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o our February 2020 Newsletter

Welcome to our latest newsletter. I hope you are all coping with the weather at the moment? Fingers crossed for an improvement soon.

A warm welcome to our new members. Hope to see you at some of our upcoming events/beginners training.

Thank you to Professor Pickard for a wonderful talk in January that was so well attended. Thank you also for your kind donation to the association. We hope to use this to encourage our junior beekeepers.

Thanks to everyone who came along to the A.G.M, so lovely to see so many people. We are looking for 2 new committee members, please contact Meriel Jones on 07814 220845 or

email chair@cardiffbeekeepers.co.uk for more information.

Membership of the association is now due.

Membership of the Association runs from January to December. Fees are being held at £20 for individual members and £24 for family membership.

This allows you to come to lectures, apiary visits and access to the library. It also give you access to the support of experienced bee keepers, where you can exchange ideas and questions helping to increase your beekeeping skills. Benefits of Membership include:

- Free Association Newsletter
- Quarterly 'The Welsh Beekeeper' magazine
- Support and advice from experienced beekeepers
- Public and Product Liability Insurance
- Bee Disease Insurance (BDI)**
- Access to the Association Library**
- Access to Association Equipment**
- Training / Information Courses**
- Practical demonstrations and out apiary visits

** Small surcharge charge applies

Please download and complete our membership form, which can be found on our website, and returning it to the address show at the bottom of the form.

Of course, we will also be taking membership renewals at our indoor meetings too.

If you have any queries on membership please do not hesitate to contact us.

Members indoor meeting - dates for your diary. All events are held at the Llandaff village hall (unless stated otherwise) and start at 7.30 pm

- **10th March 2020** - Speaker - John King - How to read a honey bee colony and swarm management
- **14th April 2020** - Speaker - Edmund Thomas - Comb management, Honey bee health and hygiene

Future Events -

Honeybee health day - Saturday 4th July 2020 - Thornhill Church
Centre drop in session between 2.30pm - 5.00pm. More details to
follow.

Christmas Social and Quiz - Tuesday 8th December - Thornhill
Church Centre - 7.30pm
bring a plate of food to share

Honey Show 2020 - Saturday 10th October 2020. More details to
follow

Training News -

Beginners Beekeeping Course 2020

This course is now full. If you haven't already done so, can you pay
your course fee as soon as possible as we have a waiting list.

Improvers Course

Information that would be included in this course, will now be delivered as part of the monthly evening events.

General Husbandry training

The WBKA will be offering a three day training course in 2020 to help people who are working towards completing the *General Husbandry* assessment.

The location will be *Gregynog Hall, Tregynon, Powys, SY16 3PW*, utilising the apiary facilities of *Montgomeryshire BKA*.

The course is split into two parts. A weekend of theory on 14 & 15 March followed by a day of practical sessions on 17 May. The sessions will run from 9am to 5pm each day.

The course will cost £90 per person for the three days. This includes all tuition and refreshments but accommodation is not included.

The aim of the course is to ensure that candidates understand the breadth and depth of the *General Husbandry* assessment to enable them to prepare as thoroughly as possible. While the course is primarily aimed at people wishing to take the assessment in the next couple of years, there is no obligation to do so. In addition, candidates who are not looking to take the assessment may find the course interesting to learn some new skills and understand what is required of them to improve their beekeeping.

Course requirements: You will need to have been keeping bees for at least three years and be a current member of an association. You will need to have passed your Basic assessment. We may ask for proof of this on application.

For further information and to register your interest on this course please contact Lynfa Davies (lynfa.davies@btinternet.com). There are 14 spaces available and they will be offered on a first come first served basis.

Payment will be required in full in advance of the course.

When making your booking please inform us of any dietary or accessibility requirements that you may have.

Association Apiary Managers report - Dyffryn Apiary

DYFFRYN YEARLY REPORT 2019

January: Two (2) visits. External checks only and cutting back some of the brambles.

Sunny and dry to start the month with light Westerly wind (7°c) Very severe weather in the final days caused country wide disruption. North winds accompanied by snow and Sub-Zero Temperatures of -4°c and sometimes lower.

February: Three (3) visits. External checks only. Collected Varroa Tray Debris and cut back brambles. All colonies flying!

Severe weather has ended and Southerly winds bringing in sunny days.

Temperatures from 7°c/14°c.

March: Three (3) visits. External check. Fed No.6 colony with Fondant.

Cleared fallen branches and collected Varroa tray Debris.

Gale force Westerly winds. Heavy rain and Hailstones. Temperatures: 9°c/13°c.

