



Eastern Region Annual Report 2017 National Bee Unit

The 2017 Season – An Overview

As usual, with such a large region, honey yields varied greatly. Reports are indicating a good flow in the spring and then the main flow being a bit of a failure, apart from beekeepers who had specialist crops like Borage and Lucerne. Beekeepers who went to the heather reported an increase in yields as did anybody who had bees on the Ivy. This may lead to problems if we have a long drawn out winter, as the ivy honey granulates very hard and bees are unable to use it. There are advantages of the late Ivy flow, such as bees brooding late, giving much needed young bees to take the colony through the winter, and a good supply of pollen.

The Bee Inspectors have had another busy season with the emphasis on checking for SHB and, throughout, the season keeping an eye out for the ever-threatening Asian Hornet. EFB has reduced within the region but, unfortunately, we have had more cases of AFB, this time in Suffolk, placing more pressure on the Inspectors to try and trace the source.

Within the Region we organised three major Bee Health days; Bedford, Hertfordshire and Essex. These were well attended. We also organised a smaller event with the West Norfolk & Kings Lynn Beekeepers and various Bee Safaris at sites around the Region. These events all enabled beekeepers to see how the Inspectorate works and to get 'hands on' experience of looking for bee pests and diseases.

As part of our preparation for any incursion of an exotic threat eg SHB, Tropilaelaps or Asian Hornet, the Bee Inspectorate carry out contingency exercises. In 2017 we ran such an exercise in the Leicestershire area which lasted five days. Time was spent contacting beekeepers, arranging time slots and then sending out teams of Inspectors to carry out Exotic Pest Inspections on the colonies within a 15km radius of the initial, fictitious, incursion. The exercise was a success and it highlighted areas the inspectorate needs to concentrate on but also highlighted the importance, to the success of these situations, of beekeepers having their apiaries registered and up to date on Beebase. If we are to stand any chance of eliminating the pest, we need full cooperation from all beekeepers.

As part of our surveillance for exotic threats we have set up a number of Sentinel apiaries around the region. During the winter I will be reviewing our current sites and looking to increase the number, especially around the potential areas where we think an incursion



may occur. So I will be looking for any beekeepers who may be interested in monitoring their hives and sending in floor samples, with some paperwork, twice a year. Please get in touch with either myself at keith.morgan@apha.gsi.gov.uk or the seasonal bee Inspectors listed at the end of this report if you are willing to help.

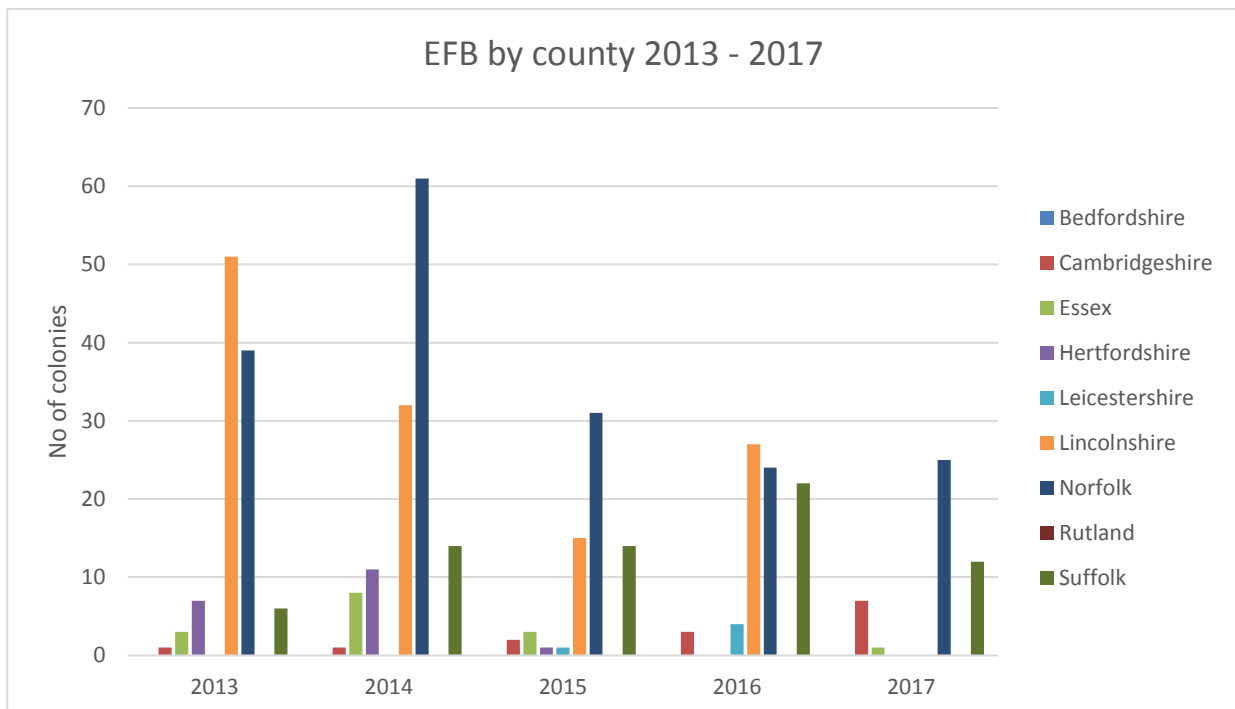
Another part of the Bee Inspectorate work is to monitor imports of both queens and package bees within the Region for the incursion of an exotic pest. Fortunately nothing was found this year.

