

BEEMASTER

**Nottinghamshire
Beekeepers' Association**
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<http://www.nottsbees.org.uk>

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The Editor would like to thank the following members for their contributions:

Karen Burrow Stuart Ching Griff Dixon Linda Jordan Alison Knox Anne & Rob Mason Glenis Swift
Other BKAs through the Bee Editors Exchange scheme
Newsletter Archive jsching37@yahoo.co.uk

DIARY DATES

Monday 1 July **Nottingham Region**, Arnold Hill Community Centre, **Arnold NG65 6NZ**
7.30 pm 'What do I do about this?': **Gerry Collins**
Monday 15 July **Newark Region**, Ferry Inn, **North Muskham NG23 6HB 8pm**
Thursday 25 July Copy date for **August** newsletter
Monday 5 August **Nottingham Region**, Arnold Hill Community Centre, **Arnold NG5 6NZ 7.30pm**
Social Evening
Monday 19 August **Newark Region**, Ferry Inn, **North Muskham NG23 6HB 8pm**

www.nbkaeducation.weebly.com

Training sessions at the Apiaries at SOUTHWELL and WOODTHORPE - 2019

All sessions start at 2pm

May	18 May	25 May	1 June	8 June
15 June	22 June	29 June	6 July	13 July
20 July	27 July			

Apiary training sessions are held at Brackenhurst College, Southwell and at Woodthorpe Park in Nottingham.

The Brackenhurst apiary is open to association members and non-members to visit on all of the dates above. Parking is at the College campus – you can then walk down to the apiary which is on the opposite side of the road. If you need any further information please contact Maurice Jordan - 01636 821 613 mauricejordan11@btinternet.com

The Woodthorpe apiary is open to members for all the dates shown, but non-members are only able to attend on **dates in red**. The contact for Woodthorpe is Bob Logan - 0115 952 0945 bob.logan@ntlworld.com

If you have a beesuit please bring it, otherwise please bring wellingtons and gloves – washing-up gloves will be fine. The apiary managers/demonstrators have the right to turn away those who, in their opinion, are not correctly attired.

From the editor

July is here and with it a promise of summer at last- do we dare hope? June's unremittingly miserable, cold and wet weather created perhaps the longest June Gap of recent times, prompting the National Bee Unit to issue a Starvation Alert, which I have reprinted below in Beelines p14. In our anxiety over OSR honey setting in the frames, or simply in our eagerness to take an early honey crop, we can easily forget that our bees do not create this golden bounty for our benefit but for their own, to ensure their survival when forage is scarce: we must always be mindful of their needs. The 2018/19 Overwinter Colony Survival Survey highlights the worrying fact that, after adverse weather conditions, starvation was the second greatest factor in colony loss and observes that the beekeeper can do much to improve these matters: one case of avoidable starvation in an apiary should be seen as one too many. The starvation alert so moved Alison that she wrote a poem "Feed the bees" You can read it in And finally..... on p16. B Change is in the air at NBKA, as you will read below in Griff's report: we thank those stepping down for their dedication and service and encourage members to step up for the roles of Show Secretary (and custodianship of the Big Black Briefcase!) and Treasurer, where a knowledge of Double Entry book-keeping is all that is required. Both Alison and Chris are happy to guide and mentor their replacements through the early stages.

In this issue Griff details committee changes and chases queens; Anne reports on empowering women through beekeeping in Zambia; Alison is hanging up her Show Secretary's hat; Glenis enjoys talking bees at a Ruddington school; some new observations on varroa; why we should love wasps; Mongolian honey and a seasonal cheesecake. Elsewhere, BBKA news has the potentials of propolis; Asian Hornet management strategies; the importance of natural selection in disease control; clearing bees and harvesting honey; an octogenarian explorer in Burundi; the results of the Overwinter Colony Survival survey. Beecraft has the experiences of an Asian Hornet Action Team; the results of a unique survey into what honey bees forage; making a hive stand; brood-and-a-half; B roads into bee roads; bees to the heather. Kettle on?

