



NEWSLETTER – November 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	
Mick Carter	
 Website Manager	 -Christopher Wilkinson

Apiary Notes - Tim Bullock

The weather still seems to be unseasonably warm (again!) but boy has it been wet! Unlike last year the bees seem to have formed clusters and stopped flying here but that may change if the sun comes out and warms the hives.

Beekeeping in December is mostly about checking; are the bees/hives safe and secure, have they got enough feed, are they warm and dry enough, are pests (mice, badgers, woodpeckers etc.), being kept out, is your bee suit(s) clean and secure ready for use in the spring, etc. etc. The real key bits are to check that hives are secure enough so they can't blow over or get knocked over and have the colonies got enough stores to see them through. It's worth hefting your hives every couple of weeks to estimate the number of stores left. **If in doubt strap down hives and give them fondant.** With November having been far warmer than normal, it's likely that colonies have used more stores than usual. It's likely that we may well need to feed fondant earlier this winter.

If spares are stored outside it's worth checking that they are secure, watertight, and wax moth free. Do the cleaning of spares now so they are ready for use next spring/summer.

If you're planning on using oxalic acid for varroa treatment, it might get cold enough by the end of the month to treat between Christmas and new year. The key is to treat when colonies are brood less. Follow the instructions to the letter including the use of PPE.

National Bee Unit – National Hive Count

The National Bee Unit & Scottish Bee Health Team have joined together to run the National Hive Count survey. This runs through November & December 2023. The information obtained from this is vital and used in planning and preparation for outbreaks of disease and exotic pests. Many of us will have our apiaries registered with the National Bee Unit on Bee Base. You can assist by updating your records with the total number of overwintering hives you have. Please log in to your account and update accordingly. You should have by now received a personal email from the NBU containing a direct link to the site. If you are not registered the link below will take you to the site.

[Home » APHA - National Bee Unit - BeeBase](#)

Asian Hornet

Mick Carter has compiled an article on Asian Hornet which was recently sent out as a circular. As beekeepers it is extremely important we have the knowledge to recognise and take action to deal with this threat. The Article is shown below



ASIAN HORNET.pdf

Varroa Survey

Kathy recently sent out a circular regarding a varroa survey being conducted. Should you wish to take part:

The survey is available at https://kingston.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_80vE6ONgUFZiljU it is non-judgemental and does not ask questions about losses, just about monitoring and treating techniques, and how open the beekeeper is to using computer technology e.g. a smartphone, to help monitor varroa levels. The survey is completed anonymously, and no personal identifying information is captured.

Club Meetings

The next club meeting is on 30th November 2023 and we will be bringing various surplus Club items to “sell” for a donation - including books which some of you may find interesting. Cash only of course!!!

Club Meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month in the Skittle Alley at the Haydon Wick Club, Blunsdon Road, Swindon SN25 1JD, start time 7.30pm. Please come along, all are welcome.

Twinkly TWIGS

This is on Saturday 9th December 2023 4.30 to 7.30pm. We will be able to talk to people about beekeeping and of course the Asian Hornet (we will hopefully have some leaflets to hand out). If you can to come and help and sell your honey of course please let Nicola know - nicola.perrett@icloud.com

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. Please remember that this is your newsletter and your voice to share news with other members.

Justin

justin.downes@yahoo.co.uk