Late in the season the Inspectors from within the Eastern Region were called upon to take part in the tracking and elimination of yet another Asian Hornet nest, this time in North Devon. An update on Asian Hornet, Small Hive Beetle and the current list of approved Varroacides is given later in this article.

Foulbrood Diseases and Inspection Statistics for the Eastern Region in 2017

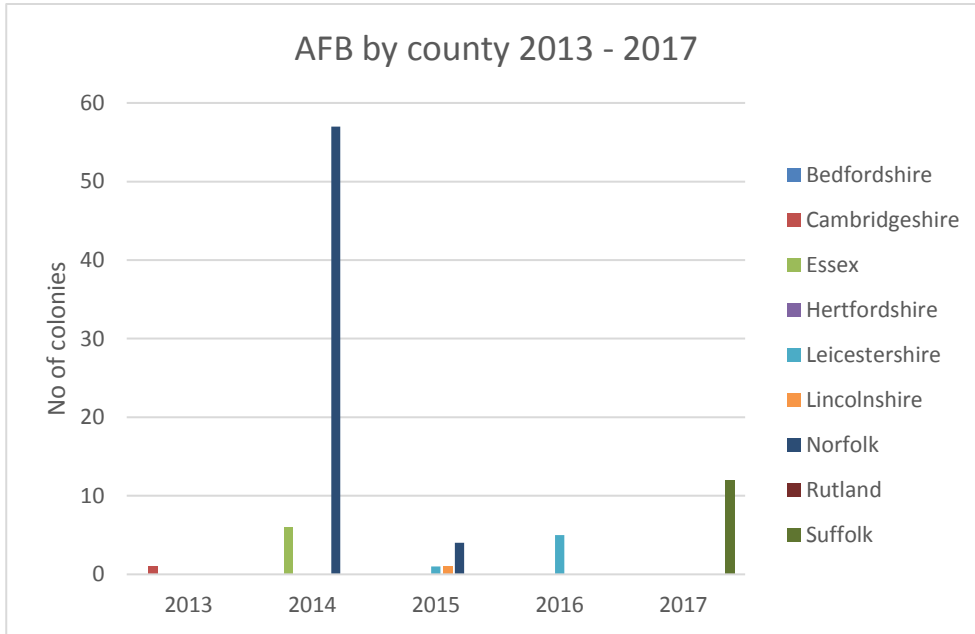
5295 colonies were inspected and 1053 apiary visits made within the region, more than last year [4109 colonies and 753 Apiaries]

Regional trends of EFB- by county in the Eastern Region





Regional trends of AFB- by county in the Eastern Region



OS 10km squares where EFB has been found in 2017

Sq No	Area	County
TL45	South Cambs	Cambridgeshire
TL46	North Cambs	Cambridgeshire
TM03	Dedham	Essex
TF63	Heacham	Norfolk
TG12	Alysham	Norfolk
TG20	Norwich South	Norfolk
TM29	Hempnall	Norfolk
TM38	All Saints	Norfolk
TM39	Kirby Cane	Norfolk
TM03	Dedham	Suffolk
TM49	Haddiscoe	Suffolk
TM59	Lowestoft	Suffolk



OS 10km Squares where AFB has been found in 2017

Sq No	Area	County
TM05	Stowmarket	Suffolk
TM25	Charsfield	Suffolk
TM36	Rendham	Suffolk
TM46	Leiston	Suffolk

Further details and mapping can be found on the disease incidence pages of BeeBase at www.nationalbeeunit.com. It is recommended that these are checked regularly by beekeepers to see if there is any foulbrood disease close by their own apiary sites.

