audience and 'Get 'em off.'

Leaving combs lying around exposed is a bad practice. It can give rise to spread of disease and robbing. When bees find it so difficult to use it in the hive but can find a crack in a hive of solid OSR and clean it all out it is unbelievable.

OSR honey should be removed when the fields are mostly green. Remove supers in the morning, shake and brush the bees off, extract in a warm room and return the combs the same evening. If there is nothing coming in the bees will go hungry. A colony consumes two pounds of stores every day and so a gallon of syrup will keep them fed, Of course we do not feed and then extract it. Liquid OSR honey in a warm room is very fluid and can be filtered through a double stainless steel strainer and then a fine nylon strainer. Left overnight the bubbles will rise and may be skimmed off. We produce naturally crystallised honey by bottling it the next day and allowing it to stand at 14 degrees. At this temperature the crystals of glucose form quickly and are fine.

Soft-set honey is made by mixing with 10% fine honey at 14 degrees. So much wrong advice is given by experts on this mixing. No need to heat. Just put it through a sieve such as a gravy strainer. Solid comb? Oh dear! Just cut it out and put it in a bucket in a warm box for two days at about 40 degrees.

by Roy Cropley

Feedback and more

This newsletter is presented by Nick Holmes with a monthly piece from Roy Cropley, but we rarely get any feedback. If you have any opinions or suggestions please email secretary@harlowbees.co.uk. Any input for the newsletter would also be gratefully received.

and declining in 'chemical cocktail' farmlands.

Organic pest deterrent 'neem oil' may harm bumble bees. Bumblebee survival and reproduction impaired by the pesticide a study has found

For sale

Nucs of bees

5 frame national nucs £120

Terry Thrussell (01279 842367)

Buckets

- Honey buckets £2

David Tyler (01279 730228)

Wax for sale

- recycle wax with Roy

Roy Cropley (01992 626668)

Division committee

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News Letter Nick Holmes & Roy Cropley