

THE ESSEX BEEKEEPER



*Honey bee and
Snowdrop*

Photo from BBKA

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**Monthly Magazine of the
Essex Beekeepers' Association
www.ebka.org**

***Furthering the Craft of Beekeeping in Essex
Registered Charity number 1031419***

Issue No. 650

February 2019

Divisional Meetings around the County

Meetings in February 2019

1 Feb	Friday 7.00pm	Saffron Walden	Divisional AGM & Annual Dinner. Great Dunmow Day Centre, CM6 1EQ
7 Feb	Thursday 8.00pm	Romford	Bee Diseases & Exotic Pests. David Rudland. Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park RM2 5EL
7 Feb	Thursday 8.00pm	Harlow	tbc
18 Feb	Monday 7.30pm	Chelmsford	tbc
20 Feb	Wed 7.30pm	Dengie 100 & Maldon	AGM & Bees and the Law - Chad Colby-Blake. The Oakhouse, High Street, Maldon
21 Feb	Thursday 7.30pm	Epping Forest	Looking Ahead - Practical Planning for the Season. Chingford Horticultural Hall E4 6PE
27 Feb	Wed 7.30pm	Southend	Spring Preparation - Chad Colby-Blake. WI Hall, Bellingham lane, Rayleigh.
28 Feb	Thursday 7.30pm	Saffron Walden	Foulbrood, Apiary Hygiene & the role of the NBU - Jonathon Baynes APHA Bee Inspector. Radwinter Village Hall CB10 2SN

Meetings in March 2019

7 March	Thursday 8.00pm	Romford	From Beekeeper to Bee Farmer - Michael Coe. Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park RM2 5EL
20 March	Wed 7.30pm	Dengie 100 & Maldon	Black Bee initiative. Kevin Thorne. The Oakhouse, High Street, Maldon
21 March	Thursday 7.30pm	Saffron Walden	Asian Hornet trap making practical - Thaxted Day Centre CM6 2RL
24 March	Sunday 10 - 3pm	Epping Forest	Asian Hornet Special - Andrew Durham (Cambridge BKA) and Bob Hogge (Jersey BKA). Copped Hall CM16 5HS.
27 March	Wed 7.30pm	Southend	Introduction of Queens - Clive deBruyn. WI Hall, Bellingham lane, Rayleigh.
29 March	Friday 8.00pm	Braintree	Agraian - the Natural Choice. Mike Able. Ethical pest control. White Notley Village Hall

**Notice of the 139th Annual General Meeting
of the Essex Beekeepers' Association
(EBKA)**

**to be held at
2pm on Saturday 16th March 2019**

**at
Writtle University College
Lordship Lane, Writtle
CM1 3RP**

The agenda for the meeting will be included in the March edition of *The Essex Beekeeper* and will be on the EBKA website from the end of February.

As well as conducting the usual essential business there will be a post meeting talk by Clive de Bruyn on '***Important things beekeepers have taught me***'.

Tony Rand
General Secretary EBKA

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Articles appearing in *The Essex Beekeeper* are not necessarily the views either of the Editor or the Essex Beekeepers' Association

To ensure inclusion within the diary of county-wide events would Divisions provide the editor with details of local meetings by the 4th of the previous month.

David Smye - dsmye@lineone.net



Update from the CEC Chair

Jane Ridler

Many of you probably know already that I have recently succeeded Ian Nichols as Chair of the CEC. I've been around EBKA some time - I've been Chair at Saffron Walden Division and both Exams and Education Secretary on CEC. As a Master Beekeeper, some will know me as a BBKA examiner!

2018 was a difficult year at the CEC and there have been changes not only of the Chair, but also of the County Treasurer and General Secretary, including a period over the spring and summer without a secretary.

I'd like to keep everyone more informed about the CEC in the life of Essex members as well as promoting more transfer of information between the CEC and the Divisions and between the Divisions. I have had the pleasure of visiting Chelmsford, Epping Forest and Maldon during my first 3 weeks of being CEC Chair – thank you very much for your hospitality! - and look forward to some more visits around the Divisions. I'm finding out more about what the Divisions want out of the CEC and about how we can all share the best aspects of all the diverse events and aims. I urge Divisional committees to generate creative ideas that their county rep (trustee) can put forward to be discussed at CEC meetings.