BeeBase Registration and Association Membership Lists



I would like to remind everyone how essential it is that all apiaries are registered on BeeBase so that we can identify any at risk of notifiable disease or an incursion of an exotic pest into the UK and target control measures effectively. Self-registration is free via the link at www.nationalbeeunit.com, or you can register by contacting the NBU office on **033 303 0094** or your Regional Bee Inspector.

All beekeepers registered on BeeBase with a current email address will receive an automatic email alert if disease is found within 3km of the registered apiary. If you are self-registered, please ensure that you keep your apiary records up to date or contact me if you are unsure. Self-registration is recommended as it also gives beekeepers secure password protected access to personal details and inspection records.

Your association can send us their list of members if they wish, but can only do this if they satisfy the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The easiest way to do this is to amend the membership renewal form to contain the following phrase;

“Please note that a condition of membership is your agreement to membership details being held on a computer. This information will be used for the efficient running of the association by its officials, for the distribution of the BBKA magazine, for BBKA Insurance, for Bee Disease Insurance, and passed to the Regional Bee Inspector for inclusion on BeeBase to aid them in the control of notifiable bee diseases”.



These lists are very useful to us as they allow us to identify new beekeepers and to update contact details for existing beekeepers. **Secretaries** – if you currently have this in place, please email me your current membership list so I can ensure our records are as accurate and complete as possible. This is something that will be incredibly important if we are unfortunate enough to find Small Hive Beetle in the UK or Asian Hornet in our region in the coming season.

Education and Advisory Services

In 2018 we already have four Bee Health days booked for Essex, Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire and West Norfolk. If any other Counties wish to have a Bee Health Day then please get in touch. We also will be running the Eastern Region Forum on the 7th March, details will be sent to secretaries inviting representatives of all the associations within the Eastern Region to attend.

I will encourage all associations within the Region to run Bee Health Days at least every other year. These provide the chance for old and new beekeepers to get a more hands on knowledge of both the notifiable diseases and the potential Exotic threats we now face, to handle bees with the emphasis on disease spotting, to get updates on approved Varroacides, to see some diseased frames and, last but not least, to meet the inspectorate and fellow beekeepers.





Inspectorate Changes

2017 was the year that the longest serving Bee Inspector hung up his bee suit. After 40 years in the role Mr Peter Heath retired. Having known and worked with Peter for 17 years I found all the time spent with him interesting and educational. Peter, in his early years, worked for the well-known beefarmer Rob Manley and also with Oliver Field [the author of Honey by the Ton]. Peter was always full of tales of his time working with both of them and also for MAFF, as it was in its early days. Every year Peter was never sure if he was going to have a job in the summer or not. Beebase, as we know it now, was then just a set of indexed cards containing the beekeepers name and contact details, Peter would be sent out and told to get on with it. His first job, in those early days, was to visit the beekeepers who had had EFB the previous year and to treat the colonies with OTC irrespectively of whether they had got EFB or not. A long way from today, where the use of antibiotics in bees is rare, as shook swarm or destruction is more effective.

Over the years we have estimated that Peter has inspected in excess of 60,000 colonies and has dealt with huge numbers of diseased colonies within Essex and the surrounding counties. After many years with numerous cases of disease, in 2017 Essex had just one case of EFB and no AFB. There were also no cases in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire two other Counties that Peter used to inspect.

