

BOURNEMOUTH & DORSET SOUTH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Newsletter

March 2026

Letter from the Chair

As I write this at the end of February we have had an extended time of very wet weather. My bees are opportunists and every time there is a break in the rain, and the sun comes out even for a short time they are out flying and collecting pollen. There are even orientation flights for the young bees. With all the rain any nectar that the plants may be producing is getting washed away so it is important to check fondant levels in your hives. There may be many factors that are beyond our control but the one thing we can do for our bees is making sure they are well fed.

It is the time of year for the BBKA Spring Convention which this year runs from 17th-19th April at Harpur Adams University, Shropshire TF10 8NB, a short distance from the M54. There will be over 20 lectures and over 70 seminars and workshops. Andrew and I went for the first time last year and enjoyed it so much we have booked again for this year. The number of master beekeepers gathered in one place is staggering. If you are unable to attend in person there are a few presentations on line from 2020-2025 <https://www.bbka.org.uk/bbka-spring-convention-presentations>

This year the National Bee Unit are not conducting widespread spring trapping of yellow-legged Asian hornets but are asking us to be vigilant and to trap only within 5km of a confirmed nest. Thank you to Conor for keeping us updated. The high risk areas in our patch are around Swyre, Ringstead and Southampton.

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/News/yellow-legged-asian-hornet-monitoring-for-2026>

A group of us have been meeting most weeks since the end of November to prepare for the BBKA Module

2 exam which takes place on Saturday 21st March. It has been very helpful to have Helga and David's wisdom and experience to guide us through the material and help us to become better informed beekeepers whatever the outcome.

Over the last year we have been meeting at St Mark's Church Hall in West Parley whilst we waited for our room at St Andrew's, Kinson to be refurbished after the flood last winter. Unfortunately, the church has decided to no longer let that room for meetings so we must find a new permanent home. We held the AGM in Bearwood Community Centre, King John Avenue, Bournemouth BH11 9TF and will continue to meet there until we have found a more suitable venue we can call home. Thanks to Brian Morgan who is looking into this.

At our AGM two long standing and hardworking committee members stood down after serving their maximum time, Lesley Moreton and Anne Moran. We are grateful that Lesley has agreed to continue to mastermind the Honey Show and Anne has offered to continue as membership secretary. We welcomed two new committee members, Jean-René Grailhe and Ann Mason. In order that you recognise Ann, I am attaching a photo of her and her husband Bill taken at their performance of Cinderella at Colehill Village Hall.

Our next meeting will be on 17th March when BADS-BKA member Adrian Dwyer will be talking to us about the latest research into the Asian



Hornet. I look forward to seeing you then. Happy beekeeping.

Anne Jablonski

Wannabee Day - Saturday 11th April

Dear Member

BADS will again be running our very popular Wannabee Day on Saturday, 11th April at High Mead Farm.

We are asking for your help to promote this, as it is getting ever more important to educate the public in all aspects of bees and honey. I have attached our Wannabee Day flyer (sent by email), and if you are able to print this and display it somewhere prominent, perhaps in your car window or a local shop, it would be greatly appreciated. Or simply chatting to friends and neighbours about it, to spread the word.

Kind regards

Ann Moran
Membership Secretary



Bournemouth and Dorset South Beekeepers Association

WANNABEE DAY

A Taster Day in Bees and Beekeeping

Saturday 11th April 2026 9.30-14.30

This is a taster day for those who are thinking about taking up, or have just started, beekeeping or are simply interested in learning a little more about bees.

Venue: High Mead Farm Ham Lane (B3073)
Longham Wimborne BH22 9DR

Bee-suits will be provided but please bring Wellington boots.

Depending on the weather one or two hives will be opened so that you can have a chance to handle some frames of bees. The Queen may be seen!

Tea and coffee will be provided but please bring a picnic lunch.

The cost of the course for each adult is £50.00. This includes associate membership in the Association until 30th September 2026

Limited number of free children places are available. Please enquire.

For more information and to book, please contact Anne Moran
at membership@bads-bka.org

BADS Basic Assessment Course – starts Saturday 18th April and continues for 6 weeks

We are offering this course for beekeepers in their 2nd, 3rd or more years of keeping bees. It will run on 6 consecutive Saturday afternoons at High Mead Apiary, starting on 18th April 2026. Each session will cover both theory and practical aspects of the BBKA Basic Assessment syllabus. We shall arrange for an assessor to visit during June, so that those who want to, can take the BBKA Basic Assessment.

