

Summer 2018

Furness Flyer



A Newsletter for Furness Beekeeper Members.

Cover photo from <https://www.pittsburghmagazine.com/Pittsburgh-Magazine/October-2011/Taste-of-Honey/>

Letter from the Secretary

I can hardly believe that October has almost gone and the beekeeping season is drawing to a close.

I hope that you all had a good season and that your bees took advantage of the hot weather. Mine did, by trying to swarm, some did, some I managed to stop; but the end result is that all my colonies have a young queen but not as much honey as perhaps they should have although I am satisfied with the crop I have just finished extracting

Varroa Treatment and Syrup.

This year we bought Varroa treatment and syrup again for members to buy through the club.

We bought more than last year, which is just as well because all the syrup has been sold and we have very little varroa treatment left

It's really good that members get their winter feed and treatment from us and take advantage of the service, and I am sure that we will be doing the same next year.

Two Apiaries

Having the new apiary at Haverthwaite and the one at Gleaston has worked well this season

Saturday mornings at Gleaston in the past were far too busy for comfort and having the two apiaries certainly took the pressure off and we were able to show the new members basic beekeeping much more easily.

We did manage to harvest some honey this year which will be sold to help pay for the running cost of the apiaries .

Mentoring is an excellent way to sharpen your own beekeeping skills.

We would like to encourage more people to mentor new members at the apiary and at their own bees. It's good fun too.

Mr Wood the tenant farmer from Haverthwaite has just had a team of helpers plug plant the meadow with wild flow-

ers. He also plans to scatter wild flower seed. It will be very interesting to see the end result

Going to the Shows

We had a good day at Broughton and Millom show this year, with lots of interest from people wanting to keep bees.

These people will be contacted and hope fully will come to our lessons next season Many thanks to members that took the time out to set up the stall sell our honey and chat to potential members plus make many candles for people to buy.

The shows are an excellent way to reach out to potential beekeepers and following the success at Broughton we intend to visit more shows next season

Annual General Meeting

This year our AGM will be held on Tuesday 6th November at Greenodd Village Hall.

If you would like an issue raised at the AGM, please contact me and I will add it to "any other Business" (01539 721501)

If anyone would like to serve on our committee, please let one of the committee members know. The usual pie and pea Supper will follow the meeting.

The aim of the meeting is to complete the business as quickly as possible and bring on the pie and peas . I hope that many of you can come and see first hand how the club is faring.

Good News

It's really good to see Anthony Davies, our chairman, back to his old self after having some treatment for cancer.

We wish him well for many years to come

David Walmsley
October 2018.



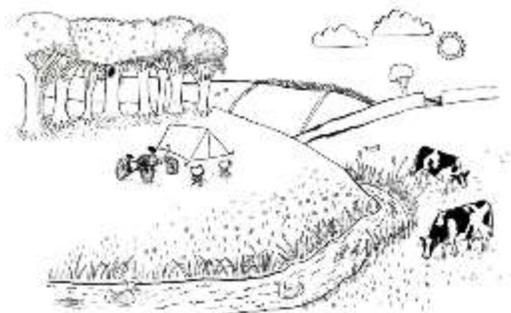
Busy Bee and the Endangered Meadow

We have recently been corresponding with author Paul Andrews about his book 'Busy Bee and the Endangered Meadow'. He was kind enough to let me have a copy to review for you.

This is truly a charming tale of how one little bee uses her creativity and daring to foil the plans of developers who wish to build on the meadow that her colony calls home and is also home to lots more wildlife. It is a story of teamwork and determination. For us beekeepers, it is also well-researched - not like a certain Movie that I will not name!

The book is 85 pages long and divided into chapters with black and white illustrations and would suit confident independent readers, or would be fine for reading aloud at bedtime. Paul suggests it would be best for readers aged 4-8. It would certainly make a fine Christmas gift!

I asked Paul to tell me a little bit about what inspired him to write this story.



