

North Somerset Beekeepers



March 2020

Welcome to the latest edition of our branch newsletter. As usual your feedback and contributions are very welcome. Please send items to the editor by 25th of the month.

Branch talks and educational events – Rob Williams, Programme Manager

Keep your eyes on the events programme for up to date information. It can be found on our website here: <https://www.northsomersetbeekeepers.org/events--courses.html>

What you'll never find in books - 7th March 14:00, Churchill Memorial Hall, Churchill.

Fellow NSB member, Brian Campbell, will be giving a talk on *What you'll never find in books*.

Bee diseases - 24th March, 19:30, St Andrews Church Hall, Backwell.

Seasonal Bee Inspector, Meg Seymour, will be giving a talk to the Improvers Course on Tuesday 24th March at 7.30pm at St Andrews Church Hall in Backwell. The subject will be *Bee diseases*.

This will be of general interest to all beekeepers and members of the branch are also welcome.

Please let Rob Francis: robfrancishere@gmail.com know if you wish to attend and he will provide you with details of location and parking.

Winter Cluster – 17th March, Kenn

The last Winter Cluster of the season will take place on Tuesday 17th March at The Drum and Monkey in Kenn. Starts at 12 noon. All welcome to come along for a chat about bees.

ABKA AGM - Sat 28th March, 14:00, Bath

This year's AGM is being hosted by Bath Beekeepers at their apiary and the speaker will be Brigit Strawbridge Howard. Brigit has just published her book *Dancing with*

Bees: A journey back to Nature.

The talk will start at 2pm and will be followed by the AGM. The location of the Bath Apiary can be found at <https://www.bathbeekeepers.com/contact>

Member survey on training needs

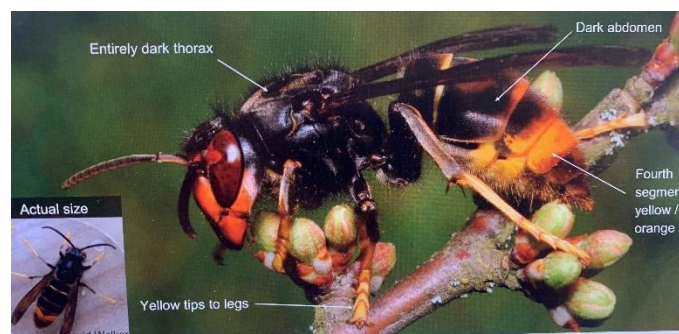
To help make sure that the branch is providing you with opportunities to learn more about beekeeping, you are invited to complete an online survey.

The survey is largely ticking boxes but with space for you to add comments if you wish. It should take no more than 5-10 minutes. You will be helping to develop our future plans. Results will be shared with members in due course.

The more responses we have, the more likely we are to get these plans right for most members. So please take a few minutes to complete the survey. **Deadline 31st March.**

Click on this hyperlink or in the email: <https://forms.gle/boRQDtrg91hczokJA>

Asian Hornet new course in France – Annabel Lewis



Are you interested in learning more about Asian Hornet from beekeepers with first-hand experience in France? A new course has been set up and the 2020 course dates are now available. Ewan Houldridge, (AHAT Co-ordinator for Manchester District) attended a course last August:

“My stay at 13 Bees was all it promised: comfortable and relaxed accommodation in a beautiful countryside setting. The course on Asian Hornets was a well-balanced mix of

theory and practical, making it both informative and interesting. I found the whole experience invaluable in my role as MDBKA AHAT Co-ordinator. From learning about life cycles and known behaviour to witnessing first-hand predation around bees, this course is a must for any beekeeper. The practical sessions where I actually trapped and marked hornets was unforgettable. I would recommend this course to anyone who wants, or needs, to find out more about this menace to our bees."

The 2020 course dates are now available, along with full details, on their website: www.13bees.co.uk

The cost for a 3-day course includes half-board accommodation, all equipment and course materials. For further information or to book your place, contact Amanda and Kevin Baughen, 3 Bees, Confolens, France amandabaughen@gmail.com. They are happy to answer questions by email.

Apiary update – Eric Sortwell



All quiet on the Apiary at the moment. It's very wet under foot but we are making regular checks to ensure the fondant is topped up.

Grand opening of the Apiary – 15th May

Plans are well underway for the Grand Opening of our new apiary. The event will be hosted by North Somerset Beekeepers in association with Langford Veterinary School on Friday 15th May 12.00pm to 2.00pm. The opening ceremony will be performed by Professor Richard Hammond, Head of School.

All members of North Somerset Beekeepers along with their families and friends, all the teaching staff, students and staff of Langford Veterinary School are most welcome.

Finger buffet and drinks will be served throughout the afternoon; also displays of beekeeping tools and equipment; pictorial displays of the apiary's development;

virtual hive; frame making demonstrations; honey sales and much, much more.

This is quite an event and is going to take a lot of work and preparation both beforehand and on the day, so we are looking for volunteers to help with both. Please get in touch if you can offer any help, which would be greatly appreciated.

North Somerset Show – Sandra Slater

I am afraid that I am still looking for helpers for the show which is held at the North Somerset Show Ground in Wraxall on 3 May. I think moving from the bank holiday has been a problem as many people who can reliably be called upon to assist are unable to do so this year.

So, I was wondering if anyone else can volunteer a couple of hours to help out. The two hourly slots run from 9-11, 11-1, 1-3 and 3-5. I am particularly short in the afternoon but still need people for the morning as well.

Please consider helping as, if you do, you get a free ticket for the show and a lovely two hours chatting about bees. Remember you do not have to be an experienced beekeeper to help out. Everyone is welcome.

I'd like to also remind you about the honey show that is run at the NSS. Honey, cake, fudge, cut comb, are just some of the classes you can enter. The full details can be found here.

<https://www.nsas.org.uk/exhibitors/competitors/bees-honey/>

As it can be a pain to get your exhibits to the showground early on the morning of the show, I am happy to take them in for you. Just contact me to arrange this.

Finally, after the good honey harvest last year, some of you may have honey to sell. The club takes a 25% commission on honey sold but this drops to only 10% if you help out on the day; another reason for volunteering.

If you have honey or related products to sell you can bring them along to the showground in the morning or give me a ring if that is difficult for you and I will arrange to take it for you. Really hoping to hear from you: Sandra Slater
Tel 07792 702513

Offer of an out-apiary site in Nailsea

We have received the offer of an out-apiary site in Nailsea. If you are interested, please contact Sandra on 07979 386246

Vacancy on committee – Education Coordinator

We are still looking for a member to act as Education Coordinator. If you would like further information, please contact Annabel Lewis at: busybee6@virginmedia.com

Branch Honey Show

Our Branch Honey Show took place in February and there was an excellent number this year with 34 entries across all 10 classes.

David Capon, our Honey Show Judge, was particularly pleased to see an increase in the number of wax and shallow frames for extracting entered this year. Hopefully this will be repeated in other honey shows throughout the year.

The open judging meant that David was able to describe how he judges each entry and discriminates between them and provide tips on how to present entries to best effect.

Belinda Kumpel was awarded the Golden Jubilee Cup as the exhibitor with most points in the show. Caz Bartlett was awarded the Novice Shield as the Exhibitor who meets the conditions as a novice and has most points in the show.



An excellent number of entries across all classes

There were more entries in the shallow frame for extracting class this year



A good number of entries in the wax block and candles classes



Belinda Kumpel won the Golden Jubilee Cup for most points in the show.



Caz Bartlett won the novice shield