THE ESSEX BEEKEEPER

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Essential equipment available from EBKA …....

Enamel Badge - £4

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In this issue:

Monthly Magazine of the Essex Beekeepers' Association

www.ebka.org

Furthering the Craft of Beekeeping in Essex

Registered Charity number 1031419

Issue No. 652 **April 2019**

Divisional Meetings around the County

Meetings in April 2019

4 April	**Thursday 8.00pm**	**Harlow**	**Fun with Pollen Traps** - Robert Smith. Kings Church, Red Willow, Harlow CM19 5PA
4 April	**Thursday 8.00pm**	**Romford**	**Microscopy** - David McHattie. Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park RM2 5EL
6 April	**Saturday 2.30pm**	**Saffron Walden**	**Practical Wax Extraction** - Boyton End CM6 2RB
13 April	**Saturday 2.30pm**	**Saffron Walden**	**Putting Your Hive Together** - Takeley CM6 1SU
15 April	**Monday 7.30pm**	**Chelmsford**	**Top Tips for beekeepers.** The Link, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford CM1 2XB
17 April	**Wed 7.30pm**	**Epping Forest**	**A different kind of swarm control**. Chingford Horticultural Hall E4 6PE
17 April	**Wed 7.30pm**	**Dengie 100 & Maldon**	**Identification** - Bumble Bee Conservation Trust. The Oak-house, High Street, Maldon
24 April	**Wed 7.30pm**	**Southend**	**Bee Space** - Bob Smith. W I Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh
27 April	**Saturday 2.30pm**	**Saffron Walden**	**From Comb to Jar** - Wimbish CB10 2UY
27 April	**Saturday**	**Romford**	**Wax Day** - Havering Out Apiary.
28 April	**Sunday 3.00pm**	**Braintree**	**Apiary Meeting** - Coney Green, Great Bardfield CM7 4PV. Jan French 07725 166 609

Meetings in May 2019

2 May	**Thursday 8.00pm**	**Romford**	**Experiences of taking BBKA exams** - Tom Keeper, **Experiences as a beginner beekeeper** - Roger Honey. Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park RM2 5EL
2 May	**Thursday 8.00pm**	**Harlow**	tbc
18 May	**Saturday 2.30pm**	**Epping Forest**	**Knowledge of Forage** - Wanstead Apiary, 24 Langley Drive E11 2LN
19 May	**Sunday 3.00pm**	**Braintree**	**Apiary Meeting** - High Garrett CM7 5PH. Telephone Stacy Cronly-Dillon 07854527163.
19 May	**Sunday**	**Dengie 100 & Maldon**	**Apiary meeting** - tbc
19 May	**Sunday 10—4.00**	**Braintree**	**Essex Young Farmers,Show,** Boyton Hall, Roxwell, CM1 4LT
20 May	**Monday 7.30pm**	**Chelmsford**	**Swarm Control** - The Link, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford CM1 2XB
22 May	**Wednesday 7.30pm**	**Southend**	**Show Preparation** - Jean Smye & Jim McNeill. W I Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh

Essex Beekeepers' Association presents a

Bee Health & Disease Recognition Day

at

The Millennium Centre

The Chase, Dagenham Road, Romford. RM7 0SS

Thursday 20th June 2019

10 am - 4pm Reception **9.30**

Suitable for Beekeepers of all levels of Experience

Come and meet your Eastern Regional Bee Inspector Keith Morgan and local Seasonal Bee Inspectors.

This relaxed & friendly day will include a mixture of presentations, Useful Tips & Hints with Discussions.

Apiary Hygiene - Varroa - Live Comb Recognition

Asian Hornet

Plus, a practical Session in the apiary observing how inspectors manipulate and check for disease.

IMPORTANT

Bring CLEAN Protective Beekeeping Clothing and a packed lunch. Tea & Coffee will be provided.

Pre Booking of Places is Essential as a limited number available
Contact; Jim McNeill on 01708 765898 answer phone, or
jimandliz44@aol.co.uk

Update from the CEC Chair

Jane Ridler

At the time of writing this article the AGM is about to be held in a few days' time, so any dramatic happenings then may make my contributions null and void! However, my communications with you are about the progress made at the CEC meeting held on 12th March.

