



# The Hive

TTVBKA Newsletter

November 2024

## In this edition

[Update from the Chairman](#)

[Around the Apiary](#)  
[Out with the old...](#)  
[Free crockery & cutlery](#)

[The latest from the BBKA](#)

[BBKA updates](#)  
[Zoom talks](#)

[Association Library](#)

[Yellow-legged \(Asian\) hornet update](#)

[Bee-stowing our knowledge](#)  
[Education round-up](#)  
[Educating young people](#)

[Events & talks](#)  
[2024 Open Day](#)  
[Annual Honey Show](#)  
[President's Evening](#)

[Bee a volunteer](#)

[Becoming a CIO](#)

[Combing through the news](#)

[Any other Buzzness...](#)



## Update from the Chair

Dear Member,

What's happened in this past season at the association. The education of the general public, both adults and children, continues and the number we get through the gates continues to increase post COVID – a slow but steady recovery.

The Association's finances are in a healthy state. This is good because as a local association, we have facilities that are more appropriate to a regional association – and are the envy of many other beekeeping associations around the UK.

This year, we've had a change in the composition of the committee and a few more active members have joined helping to run the association. Both factors have enabled us to start to drive the association forward both in our mission to educate the public and to educate and train our members.

We now have three of our number who are qualified Basic Exam assessors (up from one) which means we now have greater insight into the assessment which we can pass on to our members. Moreover, the additional active members have given the association

## Free crockery & cutlery

Over the years, we have collected a large amount of crockery/cutlery we do not need. We would like to offer it to members who may know of a voluntary/charitable organisation that could use it.

If you know of such an organisation or want to discuss, please speak to Mandy or email [mandy@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:mandy@twickerbees.co.uk)

greater flexibility, and we are now planning to increase the number of activities we can offer to our membership. This includes planning to offer training for the BBKA Honey Bee Health assessment. This is for those beekeepers who have kept bees for a minimum of three years and would like to further their knowledge beyond that of the Basic.

This year we also re-started the Module study groups – for those who want to increase their beekeeping knowledge but don't know where to start or find that they learn more easily by discussing topics with their peers.

We also feel that we need to improve communication with the membership, hence this newsletter. The idea is to keep everyone up to date with what is going on in the Association and in the wider beekeeping community. As part of the emphasis on communication you will also see more talks for the membership, both from external speakers and members. Some of these talks will involve topics that aren't strictly about honey bees and beekeeping, but about other pollinators- in keeping with our updated charity objects.

Possibly the biggest news this year regarding the Association is we have now started to positively move forward to change the Association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This has little effect on our day-to-day actions but makes a big difference to the way we work and what we can offer in the future.

There is planning in the pipeline for more services we could offer the membership – laboratory and microscope education, develop the Trading Post such that it fits today's environment, and bring the association library up to date and make it easily accessible for the membership. If you want to become more involved, please get in touch at [volunteer@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@twickerbees.co.uk).

Cheers, Ray

## Around the Apiary

### Out with the old...

Regular Friday night visitors will have noticed some big changes at the Twickenham Apiary. The Margaret English room and been cleared of unwanted items & rubbish and rearranged; both garden sheds have been cleared of old equipment and reorganised; old woodwork, unusable items and rubbish and been cleared from the exterior work areas; new storage crates have been utilised and the kitchen area has been cleaned rearranged.



The Mole Apiary has also undergone a large clean-up. The clubhouse has been cleared, disused hive boxes and frames have been discarded and an old trailer broken up and thrown away.

A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped with this massive clean-up! Special thanks to Rob for fixing the leaking shed roof...not an easy job with around half a million bees for company!

