



# Bath BEEkeepers NEWSLETTER



ISSUE 1  
JANUARY 2024

## HELLO AND WELCOME



Wishing a very Happy New Year to all Bath Beekeepers. I hope that 2024 will bring you everything you would wish for yourself and families. With the festive season all behind us and little bee activity within our hives, the club is still planning for a few events to keep you on your toes during these cold months. One thing that we can't overlook is that the Asian hornet will be on the increase, we can't stop them arriving but we can take action to mitigate & monitor the best we can. We need your help as club members to monitor what is happening in our area, we need your help to help protect our bees and pollinators. Please read on ....



## CLUB NEWS - ASIAN HORNET

Sightings of the Asian hornet (*Vespa Velutina*) in the UK have increased recently and you may have seen them in the news or on social media.



It is important that we know how to identify Asian hornets and correctly report any sightings.

### Description:

An Asian hornet has an entirely dark thorax and an al-

most entirely dark abdomen, except for the 4th segment.

They have yellow tips on their legs, and are approximately 25mm in length (this is 5mm SMALLER than our native European hornets, despite the common misconception that they are bigger).



### So what can we do?

We have appointed a Club Asian hornet Team Coordinator who is:

### Jeremy Huckle.

To support Jeremy in his role as team coordinator we can become an AH Verifier. To find out more about becoming a verifier please read page 2 which details what you need to do.

The AH role is very important, Jeremy needs a team of verifiers to support him. Not only will this role benefit others but will help to keep your own hives safer. *Help others to help oneself.*

We can also assist in raising awareness, not just with beekeepers but with the general public.



We can put stickers (like the one above) on the back of your honey jars.

You can test & increase your own AH knowledge, try this: [Asian hornet quiz](https://www.bbka.org.uk/general-public-asian-hornet-quiz) ( <https://www.bbka.org.uk/general-public-asian-hornet-quiz>)

## CLUB ACTIVITIES

**Vacancies:** Fancy taking on the role of Treasurer?



We need someone to join the committee and carry out this role for the club.

If you would like to take this on, you'll get a good handover and support from all the committee members, please contact Charlotte or Shaun at [bathbka.sec@gmail.com](mailto:bathbka.sec@gmail.com)

### Dates for Diaries:

DATE	EVENT
Now Open	Renew your Membership
Jan 6th	Asian hornet Conference
Jan/Feb 2024	TBC- Preparing for Asian Hornet
April 9; 16;25;30	Basic (Improvers) course. TBC
May 24	Basic (Improvers)
TBC	Introduction to Bee-keeping Course

### Supplies:



Pete Davis will be selling fondant at £25 per box of 5 x 2.5 kg packs.

### Oops I made a mistake:

My sincere apologies for getting our Club President's name incorrect, it was Peter Clements who presented the BBKA Basic Assessment certificates.

If you have any stories, photos, info or questions that you'd like included please email to:

[alison.hillman@btinternet.com](mailto:alison.hillman@btinternet.com)

By 20th each month



## CLUB NEWS AND ACTIVITIES -THE CLUB NEEDS ASIAN HORNET VERIFIERS

### AH Verifier's Required:

An Asian hornet (AH) verifier supports Jeremy Huckle in his role as team coordinator.

If interested in helping with this important role please contact [Jeremy Huckle](mailto:Jeremy.Huckle@outlook.com) (Jeremy Huckle <jandjhuckle@outlook.com>)

### A verifier should:

- ◆ Monitor and set up traps in their own apiaries.
- ◆ Be provided with a trap and lure/bait from the club.

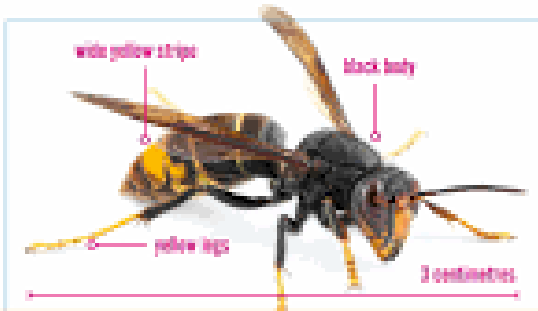
- ◆ Complete the BBKA AH [Exercise](#) ( which only takes about 20 minutes to complete) - on the BBKA site at <https://www.bbka.org.uk/asian-hornet-action-team-map>.
- ◆ Assist other club beekeepers to undertake monitoring and setting up their AH traps if required.
- ◆ Record details of all AH traps you have in use on the club map, this gives us a good visual record of what the club is doing.

