



Romford Division



Dates for the Diary

Committee Meeting: Thursday 16th may (Zoom)

Next Division Meeting: **Saturday** 8th June, 14:30

Topic: Apiary Meet & Chat

Venue: Thames Chase, Pike Lane, Upminster, RM14 3NS

Speaker: N/A

Please note that members will have to pay £2 for parking

A solitary bee home with a wool carder bee making her nest. **Photo, Pat Allen**



MAY Beekeeping Notes

The weather has been against us so far this year, but the bees are building up anyway. May will be a **significant swarming month**, so be very vigilant and have that plan and equipment ready! There are drones about so the bees are at the right stage for swarming.

May is also a good time to do a **dedicated disease inspection**. This means checking the brood combs even more carefully than usual. To do this, you need to shake off the bees. However, **before** you shake the comb, check that there are no queen cells on it. A shaken queen cell will probably be no good as it is easy to displace the queen larva from her food, or to damage her head if she is pupating. If there are queen cells, it is better to gently brush the bees off. Use your **Healthy Hive Guide** to check anything you think is suspicious. If it is not right, take a photo, make a note, close up and contact your mentor or a Romford Disease Liaison Officer straight away (see Romford website members area 'who does what' page). When you shake the bees, do make sure you shake them all into the hive, you do not want to shake your queen on to the ground!

Make sure you and your apiary are registered on **BeeBase**. This is a requirement for EBKA members, and it means you will get alerts if bee disease is found near your apiary. If you are already on BeeBase, take a moment to update your apiary details.

If you don't have a **Healthy Hive Guide** and you want one, let me know and I will bring one along to the next meeting (£3 cash please).

Pat Allen

Courses

Beginners: The first session, on 23rd April, had a major glitch in that the projector failed to work! Jim and I had to talk through the presentation just with printed pictures. Not satisfactory but 'needs must'. On the 'up' side, all the students were able to come to this first session, which was great. We have 11 students this year.

Refreshers/Improvers: I am still open to arranging topic-based sessions for those who need a refresher or are looking to advance their beekeeping techniques. Just email me to request this, I would need 4 people minimum to run one. Possible topics are: Swarm Control; Comb Changing; Nuc Set-up and Management; Using Mini-nucs; Basic Assessment Preparation.

Tasters: Garry Furnell is the contact for booking these. Planned dates are Saturday 6th July and Sunday 14th July. See the Romford Beekeepers website for further details.

Pat Allen

Stall Invites

Romford division have been invited to attend and sell hive products at the following events;

- Saturday 13th July, "Fete on the Green", Queens Theatre Hornchurch. Organised by Romford Rotary Club.
- Friday 22nd May, Women's Institute County Annual Meeting, in Grays

If you would like to attend please let me know, I can then put you in touch with the organiser.

SusanMRichardson7@gmail.com

Sue Richardson

Jars, Bulk Order

You should have all seen Sue Richardson's email about the Honey Jar order, if you are a new beekeeper I'd strongly advise you to purchase some, they are exceptionally good value and nothing quite prepares you for the first honey crop, order in advance and be ready is my advice.

The bulk order is organised by Sue Sampson for Essex Beekeepers Association, and is usually for pick up in Canewdon, however Stephen Davis has kindly offered to be a collection point (in Billericay) for the Romford Division. Please place your order as early as possible as it is quite an undertaking, I've previously helped to sort the delivery (2018?) and the order that year was £70,000!

Graeme Ellis

Gardening For Pollinators, Mark Patterson, Apicultural.co.uk, 4th April 2024

What are pollinators? There are a myriad of pollinators, not just bees. 98% of global crops are pollinated by wild bees. Since 1850 23 species of UK bee have become extinct. The types of insect pollinators are:

Butterflies, frogs, beetles (they are primitive pollinators as they were the first pollinators to evolve), bees, hoverflies, wasps (wasps control crop pests, so don't kill wasps!), hornets, 20,000 different species of bees.

Pesticides are indiscriminate, they are developed to kill not just the pests. Because of pesticides the hoverfly is now in decline, despite it being very beneficial for the garden. Therefore, our gardens are increasingly important. Artificial grass is most detrimental to the insect and natural world, plus it is instrumental in causing floods, as rainwater cannot seep through to the earth and therefore stays on the surface adding to the risks of flooding. Another detrimental effect on the gardens and wildlife are the paved over front gardens, again adding to the risk of flooding.

Gardens are an essential part of our ecosystems. Domestic gardens provide up to 85% of food for pollinators in the cities. British wildflowers have declined 98% since 1930, plus there has been a 50% decrease in hedgerows. The increased use of pesticides and the increased amount of development has added to the crisis.

Urban gardens are enormously important for wildlife. They have diverse types of flowers with lots of different flowering times which is good for the insects, and fewer use of pesticides than in rural areas. Some pollinators need decaying wood to lay their eggs in and need places to shelter in winter to hibernate, so consider setting aside an area of your garden undisturbed for this purpose.

When choosing flowers for pollinators, a wide variety is far better. Highly bred flowers are ones to avoid. Flowers that bloom early in the year are beneficial for the insects emerging from hibernation.

Spring bulbs; Crocus, Snow Drops, Mahonia, Primroses, blossoms, Winter flowering Honeysuckle and Winter flowering Cherry and Pussy Willow.

Late Spring; orchard fruit trees, Bluebells, Forget Me Not, Wallflowers, Dandelions and Aquilegia.

Summer flowers; Marjoram, Echium, Borage, Phacelia, Eryngium, Veronica, Stachys, Nepeta, Fox Glove, Lavender, Verbena, Geraniums, Campanula, Coreopsis, Hyssopus, Achillea, Thyme and Sage.

Late Summer and early Autumn; Helenium, Aster, Penstemon, Echinacea, Rudbeckia, Echinops, Anise Hyssop (Agastache), Dahlias, Golden Rod, single Chrysanthemums and **Echium***.

My Wallflowers and Forget-me-not plants are certainly encouraging pollinators in my garden!

Jilly Speakman-Bell

*Should any members want some Echium seed, please let me know, it took me over 5 years to grow these plants, but now they seed freely around my garden. If it carries on I fear I may become the national collection holder! (I am quite proud of them). **Graeme Ellis**



Beeswax Trade In

I've recently had a very good experience ordering beeswax from [Kemble Bee Supplies](#). I'd originally heard of them through Terry Watson, they do wax conversion which is certainly going to be useful for me, in the nine years or so that I've been keeping bees I have never traded in my beeswax! I have at least 15kg. I wonder how many of us in Romford Beekeepers have sacks of clean beeswax? Perhaps a few more following the talk in March...

I'm going to place another order and drive the wax down to them (in Hastings), if other members are interested I could make arrangements to take your wax? Have a look at their website and email me if you are interested. graemeellis@hotmail.co.uk

Graeme Ellis

**Ted Hooper Lecture, Saturday 22 June 12:30-16:30**

Speaker: Lynne Ingram of the Honey Authenticity Network (HAN)

Venue: Margaretting Village Hall, Chelmsford, CM4 0EP.

There is no charge for the event. A light lunch will be available before the talk. Booking will be via Eventbrite
More information to follow as soon as possible...

Sue Richardson

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