

THE BUZZ

CENTRAL SUSSEX BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

CHARITY 1051548

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Welcome to the October 2023 Edition of The Buzz.

Our Saturday morning Apiary Meetings have concluded for this year, and we now meet monthly in Roffey (see Winter Meeting Programme) which I hope you will attend and support. The first meeting is on Wednesday 18th October and will include a presentation from Sussex Police on the subject of Rural Crime including protecting your bees from theft!

Please do take a few minutes to complete the following online survey [CSBKA 2023 Feedback Form](#) as this valuable information gives us an insight into the membership's (and 2023 Newbees!) needs and thinking – thank you!.

We will of course continue to remain in touch with you all throughout the winter months via the Winter Meetings, WhatsApp Groups, this publication, and ad hoc emails from the Committee!

Yolanda Noye



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES – Ben Hewson

This month's article is unashamedly Asian Hornet biased, you will have seen the alarming rise in confirmed sightings and nests on mainland Britain, fortunately, to date nothing in our division but plenty along the boundaries.

It seems like the boat has sailed to prevent the incursion of the hornet, it doesn't take a genius to work out that if 64 nests have been found and destroyed the potential for many more to remain undetected is huge, and that this is the worrying part if you look at how the hornet has spread through Europe and Jersey.

Beekeepers are currently the only line of defence in terms of spotting, reporting, and trapping (nest destruction being down to the NBU), primarily due to the belief that we have the most to lose, but we are not doing enough and there are not enough of us.

The only way to really get a grip on what is going on is reliable and actionable data gathering and for that we need many more eyes looking to the skies knowing what they are looking out for.

In short, we need to galvanise the public, this has worked wonders in Jersey where the whole island is aware of the problem and able to provide accurate and prompt reports of sightings. We also need a concerted approach to join forces with others who have skin in the game – the farmers, soft fruit growers, orchards, vineyards, and any other ecologist keen to maintain the status quo. Central and local government have also been slow to the party but recent conversations with West Sussex County Council give hope that this sleeping giant maybe beginning to stir.

The West Sussex Asian Hornet Action Team is undergoing a revamp as we speak and in the coming weeks, we will be launching a new dedicated website with the view to being a central point for all things Asian Hornet that can be accessed by everyone, a new Facebook page and streamlined communication channels to issue information to volunteers are being implemented.

In the coming weeks, I will be sending out a print at home A5 sized Asian Hornet information poster and will ask you all to print out and seek permission to display in as many public notice boards as you can, think workplaces, supermarkets, libraries, schools, clubs – anywhere that it will be seen.

I hope you can all rise to this call to action – it would be good to get out in front of the issue and raise public awareness.

NBU Website > Asian Hornet Rolling Updates > @ 06 10 23 – So far in 2023 there have been 64 Asian hornet nests found in 49 locations.

On a different note the week before last saw the annual closing of the apiary and BBQ. The stewardship of the apiary is a remarkable feat of dedication from Ade and his team. The apiary is the beating heart of our society and provides an invaluable opportunity to educate, socialise, swap stories, and get advice. I cannot adequately express my gratitude to the team for all their efforts throughout the year – you are simply amazing. Similarly, a massive thank you to the bumper crowd of volunteers who turned up to help close out the apiary. I hope you all enjoyed yourselves. Central to that enjoyment is the catering once again organised and masterminded by Elaine – thank you!

Have a great autumn everyone, I hope you are enjoying the fruits of your harvest and wish you all good luck – and happy beekeeping.

All the best





NEWS FROM THE APIARY – Ade Belcham

And exhale ...

Honey harvest in, kit clean, hives treated and fed ... everything slowing down as the sweet chestnut leaves tumble and the other trees line up to follow. A warm day sees a flurry of late activity from bees and me. Them to the ivy and balsam, sedum, and Michaelmas daisies; me to all those jobs that still need doing before the ground gets muddy and the weather less friendly.

There is something about the rhythm of the year that I find increasingly reassuring. With all the madness in the news, the swallows still gather, the geese take formation, and the toads make their way to the sanctuary of the wood pile. Hopefully, despite all the forces gathered against them, we've done our bit to make the lives of our pollinator partners a little easier as they go through their autumn ritual.

As a club we've welcomed a new group of beekeepers to the fold. People who knew little about bees in the spring now have colonies of their own and, I hope, feel a connection to a new circle of people as a bonus. Thank you, folks, for your curiosity and enthusiasm.