I'll be writing a bimonthly review in the *Essex Beekeeper* magazine reviewing briefly the issues raised at CEC meetings and recent happenings in the Divisions from their Trustee's reports. These reports and CEC Minutes will also be on the website promptly in the Members area (please ask your secretary for the password) if you

wish for more detail. But this month I want to say more about the CEC and EBKA in general before the County AGM coming up on 16th March.

The Structure of EBKA

Newer members may not be sure of the structure of our Association. EBKA is the registered charity, but our nine divisions run semi-autonomously. That is all to the good, beekeeping being an occupation which happens locally - and Essex is a big county! As such we need a central committee, the CEC, which is answerable to the Charities Commission. The nine trustees elected by the Divisions have responsibility and power to make decisions on behalf of the whole Association. The Chair, General Secretary and County Treasurer are also trustees.

The other (non-voting) members of the CEC have organisational and administrative roles which offer county level services. This improves the beekeeping experience in our county that cannot easily be achieved in smaller groups, for example, County Honey Show, the examinations offered by the BBKA and training and education at higher levels than for beginners. All the roles are voluntary and on the whole not too onerous, but important.

We are now looking for volunteers to sit on the CEC committee in various roles, starting from the EBKA AGM on Saturday 16th March at Writtle University. We are short of several important representatives.

We need the following :

BBKA ADM Representative, who takes ideas and voting choices from Essex to the BBKA Annual Delegates Meeting (i.e. the 'AGM'), possibly someone who likes to make a point at meetings?!

Examinations Secretary, who receives applications and organises BBKA exams, ideally someone who is personally familiar with some of the exams;

Education Secretary, perhaps an experienced beekeeper who has some of the BBKA qualifications, or someone who can organise educational events;

Essex Beekeeper Editor, needs good computer skills and preferably some publishing background;

and most importantly,

County Treasurer, suitable financial skills necessary,

For all of these - are you that person? Please contact incumbents, (contact details on page 15) or me for more details - or if you know someone suitable.

Please think about it hard and see you at the AGM!



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Chelmsford Division's Centenary Year

Brian Spencer - Divisional Chair

As our Centenary Year comes to an end, I thought it was time to look back at the enormous effort our members have put into our Centenary celebrations!

Summary of our Centenary Year

Our motto for the Centenary Year was '100 Years of Education and Pollination' and our focus was to encourage our members to meet the public and encourage them to think about the life and the role of honey bees.

The results have been amazing and are reflected in the following, of which we are very proud:

- Spoken to **6,800** people who visited our stands, not just the shows, of these **4,200** were under 18 years old.
- A record number of Beekeepers were trained: **38** attended Beginners Theory training courses; **23** at Practical training courses and **28** attended Taster Days.
- We used **45** different member volunteers, this number rises to **50** when training is included. Some of our members made over **10** appearances.
- A new Observation Hive was commissioned and installed at Chelmsford Museum, designed by one of our members and a new brass plaque recently added.
- A full-size model hive was also presented to Chelmsford Museum and installed outside in their 'Bee friendly' planted garden.
- Attended **8 major events** with our Centenary Stand: Norsey Woods Open Day; Hylands National Flower Show; Billericay Mill Meadows Show; Writtle Food & Farming Day; Oaklands Museum's 'Find the Honey' half-term week; Oaklands Museum Reception attended by Chelmsford Mayor and other dignitaries; Hylands Apiary Day attended by WI and Vicky Ford MP; Essex Honey Show.
- Our Centenary Demonstration Stand was customised with picture boards, equipment, a special cut-away hive, as well as some historic books and equipment - plus 'John', the beekeeper model.

- Sold honey at every Hylands House monthly Farmers Market since January 2018.
- We have given away **400** packets of bee-friendly wildflower seeds.
- Set up 2 school visits, attending 1 assembly and 1 hands-on session for pre-school children. More sessions are scheduled for 2019.
- Created a special Centenary 'sew on' logo for our members' Bee suits and created Centenary pin badges for members who volunteered at events.

The CBK Centenary year culminated in our Celebration Dinner at the County Hotel Chelmsford, where around 80 packets of flower seeds were given away, presented the new 'Centenary Shield' and CBK cups to our Honey Show winners and gave each CBK member a Centenary gift.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank everyone who took part in our celebrations.