Going into the next season, we would like to start a Gardening Group to maintain and develop the grounds. If you are an experienced horticulturist, a weekend gardener or just want to be out in the fresh air, please consider joining the group. For more information, speak to Christine Betley or email [volunteer@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@twickerbees.co.uk)



## BBKA updates & talks

**BBKA joins the European Beekeeping Association**

**Celebrating 150 Years!**

**New oxalic acid guidelines** - BBKA asked to remind beekeepers of the guidelines

**2024 Hive Count** – Register the total number of colonies you will be taking into the winter

## Next BBKA Zoom talk

**The next in the BBKA series of Zoom talks will be "Varroa" with Kirsty Stainton on Tuesday 19th November at 7pm.**

Kirsty Stainton works as the Technical Manager for the National Bee Unit. In this talk, Kirsty will describe the biology of the parasitic mite, Varroa destructor, why Varroa mites are bad for honey bee colonies and how to recognise symptoms of infestation. She will then provide an explanation of the various ways for Varroa monitoring and a comprehensive overview of the treatment options available in the UK, including husbandry techniques that can be used to reduce mite loads without chemical intervention. This will be a jargon-free presentation designed to help you choose the right treatment for you and your bees.

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86822829123?pwd=tpZCfstxaABYXlbzslOZqCmg5BuStF.1> Meeting ID: 868 2282 9123 Passcode: 737424

## Future BBKA Talks:

### **Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus**

21st January 2025  
Giles Budge

### **'A Bee Inspector Calls'**

18th February 2025  
Keith Bartlem

### **Preparing for Exams**

18th March 2025  
Jenny Morgan

Further details for each talk will be available nearer the time





## Bee informed, bee amazed, and bee amused with our Association Library

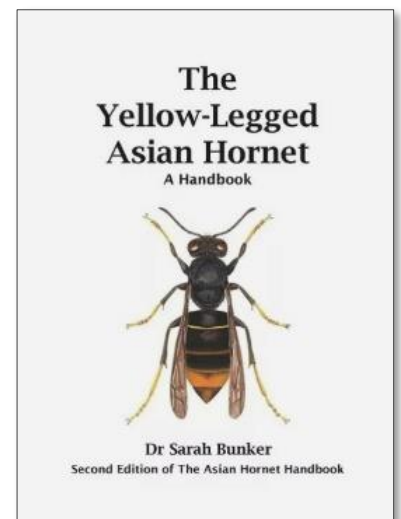
**Do you often ponder 'The Chemistry and Technology of Waxes' or wondered on 'The Witchery of Wasps'?** These are just some of the titles in our extensive library of books relating to the craft & science of bees and beekeeping and available for the use of members. Located in the Miller Hall, titles range from Late Victorian up to the present.

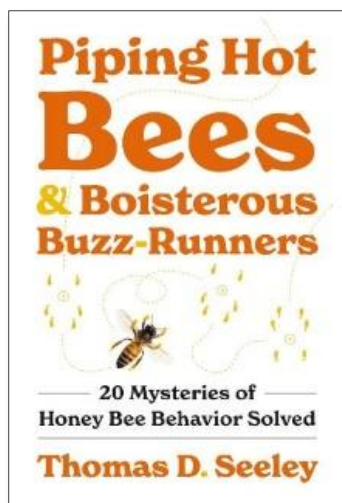
There is a searchable database of books currently held in the library available to members via the website. We are currently undertaking a thorough audit of the library and will shortly be updating the database with new titles. The library will be available for use in January 2025. For more information, please email [library@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:library@twickerbees.co.uk) or speak to Pat Brennan or Greg Elliott.

### New additions to the library coming soon include:

#### **The Yellow-Legged Asian Hornet, A Handbook (Second Edition)**

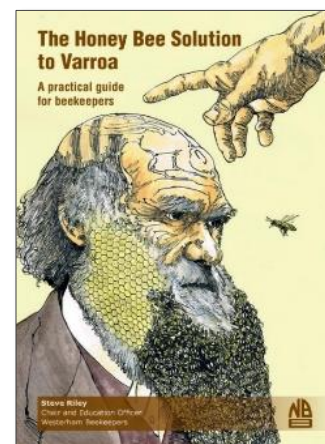
authored by Dr Sarah Bunker, is bursting with information, from hornet identification to up-to-date scientific findings on Asian hornet biology, behaviour and ecology. There are also sections on the spread of these insects, how they are dealt with in the UK and Europe, tracking, trapping, and other methods of control, as well as a chapter on beekeeping with hornets. Fascinating, readable and full of photos and illustrations, this is a book for beekeepers, naturalists and anyone interested in invasive alien species.





