

RBG Publicity Officer's Report, 2017

This past year has seen only one request for a talk and no school visits, with one Group appearance, viz Roseland's Q & A session in September.

It seems beekeeping is not the hot media topic it has been for the past few years as I've had no calls for radio or TV interviews – perhaps everybody is now up to speed and is more aware of the plight facing the bees. This has again been reflected in the courses I run, where there has been a continued interest from the general public, with two courses running in the autumn but with only one running this term. Last term I even had a student who is aiming to take over her uncles' apiaries in Hungary when they retire. The course posed an interesting challenge for her with language – and for me with the difference in climate, forage and seasons between here and Hungary. This term, the Saturday course again has more than my normally accepted maximum of students (I don't like to turn people away but, on the other hand, if I have too many students it reduces the benefit to the individuals that can otherwise be obtained with fewer). Saturday is obviously very popular so it will be interesting to see whether there are any promising students (ie “obsessive” beekeepers) when the course starts on 20th January. Hopefully the courses will result in a boost to our membership numbers again, as I think it is important that we continue to have “new blood” in the Groups, Roseland being particularly well blessed with new members (the students are given a choice of Group they can join, despite rumours to the contrary!).

I still write my monthly blog for Roseland-online, though both the summer and winter months have proved a challenge this year owing to the mild, though wet, weather. The bees have not yet been able to do what they are supposed to do during the “winter” months, other than on the odd days here and there, but hopefully that will change very shortly and I can get back to talking about what the bees are actually supposed to be doing (according to the books!), since they are still bringing in pollen and water.

Colin Rees, Publicity Officer