The Meadow

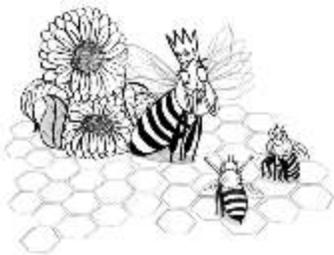
“The original idea for the story came about probably ten years or so ago. At the time my main concern was the urban sprawl of recent decades. So much farmland and meadow seemed to be being lost to developing a model where everybody would need a car to drive to work and for shopping and entertainment. We lived in Milton Keynes at the time and in theory it all looked very good but long term this model is wrong because it is not developing the high density people friendly and pollution free towns and cities that we need. I sent a very undeveloped version of the story to the publishers and got nowhere.

Time passed and I returned to the story and found that the artist that I had been using for many years for my other books had been copying off the internet. So I searched for a new artist, found one, paid a small fee and never heard anything again. More time passed and I found another artist, signed a contract but she had other work to complete so Busy Bee again gathered dust. I left it a year and then late in 2017 I found another artist, Alice, whose work you will see in the book. A month or so after finding Alice I was given three months notice and made redundant in February. I decided that I was going to self publish some of my stories using the Amazon KDP platform. So I set about going over the first four for

grammar, continuity, repetition, punctuation etc because I had never really had the time to devote the hours and patience to do so. In the three or four years of trying to sort out the artwork issue I became more aware of the neonicotinoid issue and started to read up about bees. I thought that they were simple creatures but of course the more I read the less I seemed to know.

So while Alice was creating the illustrations I published the other three stories that just needed the same text treatment as *Busy Bee* and when she had finished we published the story. I have spent the time since promoting this story because I realise now through my reading how critical bees and other pollinators are and how there has been an almighty onslaught against them. It's fairly easy to count the ridiculously low numbers of rhinos, snow leopards and whales and their survival is very important to me but the loss of the humble pollinator is far more of a concern.

My environmental concerns go back many years when I stood in a car park



An Audience with the Queen



Zooming out of the hive

once a month for Friends of the Earth collecting newspaper and cardboard. How little did we know. After, I went back to university as a part time mature student and studied Environmental Science. My favourite subject then and still is Climatology. I find it fascinating that many of the species that we currently try to save moved into those niches as the ice sheets rolled back and if they ever returned those same species would have to migrate. What that has taught me is that we need to live within our environment and not trample all over it.

I now live in London, very close to Hyde Park. They are allowing parts of it to grow wild but it could do with some flower seeds sprinkled around. I believe they keep a couple of hives in the little set aside nursery but I don't often see bees about when I walk through it."

Busy Bee and the Endangered Meadow is available from Amazon as a print book or an ebook.

The ebook can also be downloaded directly from the author's website at <https://www.junagarhmedia.co.uk/>

Mushroom offers hope for bees as fungus extract kills viruses contributing to global collapse of colonies

Diseases contributing to the global decline of bees could be beaten using a medicine created from mushrooms, according to new research.

Scientists found the fungal remedy caused a massive reduction in two strains of a virus carried by infestations of varroa mites, which began to devastate the UK's bee populations and those further afield in the 1950s, after it was spread by closely related Asian honeybees.

Since then, the mites have killed millions of honeybees around the world and are responsible, along with harmful pesticides, for the “large-scale population extinctions” that have been observed in recent years.

Beekeepers continue to struggle with the mites, which do not themselves kill bees but pass on viruses that shorten their lifespans.

To address this problem, US scientists found that colonies fed extracts from amadou and reishi fungi showed a 79-fold reduction in deformed wing virus and a 45,000-fold reduction in Lake Sinai virus.

Deformed wing virus shrivels bees' wings on bees, while Lake Sinai virus has been found at higher levels in bees from collapsing colonies and is thought to weaken the insects.

"Our greatest hope is that these extracts have such an impact on viruses that they may help varroa mites become an annoyance for bees, rather than causing huge devastation," said Professor Steve Sheppard of Washington State University, who led the study, which was published in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

"We're excited to see where this research leads us. Time is running out for bee populations and the safety and security of the world's food supply hinges on our ability to find means to improve pollinator health."