The latest book from Thomas D. Seeley, **Piping Hot Bees & Boisterous Buzz-Runners**, takes readers inside a world seldom seen even by beekeepers, shedding light on twenty of the most compelling mysteries of honey bee behaviour. A biologist's up-close account of how he and fellow biologists cracked long-standing puzzles about honey bee behaviour.

Written by Steve Riley, Chair & Education Officer at Westerham Beekeepers, **The Honey Bee Solution to Varroa** explains the practical steps beekeepers can take to identify and select for easily observable Varroa-resistant traits in the colonies. The Science behind the bees' mechanisms for controlling their mite populations is explained, in what is a bee-led solution to the biggest challenge facing the European honey bee.



To search the database visit the [Library page](#) on the website.

## Yellow-legged (Asian) hornet update

You may have noticed a gradual move towards the term 'Yellow-Legged' hornets (or abbreviated to YLH) in much of the new messaging and communications from the BBKA, this is in line with Defra who will eventually be transitioning away from the term 'Asian hornet' in a bid to improve species identification! This will be a gradual change that will take place over time, and we will reflect this in our own materials and communications.

### Yellow-legged Asian hornet tally September 1st - October 31st 2024



#### Confirmed

23 nests so far in 2024

- 3rd September - Ardingly, West Sussex - Nest
- 5th September - Dymchurch, Kent - Nest
- 7th September - Rye Harbour, East Sussex - Primary Nest
- 7th September - Swingfield (near Folkstone), Kent - Specimen
- 8th September - Lydd, Kent - Primary & Secondary Nests
- 9th September - Rye Harbour, East Sussex - Secondary Nest
- 14th September - Upper Shirley, Southampton, Hampshire - Specimen
- 20th September - Southampton, Hampshire - Nest
- 24th September - Great Maxfield, East Sussex - Nest
- 24th September - Southampton, Hampshire - Specimen
- 29th September - Southampton, Hampshire - Sighting
- 4th October - Southampton, Hampshire - Sighting
- 16th October - Great Maxfield, East Sussex - Tertiary nest
- 24th October - Coldred, near Lydden, Kent - Primary Nest
- 30th October - Udimore, East Sussex - Nest
- 30th October - South Alkham, Kent - Nest

## Latest sightings

According to the NBUs latest update there have been 68 credible Yellow-legged hornet sightings in the UK and 23 nests have been found in 2024.

A full list of sightings and locations can be found on the [NBU's website](#). You can also view a map of the [location](#) of destroyed nests.



# Bee-stowing our knowledge.

This season in adult beekeeping education, we started this season with 33 attendees on our Winter course. From the Winter course, 16 went on to attend the Practical Beekeeping course, of whom 10 saw the whole season through. The number who attend the practical course is limited by the space and number of hives in the apiary.

This year we had 7 members pass the Basic assessment with a fair distribution of passes, credits and distinctions.

This year we restarted the BBKA Module exam study group. We had one person go on to take the Module 1 Honey Bee Management and Module 6 Honey Bee Behaviour exams. Sally passed with a credit and a distinction, respectively. But credit where credit is due, Sally studied for the Module 6 exam without the study group. This year we have three candidates for the Module 3 Honey Bee Pests, Diseases and Poisoning exam.

There will be another Module exam on 22nd March 2025 (applications close on 31st January 2025) so there will be another study group starting some time in January on or around the 29th January 2025 – about 8 weeks before the exam. At this point we propose to have the study group work on Module 2 Honey Bee Products and Forage. However, if there is sufficient demand (and it wouldn't take much) for a different topic, we can change to the demanded module. If you are interested, speak to Ray Nicol or email [exams@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:exams@twickerbees.co.uk)

## Educating young people



The Education Group has again, had a busy season. The team welcomed around 550 young people to the apiary from 16 school groups and this year, by visiting 3 schools.