- ◆ Observe your local forage for AH activity.
- ◆ Report all leads, take a clear photograph if safe to do so and report a positive findings to both team coordinator and through the free Asian Hornet Watch App, for [Android](#) and [iPhone](#) (( <https://www.bbka.org.uk/asian-hornet-reporting> ) )
- ◆ Help set up monitoring traps for reported potential sightings reported via Jeremy

### Hunting for the Asian hornet:

The AH is an invasive non-native species which originate from Asia. They've colonised mainland Europe, and they now pose a significant threat to the UK's native pollinators.

The National Bee Unit (NBU) have been undertaking a lot of work on the AH to see more information that the NBU have undertaken please read information at this [link](https://aphascence.blog.gov.uk/2023/09/06/hunting-for-the-asian-hornet/) ( <https://aphascence.blog.gov.uk/2023/09/06/hunting-for-the-asian-hornet/> )



## Spot Asian hornets and save our bees!



# REPORT THEM!

Use the 'Asian Hornet Watch' app  
[www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk)



## THIS MONTH IN THE HIVE - JANUARY 2024

With January temperatures the availability of nectar and pollen bearing flowers is small along with the numbers of foraging bees. The queen will be surrounded by thousands of worker bees in a rugby-football shaped cluster in the hive. There is little activity except on a warm day when worker bees take the opportunity for making defecation flights. Drone bees are no longer present but some worker brood will be raised. Little work is required at this time of the month. If the ground is covered with snow, shield the

entrance to cut out the light and prevent workers flying and perishing in the snow.

### During January:

- ◆ Continue to monitor your hive entrance for build up of dead bees and blockages.
- ◆ If not already done wedge up the back of the hive to ensure the floor slopes gently forwards.
- ◆ Make sure the roof is still secure; bricks, blocks and/ or a strap will work

- ◆ Gently heft (lift) the hive to check food weight, if light add fondant over the feedhole, a shallow eke may be needed.

- ◆ Build hive parts
- ◆ Record your observations or actions for each hive in a book or record sheet for each visit you undertake This is far more reliable than a memory!

- ◆ Read books, study for March BBKA exams if you are taking them.





2024 is the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the British Beekeepers Association.

The Spring Convention is held at:

- ◆ Harper Adams - University near Newport, in Shropshire.
- ◆ The dates are:  
**12 -14 April 2024**

## PLAN YOUR BBKA SPRING CONVENTION

◆ The one day Trade Show will be on Saturday 13th April.

Many traders have special offers available to pre-order, as well as having new items of kit available to examine at the Show.

The Spring Convention has real-life speakers, workshops and seminars! The Trade Show and the not-for-profit area where

you'll find many organisations including the BBKA.

*There are opportunities for beekeepers to volunteer as stewards too!*

A general ticket for the Convention gives you access to all lectures, but workshops and seminars need booking and they sell out fast as many people want to have the benefit of the knowledge and skills of our expert tutors.

*Workshops carry an extra cost to cover equipment and materials etc.*

**The tickets will be released on January 29th 2024.** We recommend that you study what is available and make your bookings soon after this date! See link:

[Plan your Spring convention](#)

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS?

**Q: What happens to Bees in January?**

**A:** When it is too cold to work or fly honey bees huddle together in a cluster. The main aim is to keep the Queen warm. With the bees "hive bound" honey stores provide a crucial lifeline helping to keep up the bees energy levels. The success of the hive depends how well the bees are prepared for the cold.

**Q: Should I feed my Bees?**

**A:** Bee sure all your hives have enough honey to survive the winter months/cold weather spells. If not supplement by feeding the hives with fondant ( don't use liquid feed during cold months as this can freeze).

**Q: Should I open my hives in the winter?**

**A:** Hold off opening your hives during inclement weather or cold temperatures. Wait for warmer, sunny and not too windy weather.

**Q: How to keep Bees warm in the winter?**

**A:** Some beekeepers insulate hives for the winter either with a layer of insulation material over the hive like a tea cosy. However, the hive entrance **MUST** be kept clear for ventilation and to allow the bees to go out on cleansing flights or foraging trips.



## RECIPE OF THE MONTH - CHILLI HONEY

### Ingredients:

2 x pots of honey  
1 x super hot DRIED chilli (Dorset Naga used) or if milder Chilli's use 2-3

### Method:

**Step 1:** Gently heat the honey in a saucepan with the Chilli for about 15-20 minutes

**Step 2:** Whilst heating use a wooden spoon to gently squeeze the Chilli to get the juices out.

**Step 3:** Taste as going along

**Step 4:** Remove Chilli and strain any debris.

**Step 4:** Enjoy

*Recipe kindly provided by Jamie Snook.*

Jamie brought a pot to the club to try. It was really delicious and can be used on toast or in marinades or just about anything.

*It's worth a try.*