We are welcoming three new members in the important voting role of Divisional Trustee for 2019-20, **Vernon Amor**, from Southend, **Glenn Mayes** from Dengie and Maldon and **Bridget Mudd** from Braintree, two of whom were able to attend yesterday. After the AGM there will be more new faces, including **Paras Shah** from Epping Forest as Treasurer and others in the advisory roles which are so helpful for CEC decision making. Nearly all posts have been filled – with a new prospective editor for the *Essex Beekeeper* magazine in the offing. Unfortunately, the one outstanding gap is for Education Secretary - a position close to my heart! Training for the Basic Assessments and module exams, as well as other sessions for the more experienced members will now have to be organised at Divisional level, or as one offs, like the Asian Hornet day on 24th March by Epping Forest, which is a sell out!

The CEC is moving ahead well with overarching policies in the last 3 months. We have dealt with Safe-guarding, GDPR and the Finance policy has been addressed re the issues of last summer although the overarching document is still incomplete - awaiting scrutiny from the new County Treasurer.

Health and Safety is next on the list.

The Trustees' Handbook, which in the past has covered all the procedures of the Association is advancing well in its revision and the current one, although out of date, will be uploaded onto the website until each reviewed chapter is ratified and replaces it. All policies will be reviewed annually by the Governance sub-committee.

The *Essex Beekeeper* is now under review by the CEC although the issue is a thorny one and has been with us for many years. A short survey giving some direction on divisional views has provided a basis for us to devise a proposal of compromise for the membership to consider in the spring. Whilst many members clearly like to read a paper magazine, it is thought that making use of the immediacy of modern technology, at least for advertising all events in a timely way, must be addressed.

The trustees' reports reveal an array of interesting goings on in the divisions in the winter months – they are available on the website to share straight after our meeting. I hope you have also had time to spruce up your beekeeping equipment as the season is close upon us. Hopefully you have been wary of food shortages during March after an unseasonably warm February and also of being tempted to crack open the propolis seals the bees have so carefully constructed against the cold on an isolated spring-like day's inspection.

Last, but not least – the President's chain of office is weighed down with the mini-plaques of the many officials of our long history. The most recent presidents, going back almost to the millennium are not yet represented. So, there is going to be an additional blue ribbon on the chain and the plaques brought up to date and arranged on it. Not, alas, in time for this AGM, but look out for it in the future!

Jane Ridler Chair, CEC

Save the date:

THE CHANGING FACE OF BEEKEEPING

SAFFRON WALDEN BEEKEEPERS

Sunday, 20 October 2019
Felsted School, Dunmow, CM6 3JL

Tickets available soon: £25

EBKA Conference 2019

Will Messenger: *will present an aspect of the history of beekeeping, possibly clearing supers and the history of the Porter Escape. (There will also be an exhibition of artefacts on display in the Foyer.)*

Jed Marshall: *A year in the life of a professional beekeeper*

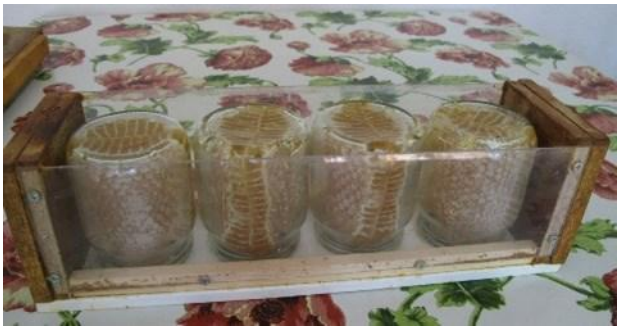
Dr Jonas Geldman, University of Cambridge: *Does conserving honeybees help wildlife?*

Professor Steve Martin, University of Salford: *Our search to understand the long term Varroa tolerance shown by colonies in many parts of the world, including the UK, and trying to understand what traits bind all these colonies together*

A Four Jar Frame

Courtesy of Reigate BeeNews - via *ebees*

Have you ever wanted to create an unusual comb display? Well here is another interesting DIY project to try from Dennis Chow.

