

East Lothian Beekeepers' Association

(Founded 1887 – Scotland's Oldest Local Association)

www.eastlothianbeekeepers.org.uk

Newsletter 155

May 2010

Chilly spring!

The cold breeze that was with us for weeks made it hard to know if and when to open the hives to find out what was going on. This has made the first of our first apiary demonstrations more question and answer sessions than experiences of practical beekeeping, so let's hope it stays warm for us and the bees.

Both my hives have seemed incredibly busy and intent on expanding despite the cold. Now that the oil seed rape is flowering I hope I can add a honey super soon and take my first honey crop!

Also a note to say that the members list will follow for those who agreed that their details could be shared when filling in the membership form. Those with an M next to their name have agreed to mentor beginners, so please contact them if you're looking for help.

Summer Apiary Demonstrations

The next apiary demonstration is scheduled for 2pm, on Saturday May 22nd, at the ELBA apiary at Lennoxlove (directions below). Of course if there is rain, wind or cold weather (if you wouldn't want to be out in shirt sleeves) then we'll postpone until the following Saturday because it won't be possible to open up the hives. Please bring protective gear if you have it. We're planning to meet at the apiary fortnightly at 2pm on the following dates (also weather dependent):

5th and 19th June, not 3rd July because it's the Haddington Show, 17th and 31st July.

Directions:

Leave Haddington heading south on the B6368, across Waterloo Bridge.

Follow the B6368 right at the fork in the road after the bridge. Continue past the first lodge building (North Lodge) on the left. Turn left at the second cottage on the left and you should see beekeepers!

Go up the lane and turn left where there is more space to park.

Association Bees and Hives for Sale

With last year's foulbrood outbreaks, it's the responsibility of all beekeepers to do all they can to prevent the spread of disease. I'd like to remind members that sourcing bees in East Lothian, where no foulbrood has been detected, is one of the easiest and best ways to do this.

As our colonies are expanding we hope to be able to supply nuclei of bees to members (beginner or experienced) from June. If you are interested in buying bees this year then please get in touch with me as soon as possible because we are supplying one nuc per member on a first-come-first-served basis.

We intend to supply nuclei of five or six frames at a cost of £10 per frame of bees. We also have second hand hives available to beginners, mostly Smiths, some of which need minor repairs. We will be charging £50 for a hive consisting of a solid floor, brood box, super, queen excluder, crown board and roof. If you're interested please contact Donald Smith at gardencottage.mail@gmail.com or 01620 822441.

We're happy to supply bees provided that the beekeeper has:

Current ELBA membership

Current Scottish Beekeepers Association membership (as this includes insurance for the hive)

Received basic training in beekeeping

A suitable site for a hive

An experienced mentor to help get them started

Basic protective and beekeeping equipment

A hive (if you have a hive already please let me know if it's Smith,

National etc, so we can ensure the bees are on frames that'll fit!)

This checklist is simply to try and make sure the bees are going to well prepared homes and isn't meant to intimidate beginners. Please get in touch if you'd like assistance on any of these points.

Haddington Show - 3rd July

If there's anyone out there who can help with the Association display for the show, for all or part of the day, then I'd love to hear from you! Our stand is always popular, with candle making and honey for sale, so anyone who'd like to share their passion for beekeeping with the public would be very welcome. Please contact Donald Smith at gardencottage.mail@gmail.com or 01620 822441.

Oilseed Rape Spraying

We've been informed that spraying of oilseed rape will be taking place over the next couple of weeks. No new chemicals are being used, so as no problems have been reported in the past none are expected this year, but if you have specific concerns contact your local farmer.

Wing Morphometry Survey

John Durkacz, a Fife beekeeper with an interest in the preservation of the Dark Bee in Scotland, is looking for people to carry out wing morphometry surveys in East Lothian to help establish the numbers and locations of colonies with Dark Bee characteristics. If you can help him with this project then contact him directly at:

15 Lundin Road

Crossford

Fife. KY12 8PW

durkacz@hotmail.co.uk

SBAi Beekeepers' Forum

The Scottish Beekeepers' Association has launched SBA Interactive, a forum where everyone can read discussions on beekeeping topics and

those registered can post questions, messages or blogs. Use it to talk to other beekeepers, help beginners and to talk to your national beekeeping association. Visit www.SBAi.org.uk to give it a try.

Buyer for Beeswax

Tommy Crooks is looking to buy beeswax by the kilo. If you have surplus to sell then contact him on 01875 615074 or 07753 80645.

Buyer for Honey

Andrew Brown from a company called Great British Honey has contacted the Association looking for small to medium-scale beekeepers to supply them with honey. They are particularly interested in sourcing 'unusual or unique' types of honey. If you would be interested in finding out more contact Mr Brown on 01691 648595 or andrew.brown@greatbritishhoney.co.uk. Have a look at www.greatbritishhoney.co.uk too.

Bumblebees active during the winter

Some news of research that has found urban bumblebees active and collecting food during the winter in urban habitats in the south of England. I wonder how they got on this winter, but perhaps something to think about if climate change brings warmer winters? See <http://planetearth.nerc.ac.uk/news/story.aspx?id=693> for the full story.

New Members

We welcome Sharon Street, Rory Sandison, Neil Waterman, Simone Anderson, Judith George and Clive Baker.

Jo Dodds – Secretary

20 King's Avenue

Longniddry

EH32 0QN

01875 852916

joannawhittingham@googlemail.com