

# East Lothian Beekeepers Association

Newsletter 131

December 2004

Dear All,

## Varroa detected in East Lothian

As we feared, Varroa has not left us alone. Varroa has now been detected at Willowbrae and Brunstane. We expected spread to come from the western edge of the county, but it has also been found in hives at East Linton and at least one other site within the county. We should all now assume that Varroa could be present in our apiaries and test for it accordingly. That means, at the very least, taking a floor scraping in the spring and sending it to Susan Irvine, SASA, East Craigs, Edinburgh EH12 8NJ (marked Bee Diseases). A much more sensitive test is to place an Apistan strip in each hive for a few days and look for mite fall through a varroa floor, with samples sent to Susan for confirmation and recording purposes. She is also participating in a study of viruses in the mites, and would appreciate samples of 20-30 mites in a double envelope with the date, apiary location, number of hives and contact address on the outer envelope.

Varroa will be the subject of our first talk of the year which will be given by Graeme Sharpe from the Scottish Agriculture College at Auchincruive. This will be on **January 13<sup>th</sup> in the Haddington Town House at 7.30pm**. Although Graeme's reputation as a speaker is very high, as an extra incentive

everyone who attends will receive a strip of Apistan so that they can test their hives for Varroa.

Anyone who wants to brush up their knowledge on Varroa can consult our website ([www.eastlothianbeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.eastlothianbeekeepers.org.uk)) which now includes a useful summary of Varroa treatment methods and resources as well as comprehensive descriptions of other bee diseases. Only two other local associations in Scotland have a presence on the web (Easter Ross [www.sites.ecosse.net/erba](http://www.sites.ecosse.net/erba) and Moray [www.bees-trees.demon.co.uk](http://www.bees-trees.demon.co.uk)) and we should be grateful to Mike Bain for his tremendous work.

## Calendar

- 13th January Haddington Town House 7.30pm  
Graeme Sharpe, Varroa
- 20<sup>th</sup> January Tyneside Tavern, Haddington, 7.30pm  
First Basic Beemaster Study Meeting (see below)
- 24<sup>th</sup> February Haddington Town House 7.30pm  
AGM and Mike Bain "DIY Hand Cream"
- 26<sup>th</sup> February Philipshaugh Estate, Selrkirk 2.30pm  
Auction of beekeeping equipment (see below)
- 17<sup>th</sup> March Haddington Town House, 7.30pm  
Informal Honey Show with George Duncan, Dalmeny.  
This will follow the same classes as the Gifford Show (see Newsletter 127) but with George giving feedback to the exhibitors as he goes through the entries.

## AGM

By rights, the first meeting of the year ought to be the AGM, but in order to give Graeme Sharpe a full evening I have delayed the AGM until February. Membership renewal forms

will therefore not be sent out until after the AGM when we have assessed our finances (healthy Rosemary assures me).

### **Want to be a (Basic) Beemaster?**

The first of the promised study evenings will be held at the Tyneside Tavern in Haddington (beside the Poldrate Mill on the road to Gifford) at 7.30pm on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January where further dates and the choice of venue will be discussed. Mike Bain will be study leader. We will follow the syllabus for the Basic Beemaster Certificate, though sitting exams is optional.

### **Books**

We have borrowed a box of books from the Moir library for circulation – I will bring them to meetings or contact me:

R. Coustoun	Principles of Practical Beekeeping
A.R. Cumming & M. Logan	Beekeeping craft & hobby
A.L. Gregg	Philosophy and practice of beekeeping
W.H. Hamilton	The Art of Beekeeping
A.S.C. Deans	The Beekeepers encyclopedia
R.O.B. Manley	Beekeeping in Britain
R.A. Morse	The Complete Guide to Beekeeping
A.I. Root	A.B.C. & X.Y.Z. of Beekeeping
L.E. Snelgrove	Queen rearing
R.E. Snodgrass	Anatomy of the honey bee
H.J. Wadey	The Bee craftsman
E.B. Wedmore	A manual of Beekeeping

### **Association Secretaries' meeting and S.B.A. Council**

I attended these meetings in Perth at the beginning of November. We were asked what the SBA can do to improve its service to local associations. One of the topics was the partial

overlap between SBA membership and that of local associations. Another topic was risk assessment and the kind of documentation that is necessary to comply with legislation. Fairly off-putting – this does sound like the sort of thing that the SBA could do on our behalf and then circulate. More immediately relevant were changes to honey labeling regulations. A summary is presented in the August edition of “The Scottish Beekeeper”, while the BBKA advice is reproduced on our website.

### **Small Ads**

**HIVES FOR SALE** – 4 hives with bees and about 8 without, a mixture of Nationals and Smiths, plus frames & kit etc.  
Contact Ian Sands: 01368 869665

**AUCTION** – Caddonfoot Beekeepers Association are organising an auction of beekeeping items belonging to the late Douglas Armstrong on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2005 at the Old Dairy, Philiphaugh Estate, Selkirk. National hives (12) + empty boxes and extracting equipment. Contact me for more details.

### **Thornes visit**

I now have a small shopping list from members for our collective visit to Thornes early next year. Let me know if you have wax to exchange or items you would like to buy.

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