



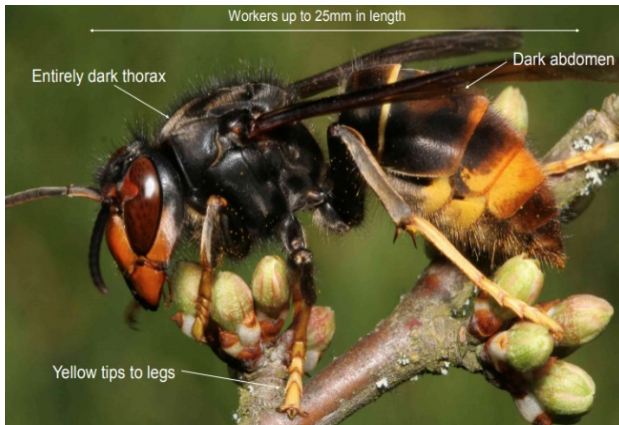
West Cornwall Beekeepers Association

ASIAN HORNET

Information leaflet

Remember:

- In the spring, from as early as March, the Asian Hornet queens will be emerging from hibernation and will be feeding on nectar rich flowers – not on honeybees.
- In the early season workers are small – and are unlikely to be seen in the apiary - preferring flowering vegetation rather than tackling guard bees.
- You are unlikely to see an Asian Hornet in an apiary until July/August, by which time a secondary nest will have become established nearby.
- It is therefore important to keep an eye out for potential sightings on flowering plants in gardens and parks etc. in the early spring and summer as this is where they are most likely to be seen.
- Early **positive** sightings are important to prevent the Asian Hornet becoming established here.
- It is essential to remember NOT to approach a nest or the site of a suspected nest
- Information on making monitoring traps is available on BeeBase, but they are currently updating their advice and will be recommending bait stations in preference to traps, as WCBKA also does.
- If any member wishes to become a monitor for the association AH Action Team, please contact Phil Green (phil@kgbee.co.uk) in the first instance.



Asian Hornet –‘yellow legged hornet’
Vespa velutina nigrithorax
 Smaller, worker up to 25mm



European Hornet (native)
Vespa crabro
 Larger, worker up to 30mm long

What to do if you think you have seen an Asian Hornet...

- Before anyone investigates your sighting, you must provide evidence – either a photograph or a dead Asian Hornet.
- We recommend downloading the Asian Hornet app to help with species identification and easy reporting of a sighting.
- An identification sheet and more information about the hornet and monitoring for it may be found on our website www.westcornwallbka.org.uk.
- Positive sightings with evidence can also be made to alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk
- You may find it useful to keep a laminated identification picture under a hive roof in your apiary for ease of reference, as well as your apiary location, or in your kit box.
- Asian Hornets can be captured in nets or traps or stunned by swotting with a racket, and frozen for 24 hours if still alive. **Only use traps if you are able to inspect them at least once a day as you risk killing a lot of harmless useful pollinators.**
- **Remember that it is illegal to release a captured Asian hornet**

Contacts:

If you need help with your identification or with capturing evidence, you can call one of our Asian Hornet Action Team members:

Carleen, Helston and surrounding area

Phil Green 07825 336357 phil@kgbee.co.uk (AHAT Coordinator)

Falmouth/Penryn area:

Anne McQuade 07974 688371,
01326 373749 annemcquade@btinternet.com

Camborne and Redruth area:

Kate Bowyer 07597 975926 katebowyer@outlook.com

Helston and Lizard area:

Graham Caines 07836 712329 grahamcaines@icloud.com

Penwith area:

Andy Beard 07958 582285, 01736 731539 andy@abeard.co.uk

Hayle and St Ives area:

Jenny Lewis 01736 753124, 07747 586354 jennymlewis@talktalk.net

Carleen, Helston and surrounding area

Keren Green 07905 045075 keren@kgbee.co.uk

Townshend and surrounding area:

Tony Deverson 07722 377315 acdeverson@gmail.com

Monthly tips

March/April

Look up into trees for old Asian Hornet nests before bud burst after which foliage will make seeing them more difficult.

Queens rarely, if at all, hawk in front of hives, therefore early in the season you are more likely to see an Asian Hornet elsewhere than in your apiary. Queens feed on tree sap and floral nectar in spring when they come out of hibernation, keen to replenish energy reserves used up over the winter. It is well worth keeping an eye on spring flowers frequented by our native pollinators in gardens, parks etc. to check whether this non-native invader is amongst them.

Similarly, the first cohort of workers (raised by the queen on her own) produced early in the season (e.g. May/June) are smaller than workers later in summer and are also unlikely to hawk in front of a hive at this time of year

Look at flowers in your garden, parks etc, and put out monitoring traps using a sweet bait of fruit juice and beer. **Don't put out traps if you are unable to check them at least once daily and release the bycatch.**

Information on making traps is available on BeeBase.



Asian Hornet queen constructing a primary nest, typically seen in a garden shed or under eaves. Note similarity to a wasp nest!

May/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.**

June

Asian Hornets switch to a protein rich diet from June onwards, but workers are unlikely to be hawking in front of hives at first.

Look at flowers in your garden and put out monitoring traps using a fish-based bait. (Ideally put out two traps, one with sweet bait and one with protein). **Don't put out traps if you are unable to check them at least once daily and release the bycatch.**



Wick bait station

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.



Monitoring trap

August

Are you sure you know what an Asian Hornet looks like? See comparison photographs on page 2.

Put monitoring traps in your apiary with a fish bait. **Don't put out traps if you are unable to check them at least once daily and release the bycatch.**

September

Large workers will still be actively foraging for protein and carbohydrates, but September is also the time when new queens may begin to emerge from a nest, New queens will remain in the nest for the first few days, while nourished by nestmates, but will soon go on mating flights and then forage for themselves, building up fat reserves before the winter. Mated queens overwinter and the aim of the current eradication phase of the National Bee Unit's policy is to destroy Asian Hornet nests before the new queens - up to 300 from each nest - disperse to hibernate over the winter in preparation for establishing new nests the following year. This would enable them to become established in this country. In 2016, 2017 and 2018 positive sightings of Asian Hornets were made by beekeepers in apiaries. Please be extra vigilant and watch out for potential sightings around the hive.

Put traps in your apiary with a sweet bait containing fruit and beer. **Don't put out traps if you are unable to check them at least once daily and release the bycatch.**

It may be possible to see a secondary nest, typically high in a tree canopy, but they may be lower down in a hedge etc. Report it but do NOT approach one.

October / November

Those nests that did not generate queens in September are likely to do so in October/November. The urgency to destroy Asian Hornet nests before the new queens-up to 300-disperse to hibernate over the winter is all the more urgent.

There is also the chance of catching queens, building up fat reserves, by feeding on floral nectar or other sources of carbohydrates. Please be extra vigilant and watch out for potential sightings around the hive but also around nectar-rich flowers.

Put traps in your apiary with a sweet bait containing fruit and beer. **Don't put out traps if you are unable to check them at least once daily and release the bycatch.**



Secondary nest



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