



J U N E & J U L Y 2 0 1 9

An Hes

'The Swarm'

Newsletter of West Cornwall Beekeepers Association

Secretary: secretary@westcornwallbka.org

www.westcornwallbka.org.uk

From the Chair...

Summer is an opportunity to put all the theory you have gleaned during the winter better beekeeping meetings into practice - and also consider taking the BBKA basic assessment. The schedule is on their website, have a look and see what you need to know to be a competent beekeeper. The assessment itself is arranged through our exam secretary - Barbara Barnes, see our new website for contact details.

Yes, I've said it - our new website is up and running! Still some more work to do, but I hope you like it:

www.westcornwallbka.org.uk

Kate Bowyer

Stop Press! The first Asian hornet sighting of the year has been confirmed in New Milton, Hampshire:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/asian-hornet-identified-in-south-hampshire>

The fastest way to report any possible sighting is using the Asian hornet app on a mobile phone. These are processed automatically and the results are received much more quickly.



"When the bee comes to your house, let her have beer; you may want to visit the bee's house some day"

- **Congolese Proverb**

In this issue:

News	Pg 2
AHAT Update	Pg 3
South Korea	Pg 4
Bee Health Day	Pg 5
What's On?	Pg 6

Save the Date!

Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th July

Bee Fayre in Enys Gardens

Sunday 18th August 2019

Chy Vellan BBQ

Saturday 21st September 2019

A Bit of A Do



News

The WBCKA request the pleasure of your company at...

The West Cornwall Beekeepers Annual Summer BBQ

When: *Sunday 18th August - Coals hot at 5pm*

Where: *Chy Vellan Apiary*

Bring and share food and drinks - family and friends welcome!

Please park at the bottom of the meadow near the apiary

AGM and New Committee Members

New committee members required. Our AGM takes place in November, and we shall be looking for nominations for a number of new committee members this year, plus officer posts of Chairman, Secretary, and Membership Secretary. Further details are available from Val, our current secretary.

The Royal Cornwall Show was a great success – more details of the event will be published in the next edition of An Hes.

Chy Vellan Summer Sessions

Mondays – 2pm to 4pm

All members are welcome to come along – a good opportunity to learn from experienced beekeepers, work with different colonies, meet fellow members and simply enjoy some extracurricular beekeeping! Keep an eye on your emails at times of questionable weather as this is how cancellation will be communicated.

For location details please email:
chairman@westcornwallbka.org.uk

Peter Kennedy, University of Exeter's Penryn campus, has bee colonies for sale. These were checked by Bee Inspectors at the Bee Health Day on 22 June. He is currently maintaining 3 colonies in double National brood boxes and 3 colonies in single National brood boxes, and is reluctantly parting with them due to work commitments that will drag him away from the bees this summer. Price negotiable depending on size of the colonies. He is not selling hive boxes or equipment as the scaling down is only temporary and hopes to re-build the campus research colonies in a couple of years. If you are interested or want more information, please contact Peter via his work email: p.kennedy@exeter.ac.uk.

The WCBKA would like to extend a warm **WELCOME** to our newest members:

Jacqueline Merrick &

Paul Smith



Asian Hornet Action Team Update

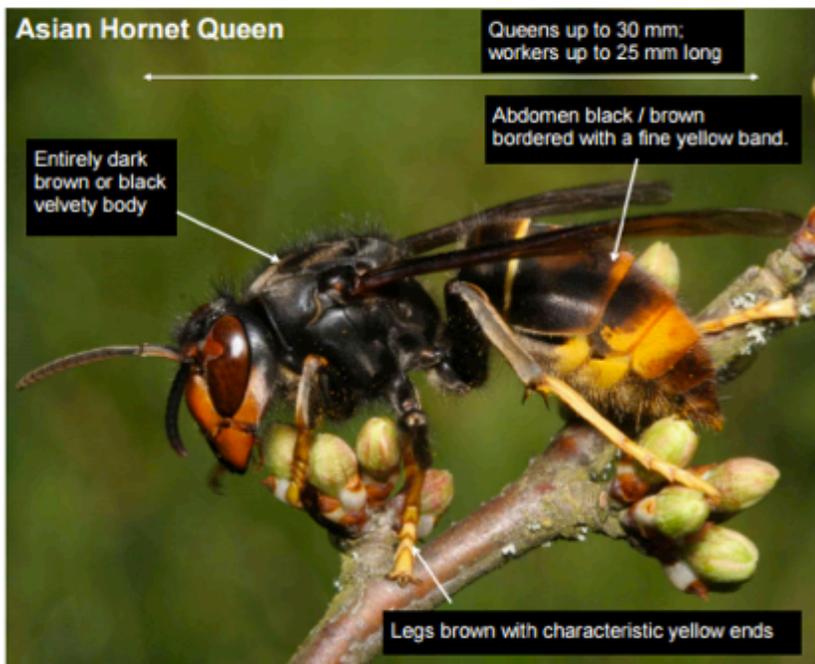
June

Workers produced early in the season are smaller than workers later in the summer (because they are reared by the queen). They are also less likely to hawk in front of a hive, but are more likely to visit flowers for nectar or to pounce on other pollinating insects. Look at flowers in your garden and put out monitoring traps using a sweet bait of fruit juice and beer, and/or a protein bait (such as one or two defrosted prawns). **Don't put out traps if you are unable to check them at least once daily and release the bycatch.**

