



Romford Division



Dates for the Diary

Committee Meeting: 19/03/2026 7:30 via Zoom

Next Division Meeting: Thursday 2nd April, 20:00

St Nicholas Church, Woodcote Avenue, Elm Park RM12 4PY

Topic: TBC

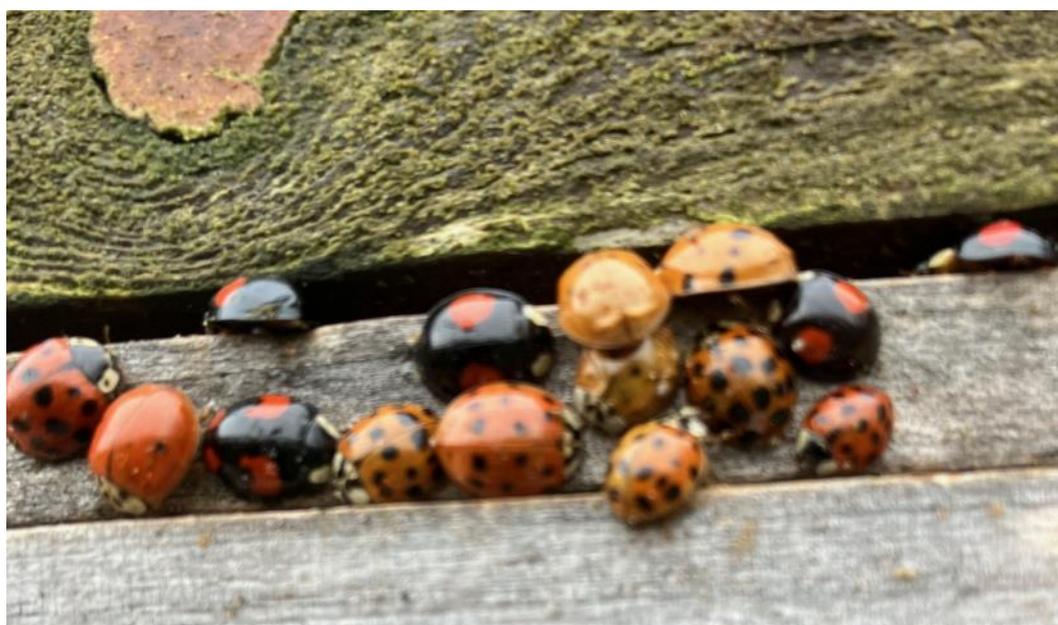
**A reminder that the venue has now changed, we no longer hold our meetings at Chadwick Hall.
The new venue is:**

St Nicholas Church, Woodcote Avenue, Elm Park RM12 4PY

Over wintering Ladybirds

Photo taken while working on the Thames Chase Apiary.

Pat Allen



MARCH Beekeeping Notes

If mouse guards are still on your hives, then you must get them OFF! They can knock the essential pollen from the bees' legs and they are no longer needed.

March is a dangerous month for bees. The weather can still be cool at times and bees are dying but must replace themselves. After such a wet and cold winter we have to hope for a decent spring. If the temperature is 14°C or more then you can risk a **quick** inspection.

If you overwintered with the super below the brood box, this is the month to reverse the boxes and put in the queen excluder. Be aware of the need for another super if the bees are strong. If you are not sure, put a super above the crownboard (one with a hole of course!). If the bees need the space they will go up into the super and you can remove the crownboard later.

Get going on those new frames!

Pat Allen

Beginners' Beekeeping Course

Pat and I will be introducing the new tutors for the Beginners' Beekeeping Course to the course content at the beginning of March. We are delighted that we have some 'new blood' to lighten the load. Our faithful tutors have been doing a sterling job year on year and need some rest from time to time!

We are pleased to report that we are now full for the Beginners' Course, and will not be taking any more bookings. The course starts mid-April.

If you know of anyone who would have been interested, then please direct them to Garry Furnell for the Summer Bee Taster Days. Everyone who attends our Taster Days gets information on the following year's Beginners' Course.

Basic Assessment

Please let me know if you are interested in doing your Basic this year. I will be applying during March to our Essex Education Secretary. See last month's newsletter for information.

Linda Dulieu

Yellow-Legged Asian Hornet (YLAH) Update

On the 23rd January I went to a Yellow-Legged Asian hornet conference in Bridgwater, Somerset. The main topic was "spring trapping" and it's effectiveness, as it's only for a limited period of time, 8 weeks from the first queen emergence. See photos below.

