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MEMBERS' COUNTY NEWSLETTER

West Sussex Beekeepers' Association

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Inside this issue:

<i>Think You've Seen An Asian Hornet?</i>	2
<i>Asian Hornet Update</i>	2
<i>Chairman's Chat</i>	3
<i>BBKA Members' Insurance</i>	3
<i>Demise of the Bumblebee</i>	4
<i>Around the Divisions</i>	5
<i>Dates For Your 2024 Diary</i>	5
<i>December County News</i>	6
<i>West Sussex BKA website</i>	6

Think You've Seen an Asian Hornet?

Report it!



Report through the Asian Hornet Watch app or www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport



'Courtesy The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Crown Copyright'.

Asian Hornet Update

At the time of writing West Sussex has remained free of the Asian hornet this summer in spite of sightings in all the surrounding counties.

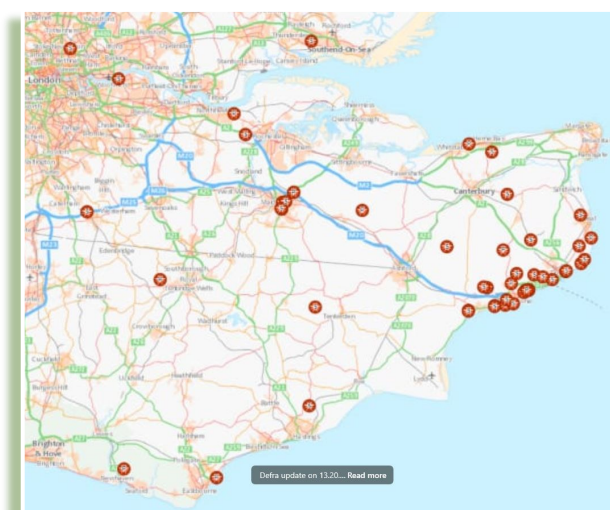
Analysis of nests this autumn has confirmed the presence of gynes (those destined to become queens) and drones in some nests. Gynes have also been identified from lone samples. The NBU are skilled at tracking, locating, and destroying nests, but can only respond to sightings with sufficient evidence, such as a photograph or sample.

If you have not yet done so, please monitor insects in your local area now.

Four nests have recently been found in Kent, one in the Folkestone area, two in different locations in the West Downs area, and one in the Dover area.

Credible reports are continuing to decrease and are often related to an incident the NBU are already aware of. The NBU are continuing surveillance in the Kent area and post-destruction monitoring of nest sites.

www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/asianhornet.html



Defra update 20 October 2023

Chairman's Chat



Chairman, Roger Patterson writes for the County News.

The Centenary National Honey Show was a great success. The organisers put on a splendid job of providing something for everyone, which included the competitive exhibits, where the judges I spoke to said the standards were high, trade stands that were busy and workshops and lectures for all levels and interests.

I was involved with the lectures, so I didn't have time to take in much of the rest of the show. Although the topics were very diverse, several speakers mentioned the same things and three come to mind: *Varroa* needs dealing with to reduce the virus load, but that doesn't mean zapping prophylactically with hard chemicals; the use of locally adapted bees is important with all speakers, although commercial beekeepers raised their own queens from their best stocks; there were some interesting points made about protective clothing, where all suggested that being fully protected doesn't help develop good handling skills. They suggested progressively reducing when skills are developed.

Probably most important was the latest news of the Asian hornet situation. It gave a good insight into the tremendous amount of work that is being done that isn't seen by beekeepers. Beekeepers and AHATs are crucial in the detection of nests, which aren't always easy to see, especially with leaves still on trees. Of course, when leaves fall, it's too late, as the queens will have dispersed and gone into hibernation.

Roger

chairman@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk

BBKA Members' Insurance

I am pleased to confirm that the £10 million Public & Product Liability Insurance for BBKA members was renewed on 4th October 2023 for 12 months.

The Public & Product Liability Insurance Confirmation Letter for those members who need to provide certification, for example when hiring a market stall, is available to download from: <https://bbkanews.com/>. You will need your membership number and postcode to login. From the 'Select Publication' drop down menu, click on 'BBKA Documents'.



BBKA has worked with the insurance brokers, Astonlark, to review and expand the FAQs document to include more clarity in regards to members who generate income from their hobby - see questions 14-17. The FAQs can also be downloaded from the BBKA News website.

Leigh Sidaway,

General Manager

Demise of the Bumblebee



Many of Europe's bees which are not currently threatened could become endangered in the coming decades. Populations of European bumblebees are projected to fall drastically in the coming decades due to climate change and habitat loss, researchers have warned. Europe's 68 species of bumblebees play a crucial role in pollinating crops and wild plants, but they are used to the cooler temperatures of the Northern Hemisphere, and a warming world caused by human-caused climate change is putting them increasingly under threat, according to the study in the journal *'Nature'*.

