

North Somerset Bee Keepers



April 2018

Welcome to the 8th edition of our branch newsletter. Your feedback and contributions are very welcome. Please send items to the editor by 25th of the month.

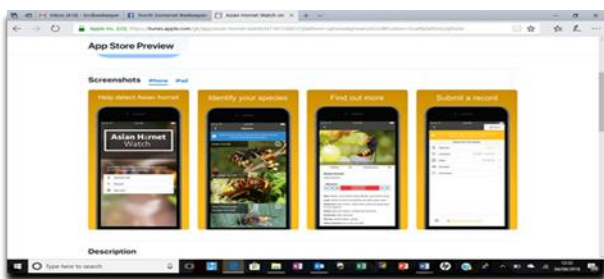
Monitoring Asian Hornets – *John Banks*

We are reminded of the importance of daily monitoring for Asian Hornets using Asian Hornet traps. The attached National Bee Unit leaflet includes information on reporting suspected sightings and explains how to set up an Asian Hornet Trap.

We are keen to promote the location of Asian Hornet traps on the North Somerset Beekeepers website so email the post code of your trap to: ja.banks1@btinternet.com to add it to the map.

Don't forget to sign up to BeeBase. You can sign up online at: www.nationalbeeunit.com or contact the NBU office via email us at: nbu@apaha.gsi.gov.uk or telephone on: +44 0300 3030094.

Download the *Asian Hornet Watch* app to help identify and report sightings.



Some areas are setting up Asian Hornet Action Teams: <http://ahat.org.uk/>. Our committee has offered to act as first point of call for suspected sightings. If you think you have spotted an Asian Hornet, send a photo or video (take care!) to a

member of the committee for initial assessment.

<http://northsomersetbeekeepers.org/contact-us/>

Bee improvement and queen rearing group – *Rob Francis*

Come and find out we have done and what we intend to do in future.

Four years ago, a small group of us started to meet together to look at how we might make the most of our queen cells and how we might rear queens. This, we felt, would give us greater control and understanding of our colonies and what we might do to improve our bees.

We tried out several approaches, using, for example, mini-nucs and incubators. There were successes and failures, but we built up our confidence and understanding of what might be achieved with a little innovation and creative management of our queens.

A year ago, we changed focus from Queen Rearing to Bee Improvement realizing that by working together we might improve not only our own colonies but possibly the quality of bees in our area.

On Wednesday 2nd May at 7.30pm we are presenting an evening at Churchill Memorial Hall to bring you up to date with what we have been doing and what we have learnt over the past couple of years. More importantly we will be suggesting what we might all do practically within the branch to work towards improving our bees. (Local bees for local beekeepers!)

This will give us the opportunity to develop the work the group are doing and encourage you to consider how you might contribute and benefit.

Whether you are merely curious or keen to rear your own queens to improve your bees, come along to Churchill Memorial Hall on Wednesday May 2nd at 7.30pm to find out more.

Apiary Update – *David Capon*

Most of you will know that for the past six years our training apiary has been in Brockley Lane, at a site kindly leased to us rent free from Solarsense.

Solarsense have moved their offices from the building at the bottom of the field into the newly built block at the top, and they have sold the lower site. Further planned development of the top site is likely to impinge on the existing apiary site so in the winter we moved the hives to the lower part of the field. A gang of willing volunteers moved most of the stands and the rubber matting to the new site so it should be ready for use by the time the new cohort of beginners make their first visit.

There is still a good deal of work to be done on the lower part of the field so we may need a couple more working parties in the coming weeks; we will make an appeal on the Facebook page when the dates are confirmed. Hopefully by the height of summer the new site will be fully functional.



Photos of the new apiary site

Swarm collection – Adrian Wells

BBKA experienced swarm collectors

The BBKA are requesting names of swarm collectors who can offer a swarm removal service throughout the season to the public.

If this is you, then text Adrian on 07 847 015 155 with your name and contact details and ensure that you mention the BBKA. Deadline 15th April 2018.

Local Swarm Collectors needed!

If you would like to help with local swarm collection this year, get some swarm collection experience under your belt, or need swarms, please text Adrian on 07 847 015 155 with your name and contact details to be added to the Swarm Collectors What'sApp group (preferably you will have a smart phone). Novices as well as old-hands are very welcome.