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Dr Joan Fitzpatrick, Senior Lecturer in English at Loughborough University, whose recent books include *A History of Food in Literature* and *Three Sixteenth-Century Dieteries*, has examined the use and value of honey in history.

Honey was praised by our ancestors long before sugar became widely available and has for centuries been celebrated in literature, not just for its natural sweetness, but for its nutrition and healing powers.

Dr Fitzpatrick said: “Honey has long been considered medicinal. Thomas Elyot’s *Castle of Health* of 1537 – a popular guide on how to maintain a healthy life – is typical of early modern views about honey, observing that ‘[it] is of incomparable efficacy for it not only cleanseth, altereth, and nourisheth but also it long time preserveth that uncorrupted which is put into it’. “Elyot describes how honey makes all sorts of ‘liquors commodious to mankind’ and he also recounts how Democritus – a philosopher from ancient Greece who lived to be over 100-years-old – claimed that the secret to a long and healthy life was to ‘moisten the inside of his body with honey and the outside with oil’.

“In another popular dietary, *The Government of Health* of 1558, William Bullein thought honey especially suitable for old people ‘for it doth warm them’ and helps them make ‘good blood’.” Honey is also mentioned in the works of great writers such as William Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.

Shakespeare repeatedly refers to the sweetness of honey and sugar in his play *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, which was first performed in 1595 and in 1598 Francis Meres, an early admirer, referred to Shakespeare as ‘honey-tongued’.

Topical applications of honey can be found in Ben Jonson’s play *Bartholomew Fair*, first performed in 1614. Ursula – the woman selling pork at the fair – is assured when she cuts her leg that the injury can be remedied ‘with the white of an egg, a little honey, and hog’s grease’.

For some time, sugar was also considered beneficial to health; it had a high status until the early 18th century when the negative effects upon the body became increasingly apparent and it started to be associated with the slave trade.

Literature such as Christina Rossetti’s poem ‘Goblin Market’ of 1862 started to refer to sugar in a negative context, but honey kept its respected status. Dr Fitzpatrick said: “Unlike sugar, honey has retained its appeal as a natural and healthy foodstuff redolent of a rural idyll.”

Honey has also long been reputed as a sacred food and in the Bible food sent by God to feed the children of Israel in the desert known as ‘manna’ is described as tasting ‘like wafers made with honey’.

www.lboro.ac/news September 2018



GM 2019/2 – to all AA Secretaries

04/01/2019

The Role of BBKA Associations and Beekeepers concerning Asian Hornets

Each Branch or Association will be asked to set up a team that can assist with local requests for help in identifying Asian Hornets. It is vital that all Beekeepers can identify Asian Hornets.

The ID sheet and poster can be downloaded from the [Asian hornet pages of BeeBase](#) or ordered from the NBU office (nbu@apha.gsi.gov.uk).

Each team should be organised with contact numbers and a team leader who can be contacted by an Area Association Co Ordinator. (This will facilitate easier dissemination of information)

Associations should encourage their members to register on BeeBase and to ensure that their contact and apiary details are up to date. If an email address is included this will ensure individuals can receive alerts from the NBU when Asian Hornets are sighted in their area

The BBKA will set up a system similar to that used for reporting swarms. This will allow the public to search for a local association (secretary or AHAT [Asian Hornet Action Team] leader) to arrange assistance with the identification of suspect Asian hornet sightings or leads. Team members from local/area Associations can follow up leads on invite/request from members of the public and aid them with identification and obtaining a specimen and photograph. These should be sent in through the altrnonnative@ceh.ac.uk email address or the [Asian Hornet Watch](#) app.

All beekeepers should be encouraged to keep an eye out for Asian hornets in their apiaries catching bees or on flowering plants feeding on nectar or other insects. In the winter months nests in deciduous trees may become visible.

All Asian hornet sightings or nests should be reported (with a photograph or video) through the alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk email address or the [Asian Hornet Watch](#) app.

Monitoring and Trapping.

