



## February 2019 Newsletter

**President: Bryan Hopper**

### **Committee members 2019**

Mike Benson	
Tim Bullock	Chairman
Ian Cowdy	Editor – Newsletter, AHAT leader
Stephen Greenaway	Vice Chairman, Spray and swarm liaison.
Clive Harris	Treasurer
Kathy Hobson	Secretary, membership secretary.
Andy Jones	
Nicola Perrett	
Christopher Wilkinson	

### **Next Meeting:**

Thursday the 28th February at Haydon Wick – A DVD about swarming, I know I can hear you mumble not swarming again! But it happens to the best of us every year and we need to be reminded of why they swarm and what we as beekeepers can do to prevent colony loss.

**Please note that the door in the car park is the one to use for this meeting as we will not be able to go through the big room as the Haydon Wick Club's AGM is being held in there.**

### **Wiltshire Honey Show 2019**

We still need volunteers to help with planning and preparing for the next Wiltshire county honey Show. Please contact Kathy Hobson if you want to be involved.

### **Bromham Asian Hornet training day.**

The Asian hornet training day held at Bromham Social centre was a resounding success in that nearly 100 Wiltshire members turned up (4 from Swindon!) Lynne Ingram (BBKA and Somerset AHAT coordinator) gave a very interesting and informative talk about her experiences with Asian Hornets in the Channel Islands.

I will contact her to arrange for the same talk to be held at one of our Thursday evening meetings.

### **Asian hornets**

The overwintered queens will emerge soon if not already! These Queens start by foraging for nectar and the odd insect for protein. They then start building a primary nest usually close to the ground in a hedge (somewhere sheltered) She makes a small umbrella hanging from a pedicel into which she builds brood cups and lays eggs. Time to hatching can be as short as 29 days or as long as 50! The Queen then has to make brood food for these larvae – from energy rich sugars and protein from any insects she catches. So any Asian hornets you have the misfortune to see or find in the next month or two should be trapped and killed (any brood will then die off) If you cannot trap one then call or inform the non-native species secretariat or use the Asian hornet App.

## Swarm collection

If you wish to be listed as a swarm collector you must let Kathy Hobson or Steve Greenaway know NOW! Although the list has now been submitted to the BBKA for the master database you could still be included in the local Swindon list.

## Apiary tasks

This spell of abnormally mild sunny weather is welcome however the higher than normal temperatures mean the colonies are gearing up to expansion and actively gathering nectar and pollen to feed brood. If the weather turns back to normal lower temperatures or even colder we are all in danger of losing colonies. Be prepared with fondant cut into small blocks to augment the bees own stores – small pieces means more frequent visits but you can tell more easily whether they need or are taking it.

## Twigs and Park Farm apiaries

All four club colonies are alive! and appear to be healthy.

The Whatsapp group is up and running and if you wish to be included please let Andy Jones know asap. I hope to carry out the first inspection of the Park Farm colonies in the next few weeks and Whatsapp is the fastest way to tell you in time.

## Training and Education

If you are considering any form of training or further education to improve your beekeeping skills then please contact any committee member.

The Taster Days and Starting Beekeeping course dates are shown on the website.

The Basic course will start soon to ensure that at assessment time the colonies are in full strength showing all stages of development.

Ross Gregory is prepared to run a Microscopy study group for those of you wanting to take the BBKA microscopy exam (you can of course like me just attend the study group). If you are interested please contact Ross directly (details in yearbook).

## Club meetings

Meetings are held on the last Thursday of the month throughout the year except December.

Venue is in the Skittle Alley at the Haydon Wick Club, Blunsdon Road, Swindon SN25 1JD.

Start time 1930 hrs

February	28th	DVD – Swarming (Steve Greenaway)
March	28th	Beekeeping from Buckfast to Buckingham Palace (Richard Rickitt)
April	25th	
May	30th	DVD - A New Introduction to Beekeeping – part 2 (Mike Benson)
June	27th	
July	25th	Preparing for a honey show (Clive Harris and Mike Benson)
August	29th	
September	26th	Club Honey Show
October	31st	Club AGM
November	28th	
December	12th	Skittles

Above list will be subject to change depending on availability of speakers.

## TWIGS

28 <sup>th</sup> April	Open day
19 <sup>th</sup> May	Open day
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Open day
21 <sup>st</sup> July	Open day
5 <sup>th</sup> October	Apple fayre

Any suggestions for talks etc. please pass to Kathy Hobson or me.

This Newsletter is more than a list of events and needs input from members so If you have anything related to beekeeping or something unusual please send to me so it can be included in future newsletters.

Please send me photos of your apiaries – we could run a best kept or the most untidy apiary competition.

Ian Cowdy [ian.cowdy@btinternet.com](mailto:ian.cowdy@btinternet.com)