

Apiary news

The hives at the apiary were fed with Ambrosia in the early Autumn, and are now being left undisturbed for the winter. The bees have been flying when the sun is on the hives, even in the cold, frosty weather that we have had recently.

The bees have access to a range of winter-flowering shrubs in the garden, to provide some forage near to the hives during the winter months. These include Mahonia, Viburnum tinus, winter-flowering cherry and heathers.



The gardening group continues to meet when the weather allows, to continue weeding and pruning the perennial plants that have died back.

Outbreak of American Foulbrood

In August and September, 4 apiaries in West Cumbria were found to be infected with American Foulbrood (AFB). All the other apiaries in the adjacent areas were checked by the Bee Inspectors, and no further cases have been identified to date.

It is important to be able to recognise the signs of foulbrood infection, and to contact the National Bee Unit if you suspect it. AFB is a statutory notifiable disease so there is a legal responsibility to report any suspected diseased colonies.

AFB is caused by a spore forming bacterium called *Paenibacillus larvae*. The spores are very resistant to extremes of hot and cold, and to many disinfectants. To prevent spread of infection, equipment and protective clothing must be cleaned and disinfected after use, and especially before visiting another apiary.

Further advice about the recognition and control of AFB is available at The National Bee Unit website.

www.nationalbeeunit.com From the homepage, follow the links via Bee Pests, Diseases and Maps to "Foulbrood"

Asian Hornets reach the UK

In September and October this year, Asian Hornets were identified at 2 separate locations, the first near Tetbury in Gloucestershire, and the second was north of the Mendip Hills in Somerset. A nest was found and destroyed near Tetbury.

All beekeepers are reminded to remain vigilant and monitor their apiaries for possible Asian Hornets. Any possible

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sightings should be reported to alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk.

Further information is available from the National Bee Unit website.



WDBKA AGM

Our AGM was held on 14th November at Lamplugh Village Hall. It was well-attended, with nearly 20 people present.

At the start of the AGM, there was a brief Special General Meeting to propose and changes regarding the category of Associate Members, who will now become Friends of WDBKA Apiary. This proposal was passed unanimously by those present.

The minutes of the last AGM were accepted, and the officers gave their reports. Our chairman, Paul Connor announced that he would be moving to Scotland at some time during 2017, so we will need a new Chairman of our Association when he leaves. The current members of the committee were re-elected.

The membership secretary Piers Manson proposed that there is no increase in the

subscription rate for the next year, and this was approved unanimously.

Therefore full individual membership will be £27.00, family membership will be £32.00, and it will be £5.00 to become a Friend of Whitehaven Beekeepers. **Subscriptions will be payable on 1st January 2017.**

Val Sullivan proposed that a second member should be appointed as Apiary Deputy Manager to support the Apiary Manager in his duties. This was approved, and it is hoped that someone will take up this post at some time next year. If anyone is interested in taking on this role, please contact Val or Paul.

The AGM was followed by an excellent Pie and Pea Supper and puddings, and concluded with a demonstration of equipment for honey extraction, and a discussion about extraction techniques.

Dates for your diary

1. 15th January 2017 – There will be a meeting at 13.00 at the apiary to tidy the equipment, the bee-shed and the garden, weather permitting
2. 1st April 2017 – The Northern Beekeepers Convention will be held at The Beacon in Newcastle upon Tyne. Please see their website <http://nebees.btck.co.uk/> for further information.

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3. 29th and 30th April – W&DBKA Beginners course. If you know anyone who may be interested in attending, please let them know. Full details and a programme will be available later in the New Year.

Further events for 2017 include;

1. An evening microscopy session to examine samples of bees for Nosema. This will be held sometime during the early part of the season, date to be confirmed
2. A Microscopy day in September, aimed at looking at pollen samples.