Cost will be £50 for BADS members

If you are interested, please contact Anne Moran at membership@bads-bka.org

David Aldersey
Education Secretary

Association Diary Dates 2025

The Evening Meetings will be at Bearwood Community Centre, King John Avenue, Bearwood, Bournemouth, BH11 9TF unless notified. An alternative larger venue would be preferred. If any members have a suggestions do contact me.

Speakers

Tuesday 17th March

The latest research and information about the Asian Hornet
by our Club expert, Adrian Dwyer

Tuesday 21st April

Honey adulteration
Margaret Murdin

Please also feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Thank you.

Lesley Morton

Speakers secretary
speakers@bads-bka.org

Dear member

As you may be aware, after many years in the role, our excellent Speaker Secretary Lesley Morton is standing down this year so we are looking to fill the

position. Lesley has kindly offered to assist with the hand-over to help the new person start planning speakers for the Autumn 2026 season onwards.

The role does not sit on the Committee but is invited to attend meetings occasionally to provide updates. It's an enjoyable and interesting role which would suit someone with beekeeping experience and who would enjoy finding BADS a range of speakers on different topics.

Please contact Lesley if you interested to find out more.

Kind regards

Joanna Bellis

Secretary BADS-BKA

Course Programme

Saturday 11th April

Wannabee Day

Saturday 18th April

Beginners Course starts for 6 weeks

Saturday 18th April

Basic Assessment Course starts for 6 weeks

Dear Members – Your Contributions please

The next Newsletter will be in June 2026. I don't mind what you would like to send in, so long as there is a bee theme...good or bad experiences, some ideas on how to do things better, anecdotes, interesting photos, honey based recipes.

Also, I invite you to send me the story of one of your mistakes! I have made plenty over the years and in this newsletter. Please contribute and don't feel embarrassed. If you want your piece to be anonymous it will still be acceptable!

Thank you

Adrian Rozkovec newsletter@bads-bka.org

Yellow Leg Hornets

Known also as Asian Hornets, but the preferred name going forward is YLAH (Yellow Leg Asian Hornet) or just YLH

The purpose of this article is to keep our BADS BKA members as up to date as possible with the information being posted by the British Bee Keeping Association with regard to combating the YLH.

Many of you on the **BADS General Chat and Advice WhatsApp Group** will have noticed Yellow leg Hornet information that the BBKA send to me and hopefully many of you will be reading this information to keep up to date.

Various methods of trying to find YLH's have been used since they first arrived in the UK in 2016. Spring trapping being the one that comes to mind as perhaps the most controversial, since it involved trying to trap individual Queens over very large areas. In the early days many used **KILL** traps (1). This trap would be half filled with liquid to attract the insects, in which everything would drown. This turned out to be bad practice as it also trapped our native Hornets, Bumblebees, Wasps and many other insect species.



We then moved to traps that **did not kill** the insects that were trapped. Here the liquid was inside a small jar, inside the trap, with a wick to allow the smell to attract the insects. This type of trap requires the bi-catch to be released daily, or at regular intervals. Not ideal for busy people (2).



2

Next there is a modified version of this trap where the YLH is trapped but most of the bi-catch can escape, location of exit holes arrowed (3). Bait stations are used when a sighting has been reported and confirmed (4).



3

As of this year 2026, the advice to those that plan to find YLHs is to use 'Trap' stations only in an area of 5 kilometers from a confirmed nest. Bait stations can be used anywhere as they do not kill other insects, but they must be monitored. There will be a map that will identify these areas for our convenience and it will be available on the BBKA website.



4 Bait station

Each year since they first arrived in the UK in 2016 the numbers of YLH's that have been reported and the number of nests found and destroyed by the NBU (National Bee Unit) has been growing steadily and so vigilance by beekeepers to report is important. Educating the general public in helping to make them aware, perhaps even more important.

Luckily for us we have had very few incursions in our wider region and those that have been reported have been dealt with efficiently. However this is likely to change over the coming years and so it is important for us all to do our bit.

