

Welwyn Beekeepers Newsletter

January 2019

NEWS SUMMARY

.... With the festivities of Christmas and the New Year behind us we are starting 2019 with....

- Holding the AGM and Open Forum on Tuesday, February 12 at Christchurch Parkway, 110 Parkway, WGC AL8 6HN

Regular items:

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

AGM & Open Forum

Make your voice heard! Come and join us to deal with the administrative work that needs to be done at the beginning of each year:

- holding the AGM which includes
 - o approving the accounts and
 - o electing the members of the committee

The second, and major part of the evening is devoted to:

- discussing our Welwyn 2019 beekeeping year which includes:
 - o social events for the year
 - o how to increase emphasis on education about bees at our stalls at events
 - o Peter Folge's plans for the bee improvement programme during the year
 - o Peter Folge's plans for the Asian Hornet monitoring during the year
 - o Any other topic you would like to address during the evening

Help us shape our year so that you get the most out of your beekeeping experience and the social side that goes with it. The committee is looking forward to welcoming you all and hearing your ideas.

www.welwynbka.org

AGM and OPEN FORUM

Tuesday
February 12

7.30 for 8 pm

at Christchurch Parkway,
110 Parkway, Welwyn Garden City
AL8 6HN

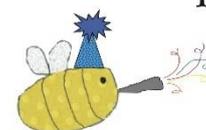
Come and help us shape the
Welwyn 2019 beekeeping year

Refreshments including
Cheese & Wine
will be provided

The HobbeeHive's New Year's Resolution:



Bee Happy...
Bee Healthy...
Bee Fabulous!



Happy New Year!
The Hobbee Hive

Date for your diary
Herts BKA Spring Show & AGM
Saturday, March 23

Q&A with Peter Folge

Q: Is there any value in feeding a dampened bag of sugar instead of fondant over winter?

A: In general, I personally do not see any reason to feed bees over winter if they have been fed properly a 2:1 sugar syrup by the end of September. Generally, a big sack of sugar (25kg) should be ample to feed two national hives on a single brood box. However, some beekeepers prefer to feed additional bakers fondant over the winter or even instead of syrup. If the later, it must be noted that once fondant has been placed directly over the brood chamber on-top of a queen excluder using an eke, this then needs to be monitored throughout the winter to make sure there is always a supply for the bees. The Crown board goes on over the eke. So, in other words the hive arrangement is:

Floor – Brood box - Queen Excluder - shallow Eke – Crown board - Roof.

The queen excluder is used to support the fondant which needs to remain wrapped up with a slit cut into the lower side and placed over the clustering bees. Bakers fondant should be used as this comes in bigger packs and does not contain other chemical additives.

An alternative that is used by some beekeepers which is quick and simple (especially in an emergency) is to use a bag of white granulated sugar instead of fondant. The whole bag is dropped briefly into a bucket of water to make it damp and a slit is cut into the bag facing downwards and placed over the clustering bees below. Again, this needs to be checked regularly.

Generally once bees have been fed in the late summer/Autumn they should need little else until the end of February. Hives can then be hefted to check on their weight loss and beginning March when bees have started flying again, can be given some syrup (2:1) if there is need to do so.

Thoughts from the Beekeeper

By Peter Folge

First...A big "thank you" to Booker for another batch of sugar. This is now to be offered to our members and I will shortly email to arrange collection details.

If not already thinking ahead, Thorne Beehives have their winter sale on until end of January. Also, it's a great time to start cleaning off brittle propolis from hive equipment ready for reuse in spring.

Just a quick reminder our Welwyn AGM is just around the corner. I look forward to seeing you there and will chat about our Welwyn Bee Improvement Programme and Asian Hornets. Any questions can be put forward or asked then.

Training

For Non Members/New Members Interested in or Contemplating Beekeeping

March 2019 Beginners Beekeeping Course

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

For Members

Sunday, January 27, 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 27th February, 6th & 13th 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 20th & 27st March & 3rd 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 2nd 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 11th May 2019

University of Hertfordshire's Bayfordbury Campus

Please email Mike Goodhew at training@welwynbka.org if you have any queries or would like to attend any of the courses.