



Romford Division



Dates for the Diary

Committee Meeting: Thursday 16th May

Next Division Meeting: Thursday 2nd May

Topic: Essex Bat Group, (they will show live bats)

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

Speaker: Ella Gibbs

Honey bee on the vibrant flower of a spring bulb called Chionodoxa. **Photo, Pat Allen**



APRIL Beekeeping Notes

The season has begun in earnest. The colonies should build up quite quickly this month, so make sure you have your swarm control plan in place and spare equipment ready. Get those mini-nucs prepared for the spare queen cells!

If you clip your queens, this is the month to do it, and to mark them (2024 colour is **green**). If you are nervous about the clipping then ask an experienced beekeeper to do it for you.

Keep ahead with supering. You can put a spare super over the crownboard if you are not sure. You can then swap over the crownboard when they go into the super.

Pat Allen

Courses

Beginners Beekeeping: Begins on Tuesday April 23rd, starting at 6.30pm. This is the first of two theory sessions. Currently there are six students booked. Zak Bickhan is the contact. zak_bic@hotmail.com

Taster Sessions: Dates are Saturday 6th July and Sunday 14th July. Garry Furnell is the contact. garry.furnell@virgin.net

BBKA Basic Assessment: I would encourage beekeepers who have not yet taken the Basic Assessment (BA) to do so once they have had a couple of seasons experience managing their bees. The BA is relaxed and the Assessor will want you to pass. You will find it boosts your confidence in handling your bees and improves your husbandry. Application for the BA is through the BBKA website. I will run a **BA Preparation Session** if there is sufficient interest, which you can come to even if you do not intend to take the BA this year. pat.allen7@icloud.com

Pat Allen

What To Do With Bees Wax - 7th March 2024 Julie Mugglestone and Jim McNeill

Jim always uses a Bain Marie when melting wax. It helps to prevent the wax from catching alight. You can use a warming cabinet. Be mindful of the temperature when melting wax. If the wax is 65 degrees it will take all day to melt, it is essential not to overheat the wax as it will turn a dark brown colour and burn.

Wax is a valuable product of the hive. Jim says it is ideal to make rolling candles. If you do not use the wax Jim advised to give it to someone else, even if the wax becomes mouldy. The wax will not be affected by the mould.

Last year Julie and a few other members from Romford spent the day at a class teaching what to do with your wax. They explained the wax must be filtered twice. If you want to sell any of your homemade products you have to obtain a licence, as well as having to list all ingredients used.

Julie made gifts from her wax for Christmas, making lip balms and hand balms. Julie made hand balm using clean wax and coconut oil, sweet almond nut oil or sunflower oil to avoid allergic reactions. The method is to put the three ingredients into the Bain Marie and stir. It all becomes one, you then transfer to a jug and the wax is ready to pour into a mould. You can add essential oils to the wax if you wish.

Lip balms are made by adding sunflower oil and coco butter to the beeswax. Melt the wax in a saucepan. From the saucepan pour melted wax into tin/mould. The lip balm only needs one application on your lips once a day.

To make wax wraps you need material remnants. Wax wraps are used instead of cling film so are much better for the environment. Julie uses Jojoba oil and pine resin (which needs to be heated to a high temperature) and grates the wax. She then just sprinkles the wax on the material, then irons on with it set on heat and by pushing the wax out make sure edges are covered in the wax. This prevents the edges from fraying.

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The instructor showed the class how to make moisturiser, but that is a more complex procedure and Julie, at that particular class, did not want to make moisturiser.

Julie gave her family home made Christmas gifts and very kindly gave all who attended the talk a hand balm and lip balm. As well as making her usual delicious homemade cakes to accompany our refreshments after the talk. I absolutely love Butterfly cakes being one of my favourite cakes and Julie's are the best I have ever tasted. They are real prize winners!

Jilly Speakman-Bell

Beware Hitchhikers

In the past week 2 Asian Hornets have been reported to N.B.U. one in Preston Lancashire and one in Romford, The one in Romford was dead (see below news article), This is how Asian Hornets arrived in France after hitchhiking from China in pottery, Have your Asian hornet watch app ready.

Terry Watson.

Romford member reported an Asian Hornet.

I have a photo that none of us really want to see. It was taken 21st March in a VW workshop on the A12. I reported it using the Asian Hornet Watch App. It most probably came in on a vehicle from one of our Kent dealerships, but it shows how easily they can spread. It was found dead, but was promptly collected by the National Bee Unit (NBU) to be DNA checked, as it maybe related to a nest already found last year.

It was later confirmed as a worker Asian Hornet, I received a very professional letter from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) stating that it was a positive identification, along with a unique reference number. To date it hasn't been matched to a known nest through DNA.

Mark Wood.

The photo supplied to NBU by Mark Wood



Stall at the WI County Annual meeting

I have been contacted to see if we would like to have a stall at the Women's Institute County Annual Meeting Friday 22nd May in Grays

If you would like to attend you can sell your honey there, please let me know. I can then put you in touch with the organiser. SusanMRichardson7@gmail.com

Sue Richardson

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