Hon. Sec. Report & Notes from Norwell July 2019

Griff Dixon

It has been described as the June Gap from Hell with feeders in short supply and much sugar syrup being mixed for emergency feeding. After a big spring honey crop the backlash has been felt with more swarms than usual and even nucleus failures. There have also been a number of reports of queens disappearing with apparent supersedure but then swarming anyway.

I have found more new queens running around my hives this year and I have, for the first time, caught and marked some. In some cases, I thought I had caught and then she escaped from the clip and flew away only to turn back up in the hive a few days later!

We seem to have now got to grips with the new BDI/BBKA eR2 Administration software with the NBKA swarm collectors now in the system and on the map! Janet Bates has taken over the Membership Secretary's duties from Karen Gladman and I have become the eR2 Association Manager. We will be looking to fully use its capabilities for making the capitation and BDI Insurance returns automated from the membership records. BBKA can no longer send email shots to the membership as they should be coming from the Hon Sec. so don't be surprised if you start getting emails to the entire membership as we look to improve overall general membership communication.

We will be looking for a new Honorary Treasurer as Chris Hutter has decided to retire from the role at the end of this year having diligently completed over 30 years' service to the Association. On another note Alison Knox is looking to move out of the Show Secretary duties with the role possibly being split as the duties have been making more demands than expected from her business time.

Hopefully my new self-made ten nucs, recently transferred to full nationals, will pick up and do well over July. The clover, wild bird seed and occasional borage strips on the farm are coming along. I am aiming to get quite a few to the heather this year.

I now have 4 out apiaries with approximately 30 viable colonies and I still haven't done any deliberate queen rearing. I have got a couple of Ged Marshall's mated queens (Danish mother origin) that I hope have been accepted and will see if I can do anything from these.

I have a very problematic hive that I cannot get near without it going full belt up my arms and head. I have taken advice on it- to put it on lock down, move it and replace with a new box in the old position and see if it can be split from foragers and internal bees. I have yet to try this but happy to take further advice. If the worse comes to the worst I may put my hand in my pocket to fund a Master Beekeeper or equivalent to come and sort it out. Anyone wanting to chance their arm and wants a challenge give me a call 07500 876836 or email griff@norwellapiary.co.uk

Martin Bencsik is now managing our Council meeting room bookings for us, which he has done with the next meeting 19th September 2019 – note it's room PCL6 and not PCL7, same building. The Association is going through some administrative changes with the advent of eR2. We need new members to step forward and help the Council develop the way forward and make this the Association that everyone wants to join and contribute to.

Oh – before I forget we need to rewrite the NBKA Constitution – any volunteers!

This month in your apiary: July

Penny Forsyth

In July our colonies should be at maximum strength to take full advantage of the summer flowers and we beekeepers need to keep pace with them to ensure that they have enough room to store nectar and pollen and that the queens have room to lay. There is less urgency to remove and extract honey as the oilseed rape is over and we can afford to wait until the frames are sealed before removing them. It's a good idea to move uncapped or partially capped frames to the middle of the super for the bees to complete as they work in a chimney fashion so will go straight up the centre of the hive, ignoring the outer frames unless they need them. With lime, bramble and willowherb coming into flower and the promise of more settled weather July can be a time of plenty for our bees but we cannot take anything for granted: we need to maintain our vigilance where colony health is concerned and to be alert to signs of robbing by stronger colonies and by wasps- yes, it's time to make some wasp traps, although I have seen very few so far. We also need to be alert for Asian Hornet activity around our hives, even if it seems unlikely.