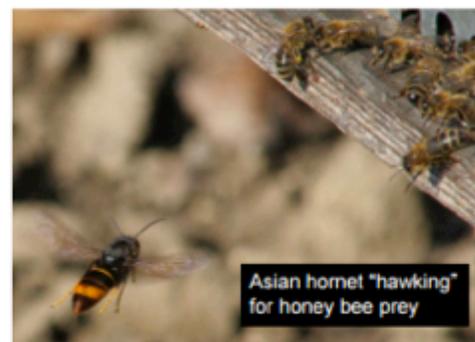
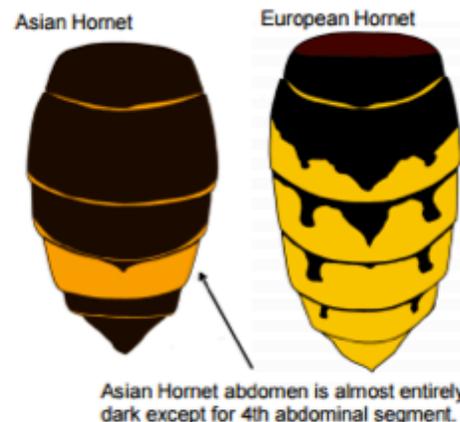
July

Large worker Asian Hornets appear in late July/August and it is from now on that beekeepers may see them hawking in an apiary. **Be vigilant!** – make sure you have an identification guide to hand in your apiary, means of capturing any suspects (child's fishing nets are ideal), or swatting it with a racquet. A camera and a pot of some kind to put the suspect into are also useful. Away from the nest, the Hornets are no more aggressive than bees. Monitoring traps in apiaries are best put up now in July/August onwards with a fish bait. **Don't put out traps if you are unable to check them at least once daily and release the bycatch.**

Key ID Features



Photos from: J. Haxaire; Rachel Scopes and Nigel Jones; Richard Ball



Report sightings of this species online at:
www.nonnativespecies.org/alerts/asianhornet
 by email alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk

or through the iPhone and Android recording app: Asian Hornet Watch

An Invite to South Korea

From Dr Pete Kennedy: Our Resident Science Correspondent

Confession: When I received the invitation to attend the 2019 International Symposium of the Korea National Arboretum, I thought it was a spam email and ignored it. But then the temptation proved too hard to resist. Somebody is bound to inherit a fortune from an unknown relative, or win a lottery they can't remember entering. So maybe this invite on an all-expenses-paid trip to the other side of the world to speak at a symposium on the "Role of Arboreta in the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation" was genuine ... even if I couldn't fathom why they would want me to speak about Asian hornets. Thankfully I had a contact in South Korea who managed to put me straight and even clarified that he had suggested to the organising committee to invite me. How lucky was I?



The Korean hosts could not have been more welcoming. Although the symposium focussed on plants, there was much about how nature contributes to our well-being, how botanical gardens provide expertise to developing green infrastructure in urban environments, how they help conserve global biodiversity but also raise understanding of the threats posed by invasive alien species. South Korea has 7 native hornet species, including the formidable *Vespa mandarinia* (the Asian Giant Hornet), but also has something in common with Europe-the Asian hornet had been accidentally introduced to its shores. First seen in Busan, a busy port at the southern tip of the Korean peninsula, in 2003, the Asian hornet *Vespa velutina nigrithorax* has spread rapidly northward through the Republic of Korea but also spread across the Korea Strait to Tsushima Island and even to Kyushu, the most south-westerly of the main islands that make up Japan. Hornets have plagued Korean beekeepers for centuries but the Asian hornet is causing real problems due its large numerous nests. Initially, the native hornets kept the Asian hornet out of the more natural habitats but the increasing numbers of Asian hornets are now beginning to even effect the distribution of native hornets. You would think that the Eastern honeybee *Apis cerana* was better adapted to cope with these hornets but sadly low genetic diversity in the Korean stock and an epidemic of Sacbrood Virus almost wiped out *Apis cerana* in Korea a few years ago, making Korea highly reliant on introduced western honeybees *Apis mellifera*.

I certainly came away with a much better understanding of similarities and differences between the threat posed by invasive alien species in Asian and Europe, but also made several valuable connections that will allow notes to be compared and ideas shared in the foreseeable future on how to tackle this latest threat to our bees and biodiversity.