Peter officially retired in July and we had a small retirement presentation where we handed over some book vouchers and the customary hive tool, little be known by Peter that this was not going to be his only retirement event. Between myself and Sylvia Pettitt we organised a far larger party, where retired inspectors and colleagues who Peter had worked with over the years and representatives from the Essex Bee Association attended. This was a total shock to Peter who had thought he had managed to escape a large leaving presentation. Mr Mike Brown, head of the NBU, presented Peter with a pair of binoculars, so he could participate in one of his favourite pastimes, bird watching and the Essex Association presented Peter with some mementos from his many years as their Bee Inspector. On this note I must thank Peter for all his work over the years, he will be missed by all his colleagues who have worked with him and by the beekeepers out there who will have benefited from his advice and help over the years. An extra thank you from me for all his help, support and reliability over the years.



At the end of 2017 Mr Paul Horton who had established himself as a well-respected, very knowledgeable and much liked Seasonal Bee Inspector within Lincolnshire decided to leave the inspectorate to spend his time concentrating on his own bee keeping business. I am sure that together with all his colleagues and myself you will wish him all the very best in the future.

Mr Jonathan Baynes joined the inspectorate in July 2017 and will be covering West Suffolk and South Cambridgeshire. Jonathan has been involved with the Cambridgeshire Beekeepers over a number of years and is a welcome addition to the Eastern team.



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2018 Seasonal Bee Inspectors contact details from the 1st April 2018

Peter Davies Norfolk, South Lincs and North Cambridgeshire

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David Bonner Leicester and Rutland

david.bonner@apha.gsi.gov.uk 07775119434

Fred Daynes Cambridgeshire

Frederich.daynes@apha.gsi.gov.uk 07775119435

Peter Folge Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and West Essex

Peter.folge@apha.gsi.gov.uk 07775119433

Jonathan Baynes South Cambridgeshire West Suffolk

Jonathan.baynes@apha.gsi.gov.uk 07557157149

David Burns East Suffolk, South East Norfolk

David.burns@apha.gsi.gov.uk 07900365721

We are currently recruiting for positions in Lincolnshire and Essex and as soon as these vacancies are filled details will be announced on Beebase

In the meantime any problems please contact myself by phone or email

Keith Morgan

Regional Bee Inspector, Eastern Region

(Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Herts, Bedfordshire, Leicestershire Rutland, Lincs)

Telephone: 01485 520838| Mobile: 07919004215| Jabber 02082257165 Email:

keith.morgan@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.gov.uk/apha | Twitter: [@APHAgovuk](https://twitter.com/APHAgovuk) | Facebook: [aphagov](https://www.facebook.com/aphagov)

National Bee Unit Website (BeeBase): www.nationalbeeunit.com

Address: National Bee Unit, Sand Hutton, York, YO41 1LZ



Update on Asian hornet and Small Hive Beetle in Europe



Early this year surveillance for the Asian Hornet, *Vespa velutina*, was resumed and enhanced trapping was carried out in Gloucestershire and North Somerset following last year's discovery and destruction of a nest at Tetbury and individual hornets found in North Somerset. No further hornets have been found in those areas but an insect caught flying inside a large distribution warehouse near Glasgow, Scotland in March 2017 was confirmed as an Asian Hornet. It can only be assumed that

this hornet had travelled all the way from southern Europe inside a container and flew out into the warehouse when goods were unloaded. This is a stark reminder that Asian Hornet (and other exotic pests) could arrive almost anywhere in the UK given the vast volume of traffic and goods arriving in the UK from across the channel and other countries where exotic pests are endemic. The Scottish incursion could well have been a mated queen emerging from hibernation and if released into the open, may have been able to establish a nest. All beekeepers are advised to monitor for Asian Hornet using a suitable trap. These can be home-made and there are links to a leaflet (and a YouTube video) describing how to make one on BeeBase (see <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=208>) Monitoring traps are advised in areas away from a confirmed outbreak as regular inspection will allow other beneficial insects to be released unharmed. Further sightings of Asian Hornets have been confirmed this year on the Channel Isles. In Jersey a primary nest was discovered in a bee hive quite early in the year, several more nests in various stages of development have been found there and were destroyed throughout the season.

Many reports of possible sightings in the UK have been received by the Non-Native Species Secretariat (NNSS) and the NBU during the year. However only one in late September near Woolacombe in North Devon was identified as an Asian Hornet. Once a positive confirmation was made, the NBU Contingency Plan was activated and Bee Inspectors deployed in the area. Aided by lessons learned last year during the outbreak in Tetbury, the nest was quickly discovered and destroyed. The nest wasn't in a typical position, high up in a tree as in Tetbury, but hidden within a tall hedge. Cutting away the cover revealed a nest of about 50cms diameter. Surveillance in the area after destruction of the nest has shown no further hornet activity.





