

Welwyn Beekeepers Newsletter

July 2018

NEWS SUMMARY

www.welwynbka.org

.... Finally, the nice summer weather is here. This is not stopping us from being busy though....

We are looking forward to:

- Meeting Stephen McPartland, Member of Parliament for Stevenage, at the Knebworth Golf Club Apiary on Friday, July 13 at 10.30 am
- Attending the Festival of Wildlife at Panshanger Park, SG14 2WN, on July 28 & 29
- Attending the Knebworth Steam, Crafts & Country Life Fair at Knebworth House, SG1 2AX, on August 11 & 12

We have been busy with:

- The Welwyn Festival Street Market and the Applecroft School Summer Fete
- The Panshanger Park Walk

Regular items:

- Thoughts from the Beekeeper
- Around the Apiaries
- Training

CHANGE OF PLAN

Unfortunately, we will not be able to see the Flow Hive Super in action this year.

The fact that the association colonies have not built up sufficiently in time as a result of the challenging conditions at the beginning of the season and coupled with the summer flow being over in a few weeks time we had to take the decision to defer it to next year.

IMPORTANT: COLLECTING SWARMS

As there are still a number of call outs for swarms a reminder to all members of the dos and don'ts:

- Contact Lieva Nation (tel 07949 624354). She is keeping a list of swarms collected as well as a list of people who are interested in receiving swarms
- No charge can be levied for collecting swarms
- Swarms collected at this time of year should be quarantined until spring and checked for disease.
- Collected Swarms from unknown sources must be kept apart from other hives and must not be placed in an association apiary
- Swarms cannot be sold under BBKA Rules unless they have been quarantined and ideally been requeened so that the seller knows the parentage of the bees being sold.

Stephen McParland's to visit Knebworth Apiary on

Friday, July 13 at 10.30 am

You may remember that Stephen McParland MP was due to visit our Knebworth Apiary last summer but the unexpected General Election meant he had to postpone his visit. His office as been back in touch with us and the visit has been arranged.

If you are free and would like to attend, please do come along and join us.

The next Newsletter will appear in your inboxes in September

Event: Panshanger Park Walk



A number of members and their families/friends met at Panshanger Park on a glorious and hot day. We had two excellent guides in David and Murray who expanded our knowledge of the Coopers (proprietors of the park for a very long time) and the flora and fauna that can be found in the park.

Needless to say we were appreciative of the fact that explanations were given whilst we could shelter in the shade.

Learning about Panshanger Park, observing dragon flies, watching birds of prey, enjoying the wonderful views and being challenged with naming flowers and plants made for an interesting and entertaining morning walk. We worked up an appetite (and thirst) and a leisurely picnic or pub lunch rounded off the afternoon.



A big thank you to our guides and to Lieva for making the event happen.

We are missing out on a great opportunity

Over the recent weeks we have received a number of enquiries from schools asking us to visit and to give talks about bees. We have been doing this on a limited basis as we feel it is important to teach children about bees. It is something we would love to expand into. However, the members on the committee cannot take on more responsibilities and in order to provide this service we are looking for a Schools/Talks Coordinator and as well as members willing to go and help. It would be very nice to have "ready-made" presentations for different age groups that includes presentation material and activities for children. Are you interested? If so, please contact Lieva Nation at welwynbees@gmail.com. Unfortunately, if we do not get volunteers it will be an area we would miss out on.

Around the Apiaries

The three new apiaries are progressing in spite of the problematic start to the year due to poor weather.

Brookmans Park has quickly settled in, Booker Hatfield is set up and awaiting bees, and Panshanger Park already looks a well-established apiary and those on the Panshanger Park walk had the opportunity to see it.

Thoughts from the Beekeeper

By Peter Folge

Although we experienced a difficult start to the year, we have worked hard to establish nuclei for our new beginners, many of whom now have now purchased elsewhere? Experience has taught us beekeepers to be patient and not hurry in making rash decisions, however this does seem to have gone out the window this year? Purchasing local bees has benefits, reducing the risk of bringing in disease to an area or putting colonies under stress (many suppliers import hundreds of packages and 1000s of queens into the UK every year). It also makes sure that only the best bees are maintained. As swarming is now upon us, it is interesting that beekeepers will run many miles to collect a swarm of unknown origin without thinking of the consequences.

The summer flow is full on with a few more weeks yet to go. Make sure hives have enough room. Keep a careful eye on colonies with weekly inspections to reduce swarming.

The Welwyn Bee Improvement Programme is about to raise the 3rd lot of Buckfast queens. The 1st two batches came from one of the association's queens and the next will be taken from one of our Welwyn members queens. This will keep diversity. If you are interested in a queen cell or mated Queen, please get in touch.

Next time a little more about extraction and labelling honey jars.

Forthcoming EVENTS with WBKA involvement

Saturday & Sunday, July 28 & 29 Festival of Wildlife, Panshanger Park
10 am – 4 pm

Saturday & Sunday, August 11 & 12 Knebworth Steam, Crafts & Country Life Fair
10 am – 5 pm

Apiary Training

Knebworth Golf Club Apiary is scheduled as follows:

Every Saturday 10.30 am
(with the exception of second
Saturday in the month)

This is primarily aimed for those new members that would like to gain some practical experience before deciding if beekeeping is for them, and those new members who would like some supportive practical training in their early stages of beekeeping.

Every second Saturday
each month 10.30 am

Members monthly training

Please email Mike Goodhew at training@welwynbka.org should you have any questions/queries.