Professor Sheppard added that mites not only spread the disease but also apply additional stress to their immune systems and make them more susceptible to disease.

He said the scientists are unsure whether the extract is boosting the bees' immune system or actively fighting the viruses.

"We're working to figure that out, along with testing larger groups of colonies to develop best management practices and determine how much extract should be used and when to have the best impact," he said.

The findings came from a partnership with Washington-based business Fun-

gi Perfecti, which has also investigated the antiviral properties of fungal extracts in human cells.

Founder Paul Stamets heard about the viruses harming bees and made contact with the researchers to investigate the effect of their products on colonies.

"After two years, we demonstrated that those anti-viral properties extend to honey bees," said Professor Sheppard.

The treated bee colonies in this experiment were fed an oral treatment of extracts in dozens of small bee colonies infested with varroa mites.

Though the treatment is easy to apply it is not yet available in levels for beekeepers to purchase for their hives.

"After we follow larger colonies for a full year, we can develop recommendations for how to use the extracts," said Professor Sheppard.

Mr Stamets added: "We are ramping up production of the extracts as rapidly as is feasible, given the hurdles we must overcome to deploy this on a wide scale."

Over the last decade, beekeepers have seen a disastrous decline in the health of honey bee colonies, often averaging over 30 per cent loss annually.

Josh Gabbatiss
www.independent.co.uk



Why Asian hornets are bad news for British bees

Asian hornets have been seen across Britain in the last two years. Hornets are the largest members of the wasp family Vespidae and this predatory species could have a devastating impact on British honeybees.

Dr Gavin Broad, a wasp expert at the Museum, explains why British beekeepers are concerned about the Asian hornet (*Vespa velutina*), a species that first arrived in Britain in 2016.

Asian hornets are an invasive non-native species in Britain and pose a threat to native wildlife, especially honeybees.

Most reported sightings turn out to not be the Asian hornet but it can clearly arrive and establish nests. Please report any possible sightings of these insects.

Honeybee hunters

The non-native Asian or yellow-legged hornet is an invasive species in

Britain as their spread could negatively affect the wildlife already living here.

'The issue is that they eat honeybees,' explains Gavin. 'They are specialised honeybee predators and beekeepers are concerned.'

'The hornets raid honeybee hives by sitting outside them and capturing workers as they go in and out. They chop them up and feed the thorax to their young.'

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is trying to prevent a nationwide Asian hornet invasion, currently through eradication of individuals and nests. But if the species becomes established in the UK, it is likely there is very little that could be done about it.

Asian hornets were first introduced to Europe when they arrived in France in 2004, thought to have been unknowingly transported in cargo. From there they



rapidly spread with numerous sightings of the hornets across Western Europe.

Asian hornets have been found widely across Western Europe since 2004 © Gilles San Martin via Flickr (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Gavin says, 'At the moment we're hoping people notice the nests early enough. Three nests have been destroyed in Britain, but they'd probably do quite well if they got established.'

'It's a distinctive enough species that people notice it - but it only takes one queen for them to make it.'

There are concerns that the Asian hornet is now becoming established in Britain after they were spotted in two locations at opposite ends of England, in the town of Liskeard in Cornwall and in Hull, within a few days of each other.

Where have Asian hornets been found?

Asian hornets are relatively new to Britain, only being spotted here for the first time in the small town of Tetbury, in Gloucestershire in 2016. A nest was found and removed by the National Bee Unit.

There have been isolated sightings of the insects across the UK since then, in Greater Manchester, North Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Hull. Individuals have also been identified on the Channel Islands of Jersey and Alderney.

Asian hornets ambush worker honeybees as they enter and exit their hive. This behaviour is sometimes referred to as 'hawking'.

Hornets are the largest social wasps and build paper nests to house a colony of up to a thousand workers. As an invasive species, the Asian hornet nests that have been found in Britain have been destroyed - in Gloucestershire, Devon and Cornwall.