Jobs for July

- ~ continue to add supers ahead of the bees' requirements- when the lower box is full of bees not honey
- ~ carry out detailed inspections on colonies that have not been split and take action if you find queen cells
- ~ remove and extract sealed frames of honey and put the empties back on in the evening for the bees to clean out
- ~ reduce entrances to avoid the risk of robbing by bees and wasps
- ~ make wasp traps- guidance online from BBKA, nbuFera, Dave Cushman et al
- ~ continue to monitor the daily varroa drop and take action if the count is above 10
- ~ make sure you have equipment, jars and labels organised for your honey harvest
- ~ leave your bait hive out a bit longer, there may still be swarms about
- ~ maintain vigilance for Asian Hornet activity around your hives
- ~ keep watching, learning and asking questions

Nottingham Region meeting report Monday 3 June 2019

Karen Burrow

Rachel Harby, from Gedling Borough Council Food Safety team gave a general talk on Food Hygiene.

She talked about when you need to register with the Local Authority and the requirements of complying with the regulations. Rachel stressed several times that honey production is considered a very low hygiene risk, and it is understood that honey production is usually undertaken in domestic areas.

If you are selling to the public or businesses on a regular basis you should register. Indeed, if selling through a shop they should ask to see your registration. If 'selling' to family and friends then not really an issue.

Registration is currently free of charge, but some authorities charge for advice.

Registration is a fairly simple matter:

Complete the form (usually available on LA website).

At some point you will be contacted to arrange an assessment visit to site of production. Areas covered include:

Kitchen/production area facility - is it easily cleanable?

Do you have a safety checklist of what you do, before starting, during and after production, e.g clean, remove pets...

Traceability of product - e.g. Labelling

Sterilisation process (dishwasher cleaning is acceptable (use new lids))

Storage of jars and equipment

Any cleaning chemicals used - food safe

Protective clothing used

If you are ill, don't produce!

Rachel recommended looking at Food Hygiene training - Level 2 certification. There are online course available (£10-£20) as well as physical training courses. (For example Nottingham City Council run one every month at cost of £70). May be possible to get someone to run a special one for a big enough group?

If inspection is okay it is valid for 3 years. If any issues are identified the team will provide advice on remediation.

Can get advice from the team.

There were some questions around the requirements that must be met, people pointed at Module 2 for detailed explanation.

Other items:

The Annual Honey Show will be on 15th September at Brackenhurst Agricultural College, Southwell.

Janet mentioned the ongoing training plans and asked if anyone was interested in doing Module 1 and the Basic.

Brief discussion on doing Varroa checks.

Newark Region

Penny Forsyth

A good crowd of beekeepers occupied the tiny Beehive Inn at Maplebeck on a pleasant, rain-free June evening. We were delighted to welcome David Kemp, who has held practically every high office in beekeeping and who worked with the legendary Brother Adam at Buckfast Abbey. David is a bit of a legend himself and has many a fascinating tale to tell. There were conversations about honey yields (varied), swarms (plenty, some quite feisty and really hungry), the joys of swarm collecting (much balancing on ladders in the rain), queen rearing and apideas. There was practical advice for a new beekeeper about to get her first nucleus and it was reported that the Primary school in Worksop that is being mentored by Pete and Arlene Bull had just taken their first honey harvest- sweet success in every way.

Beeston and Chilwell Bee Club meeting, June

Anne Mason

A buzz of beekeepers, 18 in all, attended our latest get together of local beekeepers, would-be beekeepers and interested parties!

Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus was one of the topics discussed, something that can strike your honey bee colony with no warning it would appear, with no links to varroa infestation. Symptoms include shiny bees, black in appearance, some bees might be isolated and motionless or might appear to have a tremor- particularly seen in drones shaking on the tops of frames. With no treatment on hand, some colonies might struggle with it and die off, others that are stronger seem to be able to overcome its effects and over time recover completely.

Mention was also made of the recent rainy weather and how smaller colonies have been especially threatened when their stores have been insufficient and the rain has prevented forager bees getting fresh sources of nectar and pollen. The bees may love oilseed rape but our beekeepers less so, with the attendant difficulties of extracting this rapidly setting honey from hive frames and then getting it into jars!

How to treat bee stings gave rise to many solutions offered including firstly ensuring that the sting is scraped away from its entry point to reduce further venom entering the skin, antihistamine tablets plus cream, 'After Bite' (a cream containing baking soda & ammonia) as well as use of ice or frozen peas to reduce any swelling.

