

Welwyn Beekeepers Newsletter

March/April 2019

NEWS SUMMARY

.... Spring has officially begun and we have been busy with

- Holding the Beginners, New Season, and Basic Assessment courses
- Attending and helping out at the Herts AGM and Spring Show

... we are looking forward to:

- Holding the last of the Spring Courses (Swarm Collection) on April 2
- Our Social evening on April 30
- Attending the Knebworth Garden Show May 4-6

Regular items:

- News from the Committee
- Q&A with Peter Folge
- Thoughts from the Beekeeper
- Around the Apiaries
- Training

Spring Training Courses

A massive thank you from the Committee to all members who were involved in the Beginners, New Season or Basic Assessment courses we ran during March. We had a total of 107 people attending which is excellent. All the courses held were very well received by the attendees.

The Swarm Collecting course will finish things off on April 2 and we will have 31 people attending. Without your efforts in setting up the rooms before the arrival of attendees, presenting during evening, beekeepers being available for questions from potential newbies at the 4 evenings of the beginners' course, catering for hungry and thirsty attendees and then subsequently tidying up we could not run such a sleek operation. Once again, many thanks.



(photo from the beginners course)

www.welwynbka.org

Next Social Event

Tuesday, April 30

7.30 for 8 pm

At the White Hart, 2 Prospect Place, Welwyn AL6 9EN

Catch up with fellow beekeepers, join us to watch a bee-related film and to ask questions/discuss queries with the experts

Nosema Testing Day

UoH Bayfordbury Campus

Saturday, May 18

Have a sample of your bees from your hives tested at the drop in clinic.

Contact Mike Goodhew at training@welwynbka.org for further information and to let him know whether you will participate.

Healthy Bee Day

UoH Bayfordbury Campus

Saturday, May 11

A valuable day with the Regional Bee Inspectors bringing you up to date on pests and diseases and their treatments, and importantly an update on the Asian Hornet. It is not too late to book your place. Mike Goodhew at training@welwynbka.org

Event: Herts BKA AGM and Spring Show

Members from all branches turned up to attend the AGM, stock up on equipment on sale to be prepared for the coming season, attended the excellent presentations by the speakers and sampled the number of delicious cakes provided by members with a cup of tea or coffee. Conversation flowed amongst beekeepers catching up with news and comparing notes.

News from the Committee

The committee met on March 25 and the following was discussed:

- **Accounts:** The current bank balance stands at £19,841, this before County and BBKA subscriptions are paid out. BBKA has rolled out the new membership system and the committee would like to thank Rachel Leach, our membership secretary, for the extra work she has put in to get all the work done in a very timely fashion for Welwyn to have been one of the first branches being “live” on the new system.
- **Training:** The last of the courses are to be completed in early April. The committee thanked Andy Crossley for this time and effort he put into the weekly apiary session he led the last couple of years for new beekeepers at the Knebworth Apiary. Unfortunately, he is not able to continue with these sessions this year. The second Saturday in the month apiary sessions therefore are the only sessions available for the time being and are open to all members. The date of the first session to be advised to all members in due course.
- **New Apiaries:** Discussions and meetings about potential sites are still ongoing and progressing well.
- **Events:** The committee reviewed the list of events we are attending this year with all events being listed on WBKA's website.
- **Social:** Lieva has organised the forthcoming social evening at the White Hart, Welwyn on Tuesday, April 30.

Swarm List

Please contact Lieva Nation (welwynbees@gmail.com) if you would like to be added to the list of members wishing to receive a swarm or if you would like to go out with one of the swarm collectors to collect a swarm.

Q&A with Peter Folge

Q: Can stored wet supers be put on in February if placed above the queen excluder and the crownboard?

A: I probably would wait with adding wet overwintered supers until later in March-April. These uncapped frames, if not properly stored during the winter months, may have fermented and if given to a weak colony can cause dysentery and further stress the bees. It is better to feed fondant or fresh syrup. A strong hive with plenty of younger house bees will be better at dealing with these stored supers later on.

Thoughts from the Beekeeper

By Peter Folge

Now is the perfect time, on a warm day, to make your first hive inspection. Mouse guards and woodpecker netting should be removed. It's a great time to replace the floorboard and brood box with a clean one. I check for eggs and brood and especially for honey stores and feed, if necessary, a 2:1 sugar solution, just a little at a time. Queen excluders and Supers should be at the ready but not put on until your colony has plenty of 'sealed brood' and about 8 frames of bees. Too early can be detrimental to the colony's build-up.

The next Newsletter will be sent out at the beginning of May to include the news from the next committee meeting to be held at the end of April.

Forthcoming EVENT with WBKA involvement

Saturday – Monday
May 4-6, 9.30 am – 5 pm

Knebworth Garden Show
Knebworth House

Apiary Training

Members monthly training sessions will be held at the Knebworth Golf Club Apiary every second Saturday each month with a start time of 10.30 am. Please look out for the special notice we will send out when the weather allows us for the sessions to start again.

Courses

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

Nosema Testing Day

A "drop in" clinic will be held all day to test a sample of bees from your hives for Nosema. Contact Mike to let him know if you plan to drop in so that he can ensure that enough experts are at hand to test the bees.

Saturday 18th 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.