

North Somerset Beekeepers



February 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>

Branch Honey Show 8th February

Our Branch Honey Show takes place on Saturday Feb 8th at Tickenham Village Hall. Doors open at 13:30 and judging starts at 14:30. If you are entering exhibits please leave plenty of time to complete your entry forms, label and display your exhibits correctly. The show is open to all full and associate members and is judged in front of them.

There are 10 classes so an opportunity for anyone to enter, even if you don't yet have your own bees. Plus, there are two prizes to be awarded. David Capon, our Honey Show Judge will give you an insight into what a judge is looking for in honey show exhibits and will provide feedback on your entries.



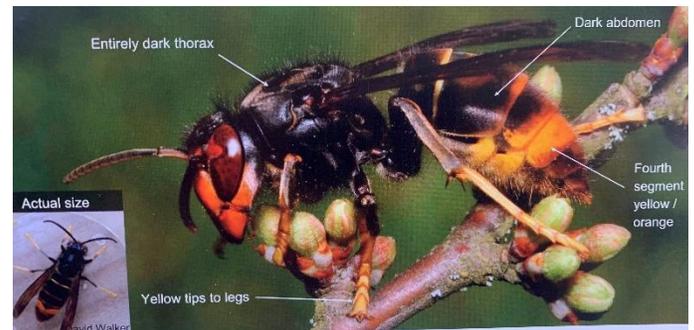
A full schedule is attached, please note a couple of changes from last year. Standard BS pattern jars are no longer mandatory, you can use any matching jars of

minimum weight 340g net. The cake recipe has reverted to one that was used previously and is not the same as last years.

Winter Cluster

The next Winter Cluster will be held on 18 February at The George Inn, Backwell at 12:00. All welcome to come along for a chat about bees.

Asian Hornet Action Team (AHAT) Training Day – Annabel Lewis



Four members of North Somerset Beekeepers attended an Asian Hornet Training day which was organised by the Asian Hornet Action Teams (AHAT) and run by Somerset Beekeepers.

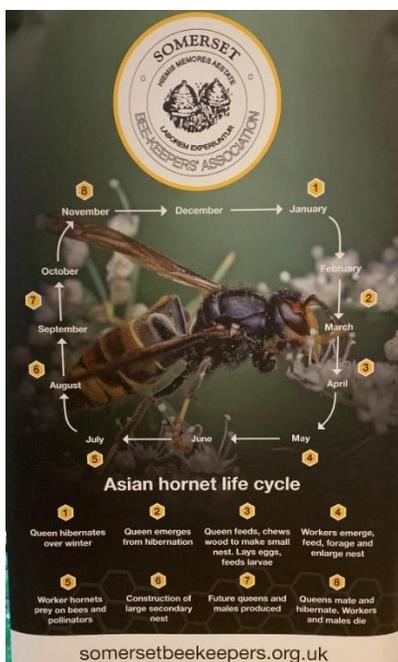
There were in the region of 120 beekeepers present from the whole of the Southwest. The day involved speakers talking about the role of the AHATs, current research on the Asian Hornet, the lifecycle, nests and behaviour and a very interesting update from the Jersey Asian Hornet Coordinator. One of the big things to come from this talk was that over half of the sightings on Jersey are from the general public, not beekeepers.



There were also workshops covering practical skills such as identification, trapping and tracking.

Somerset BKA have some great ideas around education of the public and the materials they used for that, which we hope to be able to tap into.

Overall it was a good day and we plan to take action going forwards on further educating the general public and our beekeeper membership in preparation for this insect arriving on our shores.



Apiary update – Eric Sortwell

It’s a quiet time in the apiary at the moment. When it does stop raining, which doesn’t happen very often, the bees are flying bringing out the dead and performing other bodily functions as bees do 🐝🐝🐝🐝.

Still some jobs to do finish. We need to take a pick-axe to the final section of hedge as we ran into some rocks; we

also have some Dog Roses to plant 🌸🌸. Having a shed under trees is all very nice but the gutters keep filling up with leaves 🌿🌿. We have purchased some brush gutter guards so hopefully problem solved but we’ll have to wait till the Autumn to see if it works.



We need to layer the hedge before the birds 🐦🐦 start nesting in the next couple of weeks. Volunteers are needed, it’s an easy job just need some thick gloves.

We have thirty-six potential new beekeepers on this year's course, so the apiary needs to be ready for the coming season. At the moment it's all

looking good, so roll on the summer.

Bee keeping insurance – Tony Slater

There are three types of readily available insurance for beekeepers.