Our beekeepers are still responding to queries about bumblebees and the occasional swarm, confusingly at times near to our apiaries but not our bees!

How many queen cells should you leave in an artificial swarm manoeuvre? One or maybe two by splitting the colony into three- the old queen with no brood and the remaining two queen cells if they both look decent with the brood divided into two new colonies. See what happens and if one new queen appears to be stronger than the other by the end of the season then dispose of the less effective queen and combine the two new colonies under the auspices of the stronger queen.

A funny thing happened – bees crawling into a beekeeper's smock when dealing with a rather large swarm and bees that got into a plastic bag of comb to rob any honey that was there all add to the 'spice of life' that honey bees bring us!

The Bees Abroad Women's Beekeeping Project, Monze, Zambia

Stuart Andrews the Volunteer Project Manager, who has taken over this project from the late Roy Dyche, has recently returned from a trip to Zambia in May visiting the project's apiary sites, helping with training and meeting up with Phillip Nsakilwa, the director of SRDA, a small non-governmental organization that is helping to run the project and report back on its progress. Please read my summarized version of Stuart's report below for a taste of beekeeping African style!

The main aim of this three-year project is to introduce modern beekeeping, using top-bar hives to approximately 120 women as a source of much needed income. All the women are subsistence farmers, many of them unmarried or widows with sole responsibility for the wellbeing of their households with an average of 8 family members.

The Monze District is in the southern province of Zambia and is one of the least developed areas with very high levels of poverty heightened by reduced rainfall in recent years leading to 38% reduced crop production over the past 8 years. Currently there is little crop diversification and there is a need for new methods of agriculture to be developed. The groups of women in Phase 2 of this project currently depend on growing maize, a crop particularly dependent on rainfall. Beekeeping will create an alternative income and on this visit Stuart also came across members of the first BA/SRDA project (2011-2015) selling vegetables on a roadside who were still involved in beekeeping and that the income generated from this had helped with their children's school fees in particular.



Crop failure, an all too common sight

Problems arising from Phase 1 of this new project were not only bee related with some of the apiaries experiencing a failure to colonise hives (a common challenge with African beekeeping), a lack of a water for the bees and one apiary was overgrown, but that generally the ladies themselves were suffering with the hot, dry conditions and were lacking in energy due to reduced food intake. Initial beekeeping training for the groups addressed some of these difficulties by showing how to bait the hives, the importance of watching out for swarming/absconding bees and showing how swarms may be caught and re-homed in their hives.



Priming the top bars with melted bees wax

Support from BA and the SRDA is vital to keep the project on track and boost the ladies' morale when faced with such challenging circumstances. The relevant paperwork for a new training apiary site is almost complete so that work can start on the clearing of the thick vegetation. 10 new top-bar hives are being stored ready for use and there are plans to build a new honey processing plant for the project members as well as other beekeepers in the area. Stuart returned home exhausted but felt that his trip had been satisfyingly productive and was building on Roy's sound foundation. Honey harvesting from the two groups in Phase 1 had raised the equivalent of £13 for the Kabwenbala group and £65 for the Chobaana East group. This amount of money might not seem very much but it will buy considerably more in rural Zambia for the members than it would in the UK!



A well constructed apiary

We may have challenges with our beekeeping but on reading Stuart's report, mine seem of no significance at all compared to those experienced by The Women's Beekeeping Project in Monze! My Bees Abroad stall is intended to help BA projects generally by selling the BA shop stock but I also support Stuart's project in particular by selling knitted items, cakes and plants and through the generous support of donations from fellow NBKA members. Thank you all for your support, I hope this update shows where some of your money is going to and how much it is appreciated!

Anne Mason, BA fundraiser

COULD IT BEE YOU?

Alison Knox, Show Secretary



It is with genuine regret, that I have now tendered my resignation as **SHOW SECRETARY** to NBKA, due to a change in my own professional circumstances since taking on the role 3 years ago. Sadly, I no longer have the time or flexibility to commit to what was a fascinating, educative and inspiring experience.