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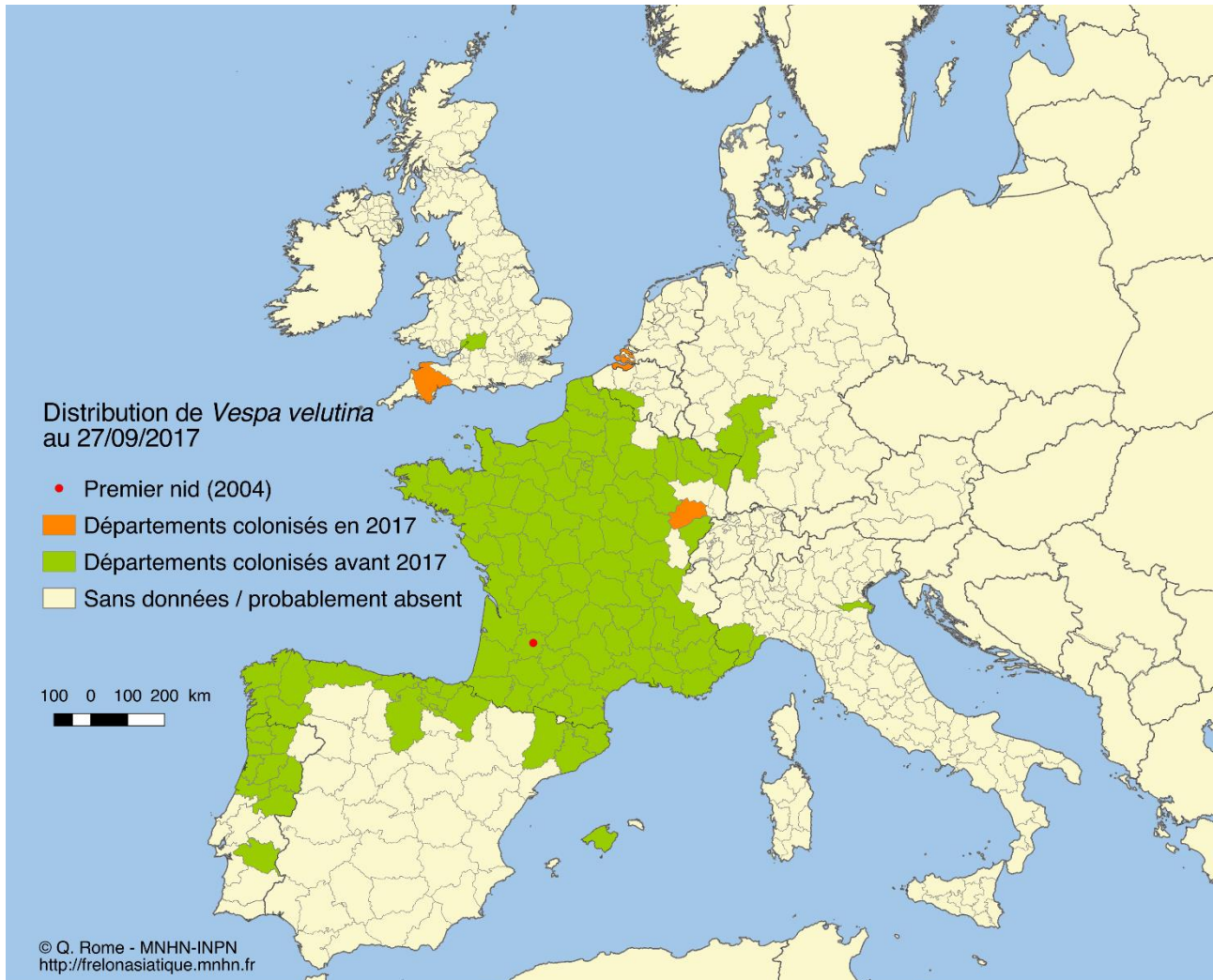
Leila Goss the SBI in North Devon is an expert with a sweep net, having worked at Exeter University studying bumble bees. Below is an Asian Hornet that she captured that was sent up to the NNSS for identification purposes at the beginning of the North Devon outbreak.