Public liability insurance

This insurance is provided automatically when you become a member of the BBKA (other than non-BBKA members). Each year the BBKA takes out an insurance policy to cover its members, and its area associations and branches, for any financial loss they might suffer if they are sued by a third party for damage caused to them by their bee keeping activities. Two obvious examples are where a member of the public is stung by a member’s bees and has a dangerous reaction, or the member produces and sells contaminated honey (or lip balm!) and it makes the customer ill. (The product cover only extends to primary hive products – defined as wax, honey and propolis with no other added ingredients - it does not cover bee products containing other substances such as solvents, perfumes and colouring). Members are covered by this policy when collecting swarms so long as they are not working higher than 3 metres or acting recklessly. (Note, members are not covered personally if they have an accident. This insurance is only for damage caused to third parties. So, if you injure someone else, the policy pays out, if you injure yourself, it doesn’t).

North Somerset Beekeepers – as a branch – is also covered in the same way. Members are therefore covered for public liability when helping at the apiary or when participating in beekeeping events or selling products produced by the club apiary.

Bee disease insurance

Members automatically pay for this by a small addition to the membership subscription based on the number of hives they have. Bee Diseases Insurance Ltd (BDI) is a small insurance company that specialises in compensating beekeepers who have had their bees destroyed or treated by the Bee Inspector as a result of being infected by a notifiable disease. These are currently European Foul Brood and American Foul Brood. If foul brood is confirmed the bees will normally be killed and the bees, frames, and comb will be burnt. All wooden hive parts not destroyed will be sterilised by scorching (I don't know what happens to poly hives). BDI pays out compensation for the comb, frames, crown boards and queen excluders destroyed - but not bees - at a rate per item published in their web site.

It is worth noting that the cover only applies to an apiary if all the colonies on it are owned by individuals or branches who have BDI. So, for example, if an apiary was temporarily looking after a colony for a non-member, and it was found to have foul brood none of the colonies in the apiary would be covered. Or if a member shares an out-apiary site with other beekeepers, if one of the other beekeepers does not have BDI, then the member does not have valid cover either.

All risk insurance

This is taken out as additional insurance at the discretion of the beekeeper: This policy is like home insurance: it covers loss of bees (other than by disease or other “natural causes”), hives and hive parts, beekeeping equipment, apiary buildings and equipment, educational equipment, honey, clothing, exhibition equipment, by reason of theft, vandalism, fire etc.

<https://www.beekeepersinsurance.co.uk>

This information is from my reading of the various policy documents and FAQs. If you think I have got anything wrong or want to ask a question, please get in touch with me on tony.slater@tstax.co.uk

Donation from Philip Clemente's funeral

Phil's family kindly asked for any donations made at his funeral to be directed to North Somerset Beekeepers. The funeral directors have informed us that the collection amounted to £49, which we gratefully receive in memory of Phil.

Membership update – Heather Pitch

As I write this article on 1 February, I am pleased to report that 95% of members renewed their subscription. This means that we now have a total of 160 branch members. Thanks to everyone who used the new eReturn2 system and paid by Bank Transfer. This made the whole process

much simpler. Just a reminder that if your tax status changes during the year and you are able or unable to help us with Gift Aid, please let me know (heather@pitch.plus.com). In addition, they will lose their BDI cover until 40 days after outstanding fees are paid.

North Somerset Show – Sandra Slater

This is an early reminder that the North Somerset Show is on Sunday 3 May this year (please note, not Bank Holiday Monday). It will take place as usual at the NSAS show ground in Wraxall.

I am asking for volunteers again after our really successful show last year. The volunteers' duties include answering questions from the public, handing out publicity material, selling members' honey and other products, manning the candle making and badge making stall, helping people find the queen in the observation hive, and setting up in the morning and taking down at the end of the show.

If you can spare a couple of hours and would like to help, please let me know. My email address is sandrajlater@hotmail.co.uk Anyone helping out on the day is given a free pass to the show.

The slots are as follows: setting up from 8am, then 9am to 11am, 11am to 1pm, 1pm to 3pm and 3pm to 5pm, from 5pm, and putting away from 5pm. Please let me know if you can help, particularly if there is a time you prefer as some of the slots fill up quite quickly.

If you have helped before, you will know how much fun it can be, and I would love to see you back. If you are new to beekeeping, or just haven't had the time before, please

consider volunteering. It is a great way to talk about this fascinating craft and the public are really interested to learn anything you have to tell them. Even if you are just starting the introductory course, you will be surprised at how much you will be able to tell people, and there are always more experienced beekeepers on hand if you need help.

Also, don't forget we organise the NSAS Honey Show. We are looking for even more entries than last year, so why not start preparing your exhibits now?

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