



NEWSLETTER – Christmas 2023

STEERING GROUP MEMBERS 2023/2024

Tim Bullock	- Chairman
Stephen Greenaway	- Vice Chairman, Spray and Swarm Liaison.
Clive Harris	- Treasurer
Kathy Hobson	- Secretary, Membership Secretary
Justin Downes	- Newsletter Editor
Nicola Perrett	
Mike Benson	
Mick Carter	
Website Manager	-Christopher Wilkinson

Apiary Notes - Tim Bullock

This time last I was talking about the cold weather, this year the main concern is the wind!!! Yesterday we were having gusts of 50 mph+. That was certainly enough to bring down trees in the village here. If you haven't done already, it's certainly worth checking to see if any of your colonies have either been hit by debris or been knocked/blown over by the winds. Colonies can survive being opened like that for short periods of time in winter but can't survive for long if it comes wet and/or cold.

My many interests, as far as colonies are concerned, now will be varroa and stores. Stores are easy to assess- hefting hives will give a good indication of what's in a hive. Putting in the monitoring boards for a couple of days will also tell you how many frames the bees are on and how much feed they are taking as the capping's will be on the board. If you have any concerns then I'd recommend putting some fondant on hives, either straight onto the top of frames or above the crown board over one of the holes.

Checking varroa levels is a bit trickier but not that difficult. Again, with the monitoring boards in you can quickly count the mite drop, wipe the boards clean and re-insert. If mite numbers appear to be high, then I'd strongly recommend treating colonies with oxalic acid. I prefer to trickle treat which involves opening the hives. This will cause heat loss and possibly stress out colonies, so I'll try and do it at the end of a cold period rather than during one. This will also mean that there will be less capped brood present if there was some at the start of the cold weather.

Now is also a good time to go through records for the year – what went well and what plans do you want for next year. Don't forget to add in varroa treatments into your records as well.

I hope you all have merry and relaxing Christmas and a "habee" new year!!

Bryan Hopper Trophy

The Brian Hopper Trophy is awarded to members for their effort and commitment to the club. This year it was awarded to steering group member Nicola Perrett. Nicola has worked extremely hard over the past year with running managing the apiary at 'Twigs'. Not to mention the managing the TWIGS open days Here she is being awarded the trophy by our chairmen, Tim Bullock at a recent club meeting



Asian Hornet Conference

The Southwest Beekeepers Forum will be holding an Asian Hornet conference on Sat 6th January 2024. The venue for this is The Canalside Conference Centre, Marsh Lane, Bridgewater. The event begins at 9am and closes at 5:30pm. Mick Carter will be attending asks if anyone else would like to lift share then please get in contact.

Television Documentary - 'A Bees Diary'

For those who didn't catch it, 'A Bees Diary' is a TV documentary following the diary of a honeybee colony over two years. Filmed in Germany it contains fantastic footage from inside the hive covering the life cycle of the bee over the season. The information is basic, but the footage is incredible and one to watch. I believe it is still available on Sky Nature

Now TV

Amazon Prime

Beekeeping Winter Sales

Now is a good time to stock up on equipment ready for the next season. Both Thornes and National Bee Supplies have sales on. The links to the websites are included below

[Beekeeping Sale | National Bee Supplies](#)

[Beekeeping Equipment | EH Thorne \(Beehives\) Ltd](#)

Club Meetings

Please note there will be no meetings in December 2023 or January 2024.

The steering group would like to wish all members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to seeing you in February 2024!

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

If you feel you would like share anything of note or which may be of benefit to other members, then please let me know.

Justin

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