



Romford Division



Dates for the Diary

Committee Meeting: Thursday 12th September 19:30 (Zoom)

Next Division Meeting: Thursday 3rd October

Topic: TBC

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

Speaker: TBC

An accident marking a Queen!

While checking bees (with another committee member), I deftly plucked the Queen from the brood frame and marked her, it was almost text book (for someone who usually opts for a marking cage), only for the pen to run! A week on and she'd been cleaned by her harem, I was certain Queen Vivienne (Westwood) would've been rejected. Worse still I'd bought a replacement pen, as I knew that one was unreliable.

There's a lesson for us all to keep on top of our equipment.

Graeme Ellis



SEPTEMBER Beekeeping Notes

The honey crop should have been taken by now (I hope you saved a nice frame for the Show!) and the wet supers given back for the bees to clean up. Then remove these supers and store them carefully for winter. If any of the super combs have had brood in them it is best to discard them as they will surely be attacked by wax moth. Combs with a lot of pollen will go mouldy over the winter, so these should also either be discarded or given to the bees as their winter super. Stack the spare supers neatly, so that mice or rats cannot get into them, preferably where it will be cold.

If you did save a frame for the **Romford Honey Show**, put it in the freezer to stop the honey granulating, and take it out a couple of days before the Show.

It is time to treat your colonies against varroa, especially if you intend to use a product that is temperature-dependent. The cold weather may set in sooner than expected. Also, even if you left your bees honey, it is a good idea to give them a feed to keep the queen laying and producing those fat winter bees that you need. (White granulated sugar: 2lbs sugar: 1pint water or 2kgs sugar: 1.2litre water)

Remember to record any treatments you give your bees, this is a statutory requirement. And importantly, put in the floor insert while feeding and treating.

Once feeding and treating are finished, remove the varroa insert and **remove the queen excluder**. If you are wintering on National brood and super, put the super below the brood box. Close off ventilation at the top of the hive, ventilation at the bottom is enough.

Pat Allen

Courses 2025

Beginners Beekeeping Course:

There are no courses running at present as they have all finished for 2024, but we desperately need someone to organise and run a **Beginners Beekeeping Course in 2025**. Usually the dates for the beginners course are booked by November and people can start booking. However, unless someone steps forward to organise it, there will be no course in 2025.

The teaching material is available already so the requirement is mainly for an organiser. There has never been a problem with recruiting Tutors for the practical sessions and someone to look after Health & Safety. So the job is not onerous.

I had thought that maybe someone who had benefitted from one of our Beginners Courses might step up and take on the organisation of the Beginners Course. I'm sure there are things we could do better and who better to identify and make improvements than someone who had done the Course? They would be supported by those who have been involved in the courses before, and it could even be a job share.

Please consider whether you could spare a few hours a week for part of the year (it's not a year-round job) to take on this important job. I can talk to anyone considering it to discuss what's involved.

Taster Sessions:

Garry Furnell took on the organisation and running of our very successful Taster Sessions this year and I hope he will be doing this once again in 2025.

Some attendees at the Taster Days expressed interest in going on to take the Beginners Beekeeping Course in 2025 and it would be very sad indeed if we are not able to run the Course.

Pat Allen

Speakers

We don't yet have a speaker booked for the October meeting, If anyone has any ideas on speakers that we could invite, or a topic they would like covered, can you please let the committee know.

dawn_doyland@hotmail.com

Dawn Doyland

Preparing For The Honey Show, Jim McNeill 1st August 2024

Jim gave excellent advice on entering your exhibits for the honey shows.

It is advisable to establish a routine when preparing honey. It is important to polish your honey jars before honey is decanted. The label should be attached about ½ inch from the bottom, do not put it over the glass jar seam as it does not look professional. Store your honey correctly. It is better kept in bulk, and only jar up before the show. Use new jars each show. Our club show and county shows allow the use of plastic lids, but the national show requires all honey to have metal lids. You also need to ensure that all the shades of the metal lids are exactly the same.

