

October Beekeeping Notes

Feeding and treating should all be finished by now, and the floor inserts taken out if you have mesh floors. There is ivy nectar coming in at a great rate at the moment so there should be no shortage of winter stores for the bees. By the way – have you recorded the treatment you used for the bees? This is a legal requirement and records should be kept for five years.

Leave the floor insert out for the winter and **remove the queen excluder!**

If you have a super on, then swap the super to under the brood box as soon as possible. The bees will be warmer this way. If you have mesh floors, give insulation at the top under the roof. Woodpecker protection and mouseguards need to be on by the end of the month.

Pat Allen



EBKA Charity Number: 1031419

October 2020

Romford Division

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Committee Meeting: Wednesday, 11th November, 7.30pm,
via Zoom.

November meeting: Thursday 5th, 8.00pm, via Zoom.

Speaker: Buckfast Speakers

Topic: 'What the books don't tell you and why bees change their minds'

New Treasurer for Romford Division:

After many, many years of service to Romford Division looking after our accounts, Bob Manning is stepping down for family reasons. Many thanks, Bob, from all of us for your work for us.

Matt Broughton has kindly agreed to take over. He has been co-opted on to the Committee and will be confirmed in post at the AGM in January. Matt can be contacted on email mrbroughton@hotmail.com.

Romford Division Contacts:

Secretary: **Sue Richardson**

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Chairman: **Paul Wiltshire**

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Divisional Voting Member/Trustee: **Jim McNeill**

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Membership Secretary: **Pat Allen**

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Websites:

www.ebka.org

romfordbeekeepers.wordpress.com

Important Notice

Due to Covid and the restrictions, both the County and the National honey shows have been cancelled for this year.

Jim McNeill

PREPARING FOR THE HONEY SHOW - Bill Fisher & Sue Carter – 3rd September 2020

Bill and Sue belong to the Chalfont Beekeeper Society which has 220 active members. They gave advice on showing your honey. It is important to pay attention to detail. Keeping everything clean, showing a variety of honey and making sure your honey is exhibited using the best of your ability.

They mark each super before they remove from the hive detailing the apiary from where it has come, the hive ID and the date it was removed.

They remove each super separately and do not heat but uncap with a knife. The cappings are sorted; clean wax for showing, medium wax for models and dirty wax for exchange. All the wax is kept in separate containers.

To get a variety of honey they uncap only a portion of a frame so that they can get different colours of honey.

The honey is extracted and left to drain through a double strainer into a clean bucket. On the bucket a label with the batch number is attached, the weight of the honey, the water content, the colour and taste and the apiary it was collected from.

A bucket of honey is poured from the bucket into a mesh bag in a settling tank. The lid of the tank is put on and is left in a warm place for the honey to filter and settle for 48 hours.

All the jars must be extremely clean. They must be from the same supplier making sure the colour of the glass is the same and have matching lids.

Fill the jars all to the same level. Make sure you do not get drips of honey on the lids or side of jars. They suggested using plastic lids to avoid metal corrosion. Record a code on the jars so that you know where they have come from. Store the jars in a dry area ensuring they are level. They advised to jar up twice as many as you need for the show so that you can choose the best ones. Ensure the honey does not have any bubbles in the jar. Also, do not use the first few jars that you filled. Sell those and do not show them.

Make sure you enter the honey into the correct category with regards to colour i.e. light, medium or dark.

We had a lot of very good advice for entering honey shows. It is a pity there is unlikely to be any shows this year, but we can always look forward to next year (hopefully!).

Jilly Speakman-Bell

Ivy Mining Bees (*Colletes hederæ*)

Several members have had calls about 'swarms' of bees recently. These have all turned out to be, not honeybees, but a type of solitary bee called the Ivy Mining Bee. As indicated by their name, they 'nest' in the ground and feed on ivy, with each female making her own tunnel in soft earth and laying her eggs there. She will seal the filled hole and go away, maybe to make another tunnel nursery. I don't know how many tunnels one female will make but their adult life is only a few weeks long.

The eggs are left to develop in the soil, and the new adults will emerge the following autumn. Males emerge first and fly around waiting for the females to emerge. The photo is a mating ball, with males trying to get to the females. St Andrews Church in Hornchurch (where this photo was taken) has a patch with thousands of these beautiful bees, the last solitary bees of the year.



[Photo: Filippo Negri]