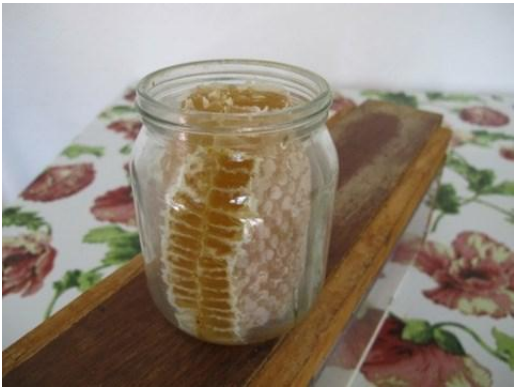


Make a small box that can fit into the super with four holes at the base to allow the bees to get in and start to make the honey comb in inverted honey jars with the aid of a small piece of wax foundation in the centre of each jar.

The jars inside the box are enclosed with Perspex on both sides so that the progress of the comb construction can be seen. Then a bee-proof lid is added to prevent the bees making wax combs inside the box itself.

Initially the bees will be busy filling up the combs on the frames in the super box and may ignore the wax foundations inside the jars. But eventually, all the combs in the frames will be full and the bees will then start to get into the jars and draw out the combs and fill them with nectar. This took only two weeks.

It is amazing, instead of building a flat surface comb, the bees just make it round till they have just enough working space between the wall of the glass to the surface of the comb, then they start to cap the honey. How can these small creatures do such a clever piece of engineering? Proving yet again what amazing creatures they are!



Photographs: Dennis Chow

UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL SURVEY OF HONEYBEES AND OTHER POLLINATORS

July 2018

Extracts from a report prepared by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

The report summarises the global survey developed to collect data on the status of worldwide honeybee and pollinator populations and current programmes for their monitoring and conservation.

Pollination is an ecosystem service that around 20,000 different species do - freely and coincidently. Pollination is estimated to be worth USD235 to USD577 billion annually to global crop production. Globally, 90 percent of wild flowering plants and 75 percent of the leading food crops are dependent to varying extents on pollinator-mediated fertilization. Not only is animal pollination invaluable to agriculture and ecosystems, the presence of animal pollinators is interlinked with the livelihoods of millions of people. The world's most important cash crops provide employment and income to people of both developing and developed countries, who often rely on pollination services for their crop yield and quality.

Aside from their quantifiable benefits to ecosystems, pollinators are Interwoven with human culture – integral to art, music, customs and religions globally. They are symbolic within religions, featured in prominent passages of the Quran and the Bible. Pollinators undeniably add beauty to this world, and the services they provide are not a provision easily replaced.

INTRODUCTION

Honeybees and other pollinators play critical roles in food security and nutrition. Given that these animals are not traditional livestock, they have not to date been considered in the intergovernmental process for management of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture. The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture requested FAO to consider including domesticated honeybees and potentially other pollinators into DAD-IS,2 - the Domestic Animal Diversity Information System, a communication and information tool for the management of animal genetic resources

THE SURVEY

The survey was Web-based and was open for submissions from 28 February to 31 July 2017. English and Spanish versions of the survey were distributed to:

(i) the Domestic Animal Diversity Network (DAD-Net):

(ii) the Beekeeping Exchange Group of FAO's "Technologies and practices for small agricultural producers" platform (TECA)

(iii) the International Federation of Beekeepers Associations (Apimondia);

iv) the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IBPES)

v) the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and

vi) all National Coordinators.

The survey comprised 28 questions and was divided into three sections:

(i) General Information,

(ii) Honey Bees,

(iii) General Pollinators.

The first section requested information about the respondents and the country about which they were reporting, whereas the subsequent two sections requested information on main honeybee and pollinator species, their contributions to food and agriculture and threats to their survival, their known or perceived population status, and existing systems for population monitoring conservation.

A total of 256 responses from 104 different countries were received, with 47 percent of responses coming from a government representative. The average number of responses per country was two, with 50 countries submitting a single response; 30 percent of countries submitted more than two responses. The largest number of responses received from a single country was 12, from Ecuador, followed by Argentina, Chile and Ethiopia, each submitting 11 responses.

