

On the 18th July I decided to go on an early morning bike ride at 5.00 a.m. to the apiary to check on a swarm I had taken there the week before. The swarm was doing well.

As I turned to leave I saw another swarm on a nearby branch hanging just like a bunch of grapes. There was no hive available at the apiary so I broke off the branch with the swarm attached put it in my rucksack which I had transported my veil in.

On my way out of the apiary I met the warden and asked him to open the gate for me. He saw one single bee on my rucksack and said "you are taking a bee with you". Little did he know that I had a whole swarm inside the rucksack!

When I got home I transferred the swarm to a nucleus and now have a nice colony with a good laying queen.

By Fillipo Negri - Romford Beekeeper



"Hurry up girls, don't lag behind – you all wanted to ride on a bike!"
Illustrated by Arthur Huggins

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February 2016

Romford Division

EBKA Charity Number: 1031419

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Committee Meeting: Thursday 10th March, 7.30, Jim's Place, Collier Row

March meeting: Thursday 3rd March
Honey Extraction Demonstration: by Jim McNeill

Beekeeping notes for February ~ written by Pat Allen

This has been an extraordinary winter. We have finally had a cold spell, which is good, but the weather is warming up again as I write these notes. However, it is very unlikely that February will be warm enough to open the hives for inspection of frames. You may want to put on a small patty of fondant and/or pollen, but do not disturb the bees more than that.

With the mild weather, there may have been brood all through, and as a result the varroa population may be significant. It would be wise to give your bees a varroa treatment at the end of February or in early March – even if you used oxalic acid earlier on (oxalic acid does not kill varroa in sealed brood cells). One tray of Apiguard should be enough at this time of year. Remember to put the floor insert in when treating.

Get your spare equipment ready, you will be needing it soon enough.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions were due on 1st January. Deadline for renewing if you wish to remain a member is Friday 19th February. If you have not renewed by that date you will be removed from the BBKA register, thus losing insurance cover, and you will not receive any more papers. If you have lost your subscription form then email Pat Allen for another one. Many thanks to those who have already paid.

January meeting – AGM

The meeting was ably run by Jim McNeill as usual. There were no propositions and changes in committee are:

EBKA Trustee – Paul Wiltshire

Programme Secretary – no volunteers at meeting; subsequently Janet Chipperfield has taken this on.

Bulk Buys Secretary – Lorna Pattle

Lay Members – Ruth Huggins stood down, Michael Webb has joined

Honey extractors: Pádraig Floyd holds a third extractor to cover the western part of the division.

Reminders were given of significant dates/events this year; the division has responsibilities at all of them:

EBKA AGM: Saturday 19th March – Romford Division doing the refreshments

Essex Show: Saturday 10th & Sun 11th September – Romford Division doing the catering

EBKA Conference: Saturday 5th November – Romford Division is the host

Teaching Apiary

As many of you knew, the teaching apiary was moved to Thames Chase in winter 2014/15, to a temporary position in the tree nursery there. The permanent site for the apiary has now been set up and all six colonies have been moved across. All colonies looked good and should do well in their new position. The apiary is well-screened by black-thorn scrub and is spacious. Once it has been grassed over, it will be better underfoot than at present. Many thanks to Jim and son James, Bob Manning, Terry Watson, Dawn Doyland and husband Steve, Mike Speakman-Bell, and my husband Tony for mucking in (and I do mean mucking!).



Bulk Buys for 2016 Apiguard and Foundation

If you missed the January deadline for orders of wax foundation you will have an opportunity to place an order at the February monthly meeting but at the advised 20% price increase.

A listing will be available to place your order for both wired wax foundation and for Apiguard.

Alternatively, would you please send me an email with your order by Monday 22 February at the latest. Please state number of packs of Foundation required and/or the number of hives to be treated with Apiguard.

Wax Foundation

Wired foundation for British Standard Brood, Super and 14x12 and for Commercial Brood and Super in packs of 10 sheets will be available to purchase at the cost of:-

British Standard

Brood @ £8.60 Super @ £5.50 14x12 @ £14.60

Commercial

Brood @ £11.75 and Super @ £ 7.50

Apiguard

Orders should cover this autumn and next spring too. Apiguard treatment for each hive is at £4.50

Collection

Orders will be available for collection at the March monthly meeting on Thursday 3rd March 2016 or from me. Payment by cash or cheque to `EBKA Romford Division` must be made on collection.

E-mail: lorna.pattle@outlook.com

Lorna Pattle

BBKA Basic Assessment

I would like to encourage those who are eligible to take the Basic Assessment. This will give you a measure of your achievement in the basic skills and knowledge of the craft, which will be a benefit to you and the bees. If you have kept bees successfully for two or three seasons, then do consider it. The syllabus and entry form can be easily downloaded from the BBKA website.

I shall run a Basic Preparation Session in April or May if there is sufficient interest (you are not obliged to take the assessment). Let me know if you are interested.

Pat Allen