A flurry of activity at the end of September by a wonderful group of volunteers sorted out the closing down jobs and were well rewarded by Elaine's BBQ and the food contributions of many. Thank you to all those who took part. I couldn't be there for the second year running and I'm grateful to those who stepped in to take care of things.

A big thank you too to the Apiary Team for all the laughter and shared experience, the completion of jobs without being asked, the being there to answer questions, make tea and most importantly to be the hub of the human community that grows each year alongside our bees.

The apiary settles into its autumn quiet – an occasional visitor rather than the Saturday morning bustle. Eleven hives of varying shapes and sizes wrapped in laurels. The school smallholding project that promised us pigs as neighbours, has stalled with the departure of a key teacher, so, for now at least, the apiary remains a little hideaway on its own.

Winter well.....

a few pictures from the end of season clean up and BBQ









TIPS OF THE MONTH – *Credit BBKA Facebook Page*

October: Time to reflect

Feeding syrup normally stops early in the month – continuing to do so risks stores with a high-water content fermenting and potentially harming colonies. If stores are low fondant may be a backup - often placed directly above the cluster on top of the hole in the crown board.

Don't inspect unless you have a very good reason, observe externally instead – inspections cause the bees to use more valuable energy reserves to reseal the hive. Alternatively, polycarbonate crown boards allow you to peek into a hive without disturbance.

Fit mouse guards.

Some place a super above the floor and beneath the brood box to raise the colony from draughts on open mesh floors (nading) – if you do this queen excluders are almost always removed.

If woodpeckers are a problem, consider a chicken wire 'cage' round hives.


Hefting, with practice this will let you gauge the weight of remaining stores – some use fishing or luggage scales, first on one side then the other, for an accurate measure.

Strap and weigh down hives, Autumn storms can tip hives over easily. After any storms check colonies haven't shifted.

Clean up and repair any kit removed from hives ready for next season.

Please remain vigilant for Asian/yellow-legged hornets and nests. Nests can become more obvious as leaves fall.





A mystery resolved? – Credit @ John De Carteret 22 09 23

Thank you to Andy Cambell for bringing this recent FaceBook post from John De Carteret to our attention.

Not a sting but something else...

During several Asian Hornet nest removals, over the seven years that we've been doing this, there have been reports from our volunteers, and indeed from Alastair the Coordinator, of instances of getting something nasty in the eye ...?

This was often assumed to be hornet venom ...?

I hadn't personally experienced this until just a couple of weeks ago when even though I'm wearing a round hood design (which keeps the hornets well away from my face and I wear glasses) I experienced what can only be described as the sensation of having liquid detergent squirted in your eye. In my case it was in the left-hand corner of my left eye obviously from the side - and behind my glasses. Very uncomfortable and not easy to take any immediate remedial action whilst at a nest all suited up. One cannot rub one's eye as bringing the face veil to your face would allow these insects to sting your face.

Washing later with an eye bath was soothing ...

It then happened to me again just two days later, but on this occasion, I was removing a nest with Chris, our citizen scientist guru who calmly said ..."I know what that is"... that of course didn't make it any more of an enjoyable experience, it was still extremely uncomfortable.

So consider my surprise when a couple of days later, after Asian Hornets (the Yellow-Legged Hornet, *Vespa velutina*) "our hornets" had been confirmed for the first time ever in North America, in the State of Georgia at Savannah - that the following article popped up in the news feed on my phone ...?

"Florida officials want to avoid spread of Yellow-Legged Hornet", by Cherry McCloud, USA TODAY NETWORK Florida - which to my surprise included the following under the heading ...

"Are yellow-legged hornets aggressive?"

The hornets are not very aggressive toward humans and attack only when it feels threatened, according to the National Library of Medicine.

However, the agency reported that over the past decade, French poison control centres have received several calls about patients who have not been stung but experience symptoms in their eyes associated with the yellow-legged hornet.

Symptoms included eye redness and pain. Symptoms were resolved quickly, usually within a few hours, after irrigating the eyes with water or saline solution".

So I asked Chris for his explanation ...

Recommendations on eye safety when dealing with Asian Hornets - Chris Isaacs 27 08 2023

We have recently had cases involving serious eye irritation during Asian Hornet nest removal. The effect was instant, and the symptoms persisted for many hours.

When a hornet's nest is threatened, they will focus their aggression on any dark-coloured moving objects nearby. Close inspection will usually reveal small droplets of fluid on these.