The sessions are aimed at 3-11 years olds and cover aspects of the National Curriculum science programme relating to insects, pollination, habitats and the environment. The team of volunteers provide a range of fun, hands-on learning activities that are differentiated according to age. The highlight of the visit is meeting the bees. All children get to view the inside of a honey bee hive from

the safety of our hide, seeing, hearing and smelling honey bees at work and often meeting the Queen.

The School and Groups outreach programme commenced in October. If you are a teacher, run a scout or guide group or a similar type children's group and would like more information on how to arrange a visit, please complete this form to discuss a visit.

The Education Group is run by a group of fantastic volunteers, and, without their time and dedication, the Association would not be able to provide these important sessions. The 2025 season starts on Wednesday 30th April and are looking for more volunteers to support the Group's work. Please contact a member of the committee if you are interested or email [schools@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:schools@twickerbees.co.uk)

# Honey Market Success!

The Twickenham Honey Market was held on Bank Holiday Monday. Members that hosted a stall reported good footfall and most sold out of their honey!

## Selling Members' honey

We have a section on the [website](https://www.twickerbees.co.uk) where we advertise members who sell honey. If you want to be included on this list, please email [mandy@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:mandy@twickerbees.co.uk), include an email or telephone number and permission to include for publication. You may also want to add where you sell your honey. You can also provide details of any shops/outlets where you sell your honey.

## Association events & talks

Rain, rain go away...and it did for our 2024 Open Day!



Despite the bad weather, we had a good turnout for the Open Day. The Laboratory display and children's activities were very popular with many a pipe cleaner bee to be admired. The book stall was busy this year, a surprise in this digital age!

As always, there were queues for the honey stand, and fortunately, the rain stopped in time for tea and delicious handmade cakes in the garden. And for the first time, we hosted [Tim Pond](#), a local artist who specialises in drawing wildlife. Tim's stand was very popular and a great addition to the day.

This annual event is not only an important fundraiser for the Association, but also our opportunity to promote our work to the local community. Positive public engagement is the main purpose and this, from all reports, was achieved!

With thanks to all members, family and friends who volunteered on the day, donated plants and prizes, baked a cake or two or helped in any other way to make this day a success.







## TTVBKA 103rd Annual Honey Show

Many thanks to all those who helped make this year's Honey Show such a successful afternoon!

We were delighted to see that we had more entries than last year with some fantastic entries in the Open & Gift classes and a wide range of colours and types of honeys. Thank you to our judges (Karen and Lisa) and their stewards (Mandy and Julia) who all commented on the quality and variety of entries.

A big thank you to Carl for organising the show. The list of helpers before and on the day is too long to mention, but we really appreciate your time and cheerful support. A few pictures have been posted onto the [TW1 Beeline](#) Facebook (members) group and our public Facebook page [Twickenham & Thames Valley Bee-keepers' Association](#)



And finally, congratulations to the well-deserved prize winners, you can see a full list of results on the [website](#).

## President's Evening

We are delighted to announce that [Dr Gerry Brierley](#) will be our guest speaker at this year's President's Evening. Gerry, a British beekeeper, author of *The Secrets of Hope the Honeybee* and an 'Accidental Apitherapist', will deliver a talk on 'The Ancient History of the Honey Bee: Myths Magic and Morals, Tales of the honey bee and humans'.

The evening will commence at 7.30pm at the Apiary on the 15th November. As usual the evening will be in the form of an American Buffet i.e. everyone brings a little drink and/or nibbles which we can all share.

*Please note, as part of the evening, the committee have called a Special General Meeting to inform and have the membership vote on the ongoing transformation of the Association from a Charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), the change of our charitable 'Objects' and the election of two new Custodian Trustees.*



# Bee a volunteer

Just like honey bees we need an army of workers to carry out roles & tasks, with the combined efforts making us a strong and robust colony (organisation).

As a charity, our Association is run entirely by volunteers, and without the support of these volunteers the important education, facilities and services we offer to beekeepers, young people and the public would not be possible.

Volunteering can be hugely satisfying and is not only a chance to pass on your skills & experience but also the opportunity to develop your own.

We are keen to expand on our current team of volunteers and there are many ways that you can get involved. And you don't need to be a beekeeper, we are grateful for any time, skill or experience you can offer.