A team of Belgian researchers collected data on 46 bumblebee species across Europe, assessing the past (1901-1970) and present (2001-2014), comprising more than 400,000 different observations. They combined this data with the latest modelling from the UN's IPCC climate change panel as well as predictions of changes in land use. Under the worst-case scenario, they found that *'up to 75% of bumblebee species which are not currently threatened will see their distribution area shrink 30% by 2061-2080,'* lead author Guillaume Ghisbain of the Université Libre de Bruxelles said. This means that most of the European bumblebees currently classified as of *'least concern'* on the IUCN's list of threatened species could fall into the endangered category.

Bumblebee species in Arctic or alpine environments may even be pushed to the edge of extinction, with an expected loss of 90% of their habitat. There was also bad news for the most common of Europe's bumblebees, *Bombus terrestris*. By 2080, it *'would see the limit of its geographical distribution, which currently borders the Sahara Desert, pull back to the Loire Valley'* in central France, said co-author Pierre Rasmont of the University of Mons. Bumblebees are particularly sensitive to heat, dying off when temperatures get too high. Part of the expected decline was due to how land is expected to be used in the next half century. *'Intensive agriculture fragments habitats and relies on synthetic fertilizers which artificially enrich the soil with nitrogen,'* Ghisbain said. *'However, bumblebees mainly consume plants which grow in soil poor in nitrogen,'* such as clover, he added.

Repeated droughts, made more frequent and severe by climate change, also kill off the plants eaten by bumblebees. But heat waves intensified by global warming pose an even bigger threat. Apart from a few resistant species, bumblebees are particularly sensitive to heat with excessive heat affecting the drones' fertility.

The researchers suggested that some bees could seek refuge in the cooler climes of Scandinavia. They have even spotted a few industrious bees who have already made the trek north. *'One day I was collecting bumblebees in northern Norway and suddenly, among the Arctic species, I came across a Bombus terrestris,'* Rasmont said. *'It had leapt 800 kilometers (500 miles) north'* of its natural habitat, he added.

Juliette Collen

Thanks to Lune Valley Beekeepers for this (abridged) article via ebees

Around the Divisions

All Members are welcome to attend any Divisional meeting, but please advise the organiser if you plan to attend.

Central Sussex Division



Wednesday 6th December - 'Swarm Collection' with Dr Nadia Ziyada at the Millennium Hall, Crawley Road, Roffey, Horsham, RH12 4DT from 7pm.

Full details of the Division's activities from: secretary@centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk or the Division's website: <https://centralsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/>

Chichester Division



Wednesday 15th November - 'Why the Drone is so Important' with Pam Hunter on Zoom at 7:30pm. Further details of the Division's activities from: Cheryl Barton, secretary@chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk or the Division's website: www.chichesterbeekeepers.co.uk.

Wisborough Green Division

Full details of the Division's activities from: Martina Hendry, secretary@wgbka.org.uk or the Division's website: www.wgbka.org.uk.

Newsletters may be viewed here: www.wgbka.org.uk/Newsletters.html

Worthing Division



Thursday 9th November - 'AGM' followed by speaker, Pam Hunter at the Glebelands Centre, Greystoke Road, Ferring, BN12 5JL at 7:45pm. Further details of the Division's activities from: Debra Edwards, dmcd.edwards@gmail.com or the Division's website: www.worthing-beekeepers.org

'Share your Division's activities with readers of the County News'

...and Dates for your 2024 Diary



Saturday 24th February - 'West Sussex Beekeepers' Annual Convention'. From 9:30am at Lodge Hill, Pulborough, RH20 1LZ . www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/convention.html

Saturday 27th April - 'West Sussex Beekeepers' 48th Bee Market & Auction'. From 8:30am at Chichester College's Brinsbury Campus, Pulborough, RH20 1DL . www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk/auction.html

We are on facebook so if you would like your events featured please send details to the Editor.



...and finally

December County Newsletter



The production of the December Newsletter will be delayed next month.

It will not be possible to publish until around the middle of the month. However, anyone with articles to be included in the December edition should send them through as normal, please.

Graham

MEMBERS' COUNTY NEWSLETTER

Thanks to all this month's contributors. If you don't have access to the internet and want further details of anything in this newsletter, please contact the Editor & County Secretary. Likewise, if you would like to contribute to future newsletters please send articles and photographs to:

Graham Elliott, Editor & County Secretary, no later than the 20th of the preceding month.

secretary@westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk

We're on the web:
www.westsussexbeekeepers.org.uk



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