Gavin says, 'The Asian hornet typically builds its nest in the open - they often build on tree branches in the foliage. The nest is patterned, which probably helps to disguise it among the leaves.'

This species is active between April and November, with a peak in August and September.

'Asian hornets occur all the way up to the Himalayas, all the way through to Borneo. They've been described as different subspecies in different areas, with different colour patterns,' explains Gavin. 'The ones that are in Europe now are from China.'

'Ours probably came from the temperate part of their range, so they're used to winters.'

Asian hornets feed honeybees to their larvae, but adults only feed on sugars - such as nectar from flowers.

By Emily Osterloff
<http://www.nhm.ac.uk>

Scientists sew trackers to Asian Hornets to find and destroy nests



Environment, as part of Defra's efforts to prepare for future outbreaks of the Asian hornet in the UK.

"It is vital to find the nests early in the season to prevent the hornet spreading, as later in the year hundreds of new queens emerge and disperse from

Britain's beekeepers are turning to technology to prevent aggressive Asian hornets destroying their colonies. In a first successful trial, experts at the University of Exeter attached tracking devices to the backs of the voracious hornets and then followed them back to their nests.

The project, which was carried out southern France and Jersey, found five previously undiscovered nest, which were then destroyed to protect nearby hives.

Asian hornets are spreading rapidly in Jersey and have also been reported in southern England, the home counties and even north west England.

A single nest can contain 6,000 hornets and each can devour up to 50 honey bees in a day, but they are notoriously difficult to find.

The project was jointly funded by beekeepers and the Department for the

each nest, each with the potential to make new nests," said Professor Juliet Osborne, a co-author on the study, and Director of the Environment and Sustainability Institute on Exeter's Penryn Campus in Cornwall.

Nicola Spence, Defra Deputy Director for Plant and Bee Health, added: "This work is key for ensuring a rapid response to Asian hornets when sightings are confirmed, and in future bee inspectors will be able to use this technique to take swift action."

The Asian hornet, which grows up to 1.2 inches long, is believed to have arrived in Europe in 2004 inside a shipment of flower pots from China at the French port of Marseilles. By 2011 it had reached St Malo.

Last summer more than 3,000 nests were discovered and destroyed on the Normandy coast suggesting it is rapidly spreading north.

The first Asian hornet discovered in Britain was in Gloucestershire in 2016, when a nest was found and destroyed.

Another nest was destroyed in Woolacombe, Devon, last year. In April this year, a single hornet was found in Lancashire.



Picture: A hornet nest

Adult Asian hornets hover outside of hives to grab bees, before dismembering them and taking them back to their nest to feed to larvae.

The Exeter researchers used the smallest radio tags available – made by UK firm Biotrack Ltd – and attached them to hornets with sewing thread. Hornets were able to carry them as long as the tag weighed less than 80 per cent of the insect’s weight.

“Our new method of tracking offers a really important new tool to tackle the spread of this invader, providing an efficient means of finding hornets’ nests in urban, rural and wooded environments,” said lead researcher Dr Peter Kennedy, of the Environment and Sustainability Institute on the University of Exeter’s Penryn Campus in Cornwall.

Asian hornets are smaller than native European hornets, have a largely dark brown or black body and yellow-tipped legs, a distinctive orange-yellow stripe near the end of their abdomen, and often a thin orange-yellow line just behind the “waist”.

Their face is orange, and the back of the head is black, unlike the European hornet in which both the face and back of the head are yellow.

Honeybees numbers, like many pollinators are already in decline because of habitat loss, parasites and pesticides, and there were fears that the new threat from hornets would wipe them out completely.

The British Beekeepers Association welcomed the results of the trial. A spokesman said: “The BBKA are greatly concerned about the possible incursion by the Asian Hornet because of the devastation likely to be caused to honeybees and other pollination insects.”

The research was published in the journal *Communications Biology*.

By Sarah Knapton
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk>

Urban beekeeping is harming wild bees, says Cambridge University



The rise in amateur beekeepers keeping hives on roofs and gardens is contributing to the decline of wild bees, Cambridge University has claimed.