As of the AGM in February 2020 we will be needing a successor.

Could it be you?

The “**big black briefcase**” holds all the secrets of the role, and I will be happy to go through everything personally, leaving a full and comprehensive “*how to do it*” file for my successor. In the meantime, I will be reviewing the current role, splitting it into two more manageable roles. . . **SHOW SECRETARY** and **SHOW STEWARD**. It is very possible that if someone is willing to take up 1 of the roles, I can continue for a short “*handover period*” with the other.

If you would like to consider this opportunity, please contact me directly in the first instance (*no obligation or coercion!*) by mobile on **07768 153526** or by email alisonnbka@btinternet.com

Thank you

Talking Bees

Glenis Swift

I really enjoyed my first experience into school bee talks at Ruddington Primary, set in extensive grounds with football pitches at the front, wildlife area and woods at the back- even a plot at the side where children could cultivate fruit and veg at break times. Every beekeeper’s dream! The kids were very knowledgeable so I decided to talk about the development of the beekeeper from hunter gatherer to modern beekeeper; from scooping honey from hollows in trees to keeping bees in skeps to today’s hives with bee space, floors, crown boards etc.

At question time one Year 4 lad even asked me about Langstroth hives!

A great afternoon all round!

The End of Varroa Is In Sight? - Kevin Thorn

Two years ago I listened to a talk by Professor Stephen Martin, a world-wide expert on Varroa, at the Cambridge BKA Convention. He hinted at research that would be published that would spell the end of the need to treat Varroa.

At the BBKA spring convention in April 2019 he was able to elaborate further. His research team have found that honey bees in Africa, South and Central America are Varroa tolerant (and Africanised!).

In the rest of the world while mites can reproduce 3-fold in worker brood and 5-fold in drone brood the actual rate is 1.2x. The difference is due to lack of fertility, accidents etc. In the Africanised bees the rate of reproduction is 0.8x. This is significant as any ratio below 1x means the mite population is reducing!

The Varroa tolerant bees showed an infestation rate of 4% whereas non tolerant populations showed an average 27% infestation. Enhanced grooming and hygienic behaviour was found to make little difference but a third behaviour - uncapping and recapping has been found to be the effective behaviour. In places where there is no Varroa there is no sign of this behaviour. The bees were seen to uncap and recap several times. Where mites are not present the bees had made a small hole and recapped. Where mites were present they made a larger hole and recapped (- this can be seen as a silvery sheen on the capping as this is part of the pupal cocoon). This action exposes young mites and kills them and while the mother mite survives she is unable to reproduce. This may also show up as pepper pot brood.

The key message was DON'T CHANGE YOUR CURRENT TREATMENT REGIME! If we stop treating now we may create Varroa concentrations that could wipe out the tolerant populations AKA Varroa bombs. The next stage of the research is to look at how the average beekeeper can manage and select their colonies to be able to take advantage of tolerant behaviour. Perhaps not the end of Varroa but maybe the beginning of the end?



This article is reproduced from the BIBBA May Newsletter.

Learning to love wasps

There has, quite naturally, been a lot of concern, even hysteria, in some quarters since the arrival on our shores of the dreaded Asian Hornet. I am not seeking to minimise the seriousness of this pest or its consequences for beekeeping, but I am putting in a plea for our native wasps and the English Hornet (*Vespa crabro*, also known as the *European hornet*)

Wasps generally get a bad press- people see them as at best, a nuisance and at worst, nasty aggressive creatures that are intent on stinging everything within range. To put this into perspective, they are a nuisance towards the end of the summer, but they are not aggressive and I am prepared to argue with anyone who says so. It is necessary to understand these creatures to fully appreciate them. We have seven species of true social wasp in this country, one which is a cuckoo on another species and therefore, not a social wasp but a social parasite and then there is the English Hornet, which is really just a big wasp.

Celia F. Davis



To enable us to fully understand these fascinating and very clever insects that are so closely related to our bees, I am going to outline the general life cycle of all our wasps;

1. A wasp nest starts each season with one queen who has hibernated over the winter



(underneath hive roofs is common and they often find snug places in and around the home.)

