

From: Margaret Murdin
Sent: Fri, 23 Sep 2016 18:48
Subject: Asian Hornet
Hello.

As you will all know by now the Asian hornet has been found in Gloucester. I have just spoken with DEFRA and they are anxious that we work together and they have asked me to send out this identification sheet and press release.

The hornet was found by a beekeeper and other beekeepers in the immediate area have found hornets hawking in front of their hives. There is a 20 Km incident zone around the hive and the National Bee Unit (NBU) are currently looking for the nest. If they find it they will destroy it. Fortunately the NBU have been expecting it for some time and had a contingency plan ready to go.

They have caught several hornets and looked at their genetics and these hornets are related to those in France and Alderney. So they have not come in from China. This is important because they are obviously breeding from quite a small genetic pool and have been weakened from inbreeding. And we have to ask ourselves if they flew directly from France to Gloucester. Unlikely I think. So maybe they are in other parts of the country. We don't know.

So far every hornet found has been found by a beekeeper.

As you may know, if the hornets gain access to a colony they will bring the rest of their nest mates and the colony will be destroyed very quickly. Our European bees have no natural defenses. Bee inspectors are currently examining every hive in the incident zone. But the problem is they cannot be sure they know the whereabouts of every beekeeper and every hive.

So please:

If you are not already registered on BeeBase, register now

If you are already registered update your entry to ensure all your apiaries are included

Send this email to every beekeeper that you know so they can do the same.

Please can BBKA Trustees send this or a similar email to all their Link Associations and ask them to ask all their members to register (if they have not already done so) on BeeBase as soon as possible.

Also please look through any wasp traps you have up to see if there are any hornets in there.

And you might want to put some traps up, the same as for wasps.

The Asian hornet is a very serious pest of honey bees. Please look at the poster for the Asian hornet at the following link

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/downloadDocument.cfm?id=872>

and make sure every one else (not just beekeepers) are aware of what it looks like....remember yellow legs.

If you see an Asian hornet please do not try and find the nest. Contact the non native species people at alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk giving details.

Thanks, Margaret Murdin
Chair BBKA