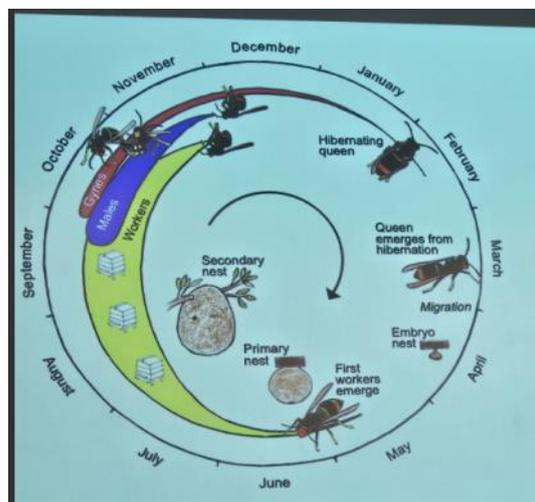
2026 spring queen trapping update

In December 2025, the Bee Health Advisory Forum, Defra, confirmed that they will not ask APHA's National Bee Unit to carry out Spring trapping activity for yellow-legged hornet for 2026.

Link: <https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/about-us/beekeeping-news/yellow-legged-hornet-spring-trapping>

There was much discussion and concern about the dead nest of the YLAH found near Wrexham, confirming it's presence in Wales for the first time. I'll continue to keep members updated.

Garry Furnell AHAT Coordinator



Bulk Buy

On the back page of this newsletter is the price list for this years bulk buy order, that we'll be placing with "National Bee Supplies", the deadline is 08/03/2026

Please send your order to me: Alan Sansford at: pandaprinting@hotmail.co.uk

Please pay at the same time as ordering to:

Name: Mr A G SANSFORD

A/C No: 14822170

S/code: 09-01-26

Stating your name in the Ref Box.

I will notify you when your order is ready to collect from: Julie Mugglestone.

183 Dagenham Road, Rush Green, Romford, Essex. RM7 0TL

If you have any problems, please don't hesitate to call me: 07980 208840 (please leave a message)

Alan Sansford

Starting The Season, Jim McNeill. 5th February 2026

At the start of the season do not consider doing your first inspection until the temperature is at least 12 degrees. Do not keep the hive open for longer than necessary. The beekeeping textbooks advise not to open the hives until it is 'shirt sleeve weather'. Check the bees are still alive by observing the front of the hive. If bees are entering with pollen on their legs it means there is brood in the hive and they are feeding their young.

Do you have a laying Queen? Add your Queen excluder over the top of the brood box and check only a couple of frames from the middle of the supers. If you see eggs in the supers, close the hive and check the supers the next week. If you're lucky the Queen will be in the brood box with no further eggs seen in the supers. Make your inspection of the hive quick to prevent the bees from getting too cold.

Swarms are most likely during April to June, although swarming can be earlier in recent years. Therefore, make sure you are ready to split the colony you'll need 4/5 frames in a nuc box. How do you know a good Queen cell? If the cell is open, you will be able to look inside and see there is a grub, so that's the one to keep. The bees usually leave Queen cells at the bottom and edges of frames in crevices and recesses.

You need to act quickly if you see Queen cells which is why you check every week. Pat says she plans a day when she is going to clip the wings of the Queen, so that everything is set up ready to clip. Clipping the wings of the Queen means she cannot fly. If they are preparing to swarm the Queen may die, but the bees will go back to the hive. Clip the wings in April because the hive is not so big and therefore, will be easier to find the Queen.

At this time of year check all your equipment is ready for the busy season. Check and prepare supers. Get frames made up ready, although it is too cold to put wax in frames. If you do not have your equipment ready, it will be to your disadvantage. If the bees need food give them some fondant. They will only store what is not needed to eat immediately. Remember the bees will need water to drink, so ensure there is a fresh water supply near the hive.

Ensure your hive has a ready supply of flowers nearby for the bees to forage to get their own pollen. Crocus, snow drops, dandelions and daffodils are plentiful at the moment.

Try to do your weekly inspection on the same day per week. In theory this should help prevent swarming, as you will notice any changes within the hives. The bees could fill the supers in a couple of days if situated near an oil seed rape field. The bees love OSR but the honey sets hard very quickly and will ruin your frames if not extracted on time.

In the Winter you want good, healthy colonies. Feed bees in the Autumn when the season starts to get them ready for the Winter. After feeding the bees leave them alone and they will progress.

It is very hard work to have just one hive. It is far easier to have two hives, but only have the amount of hives you can manage. Our honey is so much better than the mass produced honey in the supermarkets. 73% of honey sold in the UK comes from China, and who knows what chemicals and pesticides they are feeding to their poor bees?