2. These queens are intent on finding nesting places and are not interested in bees or beehives. I have never known a queen wasp or English Hornet to go into a beehive or to 'pick off' bees returning to a hive. Once they have built a small nest, they lay eggs and begin to rear workers, taking care of them entirely on their own.

3. Once the workers start hatching, the queen restricts herself to egg laying and the workers do everything else.

4. During the greater part of the year the wasp nest builds and the workers are busy capturing live prey eg. caterpillars, aphids etc, which they chew into a kind of gruel to feed to the carnivorous wasp larvae. At this stage, the nest is composed of only the queen and many workers. The workers will often visit flowers for nectar and can act as pollinators. Some plants such as Common Figwort are specifically pollinated by wasps and attractive to them and we are all used to seeing them on ivy late in the season.

5. The wasp larvae, in exchange for their 'meat' exude a drop of a sweet saliva, which the worker wasps eat and which gives them their sugar 'fix'.

6. Later in the year, the nest may produce fully functioning males and females (queens) which leave the nest to mate.

7. After this, from August onwards, the queen ceases to lay, there are no more larvae to feed, no more 'sugar' for the adults, the nest has reached its maximum size and the workers go in search of sweet things eg. honey stores in beehives, ripe fruit, food at picnics. They can then become a problem, especially for a weak colony but they will be stealing honey, not killing bees. (There may be battles, which end up with dead bees and wasps.) This is the only time of year when wasps are a nuisance to bee colonies and they can at this stage kill a colony by taking all its stores.

8. The young wasp queens meanwhile have mated and gone into hibernation ready for next season. The rest of the nest dies and wasps will not use that nest again

That gives an overview of the life of wasps. They construct the most beautiful nests made from wood, which they scrape off with their mandibles and mix with saliva to form a type of papier-maché. The cells are perfect hexagons and hang upside down inside an envelope, which continually has to be remade as the nest enlarges. To address the public conception of wasps as aggressive, this is because they are hunters seeking live prey and consequently they are very active and inquisitive, inspecting everything in their environment to test whether it is food. They

also dislike sudden movements, so waving your arms around and batting them away may very well provoke a stinging reaction. Stand still and let them inspect you and they will invariably decide that you are not suitable as food for larvae and leave you alone. Always avoid vibrating the nest as this is tantamount to launching an attack and they will retaliate. The only time I have been stung by an English Hornet was when I inadvertently vibrated the nest badly and they all rushed out and pursued me across a ploughed field. Probably quite amusing for an onlooker but not for me as the sting was extremely painful. This single incident, which was entirely my own fault, has not changed my love for hornets which are great big gentle giants. The real value of wasps is the amount of pest control that they undertake. I have watched them removing large white larvae from the cabbages and they are responsible for the deaths of many pest species. So learn a little bit about them, watch them, and learn to appreciate them, even if you can't manage to love them. As with most creatures, the more you know about them, the more you will realise what truly wonderful lives they lead. Finally, by all means monitor for Asian Hornets but use live traps and release the native species, don't just kill everything. Beekeepers should be protecting the environment and everything in it as it all has its part to play.

Courtesy of Warwickshire BKA via ebees

Mongolian Honey

Stuart Ching, NBKA Archivist

The continuing adventures of our Archivist's daughter, Professor Jane Ching of TNTU

Here is Jane's latest contribution; a tempting array of local honeys for sale.

It may be interesting to your readers to see the journey took to get this image (or maybe not!)

Nottingham to London by train 127 miles
London to Hong Kong flying 5976 miles
Hong Kong to Ulan Bator (capital of Mongolia) flying 1817 miles
TOTAL 7915 miles

TOTAL round trip 15830 miles (for one week's work!)

Incidentally, driving from London to Ulan Bator would take 113 hours non-stop!

Jane reports that in Mongolia Ghengis Khan is spelt Chinggis Khan - I wonder if that gave her any problems!