The survey sought to determine what species of honeybee were utilized in global apiculture and pollination practices. Ten different species of honey-bees were reported to be present in the respond countries, six of which were reported to be managed in some form. "Managed" in this definition

encompasses the act of caring for and interacting with the species in some form, from commercial beekeeping operations to hobby beekeeping.

The six species were:

Apis mellifera, A. cerana, A. florea,

A. dorsata, A. laboriosa and A. nigrocincta.

These species represent all three subgenera of honeybee:

Apis – the cavity nesting bees (mellifera, cerana, and nigrocincta);

Micrapis – the dwarf honeybees (florea); and

Megapis – the giant honeybee (dorsata and laboriosa).

The other four honeybee species that survey respondents reported as present in their respective countries were Apis andreniformis, A. binghami, A. breviligula, and A. nuluensis.

The European or Western honeybee, Apis mellifera, was reported to be present in 100 responding countries, and is managed in 94 of them. The next most abundant species of honeybee is the dwarf honeybee, Apis florea, present in 19 countries, followed by the Asian honeybee, Apis cerana, managed in 12 of the 14 countries where it was reported.

The 34 subspecies and main hybrids of A. mellifera reported in the survey are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Reported Apis mellifera subspecies and major hybrids

adami, adansonii, anatoliaca, bandasii, capensis, carnica, carpatica, caucasica, cecropia, iberiensis, indica, intermissa, iranica, jemenitica, lamarckii, ligustica, litorea, macedonica, meda, mellifera, monticola, nubica, rhustica, ruttneri, sahariensis, scutellate, siciliana, sicula, simensis, syriaca, unicolor, woygambela, Buckfast hybrid other hybrids

The main threats reported are similar in honeybee and other pollinators, with pesticides and loss, degradation or fragmentation of habitat/forage as largest threats. Climate change also appears to be an emerging threat for both groups. This result implies that many conservation initiatives, if managed correctly, will benefit both groups, even if the intention is only to bolster honeybee populations.

The greatest revelation to come out of the survey is the necessity to increase awareness in all aspects of pollination and pollinators, particularly in their importance for food security and livelihoods and in the major threats to their survival.

Pollinators are crucial to the environment, and the greater appreciation of their importance globally is key to increasing their populations and maintaining their genetic diversity.

Report: **COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE. INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

Tenth Session Rome, 27–29 June 2018 GLOBAL SURVEY OF HONEYBEES AND OTHER POLLINATORS

Extracts by Editor - David Smye

HOW DO BEES SMELL?

John Eaden - Manchester BKA - via ebees

How do honeybees detect scents?

Honeybees have been around on this planet for over 34 million years and during that time have evolved some remarkable adaptations. The honeybee has no nose! Instead, it has a pair of moveable antennae on its head, which it uses for a range of functions. The antennae on female bees have 12 segments while the males have 13. Each antenna has an elbow-like joint, which allows it to move in many directions.

Specialized sensing cells on the antennae allow the bee to smell, taste, hear sounds, feel by touch, sense airspeed during flight and detect temperature, humidity and carbon dioxide levels. Some of the smell sensors are specialised for detecting the mating hormones secreted by virgin queens – not surprisingly, only drones possess these sensors.

The honeybee spends most of its time in the dark inside the hive and its sense of smell is a very important way for it to know what is happening around it. Each nest has a distinct smell signature that comes from the specific mix of pheromones secreted both by workers and most importantly by the queen. The bees can tell friend from stranger by their scent as well as knowing whether the queen is present, healthy and laying well.

The Nasonov pheromone has seven distinct components, which the bees can detect, and the queen secretes a complex cocktail of pheromones. The rich and complex odour environment of the nest guides the behaviour of the colony.

Once the foraging bee leaves the nest it uses its sense of smell to locate and distinguish between different forage plants, which each give off a unique blend of odour chemicals. When a beekeeper opens up a colony and removes hive components, for example by lifting out frames to inspect them, it is bound to disturb the balance of smells within the hive. It can take up to 48 hours for the colony to re -establish its scent equilibrium.

Perhaps we beekeepers need to be aware of this when we decide whether it is necessary to open up our hives?

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.

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