Jilly Speakman-Bell

Thames Chase Teaching Apiary Work Parties

A small group of people gathered in very cold, damp and drizzly weather, on two occasions in January and February, to give the Teaching Apiary a much-needed face lift.

The 'fencing' has been replaced, including all new posts and installing a 'proper' gate and new warning signs. Some of our spare equipment was given a clean, although this was not very easy as everything was so wet!

It was disappointing that so few people volunteered, but many many thanks are due to those who did come along to do the work, including a couple of kind husbands who are not even members.

One lovely thing was, when I removed the roof on a pile of spare boxes, I uncovered this lovely multi-coloured bunch of hibernating ladybirds! I replaced the roof and left them in peace. Cleaning of that pile of boxes can wait for another occasion!! See photo on front page

There is still some work to do on clearing scrub and resetting slabs but this will be better done in warmer weather.

Pat Allen



Thames Chase Teaching Apiary Work Parties, photos continued.



BBKA March Talk

The next in our series of Zoom talks will be 'Yellow-legged Asian Hornet' with Lucie Chaumeton on Tuesday 17th March 2026, 7pm.

Lucie is a BBKA Trustee, Vice Chair of the YLAH Committee and AHAT Coordinator for North London Beekeepers. She will be covering YLAH awareness, spring trapping and monitoring.

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81233819992?pwd=DYmZxTlMjJpRCLJjYjvblxgybQQdSZ.1>
Meeting ID: 812 3381 9992 Passcode: 527929

A recording of this talk will be available on the BBKA Member Hub for those unable to watch live together with recordings of all previous talks.

Colleen Manley

Membership for 2026

Many thanks to all those who have renewed their membership of Romford Division. Membership at present is: Registered Members: 87, Partner Members: 16, Associates: 5

I wish you all a great beekeeping season.

Pat Allen

Beekeepers Auction

The Romford Division Beekeepers Auction will be held on Thursday 16th April at 20:00 at St Nicholas Church, Elm Park, Woodcote Avenue, Hornchurch, RM12 4PY

I've sent an email with further detail, if you plan to sell items please refer to the email and fill in the "sellers form". We look forward to seeing you there.

Colleen Manley

Romford Division Contacts:

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Taster Bookings: Garry Furnell

07866 430079. garry.gf89@gmail.com

Education Secretary: Linda Dulieu

Lindybees.education@gmail.com

Newsletter: Graeme Ellis

07814 814844. graemeellis@hotmail.co.uk

Disease Liaison officers: Jim McNeill, Simon Perchard

jimandliz44@aol.co.uk 07743 310143, sjp6242@icloud.com 07712 194488

Websites:

<https://ebka.org>

<https://romfordbeekeepers.org>



Straight Sided Frames

Size	Code	Book Price (10)*	Discount Price
Super SN1	59.13.81	£21.75	£17.50
Brood DN1	59.13.93	£21.75	£17.50
Super SN2	59.13.83	£23.95	£19.30
Brood DN2	59.13.95	£23.95	£19.30

Hoffman Frames

Size	Code	Book Price (10)*	Discount Price
Super SN4	59.13.14	£26.25	£21.25
Brood DN4	59.13.26	£26.25	£21.25
14 x 12 N4	59.13.08	£32.50	£26.25
Super SN5	59.13.16	£28.95	£23.30
Brood DN5	59.13.28	£28.95	£23.30
14 x 12 N5	59.22.39	£35.50	£28.50

Manley Frames

Size	Code	Book Price (10)*	Discount Price
Super SN7	59.13.75	£28.95	£23.30

Sterilised Wax Foundation (Wired)

Size	Code	Book Price (10)*	Discount Price
BS Shallow	59.17.67	£12.25	£10.00
BS Deep	59.17.80	£18.95	£15.30
BS 14 x 12	59.17.64	£30.95	£25.00
Commercial Shallow	59.17.90	£17.25	£14.00
Commercial Deep	59.17.98	£25.95	£20.90
Langstroth Shallow	59.17.75	£16.25	£13.20
Langstroth Deep	59.17.73	£23.75	£19.20

Sterilised Wax Foundation (Unwired)

Size	Code	Book Price (10)*	Discount Price
B.S. Shallow	59.17.66	£10.25	£8.35
Commercial Shallow	59.17.89	£15.25	£12.40
Langstroth Shallow	59.13.65	£13.25	£10.80

Other Discounts

MUST BE ORDERED AT THE SAME TIME

10% Off other Book items

5% Off Hive Kits



*National Bee Supplies