Almond Strawberry Cheesecake, serves 4

110g (4oz) chocolate chips, melted

1 ready-made 22cm (9in) pie shell

80 ml (3 fluid oz)whipping cream

3 tablespoons honey

2 tablespoons almond flavoured liqueur

½ teaspoon vanilla

Pinch of salt

1 punnet fresh strawberries, washed and hulled

110g (4oz redcurrant jam, melted

225g (8oz) cream cheese

Spread the melted chocolate over the bottom of the baked pie shell

Beat the cream cheese with the whipping cream, honey, almond liqueur,

Vanilla and salt. Spoon over the chocolate and chill for 30 minutes.

Combine the strawberries with the melted jam to coat the berries.

Arrange these over the cream cheese filling.

Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Beelines: notices, news and views

From the National Bee Unit 12 June 2019: Honey Bee Colony Starvation Alert

Due to the recent wet and cold weather beekeepers may wish to monitor their colony food levels closely, particularly in any splits, nucleus colonies or colonies where the entire spring honey crop was removed. In some areas of the UK, our Inspectors are concerned at finding colonies that are starving. Feed can be prepared from refined white sugar and water mixed at a 2:1 ratio or one of the proprietary ready mixed syrups available from beekeeping equipment suppliers.

More information about mixing up sugar can be found in the Best Practice Guidelines no. 7 found on [BeeBase](#).

With drier and warmer weather, however, the blackberry, lime and clover may soon be in flower and colonies should start to bring in an excess crop, so it is also important not to feed unnecessarily and risk adulterating honey with sugar syrup.

If you have any questions then please contact your local [Inspector](#).

To unsubscribe to these updates, follow the link below to log in and update your preferences:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/secure/beekeeper/unsubscribe.cfm?id=40081>

Massive colony losses in the USA

Beekeepers across the United States lost 40.7% of their honey bee colonies from April 2018 to April 2019, according to preliminary results of the latest annual nationwide survey conducted by the University of Maryland-led non-profit Bee Informed Partnership. The survey results indicate winter losses of 37.7%, which is the highest winter loss reported since the survey began 13 years ago and 8.9 percentage points higher than the survey average. Honey bees pollinate \$15 billion worth of food crops in the United States each year, so their health is critical to food production and supply.

“These results are very concerning, as high winter losses hit an industry already suffering from a decade of high winter losses,” says Dennis van Engelsdorp, Associate Professor of Entomology at the University of Maryland and president for the Bee Informed Partnership.

During the 2018 summer season, beekeepers lost 20.5% of their colonies, which is slightly above the previous year’s summer loss rate of 17.1%, but about equal to the average loss rate since the summer of 2011. Overall, the annual loss of 40.7% this last year represents a slight increase over the annual average of 38.7%.

Various sources inc Lune Valley Community Beekeepers via ebees

From Janet Bates MB, education secretary

Have a look at the website nottsbees.org.uk There are:

- Items for sale items on the Website
- Apiary sites available on the Website
- Bees for sale

Basic Assessment

We are now holding sessions at the new Hucknall Bee Garden Apiary for members wishing to take the BBKA Basic assessment.

Sessions are on Wednesdays from 1pm to 3pm (approx) and Saturdays 1pm to 3pm (approx).

You may come to either or both.

Please contact Janet Bates 07973 412101 if you would like to come along.

The apiary is on an allotment and we meet at the gates so that we can go along together.

Go down Beauvale Road, Hucknall and fork left just past the Jehovah’s Witnesses Kingdom Hall onto Priory Road. The gates are at the bottom of Priory Road.

You will need to bring your beesuit, boots and gloves (if you wear them). Please come with a clean suit and rubber gloves not leather ones. Marigold type are acceptable but the thinner, better fitting disposable gloves are preferable. The apiary has its own hive tools and smoker for hygiene reasons.

In order to take the assessment you need to have kept bees for one year and be a member of BBKA (through NBKA).

