

# Welwyn Beekeepers Newsletter

## October 2018

### NEWS SUMMARY

.... Another month has flown by....

We are looking forward to:

- The Bee Awareness evening on October 23
- The Christmas Dinner on December 11
- Planning for the training courses in the Spring
- Attending the Codicote Apple Day on October 14

We have been busy with:

- Tasting lots of honey at our annual honey tasting evening on September 25
- Attending the Tewin Apple day on October 7

Regular items:

- Q & A with Peter Folge
- Thoughts from the Beekeeper
- Around the Apiaries (will resume in spring)
- Training

### Training Autumn 2018/Spring 2019

The training schedule 2018/19 is all confirmed and set up (see detailed information overleaf).

Are you interested in

- Attending a course to improve your knowledge about beekeeping or
- would you like to try your hand at presenting a topic or talking about your experiences as a beekeeper at the beginners' or any of the other courses or
- Can you spend some time to help out at any of the courses with setting up/clearing up and providing refreshments?

Any help you can offer is greatly appreciated as it helps spreading the load and ensure smooth running of all the courses. Mike Goodhew will be in touch soon.

### Aldenham Country Park Frost Fair, November 15-18

Although this event is outside our normal area, we have accepted an invite to have a stall and will attend the Fair. This event replaces the Hatfield Frost Fair.

[www.welwynbka.org](http://www.welwynbka.org)

### Next Social Event

## CHRISTMAS DINNER

**Tuesday  
December 11**

Don't miss out on the last social event of the year and book your place as soon as possible with with Lieva Nation  
[welwynbees@gmail.com](mailto:welwynbees@gmail.com) or by phone 07949 624 354

Join us for an evening full of festive spirit and banter at the White Horse, 30 Mill Lane, Welwyn AL6 9ET.



## Thank you

A number of people interested in beekeeping have contacted us following the appeal to spread the word about our bee awareness session and beginners' course. The fliers in shop windows, libraries and on members' facebook posts have been successful. Thank you all for your help.

## Social: Honey Tasting evening



The annual honey tasting evening proved yet again to be a great success. Lots of members attended and found time to catch up whilst sampling the honey. 17 jars of honey from members were tasted, scrutinised and examined. The smell of honey from pale to dark colour, mild and strong taste – and given the lack of oil seed rape in our area – almost only runny honey, filled the room.



The snacks provided and the drinks consumed helped to dilute to sugar overload! I think we all breathed a collective sigh of relief that no one voted for the “odd one out supermarket honey” as the favourite. Goes to show that we all are getting quite discerning honey connoisseurs! A big thank you to Lieva for organising such a good evening.

## Event: Tewin Apple Day



After a very wet, cold and windy Saturday the sun came out on Sunday October 7 which meant people turned out in numbers to attend the Tewin Apple Day. It was a successful event for us with lots of people showing interest and signing up to our Bee Awareness Evening on October

23 as well as sampling and purchasing honey. A big thank you to all the Welwyn members who helped out on the day.



## Q&A with Peter Folge

Q: How is your attempt to breed varroa resistant colonies going and what are other beekeepers in the area doing?

A: The Varroa Resistant Programme is still continuing alongside the Welwyn Bee Improvement Programme and I'm hoping to be able to offer these bees in the next few years. As far as I'm aware, there is no one else in our association keeping their bees treatment free? Always a difficult subject as it's something one cannot really promote. As it seems only to work in certain areas and not in others.

After a poor start in the spring with only 5 of the 9 varroa resistant colonies surviving the winter, I now am presently back up to 10 colonies and they continue treatment free. These originally came from 2 swarms that I collected back in 2011, one from Welwyn Garden and the other from Codicote.

These colonies are managed in the same way as any of my other colonies just no treatments.

The Welwyn association lost one of its two varroa resistant colonies and the one has been replaced with bees from the Digswell Lake apiary. Ann and Andy are managing these allotment colonies and we will see what happens?

My varroa resistant bees are fairly well behaved but do have a slight edge to them, however not following and can be approached minutes after the inspection has taken place. I'm working on quietening them down even further before offering these to beekeepers. The next stage (next year) is to place one of these colonies in each of my apiaries where they will continue with no varroa treatments but hopefully their genetics and their mites will influence the other colonies in those apiaries. I cannot rule out that it could be a combination of both resistant bees and varroa (perhaps not being so aggressive) working together. I do believe hygienic behaviour is not the complete answer as I've had one colony so hygienic that the workers uncapped and removed all the pupae from the hive and it just dwindled.

Work will continue next year.

## Thoughts from the Beekeeper

By Peter Folge

Temperatures have now sharply declined over the last few days and treatments and feeding should now all be finished. By the end of October mouse guards and protective netting should be placed on the hives. Keep monitoring apiaries over October as the Asian Hornets are now present in the UK and any sightings are notifiable. Traps should be setup during October and again early May 2019.

### **Training**

#### **For Non Members/New Members Interested in or Contemplating Beekeeping**

##### **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018, Bee Awareness Session**

19.30 h at Christchurch Parkway Halls WGC

##### **March 2019 Beginners Beekeeping Course**

Tuesday Evenings 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March, practical session Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March, at Christchurch Parkway Halls WGC, Apiary session in April tbc

#### **For Members**

##### **Sunday, January 7, 2019 Use of Microscopes in Beekeeping Taster Appreciation Day**

An opportunity to experience working with the different types of microscopes and understanding their uses

University of Hertfordshire's Bayfordbury Campus

##### **New Season Preparation course**

For beekeepers starting into their second year or those wanting a refresher.

Wednesdays 27<sup>th</sup> February, 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Christchurch Peartree Halls, Tewin Road, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1BW

##### **Basic Assessment Preparation course**

A very useful 3 evening check point for those with at least 2-3 years' experience. Ideal preparation for BBKA Basic Assessment.

Wednesdays 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>st</sup> March & 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 – 7.30 to 10pm

Christchurch Peartree Halls, Tewin Road, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1BW

##### **Swarm Collecting course**

Do's and don'ts, what to expect and equipment to use.

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019

Christchurch Peartree Halls, Tewin Road, Welwyn Garden City AL7 1BW

##### **Healthy Bee Day**

Presentation by Regional Bee Inspectors providing up to date information regarding pests, diseases and associated actions and treatment. Intended for beekeepers with at least 2 years+ experience.

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2019

University of Hertfordshire's Bayfordbury Campus

Please email Mike Goodhew at [training@welwynbka.org](mailto:training@welwynbka.org) if you have any queries or would like to attend any of the courses.