Cumbria Asian Hornet Team Volunteers - Newsletter

Cumbria Asian Hornet - April 2026 Newsletter

Hi All

I hope you're all well and fighting fit. Apologies for the lack of information of late, but I've been a bit over-involved in other projects, beekeeping stuff and school talks.

So, where are we?

1. There have been a couple of **Area Coordinator Meetings** in March and yesterday. Lots of great sharing of information and issues:

- **Educational** roles with talks to wildlife, forestry, garden centre and general rural communities. Both with us and throughout the country. Education of the public, getting the citizen-science / crowd-involvement being critical to the success of YLH prosecution. Posters in village hall noticeboards, letters to key figures and interviews with media etc. The BBC documentary on the Asian hornet in the UK has, after pressure from our high-profile volunteers, been released on YouTube at last. There's a BBKA simple short film for awareness available too. Both are on the Kendal beekeepers' website Asian hornet page. Please refer the media and folk you talk to towards these sources of information, as a way of getting more people involved. However, the key message as always is for everyone to learn to ID and use app reporting process. **See it, Snap it and Report it**! I find having the Apple and Android QR code links about my person is the quickest way to help people get the apps on the phone; no fiddling around with finding things. Having the acrylic YLH block is such a good way to get people's attention.

- **Monitoring and Trapping** is the next step for many volunteers to get going. There are many currently Spring Queen trapping in the recommended areas, from last year's sightings. Queen trapping is very hit and miss if you aren't in these areas, it can be a lot of effort for little likelihood of success. Remember, we must strive for zero bio-catch options, so no bait pools for creatures to fall into and drown, holes at the base of the trap-area for smaller insects to escape and regular visits to release non-target creatures. Soon though, we will begin monitoring in earnest, with the appearance of workers and secondary nests. This is when we hope to have the **Buzzcopper** remote monitoring devices with us. Note they now have a much-updated website now. However, this doesn't prevent us from setting aside a little time each week, in our own areas, to do a little basic monitoring of our own. A good book, or a set of bird-watching binoculars, an open container with a bait-soaked cloth in it (held down with a stone for windier days) and just an hour of watching is all that's needed. Make note of the location and the timings and send then to me or Clare. If you are on the **AHA Catch App**, then make a note of it there as well. Every little helps and remember a non-sightings are as valuable, information-wise, as a sighting. If you do see one, then, as always, snap it and app it! Then **please let Clare and I know** as the NNSS/NBU have been a bit slack in sharing information of late and this has been a source of concern with BBKA and other organisations. This is being addressed at higher government levels.

2. **NNSS/NBU Support Roles**, are the possible next step, with requests, usually via the BBKA for volunteers to follow up on Asian Hornet App reports. This may include monitoring at a specific location or even contacting someone who has a credible report but no supporting photo. To that aim, at the next meeting in May, Julia Hoggard and I will be role-playing and showing you how to conduct a call to a reporter and a list of questions to narrow down the credibility of a sighting, via verbal description.

3. **Finance and Organisation** is continuing to develop. I will be getting a brief soon from Patrick Curry of Wiltshire, who is pursuing, with others, a centralised and government recognised volunteer body. In the meantime, Clare and I will discuss the short-term recompensing process, beyond just from your local BKA. I shall follow up on this soon. Obviously, we would be reluctant to form a CIC / CIO only just in time for it to be unnecessary.

4. **Support for Volunteers** is substantial currently but still developing. Remember all the latest information is on www.kendalbeekeepers.com/asian-hornet and the latest volunteer information and tools are available on www.kendalbeekeepers.com/caht . Please let me know if any errors, updates or requested changes are needed on either of these pages. For those that can, there's a wealth of details, resources, help and information on the BBKA members hub here: https://memberhub.bbka.org.uk/course/index.php?categoryid=55 . If there's anything else you need or would like Clare or I to talk to a group or organisation, then please don't hesitate to contact us.
For those that are still not on it, please contact me for access to the ever-more-important **WhatsApp group**, both the BBKA national and CAHT ones. Lots of updates there and a good place for question and answers.

5. Next Meeting - We will soon establish a date for the next Zoom Meeting in May and this will pre-empt the June monitoring season. We are also, in conjunction with Lancashire and Yorkshire volunteers, an Awareness Week, to co-inside with the Non-Native Species Secretariat (NNSS) invasive species week. It was mutually agreed that the BBKA Asian Hornet Week in September is a little too late for our public awareness drive.

That's all for now and I hope to catch up soon.

Andy

Andrew Brown / Clare Woowat
BBKA Asian Hornet Team Coordinator (Cumbria)
www.kendalbeekeepers.com/asian-hornet
cumbriaaht@gmail.com
07551 445658 / 07931 402148
WhatsApp

Yellow-legged Asian hornet sigtings/nest tally 2026
January - April

5th January - Caergwrle, near Wrexham, Clwyd - Dead secondary nest
26th February - Doncaster, South Yorkshire - Sighting
13th March - Sawtry, Cambrideshire - Sighting
8th April - Nonington, Kent - Sighting
9th April - Densole, Kent - Sighting
9th April - Oxsted, Surrey - Sighting
10th April - Sandwich, Kent - Sighting
11th April - Nonnington, Kent - Sighting
11th April - Kingston, Kent - Sighting