

East Lothian Beekeepers Association

(Founded 1887 - Scotland's oldest Local Association?)

www.eastlothianbeekeepers.org.uk

Newsletter 140

November 2006

Your secretary has gone into organisational hibernation – unlike the bees who are still working away in the mild weather. I haven't had to feed my bees at all this autumn. After taking the supers off at the end of August I put in Apistan strips and left them to it. A couple of weeks ago when I took the strips out the hives were all satisfyingly heavy, though there were an awful lot of mites on the Varroa floors. I wrote a letter to the East Lothian Courier about their "Swarm of angry 'wasps' forces pharmacy to close" article – the first silly bee story in the paper for a while!

I will be attending the SBA Secretaries's and Council meetings on your behalf on 11th November in Perth.

Forthcoming events

Thursday 23rd November 8pm Bonar's Restaurant, Haddington. After last year's successful revival of the annual social dinner, and the enjoyable honey themed menu, this year's event will again be at Bonar's, which is beside the Poldrate Mill on the road out of Haddington towards Gifford. Dinner will comprise three courses, coffee and half a bottle of wine and will cost £21.50 per head. Please let me know in advance if you intend to come so that I can advise the restaurant of numbers.

Sunday 17th December 1pm - a demonstration of the oxalic acid trickle method at my apiary, at Clerkington, Haddington. Call 01620 822441 to confirm and for directions.

January – Beginner's Class. Mike Bain already has several enquires to form the nucleus of a class – let him know if you would like to join the weekly sessions covering everything from bee biology to setting up your own apiary.

Winter Program

Confession time – I have more or less run out of ideas! I'm thinking that it's about time for a new vigorous secretary to leap into the breach. But that can wait for the AGM. In the meantime, all suggestions for speakers and topics would be most welcome. We also have a fairly healthy bank balance, thanks to our honey sales at the Haddington Show. Any ideas what to do with it?

Past Events

This year the heather picnic actually did take place – sandwiches were consumed in a sheltered neuk in the Lammermuirs with a fine outlook. The boys chased the sheep (without success) and Peter Radband's bees were tolerant of having their roofs removed and their industriousness commented upon. None of us quite knew what we were supposed to do, but hopefully we covered the essentials. Everyone enjoyed getting a bit of hill air.

Entries were noticeable healthier in the honey section at this year's Gifford Flower Show. The prize winners were:

222. 1lb jar clear blossom honey

1st John De Pree 2nd Peter Radband 3rd William Fife

223. 1lb jar naturally granulated honey

1st John De Pree 2nd James Bell 3rd Peter Radband

224. 1lb jar soft set honey

1st James Bell 2nd Andrew Stenhouse 3rd John De Pree

225. 1lb jar heather honey

1st Mark Hedderwick 2nd John De Pree 3rd Peter Radband

226. one piece cut comb blossom honey (approx 8 oz)
 1st James Bell 2nd Andrew Stenhouse 3rd Sandy Murray
227. one piece cut comb heather honey (approx 8 oz)
 1st Peter Radband 2nd James Bell 3rd Sandy Boggon
228. one section flower honey
 1st Peter Radband
229. one section heather honey
 None
230. one shallow frame blossom honey
 1st Peter Radband 2nd Sandy Murray 3rd James Bell
231. one shallow frame heather honey
 None
232. one bottle wine-type mead (not fortified)
 1st John De Pree 2nd Peter Radband
233. one piece beeswax 8 to 12 ozs.
 1st John De Pree 2nd Sandy Boggon 3rd Mark Hedderwick
234. honey cake (no set recipe, but see our website for one)
 1st James Bell 2nd anonymous!

Gifford Horticultural Society Trophy for most points in classes
 222-233 – shared by John De Pree and Peter Radband

George Turnbull Trophy for Beekeeping, best exhibit excluding
 class 234 – John De Pree for class 222

The Judge recommends that in future section 222 is divided into
 separate sections for dark and clear honey.

In September, Mike Bain and I took a jaunt up to visit Thornes’
 new site at Newburgh to collect orders for several members and
 to get next year’s foundation for nothing in exchange for our
 blocks of wax. The new site felt more spacious than the Tayport
 site and it’s more accessible from the motorway (if you take the

right exit). However, we felt that the variety of stock was a bit
 disappointing, especially for books and leaflets.

Small ads

- Bees wanted – contact Foppe Jellema - 01875 833297

- Site available near Gullane in exchange for management of two
 active colonies already in location – contact me for details.

- Four Miller feeders and a glass display case for a single frame of
 honey, all free to a good home – contact Mike Bain and
 Rosemary Carthy 01620 850 395

Some Snippets

Did you all spot that a 100 million year old bee was discovered in
 a piece of amber from Myanmar (Burma) – about 40 million
 years older than was known. It’s only 3mm long and shares
 features in common with both wasps and bees. The discovery that
 pollinating bees existed 100 million years ago fits in nicely with
 time when plants species switched from being dominated by wind
 pollinated species of conifer to insect pollinated angiosperms.

And coming right up to date, the genome of the modern honeybee
 has now been sequenced. The bees know what they are doing by
 now, but I wonder if we ever will?

Donald Smith (Secretary)

Garden Cottage

Clerkington

Haddington EH41 4NJ

01620 822441

gardencottage@ntlworld.com