- Monitoring traps can be used in the spring or late summer especially around risk points such as ports or areas where nests have occurred previously. A [fact sheet](#) and [YouTube video](#) on how to make an Asian hornet monitoring trap are available from the [Asian hornet pages of BeeBase](#).
- It would be very helpful if all beekeepers who use monitoring traps were encouraged to record their use on BeeBase by editing their apiary records, how to do this is described on page 9 of [Beekeeper Pages FAQ](#).
- **It is illegal to trap and release an alien species.**
This means it is illegal to trap and release an Asian Hornet.

Insurance Issues

The insurance cover that is provided is excellent and covers all that Beekeepers do in the normal process of beekeeping including swarm collecting.

Beekeepers are insured for beekeeping activities including swarm collections **BUT** they are **NOT** insured if trespassing or entering areas without the land-owners permission

They are **NOT** insured if involved in **trapping and releasing** Asian Hornets as this is an illegal activity, Asian Hornets are an invasive species and sightings must be reported.

Members of the public have **NO** insurance through the BBKA unless participating in Beekeeping activities with BBKA members.

Beekeepers involved in tracking hornets or searching for hornet nests in order to protect their bees are **not insured** if climbing ladders, trees or scaling buildings above the height specified in their BBKA policy concerning swarm collection. Beekeepers should only be involved in tracking activities directed by the NBU and will **not** be insured if they are practically involved in Asian Hornet nest destruction, this will be undertaken by specialist Pest Controllers appointed by the NBU.

During a NBU response. (this will be led by Bee Inspectors)

- If the Asian Hornet is from Europe and there is no risk that it is from a local nest - then nothing further will happen.
- If flying Asian hornets are seen then a contingency response will be initiated and the local association contacted. Alerts will be sent out from BeeBase across the county to increase awareness.

The BBKA are asking all Area Associations to supply contact details for their Area Coordinator to the BBKA office. These people will be the main point of contact and be asked to disseminate information to their local branches/associations and members. The BBKA will be sending out more information about any appropriate training and information that may be useful to limit the impact of Asian Hornets.



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A date for your diary -

Friday 16 August 2019 - WORLD HONEY BEE DAY.

How do honey bees survive the winter?

Dr Fred Ayres - Lune Valley Community Beekeepers - via ebees

Insects generally survive sub-zero environmental temperatures by evolving one of two strategies. Some are freeze tolerant, meaning that they can survive the freezing of their body fluids. In contrast, those species that die if frozen must evolve seasonal adaptations that prevent freezing of their body fluids in winter, such as various antifreezes that make them freeze avoiding.

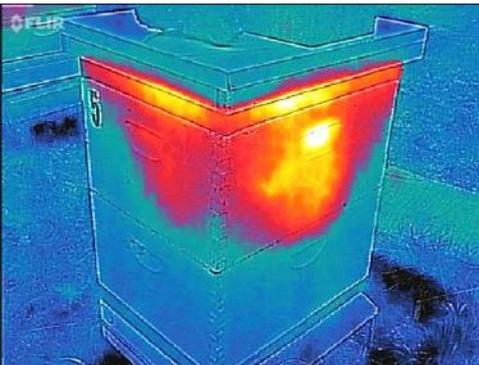
However, honey bees are neither freeze tolerant nor freeze avoiding. They die of hypothermia if their body temperatures are lowered to approximately 7 degrees C. In fact, they are endotherms.

Like humans and other mammals, they control their body temperatures by producing internal heat, mainly by shivering their flight muscles. In addition, they huddle together into a large mass that conserves the heat produced by the individual bees. Individuals within the cluster move in and out between the centre and the outside edge of the cluster. This combination of endothermy and clustering keeps their body temperatures well above freezing right through the winter.

In one experiment, when the air temperature around the cluster was kept at

5 degrees C, bees at the centre of the cluster had body temperatures of 35 degrees C and temperatures of individuals on the outside edge were approx 19 degrees C. The centre of the cluster generally stays between 30 and 35 degrees C.

This infra-red photo shows the temperature of the cluster being much higher than the internal hive temperature



However, one very serious problem for maintaining endothermy at low temperatures is that it becomes very energetically costly, requiring large amounts of food, which is one of the main reasons why so many colonies fail to over-winter.

WHO'S WHO & HOW TO CONTACT THEM

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Welsh Beekeepers Convention 30th March
BBKA Spring Convention 13th April

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