Initial laboratory examination and analysis of the nest indicate that this was a fresh incursion from the French Asian Hornet population and not directly related to the nest discovered in Tetbury last year. DNA tests on the brood show that reproduction had reached the stage of drone eggs only. As with other *Vespa* species, drones are produced before gynes (virgin queens) and so we can be fairly certain that this nest was destroyed before it reached the stage of releasing queens capable of setting up new colonies next spring.



The map illustrated below shows the further spread of Asian Hornet in 2017 (marked in orange on the map)



Please check BeeBase News items for regular updates and the dedicated page at <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=208> for further information including the Asian Hornet id. sheet, videos and useful links. Any suspect sightings of the Asian Hornet should be reported to the Native Species Secretariat at alernonnative@ceh.ac.uk and the NBU office or your Regional Bee Inspector.



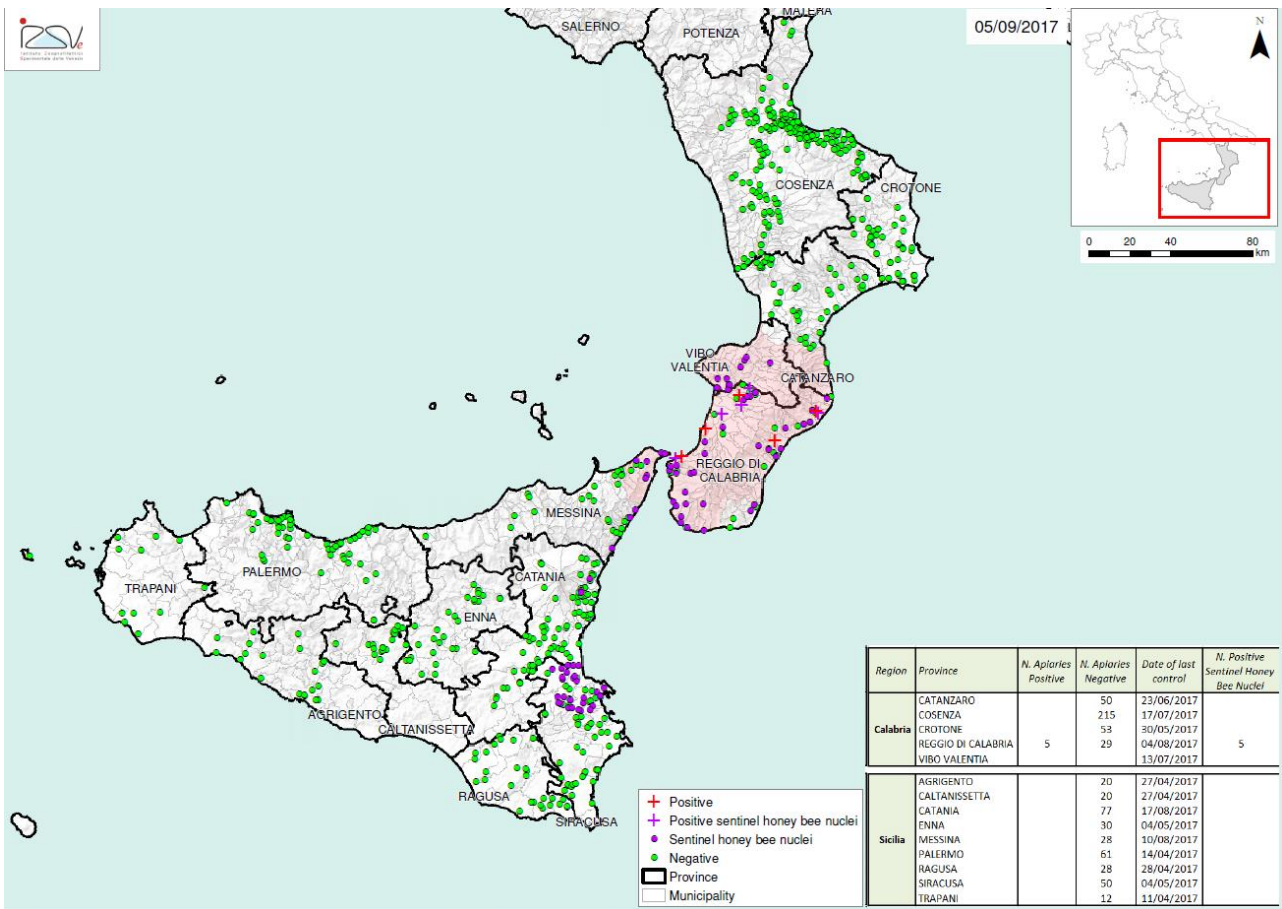
The image gallery on BeeBase <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/gallery/index.cfm> contains several pictures of Asian Hornet and Small Hive Beetle as well as other pests and pathogens and general beekeeping topics. All images are subject to © Crown copyright 2010 but may be used free of charge in any format for non-commercial research, private study or internal circulation within your organization. When reproducing images, please associate the phrase "Courtesy of the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Crown Copyright" alongside each image.

