

Harlow Bees-letter May 2018

Upcoming Meetings

3rd May – Queen Rearing with Ted Gradosielski

7th June – The Importance of Drones with Chad Colby Blake



Divisional Newsletter:

Come on folks we are still looking for a member to volunteer to collate and write the monthly newsletter. Nick has now taken on the role of Central Executive Committee Trustee. Guidance will be given. Please email Pauline @ pauline.bees@hotmail.co.uk if you are interested. Various members of the committee write pieces monthly or during the year which is always a great place to start and there are set deadlines to adhere to.

Secretary Notices:

At the 5th April meeting Robert Smith NDB gave a very informative talk on the benefits and reasons of why and when to do a Shook Swarm. We had a good turn out with members very interested in reasons for the producing a new clean environment for their colonies.

- Replacing or cleaning floor, brood box, crown board and replacing all old frames with new frames with foundation help in removing Varroa as you are destroying all brood and allows recycling of old wax if put through a Solar Wax Melter.
- Starting back with foundation helps in Swarm Control as it takes a few weeks for the drawing of cells with production of brood to bees hatching so numbers are maintained.

Membership Secretary - Winter Losses:

Thanks to all the members who replied and gave details with regards to winter losses, the results from the basic sums are:

Total of 42 replies from 62 members with bee colonies

Total of 245 colonies going into winter

Total of 170 colonies coming through winter and spring build up

Total of 75 colonies lost

Total of 30.6% colonies lost.

This is such a large number of colonies and it's a great shame it happens every year. This winter however seems to have been a little extreme in some cases. If we could identify better practices or timings with regards to our Winter Preparations and Varroa Control it could help over future winters. One thing we obviously cannot control is the weather which plays a large part in the losses. It is worth looking into this a little deeper and we are looking into putting together a small survey, we will keep you informed.

Divisional Library:

We have gradually been adding books to our reading library which all members can borrow. David Tyler is responsible for the library and he brings them to every meeting. Why don't you have a look?

Divisional Events:

- **Sunday 8th July** – 11am – 5pm Celebration Event @ the Newly Created Wildflower Meadow in the Harlow Town Park, Stort Valley Meadows.
- **15th July** – On a Sunday (date to follow) Hallingbury Flower Show
- **August** – Weekend Education Event (date to follow) @ Parndon Wood Nature Reserve, Harlow

Essex Association Dates:

Essex Honey Show, Saturday 1st September, Orsett Show, Orsett Showground.

EBKA Conference, Saturday 3rd November, Chelmsford City Racecourse.

So Beekeeping Resumes:



So the sun is now shining and you are out cutting your grass, just like the Council. Some of the best flowers at this time of year are 'Dandelions', *Taraxacum Officinale*. Cutting your grass will cut the main flower heads off but Don't cut too short (around 4" is good) otherwise you are cutting off the stems of the flowers which follow. This is an essential flower for the bees as they are abundant and full of yellow pollen. Did you know the pollen turns orange when the bees collect it?

The month of May brings Oil Seed Rape if the farmers are growing it in your area. This is one of the best plants to assist in the colony build up. Ted Hooper once said "There is around 250 pound of honey on one acre but you won't have enough bees to get it off. However having a 'mono' pollen can make the colony rather touchy".

Field Beans, Borage and Echium follow out in the farmer's fields, which is great if you are nearby or can move hives to them.

Also we tend to forget about the trees and bushes which have burst into beautiful small white flowers, such as Black Thorn (perfect 'slows' for 'slow gin').

Many colonies are small as we are around 5 weeks behind this year due to the weather with many of the real early flowering plants flowering now. Watch out for Pollen levels; they are high.

Bee Rustling:

Unfortunately we have just learnt that 30 Nucs were stolen out in Bobbingworth. Please make sure your colonies are safe if taking them out to crops or where ever you site them.

Honey Jars:

No information has been received so far with regards to the large bulk buy that is due very soon; this will be sent as soon as it is received.

Items Always For Sale

Honey Buckets £2.00
David Tyler 01279 730228

Wax
Roy Copley 01992 626668

Division Committee

President Danny Nicoll
Chair/Librarian David Tyler
Vice Chair Mike Barke
Secretary/Web/Trustee Nick Holmes
Treasurer Pauline Tidmas
Mailing Officer Lisa McCorkindale

Swarm Liaison David Swindale
Spray Liaison Ben Hart
Training David McCorkindale
Council Liaison Ralph Cullen
Newsletter Vacant