Swarm Prevention

If like mine, your bees have been flying strongly through the winter, then we could be in for another early swarming season. You should already have your colony needs and swarm management method outlined for the coming season, if not, now would be a good time to prepare. As in all things, prevention is better than cure, so be ready to begin your inspections once the weather has warmed up and give your bees plenty of space. Don't be afraid to ask for help and advice. Swarming is of course a natural process, but if we can reduce the annoyance of swarms to the public and maintain strong colonies, so much the better for all concerned.

North Somerset Agricultural Show 7th May 2018 – Sandra Slater

Just a reminder that help is needed to run our stall at this show each year to showcase bees and beekeeping. Members of the association are available to share their knowledge with the public. New beekeepers are welcome too, it is fun and it is amazing to find how much you know.

The slots run from 9-11, 11-1, 1-3 and 3-5. We also need some help on Sunday 6th May at 4pm to help set up the stand and to help clear up on the Monday.

Members are also encouraged to sell honey and to enter the honey show:

<http://wwwnsas.org.uk/bees-honey/>

Contact me at: sandrajlater@hotmail.co.uk

Programme of events 2018

Keep your eye on our website for any changes to the 2018 programme, which has just been updated: <http://northsomersetbeekeepers.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/BeeKeepingDiary2018-180326.pdf>

Next branch meeting – John Banks

The branch isn't having an April meeting as the date clashes with the Avon Spring Day School. This will be held on 21st April at Shipham Village Hall 9.45am - 4.30 pm. Booking is essential. See attached flyer for details. All members are invited to attend.

Other events coming up in next couple of months – Jenny Wakenshaw

- Zest Hives
01258473015
williamfsummers@btinternet.com Saturdays 10 - 1pm £20. Hosey Bridge, Dorset DT101HE
- BBKA Spring Convention 13th -15th April
Harper Adams University TF10 8NB
- North Somerset Show 7th May
Wraxall BS48 1NF
- GBKA Auction 19th May
Undercover at Cotswold Riding School for the disabled, Prestbury Park Racecourse, Cheltenham GL50 4SH
- Royal Bath and West show 1st - 4th June
Show Ground Shepton Mallet
- BIBBA 2 Day Queen rearing course 11th - 12th June
Denbighshire LL21 0HA
steve-rose@bibba.com £90

Bee craft monthly online “hang outs”

BeeCraft hosts monthly live events to discuss topical issues via the internet. You can watch the discussion and ask questions or comment live by email. Hangouts are recorded for future use. Future dates for your diary are: April 25, May 30, June 27, July 27, Sept 26, Oct 31, Nov 28, Dec 19. Visit the site to access:

<http://www.bee-craft.com/beekeeping/bee-craft-live/>

Queens, nucs and other for sale

If you have queens, nucs or colonies for sale you can advertise them on our Facebook page or on the market place page on our website:

<http://northsomersetbeekeepers.org/queens-market-place/>

At this time of year, new beekeepers and beekeepers needing to replenish colonies lost over the winter are keen to buy a nucleus of bees.

The BBKA previously published standards for the buying and selling of a nucleus, which our branch has adopted. On the Bee Base website you can find Best Practice Factsheet 8 *Sale of Honey Bee Nuclei*, which provides guidance for buyers and sellers:

[Sale of honeybee nuclei March 2012.pdf](#)

The standards include the:

- Number of frames of brood and food supplies within the nucleus.
- Health of the colony and treatments administered
- Balance of adult and nurse bees
- Guidance on the care of the colony
- How to make a complaint

Nuclei that don't reach the standard can be sold but the reasons for this must be declared by the vendor in advance and the colony may need additional care.

Best practice Factsheet 5 includes further advice on obtaining honey bees as nuclei or swarms:

[Advice for obtaining bees.pdf](#)

New beekeepers please note that if you want to keep them on the branch apiary, you won't be able to move them there until the open sessions start in mid-May.

Contact the Editor: northsomersetbeekeepers@gmail.com

Branch Facebook page

If you haven't already joined the branch Facebook page, please think about it. It is a good way of keeping in instant touch with other members. Share your thoughts, observations, questions, photos and videos, and seek advice from fellow beekeepers:



Local honey sought

Terry Phillips has contacted us to ask if anyone from the Pensford area has honey for sale; or knows an outlet where he can buy it regularly. If you do, please contact Terry at: terryphillips@live.co.uk

Terry Streat is also keen to buy local honey. He hasn't specified a locality. You can contact him on: streatts@hotmail.co.uk

Helping fellow beekeepers

Recently working parties were set up to help out a fellow beekeeper. Thanks to all volunteers who make this a great branch xx

