

East Lothian Beekeepers' Association

(Founded 1887 – Scotland's Oldest Local Association)

www.eastlothianbeekeepers.org.uk

Newsletter 161

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A tricky year for bees and beekeepers

A hot spring and sodden summer made for a difficult beekeeping season this year, and led to the cancellation of our main summer event at the Haddington Show. Despite the wet weather however, George Barton still managed to run some practical demonstrations for members at the Association apiary, and takes us into autumn with three colonies at Lennoxlove. Unfortunately the poor conditions meant we could only supply one beginner with a nucleus of bees, but luckily demand was not as great as it has been in recent years.

I lost my own bees in spring, and have had numerous reports of other colonies petering out, unmated queens and sparse honey crops. Not a vintage year, but one we can all learn from I'm sure! With so many events rained off, it does feel like a long time since we've had a good number of members together, so I'm looking forward to getting this year's winter meetings started and catching up with everyone and news of their bees. There's information about the meetings and social dinner here, along with news of ELBA's spectacularly successful exhibits at the SBA Centenary Event in September.

Winter meetings

As in previous years, winter meetings will be held at Haddington Town House, in the buffet room on the left on the first floor. They will take place monthly on THURSDAY evenings from 7.30-9.30pm (apart from December, when we hold the social dinner instead). Each month we host a visiting speaker, who gives a beekeeping-related talk, followed by questions and refreshments. A great opportunity to meet local beekeepers, learn more about beekeeping and have a chat!

8 November – Gavin Ramsay will speak about Bee Communication

10 January – AGM & speaker to be confirmed

7 February – John Coyle will share his expertise of Beekeeping in Top Bar Hives

7 March – Graeme Sharpe will tell us about his methods of Varroa Management

4 April – Speaker to be confirmed

Also, please don't forget to take a look at our small library of beekeeping books, which members are able to borrow from Deborah Mackay.

Annual Social Dinner

After the success of last year's gathering at the Avenue Restaurant in Haddington, we have asked them to come up with another tempting honey themed menu for our social dinner. Please save Thursday 6 December in your diary and I'll be in touch shortly with more details.

Success at the SBA Centenary Event

The Association put together two displays for the SBA Centenary Event in Stirling in mid-September and our efforts were rewarded with a gold medal for the dazzling decorative exhibit, which displayed East Lothian's wonderful hive products to great effect. We also won a silver medal for our Local Association General Exhibit of Beekeeping, which illustrated ELBA's work past and present. I've attached Allan Cameron's pictures of our displays, so please take a look! Many thanks are due to everyone who generously gave their time, equipment and honey to create these award-winning exhibits.

Donation of Hive Equipment

Many thanks to Wendy Fraser, Gordon Biggar's widow, for her generous donation of a mixture of his equipment to the Association, which will be made available to the membership.

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