April: Five (5) visits. This month saw 2 groups of newcomers gaining hands-on experience. Queens, Eggs and larvae were present for all to see. Frame assembly demonstrated with the emphasis on secure nailing. Super box assembly also demonstrated. All present appreciated the practical nature of the session. No.6 colony received a Liquid feed and 2 frames of sealed brood and eggs taken from No.1 colony. All in All a very productive month. Mainly Dry. Westerly winds predominant. Gale force at times accompanied by heavy rain. Temperature: 7°c/ 16°c.

May: Five (5) visits. There is much variation in colony development this month. No.1 and No.7 are very strong. No.5 has bees but will require feeding. No.6 has super-seed cells present thanks to the introduction of eggs last month. No.4 colony is poorly populated and has been moved from a national brood box to a Poly-Nuc with feed. Colonies No. 2/3 are this year's swarms and replace earlier die-outs. A very dry month. However a great variation in wind directions i.e. North, South, East and West all producing different days. Temperatures: 10°c/ 24°c.

June: Four (4) visits. All colonies are progressing well with the exception of No.5 which is Queen less! (Very Noisy) a frame of eggs and larvae from No.6 colony will put things right. Added supers to No.1 and No.7 feeding

where required. More wet days than dry ones. Winds from S/West and West very fresh at times. Temperatures: 16°c/20°c

July: Six (6) visits. A very busy month that has included 3 Members taking their Basic Beekeeping Exam. We have 2 colonies in Poly-Nucs and they are expanding rapidly so extension supers added to them. Other colonies given supers to accommodate their requirements. Some feeding still on-going. Cutting back the ever present brambles. A very hot and dry month. The winds were very light S/Westerly's. Temperatures: 23°c/35°c

August: Four (4) visits. No.5 colony now has Supersedure cells as a result of the eggs that were introduced earlier. No.4 (Poly-nuc) has become very aggressive. The Bee Disease Inspector here this month, and all colonies given a clean bill of health. Hot and very Humid throughout this month. Light S/West Winds. Some very brief Showers occurring. Temperatures: 20°c/28°c

September: Three (3) visits. Fed the 2 Poly-nucs and No.5 colony. Have reduced the entrances to No.5 and No.6 due to wasp seeking entrance. Cut back Brambles. Mainly Dry. Variable winds' N/West, S/West. Southerly and sometimes very strong. Frequent Heavy Showers. Temperatures: 17°c

October: Two (2) visits. As has occurred previously no access to equipment in shed. Checked all colonies. Still feeding No.5 and Poly-Nucs. There are several supers that could come off but due to lots of brood being present and much external bee activity this has me erring on the side of leaving well alone for now. Mouse Guards now on. Mainly Dry. Some sunny spells. Wind S/Westerly. Temperatures: 15°c

November: Two (2) visits. External check. Cleared fallen branches. All colonies very active and much pollen coming in. Dry and Sunny. North and East Wind. Temperature 9°c

December: One (1) visit. External Check. Dry. Chill N/Westerly.
Temperature: 6°c

Harold Williams - Apiary Manager

Association Apiary Managers report - Nature's Little Helpers

Annual Summary

The 2019 beekeeping season has been a year of ups and downs and at times quite challenging. At the beginning of the year we had a warm start to spring and the bees started to build up nicely then the cold arrived and set the bees back by about 3 to 4 weeks.

I can honestly say that we have had our share of rain this year with our summer being on the wet side and October/November being a complete wash out.

Honey crops this year were very good even with the wet and cold Welsh weather and the bees certainly packed it in when they could. Most beekeepers that we know had a good crop of honey and some had an

exceptional crop.

Due to the cold snap just when the bees were thinking it was safe to multiply the queens and bees decided differently. Lots of queens refused to go out and mate and when they did they didn't mate very successfully. We have noticed lots of queens being superseded, drone layers, new queens swarming and also queens being rejected after a short time of apparently laying well.

Eventually nature caught up and the queens performed very well with some lovely stocks of bees being produced.

All the association hives did very well this year after a bit of a slow start and 2 of the colonies had to be re queened. This year's students were amazing and so enthusiastic, its so nice to see the excitement on the beginners faces when they open hives up for the first time.

The wasps have been a real pest again this year and are getting worse every season. They started to harass the hives much earlier this year and lasted long into November. Our winters aren't cold enough or long enough to knock them back really.

Thank you 2019 for everything you threw at us and here's to 2020.

Tim Wright

Natures Big Helper

Apiary Manager.

Ideas for our newsletter

If there is anything that you would like to see in our newsletter, any latest news, beekeeping items for sale or you have something you would like to add, then please send for the next edition to louise@cardiffbeekeepers.co.uk

If you would like us to hire a particular speaker, you would like to know more about any topic to do with the World of beekeeping or simply some further training, then please get in contact with me. We would really appreciate your input as this is YOUR association.