Module 1 study group

There are a few members who are going to start studying Module 1. This is mostly General Beekeeping and follows on naturally from the Basic syllabus. If you are interested in joining this new group then please email me janet.bates@ntlworld.com

NBKA Asian Hornet Action Team News

There have as yet been no reports of Asian Hornets in mainland UK despite media hysteria! **Latest:** In Jersey there have been over 80 sightings of Asian Hornets so far in 2019, as well as more than a dozen primary nests found. In Guernsey, the first Asian Hornet primary nest was found and a 'Spring Queening' initiative has set up 275 regularly checked traps across the island. Alderney repeated spring trapping to reduce on the four secondary nests found last year.

The NBKA Asian Hornet Action Team is now registered on the AHAT website and with the BBKA. I am currently registered as Coordinator with Pete Bull as North Notts contact and Alec Thomson the City and South Notts contact. We have a further 11 team members and between us we cover several postcodes but the aim is to provide a county-wide contact network ready to react to reports of possible Asian Hornet incursions into our region and to coordinate with the National Bee Unit, the Non-Native Species Secretariat (NNSS) and other BKA's **so we need more!** There is no limit to the number of members an AHAT may have so if you would like to be involved please contact me at pennyforsyth16@mail.com for information or if you wish to join the contacts register. There is excellent information and a set of guidelines on the AHAT website <https://ahat.org.uk>

If any foundress queens are around they will have formed their primary nests and moving to start secondary nests and so the queens will not be flying any more but the number of workers will steadily increase. This will mean that the monitoring traps put out in the spring will have less value as the carbohydrate bait used for the queens will be of no use because the workers will be looking for protein sources. This is also the time that the workers will start taking bees from hives and so the best detection is to observe around the front of hives for the hornets, the numbers will steadily increase into September or later depending on the weather. If any are seen they should be reported immediately to the Non-native Species Secretariat or the National Bee Unit and please let me know pennyforsyth16@gmail.com If you have any queries about identification please send me a photo, the smart phone app has useful pictures and a means of reporting. I hope that none are seen this year but if seen the sooner the nest can be found and destroyed the less likely it will be for the nest to release queens.

Download the identification pdfs, laminate them and put them up in your apiary, on your allotment information board or local notice board.

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/home/index.cfm>

Get the Asian Hornet Watch app for smart phone and tablet

Read up about traps and baits and use them appropriately- visit <https://ahat.org.uk>

If you have not already registered your apiary on Beebase then please do so now. If there is an Asian Hornet incursion in your area it is vital that every beekeeper can be located and contacted. When you register and record your apiary information you can also report whether or not you have AH traps in place. Follow the link below:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/login.cfm>

And finally.....

from Alison Knox

FEED THE BEES

My bees are very soggy
their legs are very crossed
They haven't flown for several days
Their "va va voom" is lost.
I'd planned to check the mite drop,
And mark a nice new Queen
And split a busting colony
Before the beggars swarm
My best intentions scuppered
My plans are on the shelf
My bees are very soggy
And feel sorry for themselves.
The garden is floodplain
The flower heads tiny ponds
The trees are dripping heavily
And all the blossoms gone.
What will they do for nectar?
How will they feed their brood?
STARVATION is upon them
What are the bees to do?
It's up to me, their beekeeper, to give them extra food.
The warning has been issued,
The message loud and clear
So **FEED YOUR BEES** before they starve
And they'll thrive another year.
But if they starve to death in there
Then YOU have sealed their fate
Get to it now, and do the job
BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE

Written by a soggy beekeeper, June 2019

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The Editor retains the right to amend submitted articles or to reject articles which appear, in her opinion, to be unsuitable. Items which do appear may not reflect the opinions of the Council of the NBKA.

EXTRACTORS

Members may borrow the NBKA extractors - 4-frame, hand driven kept at Brackenhurst and hired from Maurice Jordan. An electric one (with settling tank) is held by Glenis Swift 0115 9538617. The EasyBee extractor which is useful for extracting frames that hold honey that has granulated is held by Frank Chambers in Calverton (0115 965 2128).

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