It's not possible to rule out the presence of airborne venom during an attack however I have carried out extensive research using live hornets. They were all very reluctant to release any venom unless the sting was actually penetrating something and the maximum amount of venom, I have observed being expelled from the sting is a tiny drop which is hardly visible to the naked eye.

They regularly defecate when leaving a nest and when leaving a bait station. They also do it when they go into attack mode. In my captive nest studies, they would fly at the glass viewing window in response to the nest being disturbed, leaving it covered with fluid. It's unclear if they are using excrement defensively or simply lightening the load to improve their speed and manoeuvring, but significant amounts of excrement are expelled during an attack.

They can't eject excrement with much force but the speed at which they fly toward a target is sufficient for the fluid to continue horizontally through a veil and land on the face. If a droplet lands on another hornet which is clinging to the veil the wings could also 'atomize' the fluid into a fine mist so there could be several factors at play.

My observations suggest that airborne excrement is the most likely cause of the eye irritation. In the absence of any health and safety information on this it is strongly advised that a wrap-around visor or safety goggles are worn whenever dealing with Asian hornets.

Citizen science at its best!

Needless to say, I immediately started wearing safety glasses with sides, over my normal eye glasses but I found that these quickly misted up, I ... (apologies Chris) have now modified my safety helmet to accept a replaceable visor, which works very well.

Only yesterday another of our volunteers experienced the same thing ... and a few stings 🐝🐝





WINTER PROGRAMME - Fiona Hiron

CSBKA WINTER MEETINGS

The first Winter Meeting will take place on Wednesday 18th October 2023 at the Millennium Hall, Crawley Road, Roffey, Horsham, RH12 4DT.

Erica Baxter (Sussex Police) – Rural Crime, including the theft of bees.

The talk will commence at 7.30pm but the room will be available from 7.00pm for those that want to get settled into their seating and catch up with other members.

Light refreshments will be served.

Dates for your Diary:

Wednesday 18th October: Erica Baxter, Sussex Police: Rural Crime

November: tbc

Wednesday 6th December: Dr Nadia Ziyada, CSBKA: Swarm Collection

2024

Wednesday 17th January: Joseph & Elizabeth, Bee Cosmetics: Local family run business featured in the recent "All about Horsham" September publication. Formulators of skincare products using beeswax, honey and propolis along with natural and organic botanical oils.

February: tbc

March: AGM



EVENTS

21st October – National Honey Day

The BBKA celebrate National Honey Day on the 21st October each year. Below is a notice from Anne Rowberry, BBKA President.

“We would like to invite you to share in this day when we will be encouraging everyone to buy a jar of local honey, produced by bees here in the UK. Not only do we want to ensure people are aware of all the benefits honey provides but we are seeking to celebrate the pleasure of eating honey. Honey has been enjoyed all over the world for centuries, it was found in the Egyptian tombs and is often depicted being collected by bees in ancient cave drawings.

During this day of celebration, you could encourage friends and family to share photos on social media: you and your jars of local honey!

The things you do with your honey. Perhaps you eat it on toast or in porridge? Perhaps you bake with honey or make mead? Do you make cosmetics containing honey?

Use the hashtags #NationalHoneyDay, #LocalHoney, #Beekeeping

But we are concerned that consumers can buy a jar labelled honey that contains additives such as corn syrup, and other chemicals. We want people to be aware and informed about the worldwide fraud affecting imported honey.

The BBKA will be continuing the work started as a response to propositions in the Annual Delegates Meeting in January 2022 calling on the Government to revisit the intended change in labelling of honey sold in the UK. Some changes were due to have come into law in 2022 but have been delayed until 2024. We want people to be able to recognise honey produced here in the UK and be able to have a choice in what they are buying. Some imported honey has never been collected by a bee. The BBKA is asking for informed information on the labels of honey. We are asking that consumers and our beekeepers are protected from the fraud, which is occurring worldwide now.

Many thanks for your continued support of this important initiative”



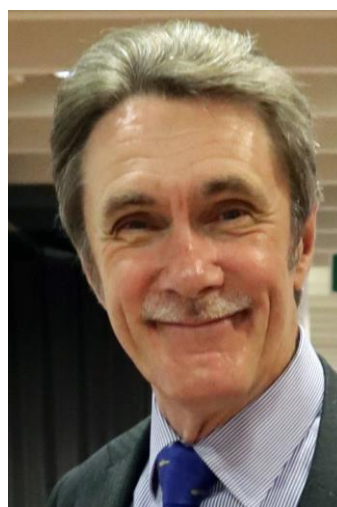
26th – 28th October 2023 – National Honey Show, Sandown Park Racecourse

The 100th National Honey Show is going to be a very special event! Click the link below to download the full Convention Programme, Schedules, and Entry Forms.

