

# WDBKA Newsletter, June 2016

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## Apiary news:

The five hives at the apiary came through the winter, and although several of the colonies were small at the start of Spring, they are building up now, helped by the recent fine weather.

The gardening team continue to meet at the apiary on most Wednesday mornings. The herbs and other plants in the raised bed in front of the hives have been moved out into the rest of the garden, so we can properly get rid of some persistent weeds which have been threatening to take over.

Instead, the bed has been sown with bee-friendly annuals, so we hope that this should provide a good show of colour later in the year. The shrubs and trees are starting to look more established, and some of the perennials are seeding and spreading nicely.

We are hosting visits by several different local groups later this summer, so we would like the garden to be looking at its best. If anyone would like to come and help, they would be most welcome.

## Annual Dinner: (by Steve Sullivan)

“The Parkside Party”

April 29th saw the WBKA annual dinner held this year at the Parkside Hotel.

Eleven gourmet members attended, enjoying both a good meal in the Parkside’s private dining room as well as animated chat ranging from bees to Brexit.

The main anxiety regarding leaving the EU was how it would affect Cumbrian honey exports.

Come and join us next year to see if our fears have been realised.

## Apiary Meetings:

There will be 2 more apiary visits this month, on **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June and Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June.**

For new members, the apiary is located at Westlakes Science Park. We meet at the overspill car-park at 13.00, then walk across to the apiary.

The dates of further meetings this summer will be sent round after the programme has been finalised at the next Committee meeting.

## Good Husbandry Day:

There are plans to hold a “Good Husbandry Day” for beekeepers later this summer. This provides an excellent opportunity to learn about common and important bee diseases, and how to recognise and manage them.

Details haven’t been finalised yet, but the provisional date is July 4<sup>th</sup>, to be held at Houghton, just north of Carlisle. Full details will be circulated as soon as they are available.

## Swarming Season:

The swarming season has already started, so bee-keepers may be contacted by members of the public who are concerned about a possible swarm in their garden.

The home page of the BBKA website has a link (see below) to some very useful information about swarms, with a clear pathway of what to do, including pictures which show the differences between honeybees, bumblebees, wasps & hornets.

[http://www.bbka.org.uk/help/do\\_you\\_have\\_a\\_swarm.php](http://www.bbka.org.uk/help/do_you_have_a_swarm.php)

### **Asian Hornets update:**

There have been a number of newspaper reports about possible sightings of Asian hornets this spring, with headlines such as "Warning over killer hornets invading Britain", "Killer hornets making a beeline for the UK" and "Deadly Asian Hornets".

In response to these reports, Beebase has issued this update.

**"Following recent press articles there have been many reports of potential Asian hornet, (*Vespa velutina*) sightings across the UK. We would like to re-assure everybody that there have been no confirmed sightings of Asian hornets in the UK, and so far all hornet reportings received by the National Bee Unit have been identified as the native European hornet, *Vespa crabro*.**

**Experts at the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology confirm that the hornet picture taken in Kent and featured in the press is not an Asian hornet - which would be darker in colouration, and that the size suggests European hornet.**

**The Asian hornet or yellow-legged hornet, is smaller than our native hornet, with characteristic yellow legs, a dark velvety thorax, and a dark abdomen with a distinctive yellow band on the fourth segment.**

**We are aware of the potential impacts they could have on honey bees and have contingency plans in place to remove them if they are identified. This includes comprehensive monitoring and teams ready to destroy any confirmed nests.**

**For those who think they have seen an Asian hornet please first read the Asian hornet ID sheet which outlines the main differences**

**between the native European hornet and this Asian hornet.**

**There is more information on the Asian hornet pages of BeeBase.**

**If you still believe you have seen the Asian hornet after reading this ID sheet, please report it to the email address below, together with a photograph and location details: [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk) "**



For more information about the Asian hornet and the work of the Non Native Species Secretariat, visit their website here: <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/alerts/index.cfm?id=4>

The National Bee Unit also has details of how to make a hornet-monitoring trap, please see the PDF attached to this newsletter for details. We may not have Asian hornets, but wasp/hornet traps may be very useful later in the season if robbing hives becomes a problem in your apiary.

### **Seasonal Bee Inspector for Cumbria:**

Following Stuart Beattie's retirement, there is no seasonal bee inspector in post for Cumbria. Until a new person is appointed, enquiries should be directed to the Regional Bee Inspector, Ian Molyneux

[ian.molyneux@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ian.molyneux@apha.gsi.gov.uk)

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