<http://frelonasiatique.mnhn.fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2016/07/Carte-Vespa-velutina-Europe-Q-Rome-MNHN-e1469556132917.png>

Small Hive Beetle



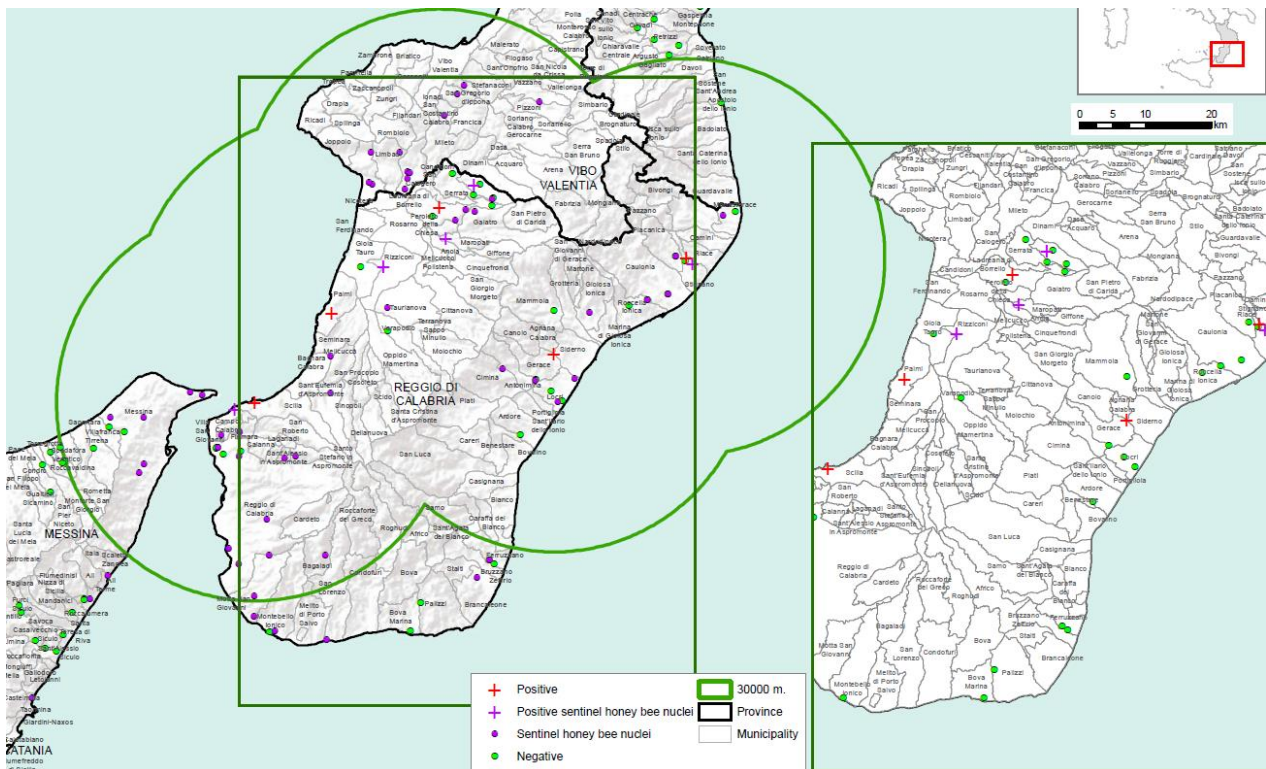
At the time of writing there have been a total of just 10 apiaries reported positive for Small Hive Beetle (SHB) in the province of Reggio Di Calabria in the region of Calabria, southern Italy. Two of these were in fact feral colonies and 5 others were sentinel apiaries set up by the authorities.