[National Honey Show Centenary Show Programme](#)

The very first “National Show of Bees & Honey” was held in 1923 at the original Crystal Palace, Sydenham, London. There were no shows during the period of the Second World War. The show continues to be held each year in October. Admission for NHS Members is FREE, Non-Members £25 of 3 days or £15 daily. Accompanied children under 16 go FREE.

and a message from the Chairman



“It’s going to be a really special event. We have come a long way since our first show at Crystal Palace in 1923 and we should take a moment to think about the many amazing and dedicated people who have delivered great shows over the years. Too many to mention here but you can read about them in our publication, ‘[A Short History of the National Honey Show](#)’, available to download from our website.

We have reflected the centenary in some of our existing classes, but we’ve also added special centenary classes which replicate some you would have found in the early years. There are pictures in the schedule to inspire you!

A couple to watch are the shop window display (great prize money on offer) and the amazing ‘decorative honeycomb’. Have a look at the pictures – it’s astonishing what our predecessors achieved. Stunning miniature versions of a shop window and bees persuaded to produce incredible shapes in wax comb. Can we match them? These would be great classes for Beekeeping associations to have a go at as a group.

Our overseas visitors requested a class for honey with nuts. This is a popular decorative product in the Middle East and of course we are delighted to oblige. In the 1920’s there was a class for observation hives. Back then the show was at a different time of year so, whilst we have reintroduced it, we are only looking for annotated photographs of frames so your bees can remain tucked up in their hives.

We have a great speaker lined up and do look out for our exhibition of bee photography from French photographer Eric Tournet, both inside and outside the building. This is a 'one off' and not to be missed. These pictures are not only stunning, but they are also enormous!

As always, we are grateful for the fantastic support we receive from our traders and the sponsorship we receive from the Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers, beekeeping associations and individuals. We couldn't run the show without the support you give us. Thank you so much and please keep the support and sponsorship coming – especially this year as we are adding all sorts of 'extras' to enhance your enjoyment – they all cost money!

You will notice that we have split the Schedule of Classes and the Programme of Events for the Beekeepers Autumn Convention, Workshops and Trade Show into two booklets this year. We wanted to give everyone the opportunity to have time to prepare for the Show, particularly for the centenary classes.

As every show insider knows to say, 'see you at the National!'

Bob Maurer
Chairman



NOTICES

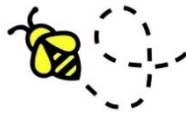
Committee Resignations: Kim Mair and Simon Randall



A huge thank you to Kim Mair (Hon Secretary) and Simon Randall (Swarm Collector/Co-Ordinator) who recently both resigned from their positions.

Kim has worked alongside Fiona in the joint role of Hon Secretary and we would like to thank her for her enthusiastic contribution behind the scenes to the smooth running of the Association.

Simon has co-ordinated the collection and distribution of swarms amongst the CSBKA membership for several years. A big thank you Simon for not only collecting the swarms which at some times have proved “challenging” but also patiently managing the Swarm List!



CSBKA Honey Extractor Hire

CSBKA has various honey extractors which can be hired

3 Frame Electric * 10 Frame Electric Extractor * 4 Frame Manual Extractor * 2x2 Frame Manual Extractor * x1
Stainless Steel settling tank

The electric extractors are £20 and the manual extractors are £10. Members may hire an extractor for as long as they need to that price but please be mindful that if an extractor is sat in someone’s shed or garage doing nothing then another member won’t be able to use it! Payment on collection from Sedgewick Lane, (turning just after Hillier’s Garden Centre if you are driving towards Mannings Heath from Horsham). Please contact Matt Arbutnot direct on 07912 024420 or via the CS Bees Knees WhatsApp Group!



Location for hive/s in Horsham

Please contact Antonia Maidwell: fifry@btopenworld.com who has land available for an out apiary.

Do you have any surplus honey for sale? If so

Please contact Tom: tommccormack111@gmail.com who is looking to purchase at least 1kg of honey and is also open to buying Bakers Honey which he hopes to use for fermentation.

Committee Vacancies

We have two vacant positions – please email secretary@centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk for more information if you are interested in either position!

Hon Secretary

Swarm Co-Ordinator