

Westerham Beekeepers Association Newsletter – November 2019

Dear fellow beekeepers,

Welcome to the first newsletter of my tenure as your event organiser – and hopefully not the last!

Firstly a reminder:

Annual General Meeting and Honey Competition

Wednesday 27th November 20:00 at Westerham Hall

The branch officers will be elected for next year and the usual business of an AGM conducted (agenda and reports to follow from our secretary Diana Pickard), after which Peter Bashford, from Bromley, will judge the honey competition. Please bring with you to the meeting two unlabelled jars of your best set-honey or two jars of your best liquid honey (or alternatively four jars in all – two of set and two of liquid). Cups will be awarded to the winners in each category.

And please remember to bring a contribution of food or drink, for enjoyable evening!

Events

On Wednesday 25th September we had a very enjoyable presentation from Kevin Thorn on his project at Abberton reservoir to reintroduce the native black bee (*Apis Mellifera Mellifera*) through a local breeding and mating programme. Kevin took us on a whistle-stop tour of various methods of breeding our own queens and took many questions from an enthusiastic audience!

Wednesday 29 th January 2020	Adam Leitch , will present on “The anatomy of the honeybee from antenna to sting: how the biology of the honeybee impacts on our management of them”.
Wednesday 26 th February 2020	Norman Carreck will present on the EU project called “EurBest”, which is looking at breeding of bees including known varroa tolerant populations.
Wednesday 25 th March 2020	Pam Hunter will give the talk “When the king became a queen – aspects of the history of beekeeping made fun”
Wednesday 29 th April 2020	To be confirmed

Finally, a word from Jacky Delooze on the season at the teaching apiary:

Training Apiary 2019

It's been an interesting year at the training apiary for beekeeping. We have chemical free colonies as well as chemically treated and it's been good to get the comparisons between them. We've had fun with queen trapping, splits, artificial swarm control and uniting.

We started the year with four colonies and have increased to eight. Our year ended with a "How to winter ready your bees and a mead tasking session.



This year had plenty of interest for the taster sessions. We ran two sessions and had ten people attend, with several going on to either keep bees of their own or join Westerham BKA.

As a group, we took Rory Waddington through his Duke of Edinburgh skills section. Well done Rory!

Our honey extraction day was well supported, with everyone trying their arm spinning honey, followed by a lovely lunch in Steve's garden.



Mark Waddington

17th November 2019