

Cumbria Bee Times

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(Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the editor and do not necessarily represent those of the CBKA)

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Do Bees Have Legal Protection In The UK?

The reasons why many people may think bees have legal protection are quite curious, and having dug around on the Internet this mistaken belief has been passed on for over a decade. A search to find which animals were protected from threat by legislation revealed a rather short list. All the usual suspects are there, including bats, which our wood preservation specialists are trained to look out for. But regarding bees, it's not the case that they were protected and are no longer: there's no mention of bees in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 either.

So where does belief that bees have legal protection stem from? The myth was in place before the proliferation of the Internet in the mid 1990s, possibly the mainstream media had a hand in this. Searching newspaper archives points the finger at a piece of legislation called the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) which was originally published in 1994. The aim of this document is to "conserve and protect existing biological diversity, and to enhance it wherever possible.". Priority species and habitats are "those that have been identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action". Various species of bees are listed in this document as being found in habitats that should be conserved in order to protect existing biological diversity. Despite being on the UK BAP, those species are not afforded any specific legal protection. The misinterpretation of this document seems to be the root of the misunderstanding. So does this mean that anyone can kill bees....? Many insecticides are capable of killing bees, their biology is not too dissimilar to that of pest species, so there is a risk of 'non-target' poisoning. A high profile prosecution in 2008 related to the misuse of a carbamate insecticide that led to the death of naturally foraging non-target bees. The prosecution was successful and no doubt fuelled the belief that the pest controller in question was fined for killing a protected species rather than for the misuse of chemicals. Interestingly, the defendant was on record stating that bees were protected.

Hopefully that clears up the confusion about whether or not bees are protected by law. Thanks to I. Gregory for finding the whole article on the web Posted in Other Wildlife by Matt 1/07/2011 | 4:39 10 www.rentokil.co.uk/blog/do-bees-have-legal-protection/

Whitehaven Beekeepers Skep Making Day

Sunday 13th September, 10.00 -16.00.

Cost: £30.00 members of WDBKA, £40.00 non-members, payable in advance, to cover the cost of the materials and tools. At the end of the day everyone will be given sufficient materials to complete their skep at home.

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

If you would like to book a place, or find out more about the day, please contact Sarah Richards at hawesfarm@hotmail.co.uk or telephone the editor.

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Telephone: 01228 573289
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Message from S.Beattie Seasonal Bee Inspector

During routine inspections of an apiary in South Cumbria this week I found a colony infected with European Foulbrood. The colony has been destroyed. The bee unit will not make public the name of the beekeeper or give the exact location of the EFB apiary. The apiary is within the 10 Km map square SD38. The nearest village to the CENTRE of the 10k map square is Newby Bridge. Beekeepers having apiaries within 3K of the outbreak will receive an e-mail giving notification of their close proximity and recommendation to inspect the brood in their colonies. In the next few weeks an inspector will be making contact with beekeepers in the South Lakes area to visit and inspect their colonies. It is important that the Bee Unit know of all apiaries in the area. If a beekeeper has an apiary in this area and has never had a visit from a bee inspector to that apiary then it's unlikely the location will be registered on beebase.... Please can they log on to bee base and update their details, including current e-mail.

The National Bee Unit Has moved.....we are now within The Animal and Plant Health Agency
Seasonal Bee Inspector, Northern England (Cumbria & North Lancashire)
National Bee Unit, Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
Mobile: 07775 119443
stewart.beattie@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Dates for your Diary

Next Cumbria Beekeepers Executive Meeting: Sat 19th Sept 14.00 at Southey St Methodist Church, Keswick.

Please make sure at least 1 member attends from your Branch. If in doubt contact your Branch Secretary for more details.

Sat August 15th : Annual Whitehaven Honey Show at the Gosforth Agricultural Show. Schedules on the CBKA website or from the editor.

Sat September 5th : Cockermouth Convention Embleton Village Hall. Details from Cockermouth Secretary.

Sat 13th Sept : Skep making Day W&DBK.

Sat 7th November : Annual Cumbria Beekeepers Honey Show Newbiggin, Penrith.

From the South Wales Argos:

Gwent police called a Beekeeper to deal with a swarm of bees outside a church in Abertillery Town Centre which was causing passing shoppers great anxiety. However the beekeeper is reported to have declined to intervene, saying that the "64,000 bees were protecting the Queen and he did not want to disturb them." The swarm eventually moved on under its own wing power.



A swarm of bees on Finkle Street

Workington last week also brought out the police force but on this occasion the local beekeeper dealt with the bees in the usual manner and allayed the fears of passers-by. These bees are now suitably hived and causing no more nuisance.

In Wales it may be that a congregation at church in the next few weeks will discover 64,000 other visitors within the hallowed walls.

European Foul Brood A reminder



EFB is caused by a bacterial infection (*Melissococcus plutonius*) and is a disease of honey bee brood. It is mostly spread by Beekeepers moving colonies, hive equipment or honey from one Apiary to another. Unclean hive tools and bee suits can transmit the infection.

The bacteria live in the digestive tract of the young larvae where they multiply and take all the brood food supplied to the grub by the nurse bees. As the larva starves it twists and turns in the cell from its usual curved position and dies in a stretched out shape across the cell. The gut of the larva becomes distended and often visible as a white bag within its' translucent body before it dies, collapses and forms a scale on the cell wall. The larva dies **before it is capped**. If the larvae are well fed they can survive to pupate and reach adult hood, but the voided contents of their gut which will be cleaned out of the cell by housekeeping bees are full of masses of the EFB bugs which the bees then pass on to the next batch of brood as they feed them. Eventually the EFB infection overwhelms the whole colony which dwindles and dies, often smelling bad due to superimposed infection with other bacterial species. European foul brood is a notifiable disease, and the Bee Inspector will destroy the infected colonies to prevent spread. Keep equipment clean, read the Fera booklet "Foul brood disease of Honey Bees" and be vigilant in looking through hives.

New Honey regulations

From 24th June 2015 new regulations have come into force for the sale of honey. These contain strictly defined limits for water content, non-soluble components and acidity. The guidance seems to imply that no honey may be extracted from any comb which may have contained brood at some stage. Go to: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/1348/pdfs/ukxi_20151348_en.pdf