



EBKA Charity Number: 1031419

April 2022

Romford Division

Dates for the Diary

Committee Meeting: Wednesday 4th May, 19:30 Zoom Meeting

Next Meeting: May 5th 20:00.

Topic: The Asian Hornet

Venue: Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park, RM2 5EL

Speaker: Andrew Durham

A buff-tailed bumblebee queen robbing a *Pieris* flower through a hole it or another bee has made in the base of the flower. This 'naughty' behaviour means that the flower may not be pollinated."

Photo Pat Allen.

Romford Division Contacts:

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Websites:

<https://ebka.org>

<https://romfordbeekeepers.org>



May's speaker:

Andrew Durham is a Cambridgeshire beekeeper who has spent the last 6 years researching the Asian hornet. His research has three main objectives; to understand the effect of the hornet's predation on honeybees, to quantify the threat, and to formulate a defence strategy that builds on the lessons learnt by French beekeepers since the arrival of the hornet in France in 2004.

Andrew became aware of the threat from the Asian hornet during his extensive travels in France and in 2015, realising that the hornet was on the verge of invading the UK, he focused his attention on France, determined that both he and UK beekeepers should benefit from the lesson learnt by the French.

He has reported his findings into a series of articles in the *BBKA News*, with the aim of ensuring that British beekeepers were fully informed on the threat from the Asian hornet and the defences available to the beekeeper. His latest update is in the March 2021 issue of the BBKA news.

Dawn Doyland

Photos for the Newsletter:

A reminder that I would like to receive your beekeeping related photos for inclusion into the newsletter, ideally with a brief explanation.

Please email them to me at: graemeellis@hotmail.co.uk, or you can send them to me via WhatsApp on 07814814844.

Graeme Ellis

June Jubilee Meeting, Thursday 2nd June

Hello members, our June meeting falls on the Queen's Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend and we thought it would be nice to have a social get together to celebrate.

We plan to hold our meeting at Thames Chase, Pike Lane, Upminster, starting late to mid afternoon, as the weather will hopefully be good, with refreshments provided, please bring your own drinks.

Weather permitting, we hope to hold the gathering outside in the grass area between the old barn and the education room, at the back of the visitor centre. It may be possible to open a hive or two for any one interested in having a look at the teaching apiary bees, and it will be good to have a chat and social get together.

We will need numbers for catering, so please could you let us know whether you would be interested in coming along.

Dawn Doyland, Programme Secretary , Sue Richardson, Secretary

Courses

Beginners Course: This is fully booked now, with 24 students, and will be starting on 26th April. Details will be sent in early April to those booked.

Basic Assessment Preparation: This session will run on Saturday 7th May, time to be confirmed. A number of members have indicated they will be taking the Basic Assessment this year, but you can come to this session even if you are not taking it. Just book in with Pat Allen. Fee: £5

Comb Changing Session(s): I have had interest shown in this topic and I intend to do a real comb change on at least one of the Teaching Colonies anyway, for husbandry reasons. I am hoping we can arrange a date that suits all parties for this. Let Pat know if you are interested. Fee: £5

Other topics: If you have a particular procedure you would like to refresh your memory about, or just a general refresher on routine inspections, then do let Pat know.

Pat Allen

Swarm Control, Bob Smith 3rd March 2022

The reason bees swarm is mainly because the hive is running out of room, if the colony has reached its ultimate size bees may seek another place to live. If a queen is older she may produce less pheromone causing the bees to lose contact with her and you may notice queen cells appearing as a result.

The disadvantages of bees swarming are that it can be very annoying to neighbours. If a hive swarms you will lose a proportion of your honey yield as the bees will take honey with them. The queen that has swarmed may be your best queen. Also, swarms create a lot of work for other beekeepers.

Swarming is a natural occurrence with bees therefore you have to be well prepared for this eventuality. It is important to have a brood box ready. Mark your queens.

Once the swarming is over the queen needs to mate, she will normally start to lay a week later.

If you suspect your bees will swarm you must check your hive on a weekly basis. Swarming could start in April. Have spare equipment ready.

The advantage of a swarm is that you will have another colony. By the bees swarming it helps to temporarily halt the parasite varroa mite as the bees have a break in brood rearing.

Jilly Speakman-Bell

April beekeeping notes

Here's hoping for a decent spring so we can get into regular weekly inspections. If it is warm though, remember some colonies will be building up quickly and may be making early swarming preparations – have your plan and equipment ready.

If you clip your queens get it done this month, and mark them. (Clipping the queen's wings does help with swarm control and should not harm the queen; get someone else to do it if you don't want to do it yourself.)

Keep ahead with supering (put the super over the crownboard at first if you are not sure).

Pat Allen

Beekeeping Mentors & Mentees!

The Divisional Committee understand just how challenging the first 2 or 3 years of beekeeping can be. We all want new beekeepers to succeed in becoming accomplished in the craft but know that putting into practice the many skills that are taught during the beginners sessions and explained in detail in various books can be a little overwhelming. We believe that a few inspections with an experienced beekeeper or just some friendly practical advice over the phone can make a huge difference when nothing seems to make any sense and the bees refuse to read the text books themselves!

We would like to hear from experienced members who are willing to pass on their knowledge and skills to new beekeepers and also from members who have completed the beginners course in the last three years and who need a little extra help to perfect their skills. If you are either an experienced beekeeper willing to assist or a new beekeeper looking for some practical help then please get in touch with Paul Wiltshire or any other committee member and we will do our best to match Mentors with Mentees in similar locations.

Paul Wiltshire



"I don't think the new guy gets it."

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