



NEWSLETTER – February 2024

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	-AHAT Co-Ordinator
Website Manager	-Christopher Wilkinson

PLEASE NOTE THAT CLUB MEETINGS NOW START AT 7PM

APIARY NOTES - Tim Bullock

Hopefully your bees are now flying actively on warm days and the queens are laying. This increased activity and heating of the brood uses more energy, so colonies will be using stores faster (for March work on around 4kg of stores for a typical colony). As the nectar sources aren't huge at the moment it's important to keep feeding if you even think they might be a bit low. If in doubt – feed!

Personally, I wouldn't do inspections in the first half of the month unless I had serious concerns about a colony. Even in the second half if you must inspect, then keep it brief. If you must inspect, make sure it's a really warm non-windy day and keep the inspection brief -have they got food, any sign of disease? are eggs and larvae present (don't worry about looking for the queen) is all you're really likely to need to know. If the bees are flying well and bringing back pollen, then I wouldn't inspect.

Have you got enough equipment for the upcoming year and is it all ready for use? If the answer is no then this is definitely the time to sort it out, rather than in a panic later (been there, done it and got the tee shirt – it's not a good one!!!

Asian Hornet News

After a series of meetings each branch within Wiltshire now has a AHAT leader with Mick Carter representing us. Thirty Asian Hornet traps have been ordered for individuals and the club, and members are encouraged to place traps out where they can. Mick has also been working hard to identify methods on how we can educate the public on this serious issue and, as a club we will be purchasing some posters & stands so these can be displayed in appropriate places. A big thanks goes to Mick for his pro-active effort in this area.

SDBKA Apiary – Park Farm

As was mentioned last month, we lost the hives at Park Farm, and these will be replaced with Nucs later on in the season.

SDBKA Apiary – TWIGS

We have two hives at this location and Kathy & Nicola report that they are doing well. On a more concerning note, due to the bad weather a tree has blown over within the apiary which is causing an obstruction. We are communicating with a number of parties so the matter can be resolved as soon as possible and prevent any disruption to future planned activities in the apiary.

Club Meetings

The next club meeting is on Feb 29th, 2024, during this we will be covering Spring jobs and Asian Hornet issues. The topics for the next three months are

28th March 24 - Swarm Management
25th April 24 – Flo & Rose Hives
30th May 24 – Drones

Please note that the steering group arrange topics which we feel will be of benefit. However, this is your club, and you have voice in what you would like to be covered. So, if you have any ideas please get in contact.

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 7.00pm. Please come along, all are welcome.

Future Dates to Note

Starting Bee Keeping Course

8th June 24
15th June 24

Bee Taster Days

11th May 24
13th July 24
10th August 24

TWIGS Open Days

21st April 24 – TWIGS
19th May 24 – NGS
23rd June – TWIGS
27th July 24 – NGS

Further information on these will be provided closer to the dates.

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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