



# Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association December 2017 Newsletter

## "Living with the Asian Hornet" A French Beekeepers Perspective

Our next winter Association meeting is 17th January 2018 starting 7:30pm at the Church of the Good Shepherd. Our speaker will be Alan Roberts, a French Beekeeper and Sapeur Pompier. Alan started Beekeeping with the Chalfonts Beekeepers Association before moving to France in 2010. His chosen career as a Beekeeper and Fire-fighter meant he quickly experienced Asian Hornet first hand.

I met Alan earlier this year and stories of his experiences are fascinating; from destroying nests, trapping queens and the effects of the sting/spray. The talk will cover a range of Alan's experiences. On a practical basis on how to try and manage colonies whilst protecting them from invasion. Giving simple apiary advice as well as an insight into the complications of being stung and protecting yourself from these risks.



## New Association Apiary on National Grid Land



Over the last few months we have been working with the National Grid to establish a satellite Association Apiary near Waddesden. The site has space for up to 24 hives and National Grid have funded a small shed on site to be used for equipment storage.

The apiary will operate in a different manner to the Association Apiary in Stoke Mandeville. It is primarily available for members to locate their hives. It will also be employed for queen rearing. Basically it will be a member's apiary for Beekeepers of mixed ability to the west of our region. If you are interested in finding out

more about the apiary please drop me a line [chairman@mbbka.org.uk](mailto:chairman@mbbka.org.uk).

## NBU Southern Region Annual Report 2017

The 2017 National Bee Unit Southern Region Annual Report was published last week and can be found [here](#).

The report includes an excellent update on the Asian Hornet incidents in the UK, the status of Small Hive Beetle in Italy as well as statistics on Foulbrood incidents. With the continued threat of Pests and Diseases to our colonies, all Beekeepers should keep their Beebase records up to date. If you have not registered on Beebase please do so [here](#).

## Hazel Catkins

The adjacent image shows Hazel catkins taken earlier this month. The Hazel tree is monoecious as it has male and female flowers on the same tree. The catkins are the male flowers producing the pollen which via the wind pollinates the small red female flowers.

In the Spring the catkins open up exposing their anthers and copious amounts of pollen. The pollen is a vital early source of protein for the Honey Bee. The Hazel flowers do not offer any nectar and do not require any insects for pollination.



## Winter 2018 Programme of Events

**17th January 2018**  
**Association Meeting**

Alan Roberts, Asian Hornet  
7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd

**10th February 2018**  
**Bucks County Spring Seminar**

10am

Wendover Memorial Hall

**21st February 2018**  
**Association Meeting**

Dr. Michael Keith-Lucas, Pollination  
7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd

**21st March 2018**  
**Association Meeting**

Ian Judge, Products of the Hive  
7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd

**18th April 2018**  
**Association Meeting**

Members 15 minute talks  
7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd

## New Beekeepers Course 2018

The new Beekeepers course will commence on 19th February 2018 at the Church of the Good Shepherd. The format will be similar to that of previous years with 6 classroom sessions followed by practical sessions.

This year we would like to welcome any of our Full Association members to attend the lectures in February and March. There will be no charge, a member just needs to register before attending. We will publish the lecture list in the January Newsletter.

We are also looking for volunteers to help with the teas, if you can help please contact Liz at [secretary@mbbka.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mbbka.org.uk). If you know of anyone interested in taking up Beekeeping ask them to contact



Helen at [beginnerscourse@mbbka.org.uk](mailto:beginnerscourse@mbbka.org.uk).

## Varroa Treatment During the Winter

This winter, as with the last couple of winters, I will be treating my colonies for varroa before Christmas. As the daylight hours decline the queen is less inclined to lay eggs. Add to this a cold period for more than a week, just like the current weather pattern, it is unlikely that there will be sealed brood within the Honey Bee nest.

During the last few winters we have rarely experience a long cold period after Christmas and as the days get longer the queen will be inclined to start to lay.

The only approved treatments for varroa that work during the winter employ Oxalic Acid. The National Bee Unit fact sheet on Bee Medicines can be found [here](#). Api-Bioxal is available from most major suppliers. I could not find any suppliers of Oxuvar. The application instructions for each product differ and the base products employ different concentrations of Oxalic Acid so it goes without saying, read the instructions before use.

The main issue with the approved products is that the minimum package is sufficient to treat 10 hives and the use by date is generally within 12 months. This makes the treatment expensive and wasteful for members with only a couple of hives.

Each year we run an winter varroa treatment day, this year it will be held at 11am on 16th December at the Association Apiary. During the session how to apply Oxalic Acid varroa treatments will be demonstrated followed by the opportunity to practice on the Association colonies. At the session there will be smaller volumes of pre-mixed Api-Bioxal available for members to purchase. For those members who cannot make the day, a short aide memoir on trickle application of Oxalic Acid is given to the right.

## Trickle Application of Oxalic Acid

- Mix the liquid as per manufacturers instructions
- Place container of liquid in warm water to warm it before application
- Work in pairs if possible, the second person can help keep track of the seams trickled
- Light smoker, it should not be required
- Have torch available, sometimes the bees are deep within the brood box
- Swiftly and quietly open the hive
- Count the seams of bees, a seam is a frame gap with bees back to back
- Trickle the application to the required amount for each seam
- Quietly close up the hive



## Apidea Lucky Escape

My experiment to try and bring an Apidea of bees through the winter nearly came a cropper with recent snows! I hope all your colonies survived the recent weather.

**Wishing all our members  
Seasons Greetings!**

## Bucks County Spring Seminar

The Bucks County Beekeepers Association will be holding it's annual Spring Seminar on 10th February 2018 at Wendover Memorial Hall commencing at 10am.

The date is well worth putting in your diary. In 2018 we will have three excellent speakers; Steve Martin, Keith Pierce and Mark Patterson, the usual stalls including Northern Bee Books and the second hand equipment sales. Following the seminar the County Association will hold its AGM.