Experts at the Department of Zoology said the growth in urban keeping was leaving wild bees struggling to gather enough pollen and nectar.

Urban beekeeping has flourished in recent years, with many museums, charities and businesses creating colonies on their roofs.

“Keeping honeybees is an extractive activity. It removes pollen and nectar from the environment, which are natural resources needed by many wild species of bee and other pollinators,” said González-Varo, also Cambridge’s Zoology Department.

“Honeybees are artificially-bred agricultural animals similar to livestock such as pigs and cows. But this livestock can roam beyond any enclosures to disrupt local ecosystems through competition and disease.”

The conservationists argue there is a “lack of distinction” in public understanding – fuelled by misguided charity campaigns - between an agricultural problem and an urgent biodiversity issue.

Many organisations now keep bees on the roof

Many organisations now keep bees on the roof

“The crisis in global pollinator decline has been associated with one species above all, the western honeybee.

“Yet this is one of the few pollinator species that is continually replenished through breeding and agriculture,” said co-author Dr Jonas Geldmann.

“Saving the honeybee does not help wildlife. Western honeybees are a commercially managed species that can actually have negative effects on their immediate environment through the massive numbers in which they are introduced.”

Honeybees are active for nine to twelve months and travel up to 10km from their hives.

Experts say it results in massive “spillover” from farmed honeybees into the landscape, potentially out-competing wild pollinators.

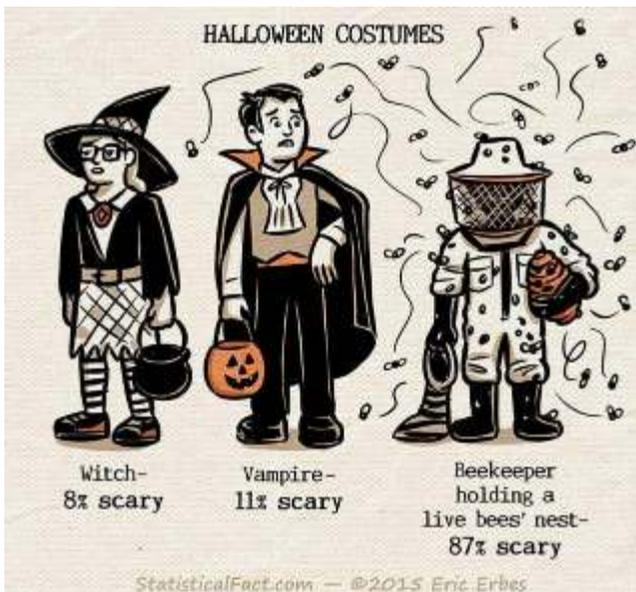
Honeybees also pass on diseases to wild bees when they feed from the same flowers, the researchers warn.

century, and is now limited to coastal areas of Scotland.

Wild European bee species such as the great yellow bumblebee, which was once found across the UK but has lost 80 per cent of its range in the last half

The experts say there needs to be greater controls of managed honeybee hives.

www.telegraph.co.uk



Furness Beekeepers AGM
Greenodd Village Hall
Tuesday 6th November 7.30pm

Followed by a
Pie & Pea Supper

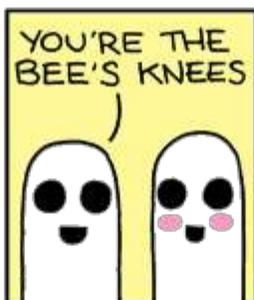
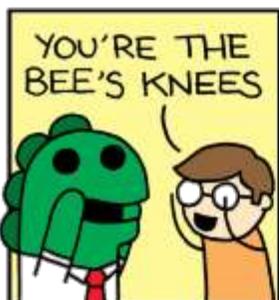
Would you like to see your story in
our newsletter?

Have you seen a story that would inter-
est our members?

Perhaps you're an artist or photogra-
pher and would like to share your
bee/honey related work?

Have you read a beekeeping book
that you would like to review for us?

If YES, than contact us at Mail:
info@furnessbeekeepers.co.uk





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