As the YLH co-ordinator for BADSBKA, I am constantly being sent updates from the BBKA and I do my best to forward them to the Association members as quickly as they arrive. This I do via the **BADS General Chat and Advice WhatsApp Group**. I assume that not all members will be signed up to the group App and so, hopefully this article will help you in understanding the urgency of being vigilant and constantly educating others of the seriousness of our YLH situation.

I will be more than happy to answer questions, preferably by WhatsApp, Text or Email, but I should point out that I am only a co-ordinator and not an expert on the Hornet. Hopefully, if and when we do have a sighting in our area I will be able to call upon members to help track, should that become necessary.

Conor Wall
AHAT Co-ordinator

Bait Hive

If you want a swarm, rather than collecting one, have you tried to see if the swarm will come to you? I have put out a Bait hive for some years and through reading up, and building up my experience, I have finally succeeded. Once the swarm is in the brood box, the approach is the same as for a collection.

It makes sense to simulate the preferences wild bees make in choosing a new home. Wild swarms favour cavities with a volume of around 40 litres with a small entrance (around 20 cm²) near the bottom of the cavity, south facing, and containing a small amount of existing comb. The entrance should be elevated; Tom Seeley observed an average height of 6.5m for wild colonies.

In practice there are many differences in advice, but this is what worked for me.

Equipment set up April to July

14 by 12 brood box

Solid floor (+/- a landing board and entrance block)

2 14x12 foundation comb kept at the back

1 14x12 comb (used and empty) in front of the foundation comb

Crown board and roof

The bait hive elevated by using, for example, empty 14 by 12 brood boxes, to an entrance height that you can reach. Something heavy on the roof if you are concerned about wind.

I did not use the entrance block until the swarm had arrived.

Lemongrass oil (simulates the queen's pheromone) applied to the entrance and frames. For administration, refer to the manufacturer's instructions. Spray a small amount weekly or use soaked cotton ball in a partly closed container mounted on one of the frames.

Watch

Check every day during the swarm season. On grounds of hygiene, it is best to have the bait hive remote from your established hives and then move once the colony is established and hygiene precautions taken.

The Swarm has arrived

Don't feed for 2 days. Then give sugar syrup with a top feeder.

Take the opportunity when there is no brood to treat with oxalic acid. I also put in a super frame to collect drone brood/varroa.

Once colony established (watch for pollen collection), add frames with foundation.

Continue to manage like with a collected swarm.

Remove the drone comb formed on the super frame (and the super frame from the brood box).

Pictures of 1) swarm beginning to settle and 2) drone comb below the super frame (also worker brood)

Adrian Rozkovec

Reference: Honeybee Democracy by Thomas D Seeley



Further Updates on Hornets...

Hornet will be up and about before the next Newsletter. Please see the detailed updates by Conor Wall on the General Chat and Advice group in the BADS-BKA Community on WhatsApp. I would encourage you to join if you are not already a member (47 of our members so far). The WhatsApp group administrators of the site are Nick Earl and Brian Morgan.

An Irish Recipe particularly popular around the time of St Patrick's Day (17th March) ...

Honey-Fruited Soda Bread (serves 6)

40g honey
150g mixed dry fruit (e.g. raisins, cranberries, peel)
300g self-raising flour (plus extra for dusting). Can also be gluten-free flour.
Large pinch fine sea salt
200ml buttermilk [or put 1 tablespoon of white wine vinegar or lemon juice into 200ml of normal milk and let it thicken for 10 minutes]
2 tbsp olive oil



At least one hour before making the bread, mix the honey with 3 tablespoons of tepid water so it dissolves, then stir in the dried fruit. Leave to soak.

Preheat oven to 220 degrees C/Gas 7. Sift flour and salt into large bowl. Add the honeyed fruits and mix well.

Make a well in the flour mixture and add buttermilk and oil. Mix until it comes together. Transfer to a floured surface and knead then press into a rough round shape.

If using normal wheat flour: Place on a baking sheet and press down to make a circle about 20cm in diameter. Mark a cross shape into the dough with a knife, almost all the way down onto the baking sheet. If using gluten-free flour: do not knead. Push mix down into a lined 2lb tin.

Bake for 25-30 minutes until brown all over. (If getting burnt, cover top with tin foil.)

Best eaten within 1-2 days and served toasted (with more honey).

Joanna Bellis