

Harlow Bees-letter - March 2017

Upcoming Meetings

March 2 - Planting for pollinators with Darren Lerigo

April 6 - Bee Spacing* with Bob Smith, NDB



Secretary Notices

Last month we had the annual Spring preparation talk and then we had a talk from David McCorkindale taking us through the options for education in the BBKA.

Talks

We have a great talk coming up this month from Darren Lerigo, who is coming to talk to us about gardening for bees. Darren is also going to be one of the speakers at next month's Tede Hooper Memorial Lectures

Next month we are having Bob Smith, whom some of you may know from the Essex conference. Bob is coming to talk to us about the importance of bee space in a hive and why it is important to buy the right kit to make your beekeeping that little bit easier.

Essex and wider events

There are bee related events coming up further afield than Harlow :

- **Bee Tradex** – 4th March – Stoneleigh, CV8 2LG
- **EBKA AGM** – 18 March – Chelmsford, CM1 3RP
- **The Ted Hooper Memorial Lecture** – 2nd April – Coggeshall CO6 1TG
- **BBKA Spring Convention** – 7-9 April – Shropshire, TF10 8NB
- **West Sussex Beekeepers Auction** - Saturday 22nd April, Pulborough, RH20 1DL.
- **Bee health & disease recognition day** – Thurs 15th June – Copped hall, Epping, CM16 5HS

Google group

We are going to be resetting our google groups - both the one for information and discussions and the one the newsletter gets mailed out to. If we get something wrong, please get in touch on wwwcight@gmail.com.

News from the outside world

Defra have published a [Generic Contingency Plan for Plant and Bee Health in England](#). This describes how Defra and operational partners prepare for, and would respond to, an outbreak of a plant or bee pest or disease in England. Defra has combined existing approaches to bee and plant health in one document for the first time to broaden the overall approach to pest and disease control.

Preparing for the new beekeeping year

Nick has written [a blog post](#) about how to make dummy boards rather than buying them.



Tea and Coffee

Its was agreed at the AGM that tea and coffee would be done by different people each month from now on, and that we would be asking for a volunteer for the next meeting at the end of each meeting. Please be forthcoming in this.

Welcome Spring

The weather is mild and bees are flying and bringing in pollen. Bees are eating fondant and it looks like the queens are laying. Some years we get a cold snap after a warm February just to kill off the young shoots on the potato plants. In that case they could do with help with their stores. Soon the mouse guards can come off.

Spring inspection

There are five things to look for:- 1. Find the queen. Is she marked? If not mark her. Does she look healthy and active? Is she laying? 2. Is there room for the queen to lay? 3. Are there enough stores until your next visit? 4. Are the bees healthy with no sign of disease? 5. Are there any signs of swarming?

Comb change

Every aspect of beekeeping leads to variations of opinion. Some people have combs which are thirty years old, others change their combs every year. The super combs are easier to keep from year to year. But brood combs may harbour disease or damp pollen. Or be filled with hard honey. You may keep the combs for years. Or change some each year. The Bailey comb change is practised by some. This involves putting a brood chamber with foundation on top of the old one and feeding with a gallon of syrup. When the queen is laying in the new combs a queen excluder stops her going back down on the old combs. When all the brood has hatched out the old combs are removed and the wax is recycled.

Complete comb renewal

When the weather is fair and bees are flying in late February or early March the bees may be moved off their old combs and on to new foundation. Move the hive to the side and replace with a clean brood chamber with frames of foundation. There is a queen excluder between floor and new brood chamber. Find the queen and put her in a cage. Shake all the bees on to the new combs. Put in the queen. Feed with syrup. The Q/E keeps the queen in so they do not swarm. After a few days remove the Q/E. Dispose of all the old comb including the stores, pollen and small amount of brood with most of the varroa.

By Roy Cropley

For sale

Buckets

- Honey buckets £2

David Tyler (01279 730228)

Wax for sale

- recycle wax with Roy

Roy Cropley (01992 626668)

Division committee

President Danny Nicoll

Chairman & Librarian David Tyler

Vice Chair David McCorkindale

Secretary & Web Editor & Swarm Liaison Nick Holmes

Treasurer Pauline Tidmas

Divisional Trustee Martin Cavalier

Spray Liaison David Swindale

Training Liaison David McCorkindale

Council Liaison Brian Bull

Newsletter Nick Holmes

Mailing Officer Lisa McCorkindale