

Blackhorse Apiaries, Course and Events Summary

Beekeeping courses are managed and run on a commercial basis by John Hamer, a Surrey bee farmer, using his purpose built facility at Blackhorse Apiaries in St Johns near Woking. The bees have been selected for their quiet handling characteristics and all essential equipment is provided. The tuition has been designed to work with local associations and equipment vendors to provide continual support for beekeepers during the early years. It aims to encourage beekeepers to understand the principles underlying what they are doing, and to develop an efficient, integrated management style, keeping beekeepers in touch with their local environment and enabling them to care responsibly for their livestock. The courses are arranged so that the students can begin as novices learning to handle bees and establishing a colony through the first winter. They can then progress to managing the build up of a mature, productive colony for the extraction of a crop of surplus honey, and to control the number and strain of bees they wish to keep.

Ten Week Evening Courses

Practical Beekeeping for Beginners.

Aspiring beekeepers can gain their first experience handling small colonies in the company of the more knowledgeable. More experienced beekeepers will have the opportunity to review their techniques and to experiment with a range of equipment and management styles. The course will consist of TEN evenings of practical work in the apiary, supporting Course A – Beekeeping for Beginners, and will run on Wednesday evenings and Thursday afternoons starting 21st April 2010. £70.00

Further Practical Beekeeping.

Aimed at beekeepers in their second or subsequent season who wish to extend their knowledge of the practical basis of beekeeping and improve their management skills. The course will cover the management of bees throughout the season, including transfer onto clean comb, swarm control, feeding, making nuclei, elementary queen rearing, and disease control. The course will consist of TEN evenings and will run on Tuesday evenings starting 20th April 2010. The course will also include some weekend work on queen rearing. £75.00

Beekeeping for Beginners.

A course for those considering beekeeping for the first time dealing with the life-cycle of the bee, elementary management, setting up an apiary, and basic equipment. The course consists of TEN evenings of theory supported by Course B – Practical Beekeeping, and will run on Wednesday evenings from 7.30 – 9.30pm, starting on Wednesday 23 September 2009, and Wednesday 20 January 2010. The same course will also run during the day on Thursday mornings from 10.00 – 12.30pm, starting on Thursday 24 September 2009, and Thursday 21 January 2010 £70.00

Day Courses

Meet the Bee Day	Saturday, 24 th April 2010	£45.00
Meet the bee day is a one-day introduction to beekeeping. The topics covered include; The honey bee colony and yearly cycle; The beekeeper's year; equipment; where you can keep bees; practical bee handling; individual questions and answers.		
Skep Making	Saturday 12 th June 2010	£45.00
This course will cover the techniques and tools required to start and build the two main skep types, using wheat straw.		
Candle Making	Saturday 9 th October 2010	£45.00
The collection of beeswax and its preparation for use, the equipment required, and the main candle making techniques. Students will gain practical experience of rolling, dipping, pouring and casting beeswax candles and decorations.		

All courses will be run subject to a minimum number of students attending. All materials and equipment, and tea and coffee, are provided. Day courses also include a ploughman's lunch.