

RBG Publicity Officer's Report, 2018

The continuing interest in beekeeping this year 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 with 21 students going through the mill. This coming term has an over-full class of 16 students on the Saturday course and currently 13 on the Monday course. This is a reflection of the heightened awareness amongst the general public as to the importance of bees to the world's ecology. Whilst I normally limit my courses to a maximum of 15, I don't like turning people away, so I try to include the odd one or two extra who would prefer the Saturday to the Monday. However, if I allow too many extras it limits each individual's opportunity to raise their specific issues, so I try to be quite strict about this. With 50 potential new beekeepers doing their basic Introduction course, therefore, it will be interesting to see whether there are any promising students (ie "obsessive" beekeepers!) by the end of this term. Certainly the courses will result in a boost to our membership numbers again, and this is very important in continuing to introduce "new blood" into the Groups. Roseland has been particularly well blessed with new members each year, though the students are given a choice of Group they can join, despite rumours to the contrary! Bear in mind also that there are courses being run in the East and the West of the county, so we are maintaining a good geographic coverage.

I still write my monthly blog for Roseland-online, though the winter months always prove a challenge as not much goes on in the apiary. The main emphasis this year, however, has been on the Asian Hornet and the blog has been a useful tool to get information about this exotic pest into the public domain. Let's hope the Asian Hornet remains a topic for discussion rather than a real blight on beekeeping in the coming year,

Colin Rees, Publicity Officer