Read the show rules schedule twice, or you can get knocked out of the show for minor deviations. It is a requirement that the rules are followed implicitly. For each category ensure that all honey jars are from the same batch, as differences in glass can cause the shade of honey to not match exactly. If you have any different coloured honey keep three of each shade for each category of the show. When you put your honey in the bucket keep a note of the shade of the honey. i.e. light, medium or dark. Jim has colour identifying glass to match the correct shade of honey to the appropriate category. Shine a torch through the jar to check it does not have any bubbles and debris in the honey. Jim filters his honey four times through a clean net curtain to remove any unwanted fragments.

Put honey jars in a warm water bath to take out any crystallisation. Viscosity counts. You must keep the water bath under 60 degrees. Never leave honey without lids, or it will take in water.

Aroma is also important, Do not open honey jar lids at the show, this ensures that when the judge opens the lid of the jar they will get a good honey aroma. Ensure your jar is full, if the judge sees any air space between the top of the honey and the lid you will be disregarded. Take the scum off the week before the show, then leave the honey alone so that the aroma is strong. Judges do not like scum or air bubbles.

Advice when exhibiting candles.

Wax melts at about 60 degrees. If it heats too much it will darken the wax. You can buy different thickness of wicks for different size candles. Get the correct one or the candle won't burn properly. The judges light the wick to see how much smoke the candle creates, they leave the candle alight for a while then blow it out, repeating the process again to test the candle.

Look after the wax that you intend to use for candles. Jim uses a warming cabinet to gently melt the wax. When cleaning your wax it is better to let it drip through slowly to remove the dirt. When using moulds for candles the wick must be centralised and kept in place

When buying moulds for candles try to get two. If not warm up and put half into another tin so that you will have enough ensuring that the candles the same colour. Leave the wax to cool in the mould overnight.

Jilly Speakman-Bell

Asian Hornet Update.

So far this year five Asian hornet nests have been found and destroyed in Kent and Sussex, with ongoing surveillance at three locations in Kent. Remain vigilant and report any suspected sightings through the Asian Hornet Watch app.

Terry Watson

Bulk Buys

I'd like to thank all those who purchased Varroa Treatments. Almost everyone ordered before the deadline. But, most importantly everyone paid on time. In all, I purchased enough treatments to treat 215 hives. In early Spring I will be arranging 'Bulk buy' for Frames & Wax. Consider what you need, plan ahead, and order through the club so that we can continue to secure discounts.

Alan Sansford

ROMFORD HONEY SHOW, IT'S SHOWTIME!

Saturday 19th October 2024

Please support this year's annual show by entering as many classes as you can from the schedule. We need to impress our expert show judge Claire with plenty of entries. There is something for everyone, from novices to seasoned exhibitors. Even if you have no honey you could try out one or two bakery classes or submit a photograph.

I will be taking entries at the October meeting where I will give out labels for your exhibits. Or you can email me with your entries to angelam59@hotmail.co.uk

Labels will then be handed to you on the day when you deposit your exhibits.

If you need any help with filling in the form, need advice on which classes to enter or have any other questions please contact me.

The show will take place at the Ascension Church in Collier Row, RM5 2BA.

Judging will take place in the afternoon, followed by the annual supper early evening when all the winners will be announced. Keep the date free in your diaries, details for booking the supper in next months newsletter. A chance to socialise and catch up with fellow Romford beekeepers.

Angela Mander

Committee Meetings

Romford Division committee meets every other month to discuss beekeeping matters. and any member is very welcome to come and join the meetings.

If you would like to come and see what goes on behind the scenes and what the committee does to help the division run smoothly, please do let us know. The next meeting is on Tuesday 12th September at 7.30 pm and is being held via zoom, so you do not even need to leave the comfort of your home to attend. There is always space on the committee for lay members, you do not have to commit to any role, but any member input is welcome.

Susan Richardson

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