



# SEHBKA Newsletter

April 2015

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## Contact Us

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<http://www.SEHBKA.co.uk>

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[sehbka@Outlook.com](mailto:sehbka@Outlook.com)

## Dates for the Diary

- April 19<sup>th</sup> RSPB Rye Meads fun day 10-4pm (look out for info on the website)
- Apiary meetings; 10th May, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 26<sup>th</sup> July, 23<sup>rd</sup> August

## April Bee News!

Good news .....and some less so! Life is at work in the hives this month! We've had some beautiful sunny days with clear blue skies and warmth at last after those grey, cold ones! The bees will be venturing out to forage on the spring flowers now in bloom, bringing this forage back to the hive ready for the Queen to lay down new brood.



As days get longer and milder the population will expand and many of you will be taking your first inspection of the year. This should be timed according to temperature (no lower than 15 degrees Celsius), on a sunny mild day with little or no wind. A quick peek under the crown board can be made at lower temperatures but don't take out any frames as the brood may chill and die. If you need an over coat, It's too cold for an inspection!

We have been receiving reports that some of our members have experienced significant colony loss over the course of the winter. In some cases these losses have been 50% or more of the colonies our beekeepers have been looking after and for those keeping one or two colonies it has been their entire stock.

The reason for this is as yet unclear as there appears to have been no sign of disease or pests involved which suggests the weather may once again have played it's part. It is possible that last season just went on too long, way past the point where the queen was laying eggs in any significant numbers. With the winter workers still working and the amount of forage decreasing, the winter bees just got worn out before their time and hence the number of bees in the colony was not viable. Another factor may have been that the stores were filled late on with ivy honey which crystallises in the comb. Whilst bees will collect ivy honey, they don't tend to like it and when it crystallises it makes it difficult for them to use.

For those of you who have lost your entire stock, why don't you put your name down for a swarm. Whilst the numbers of swarms maybe lower this year, we are still likely to get some, so it offers an easy way to get going again.

Contact our Swarm Officer, **Suleyman Gursoy** by emailing [suleyman@gursoy.biz](mailto:suleyman@gursoy.biz) and let him know you would like to take a swarm if one becomes available. Remember to get your hive cleaned out ready for your new bees as they will get delivered at fairly short notice.

## Apiary Meetings

Please would any members consider offering their apiaries for summer meetings? These apiary meetings are often a chance for members to socialize, share best practice and experience hands on beekeeping with a nice cup of tea (or even sometimes cake) afterwards! We have a few venues so far but not every month is filled as yet. Even if you only have two hives, it is always good to share best practice if you have suitable permission and access. Please contact Dave Canham on [multi.speed@ntlworld.com](mailto:multi.speed@ntlworld.com) as he would welcome any offers. Thank you.

## Queen Rearing by Derek Driver - March 12<sup>th</sup>

**Derek Driver** gave a very interesting talk on Queen Rearing at Pinewood School on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March. This was very well supported and attended with 17 members present. Andrew Bridgeman came from Bishop Stortford and took a day off work to attend, with Janet Doyle coming from Puckeridge! It was great to see this amount of enthusiasm and proof that members are grateful that those with expertise, such as Derek are willing to pass on their knowledge and skills. He provided a thorough overview of some of the various methods of queen rearing, bringing along related pieces of equipment and demonstrating how these are used. This kind of knowledge cannot be imparted through reading textbooks as the small practical tips he gave come from hard won experience. Thank you for a great instructive evening Derek! And to Pinewood School for the facilities and a good cup of tea!

## Hertfordshire BKA AGM and Spring Event.

At the Herts. AGM on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March an amendment to the constitution was approved. This reduced the number of nominated committee members from each division from two to one, whilst at the same time introducing committee members who carry out particular tasks (e.g. Communications Officer, Examination Secretary, Education Officer, Events Officer etc.). The purpose is to make sure that Herts. BKA plays an active part in supporting the divisions, something some would argue hasn't happened in recent years. This approach was already running in the background and the change to the format of the afternoon, combining the AGM with a Spring Show, saw over 50 people turn up.



The event included a Bring and Buy sale, Honey tasting, microscopy, wax exchange and a number of commercial stalls. Our own **Roy Cropley** can be seen conducting business in the picture above on his wax exchange stall along with a picture of the honey tasting stall.

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## Rent a Hive Scheme

Our association has run a successful 'RENT A HIVE SCHEME' open to students and new members for the past few years. This is a great way to start your beekeeping. Hives can be rented over your first year and it's a great way to see if you like beekeeping without a huge initial investment! A hive can be rented for your first year and then more of your own equipment can be acquired later. It is run by **Derek Driver** and **Tom Dawson**, so if you are interested please contact **Derek** in the first instance on **01992 466649**

## New Apiary Site urgently needed.

One of our members, **Sarah Evans** has been asked to vacate her current site by July this year due to new ownership. So please if anyone knows of an available site, would they contact her on [sevens767@gmail.com](mailto:sevens767@gmail.com)  
Thank you

## Honey Recipe

It was suggested by a member that recipes using honey become a regular feature in the newsletters. If you have any that you would like to pass on please contact **Tina Rawlings**, [trdreamcatcher@ntlworld.com](mailto:trdreamcatcher@ntlworld.com)  
Thank you!

Here is one used by **Daphne Rooke** some years ago to win at the County Show

### HONEY SEED LOAF

4 oz butter  
2 level tablespoons clear honey  
½ teaspoon baking powder  
1 level tablespoon caraway seeds  
3 oz soft brown sugar  
5 oz Self-raising flour  
2 eggs

Grease and line a 1 lb. tin. Cream butter and sugar until fluffy, then beat in honey. Add beaten eggs a little at a time then fold in the sifted flour and baking powder. Finally add the Caraway seeds. Turn into the prepared tin, and bake on centre shelf at Gas mark 4 (350F) for approximately 1 hour.

## RSPB Rye Meads Funday, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Our association have been invited to lead the beekeeping stand at this event in conjunction with Bishops Stortford BKA. This will be an educational opportunity along with honey sales, an empty hive for demonstration and candle rolling and is being organised by **Tansy Rothwell** [tansyrothwell@hotmail.com](mailto:tansyrothwell@hotmail.com) . If anyone can help on the day please contact Tansy on the email address above.

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Tina Rawlings