

## What the Beekeeper needs to know – “The Basics”

### These "Basics" include:-

**Identify brood in all stages**, pollen, nectar and honey. These should be shown at a first inspection by whoever is teaching you.

**Learn the life cycles of the queen**, drone and worker. Very simple and can be learnt away from the bees.

**Recognise good healthy bees and brood.** You need to know this, otherwise how are you going to recognise a possible disease problem?

**Identify the brood diseases** European Foul Brood (EFB), American Foul Brood (AFB) and Chalk Brood. Both AFB and EFB are notifiable, so there is a need to know them. Sometimes chalk brood can look like EFB.

**Learn the life cycle and treatments for varroa.** The life cycle is important as you need to understand what the treatments are trying to achieve. All chemical and non - chemical treatments should be known.

**Understand how varroa vectors viruses.** When varroa first arrived in Ireland it was very definitely varroa that killed colonies, now it is probably more likely to be the associated viruses.

**Understand how pheromones work.** This need not be in any great detail. A pheromone is simply a chemical given off by a member of a species that has an impact on the behaviour of another of the same species.

**Understand the swarming process.** For this you will also need to know the life cycle of the queen. It is the lack of understanding of this that causes problems for many beekeepers, even some who have been keeping bees several years.

There are many beekeepers with several year's experience who would struggle to know all these. **There is no excuse!**