Areas where you can help include Apiary teaching, Schools & Groups, Gardening Club, General DIY & handyman, Trade shop, Website & IT and Events but we are happy for any support you can give.

Get in touch with us at [volunteer@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@twickerbees.co.uk) if you would like to find out more.

## Becoming a CIO

In 2022 the Association agreed to explore the conversion of its status to that of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and the Committee is now in a position to propose the transformation to our members.

### What is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)?

A CIO is a corporate body, which is specifically designed for – and only available to – charitable organisations in the United Kingdom. The Charity Commission is responsible for conferring and regulating CIO status.

### Benefits of a CIO

1. CIOs have a legal personality and therefore can enter into contracts, sue and be sued, and hold property in the name of the company, and
2. trustees & members personal assets are protected if claims are brought against the CIO, and
3. CIOs benefit of being a corporate body with the need to only comply with one set of laws, charity law, and only one regulator, the Charity Commission.

We have called a Special General Meeting on the 15th November, at President's Evening, to have the membership vote on the conversion. An information document has been shared with members ahead of the meeting (also located on the [website](#) in the Members section) and we ask all members to read ahead of the evening and send any questions you might have to Mandy Moss, who is leading this transformation for us, at [cioproject@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:cioproject@twickerbees.co.uk)

As part of the evening, the committee have called a Special General Meeting to inform and have the membership vote on the ongoing transformation of the Association from a Charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). If you remember, we put this change to you at the 2022 AGM and the committee is now in a position to positively move things forward. To do this, the committee has called a Special General Meeting.

The Committee & Trustees truly believe that becoming a CIO will enable our Association to develop and expand our membership offering, commercialise our facilities, skills & knowledge and safeguard our assets and liabilities, whilst fulfilling our charitable purpose and we call on all members to support this exciting new stage in the Association's history.

# Combing through the news

## A round up of Bee related news & research

### Honey fraud scandal: Non-EU imports under fire, Finnish honey stands pure

There is more evidence of large-scale counterfeiting of honey imported from outside the EU.

### The impact of landscape structure on pesticide exposure to honey bees

To effectively control pesticide exposure levels in bees, it is essential to understand pesticide usage patterns and to develop appropriate regulatory systems in non-agricultural lands, similar to those in agricultural lands.

### Kent: Gardeners asked to report sightings of Asian hornet nests

Hunt on for Asian hornets as autumn reveals nests.

### New Sensor Can Identify Watered-Down Honey

To make their profits all the sweeter, some honey producers have been known to top-up their products with water, leading to a mixed market of low- and high-quality condiments...

### Pollinator risk

A novel pesticide thought to be a potential successor to banned neonicotinoids caused 100% mortality in mason bees in a recent test.

### Bee vision reveals a hidden world that we cannot see

While reading a children's book about insects with his daughter, Matt Shipman came across an interesting fact: bees perceive colours differently than humans do.

### Polish teen and her granddad save bees from killer fat-sucking parasites

A Polish teenager and her grandfather aim to revolutionize the fight against a bee-killing parasite with an innovative new device that uses ultrasound.

### Africanised honey bee: Scientists brew beer from killer bees

Hopes beer made from killer bees will create buzz

### How stressors disrupt honey bee biological traits and overwintering mechanisms

We reviewed the effects of stressors on key overwintering biological traits, distinguishing between individual and colony traits.

### Nurse honey bees filter fungicide residues to maintain larval health

Residues of plant protection products (PPPs) are frequently detected in bee matrices due to foraging bees collecting contaminated nectar and pollen, which they bring back to their hive...

### Small Hive Beetle returns to Sicily: New Cases Cause Concern

The Small Hive Beetle, *Aethina tumida*, has resurfaced in Sicily after a four-year absence.

## Any other buzzness...

We hope you enjoyed our inaugural newsletter and hope to make it a permanent feature. Moving forward, we would like to include articles, news and ideas from our members including photography submissions, guest/member articles, questions for our experts, interesting news/research, etc. Email [newsletter@twickerbees.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@twickerbees.co.uk)