Wales Beekeeper/W.B.K.A News

WBKA events can be found on their [website](#).



Cymdeithas Gwenynwyr Cymru
Welsh Beekeepers' Association
Convention 2020
Saturday 28th March at 0

Tea and Coffee available from 08:00
Old Food Hall, Royal Welsh Agricultural Showground
Builth Wells, Powys, LD2 3SY
Mynediad/Admission: Oedolion/Adults - £9.00,
Advance Payment - £7.00 (see below)
Ieuenctid/Juniors (under 17) - am ddim / free admission

Guest Speakers:

Paul O'Brien

President of The Federation of Irish Beekeepers Associations
(FIBKA)

BDI Sponsored Lecture

Professor Stephen Martin

Understand the evolution of natural Varroa-tolerance mechanisms in various
beekeeping populations

Laura Jones

Investigating the foraging preferences of honeybees using DNA metabarcoding

Filipe Salby

Upstairs, downstairs hive

Kevin Williams

The History and Traditions of the beekeeping in Wales

“Beekeepers’ Question Time”

your chance to ask the experts....

Trade stands and exhibitions.

Bargain beekeeping supplies. All day refreshments

Free Parking.

Earlybird tickets (£7.00): Forms available on WBKA website
(www.WBKA.com)

Return completed forms plus payment to
Convention Secretary by March 21st
Address and payment details on form.

Asian Hornet Advice

Latest advice is as follows;



What to look out for

- *Vespa velutina* queens are up to 3 cm in length; workers up to 25 mm (slightly smaller than the native European hornet *Vespa crabro*)
- Entirely dark brown or black velvety body, bordered with a fine yellow band
- Only one band on the abdomen: 4th abdominal segment almost entirely yellow/orange
- Known as the 'Yellow legged hornet'
- Head black with an orange-yellow face
- *Vespa velutina* is a day flying species which, unlike the European hornet, ceases activity at dusk

If you think you have seen an Asian Hornet

1. Please use the [Asian Hornet Watch app](#) on your phone to send a picture and a location via GPS in the app straight to the non-native species secretariat and National Bee Unit. 2. If you cannot download the Asian Hornet Watch app, please use this [online recording form](#) 3. As a last resort, you send a picture and email with details of where you saw the Asian hornet with your contact details

to alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk

If it is safe to do so, you can send in a sample to the [National Bee Unit](#) for examination to confirm identity (please note the specimen must be dead before sending it in). However, do not under any circumstances disturb or provoke an active hornets' nest. For more information visit the Non Native Species Secretariat [website](#).

Beebase/NBU News

No news.

Bee Craft Timely Reminders

When the weather starts to improve over the next few weeks, during daylight hours look in your garden or apiary and make a note of where the sunny spots are. These are ideal places to plant snowdrops/crocus/Christmas roses and/or aconites for early forage for the bees next year.

Continual breeding mentioned a couple of weeks ago will also apply to varroa so it will be interesting, as well as necessary, to assess the mite levels in your colonies. Whether or not you remove your varroa trays throughout the winter, now would be a good time to put them in/clean them and replace to check for varroa drop in a week's time.

This should give you an idea of how much of a problem they are currently and whether you will need to buy some treatment that is not temperature sensitive to use as soon as the opportunity arises. With the daily variation in temperature the cold spells are probably not sufficient in duration for oxalic acid treatment nor warm enough yet for a few weeks for some of the other treatments available. If the drop is significant you may need to take action.

Bees and equipment for sale

Natures Little Helpers Lisvane Honey Farm

Unit 8, Mill Farm Industrial Estate,
St. Mellons Road, Lisvane, Cardiff, CF14 0SH
Tim Wright: 07970 289677 Pete Shaw: 01633 897195
Email: sales@natureslittlehelpers.co.uk
Web: www.natureslittlehelpers.co.uk



WELSH HANDMADE PRODUCTS

Hand and Body Balms, Lip Balms,
Moisturising Creams and Soaps all made
using only natural ingredients.

Professional beekeepers with years of
experience offering a full range of
beekeeping equipment and stocks of bees.

**Orders being taken for 2019 nucs of bees
on 5 National self spacing frames £195.00**

Our Seasonal Bee Inspector contact details;

Daniel Baxter

07771038646

Daniel.baxter@apha.gov.uk

Social Media

Don't forget that you can follow us on Facebook on Cardiff, Vale and Valleys Beekeepers Association.

Thanks,

Louise

Louise@cardiffbeekeepers.co.uk