Gyeongbokgung Palace in northern Seoul; a 40 hectare Royal Palace from the Joseon Dynasty (built 1395)



A \$1000 infusion of Asian Giant hornets in alcohol; a Korean traditional medicine.



Dr M-B Choi, from Kyungpook National University, with a Korean anti-hornet suit.

Bee Health Day 2019

June 22nd was the day of the Bee Disease Convention, held at Penryn on a beautiful warm summers day, in one of the University of Exeter Research buildings on campus at Tremough. The facilities were super-lucky students! The first hour was a general talk about the diseases we should be aware of and the ones that are notifiable. We were constantly being reminded about hygiene, keeping our tools washed in washing soda between hives, wearing disposable gloves. Apparently American foulbrood can last in the soil for over fifty years! We were then divided into small groups and rotated around four different areas. Our next session was run by Hazel Vallis, Seasonal Bee-Inspector for SW England, on a general view of foulbrood, the Asian hornet and small hive beetle. We were told about our responsibilities as beekeepers in being able to recognise the signs and causes of disease, as well as the importance keeping records of any treatment given to each hive. We were shown the use of corrugated hive inserts to use as a detection method for small hive beetle. We also noticed the difference between small hive beetle larvae and the wax moth larvae. The small hive beetle larvae are maggot-like in appearance and having 3 pairs of legs near the head and no abdominal legs. Wax moths move away from the light and spin silken galleries whereas small hive beetles are active in the light and do not spin webbing. Again the emphasis was on us as responsible beekeepers to keep healthy stock so that we are not unwittingly spreading any infection.

The next session was on managing varroa. We looked at the life cycle of the varroa and both biotechnical controls and using varroacides. The biotechnical methods were replacing a brood frame with a super frame, to create a "drone-trap": the bees build drone comb along the bottom of the frame, which attract varroa (as they prefer drone cells). Once full of drone brood (and hopefully varroa!), the whole lot could be cut off and frozen (or fed to chickens!) Drones would be sacrificed, but it is an efficient way to control varroa. Completing an artificial swarm is another method as well as using an open mesh floor. We were also shown a purpose made comb cage, which can be very effective but rather time consuming. After lunch we had a visit to the apiary with a Bee Inspector, who alerted us to a very slight indentation on a capped cell, opened it and found malformed larvae, which was caused by a virus. He advised us to make a point of twice a year inspecting your hive for the sole purpose of a disease check, and of course hive hygiene.

The last group session was a quiz. We were all provided with gloves and aprons and around the table were 24 samples. Very knowledgeable Bee Inspectors would help whoever needed it. This really helped to bring together everything we had learnt during the day. There were samples of American foulbrood, European foulbrood as well as a case of neglect where the colony had starved. The bee inspectors also emphasised how we can make contact with them through "Bee Base" if we had disease concerns.

We all met at the end to hear Pete Kennedy's talk on the Asian Hornet and the development of tracking, to find nests to try and control the spread. I can only say how interesting and informative the whole day had been; it ran like clock work and whatever your level of experience you would have come away with something. Many thanks to every one involved in putting on this fantastic day!

Lizzie Gibson



What's On?

Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th July 2019 – The BEE Fayre, Enys Gardens, Penryn.

The BEE Fayre will be held primarily inside Enys House and admission will also give you the chance to explore all of the lovely gardens. Organiser of the BEE Fayre, which has become a yearly event, is local business BJ Sherriff: “At BJ Sherriff we are becoming increasingly concerned about the lack of bees and it would seem that amongst the general public globally the concerns are the same and with this in mind we have organised our charity bee awareness day. With the help of knowledgeable beekeepers, who have volunteered to assist on the day, we are hopeful that many of the public’s questions can be discussed and answered as well as introducing people to the world of bees”.

Sunday 18th August 2019 – WBCKA Barbeque

The annual BBQ takes place once again at Chy Vellan and as always family and friends are welcome. The coals will be hot at 5pm so bring food and drink to share. This is always a fun evening so do come along! If you have never been to Chy Vellan, contact Kate or Val for directions.

A Bit of a Do 2019

The Annual Cornwall and West Cornwall Beekeeper’s Associations convention, returns with another exciting line up of speakers.

Saturday 21 September 2019
Fal Building, Truro College TR1 3XX

Registration from 9am, tickets £15 in advance, or £18 on the door, complimentary refreshments all day (lunchtime pasties must be booked in advance)

Speakers:

Tony Harris, NDB: “Maximising your honey crop”, and “Swarming from the bees’ perspective”.

Dr Ben Woodcock, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology will be speaking on “Neonicotinoid pesticides and bees”.

Victoria Buswell will provide an update on her research into investigating the phenotypic and genomic basis of local adaptation in the UK native honey bee *Apis mellifera mellifera* (the European dark honeybee or indigenous “British Black Bee”)

As well as the speakers, there will be trade stands, a gadget competition and local Bee Inspectors to answer all your questions.

Tickets and pasty reservations from Heather: heather@quillet.org.uk