



Newsletter

March 2019

The Season Begins...

With the sudden and very welcome few days of mild weather Cliff and I wasted no time this last week in scooting around to the bees for a first quick examination. The constant feeding over winter has paid off and all colonies are in good shape and ready for a spring population explosion. The bees were on a mission in all hives with loads of pollen going in, bees on nearly all frames and brood being produced. We frantically caught up with the long overdue winter jobs of getting new frames ready and equipment cleaned so that we could do early season manipulations the next day. We got a nuc into a full hive and, taking inspiration from John's excellent presentation at the last meeting, started a Bailey comb change on our full Speke Hall colony. We spotted queen cups and drones already, so it promises to be a lively year.

Meetings

We had a good turnout for our meeting earlier this month and the presentations by John McCann and Peter Wass were great. John explained how to make a Bailey board and demonstrated how to use it for comb changing without losing brood and Peter showed us an alternative comb change or swarm prevention method using the Horsley board. These are very useful techniques to be familiar with for essential early season manipulations and it was a treat to be able to learn from some of our most experienced beekeepers.

Don't forget the next branch meeting, our first apiary meeting of the year,

Saturday 13th April 2.30pm, Woolton Apiary.

The topic of this meeting, originally planned to be 'Preparing for Spring', might be changed but will be confirmed about a week before the meeting. But weather permitting it will include a look into at least one of the hives and we can see how they have fared over winter.

12TH -14TH April
Spring Convention 2019
Harper Adams University, Newport, Shropshire

The national beekeeping event of the year.

20+ Lectures; 60+ Workshops & Seminars for all levels of beekeeping
experience and large tradeshow

Full more information on how to book and the full programme, use the following
link <https://www.bbka.org.uk/event/spring-convention-booking-now-live>

Upcoming meetings in the Lancashire and North West Region:

- Tuesday 26th March, 7.45pm – Ormskirk Beekeepers, Branch Meeting with Margaret Murdin talking about Honeybee Dances and Spring Management; Church House, Church Street, Ormskirk L39 3RD
- Friday 5th April, 7.30pm – Wirral, A Taste of Manuka Honey, Chris Logan; Thornton Hough Village Hall, CH63 1JB (not located properly on google maps)
- Thursday 11th April, 7.30pm - Southport and Formby Beekeepers; Fleetwood Hesketh Club, Fylde Road, PR9 9XH.
- Tuesday 26th April, 7.45pm – Ormskirk Beekeepers, Branch Meeting with Queen Rearing Theory; Out apiary, Fir Tree Lane Farm, Pimbo Lane, King's Moss, St Helens WA11 8RG

Education

The BBKA has a qualification called the Basic Assessment. You need to have been keeping bees for 12 months (so at least one full summer and winter by now). The assessment consists of a practical task, where the assessor will ask you to go through a colony and do a full inspection, followed by 15-20 minutes of oral questions and then you assemble a frame with foundation.

It is quite a practical assessment and so you need to be comfortable handling the bees.

The way we run the course is by correspondence. I send out some questions, along with materials and things for you to look at - these will be on a memory stick and need access to a computer to view. You then send me your answers back and I give feedback on your responses. We can also run a practical session

if people want this. We would aim to get the assessments some time around June to July - so that there is plenty to see in the colony.

Please let me know if you want more information about the course.

A copy of the Basic Assessment syllabus and a table of fees for all BBKA qualifications are attached with this Newsletter.

Cliff Porter
Education Officer
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Interested in Skep Making?

Barry Milner will be demonstrating the rapidly dwindling art of skep-making at the Royal Cheshire Show in June, the Great Eccleston and Nantwich Show in July, Lowther and Southport Flower Show in August, and at Westmorland in September.

Barry says if any of our members go to the Southport Flower Show and are interested in having a go he will be only too happy to show them.

*Tracey Seddon, Branch Secretary, contact@liverpoolbeekeepers.co.uk
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