Surveillance inspections in Sicily (326 apiaries) and in the more northern regions of Cosenza, Crotona and Catanzaro (318 apiaries) have all been clear. This indicates that the secondary outbreaks in Sicily in 2014 and Cosenza last year (the latter due to the illegal movement of colonies) may have been eradicated.

There has been a change in EU legislation

On the basis of information received from the Italian competent authorities relating to their experience with Small Hive Beetle occurrences in Southern Italy the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/2174 of 20 November 2017 has been passed, amending Annex E to Council Directive 92/65/EEC as regards the health certificate for trade in bees and bumble bees such that in respect of SHB, as well as meeting other measures, honey bee queen exports must originate from an area at least 30 km distance from the limits of a protection zone of at least 20 km in radius around confirmed occurrence(s) of the small hive beetle. The previous 100km exclusion zone remains in place in respect of *Tropilaelaps* sp. Mites and bee packages.



See <http://www.izsvenezie.com/aethina-tumida-in-italy/>

The map above indicates that SHB is now present right across the region of Reggio Di Calabria with three new positives in two of the eastern provinces.

The Italian experience does suggest that early detection and immediate action before SHB becomes established may enable a small localised outbreak to be eradicated and once again I would encourage all beekeepers to make themselves aware of the signs of SHB and monitoring techniques as described in the NBU leaflet, 'The Small Hive Beetle – a serious threat to European Apiculture'. See the dedicated pages for SHB on BeeBase <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=125> for links to the leaflet, a video and much more detailed information.

There is also a new Fact Sheet on Beebase 'Contingency Planning Procedures' which covers Small Hive Beetle, Tropilaelaps and Asian Hornet <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=167>

Imports 2017

Import or export of bees, (including queens, packages and colonies) is permitted only if accompanied by an Official European Union (EU) or Third Country health certificate issued by the competent authority where the bees originated. It is a **legal** requirement that you



notify the **National Bee Unit** of imports of bees from outside the UK. You can do this by completing the [Importer Notification Form](#) and posting, faxing or emailing it to us. Alternatively, if self-registered, you can log in to the Beekeeper pages of BeeBase and click the 'Import Notifications' link from the left hand index. It is of course illegal to import bees, queens or any bee-related products from within the SHB exclusion zone around the affected areas in southern Italy. Further details can be found on the Imports/Exports pages of BeeBase at <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?sectionid=47>

The number of queens imported into England, Scotland and Wales from other EU countries continues to rise year on year. Import numbers for 2017 at time of writing are as follows (2016 figures in brackets for comparison):

- Queens imported from the EU 15,210 (13,924)
- Packages of Bees imported from the EU 1,776 (1,924)
- Of which from Italy 1,310 (1,354)
- Nucs imported from the EU 19 (23)
- Full colonies imported from the EU 0 (0)
- Queens from Third Countries 525 (Argentina) (335, also Argentina)

Varroacides

It is perhaps worth mentioning here that there have been some additions recently to the Varroa treatments available in the UK. The list of those registered and approved for use by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is available on their web site (<http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/ProductInformationDatabase/Default.aspx>) together with the 'Summary of Product Characteristics' giving full details of use. For the full list select 'Bees' on the drop down list of Species in the product search link. Apivar is the most recent addition and Apitraz has now become available in the UK. Both of these are strips containing Amitraz as the active ingredient. Now that they are on general release they may be obtained from UK beekeeping suppliers and will no longer require a veterinary prescription. Oxuvar, an oxalic acid based treatment applied by the 'trickle' method was also approved late last year but is currently without a UK distributor. See the VMD list of approved products below.



Product name	MA number	Company	Legal Category	Issued	Indications
Bayvarol 3.6 mg Bee-hive Strips for Honey Bees	00010/4090	Bayer plc	AVM-GSL	17/07/1992	For the diagnosis and control of flumethrin sensitive Varroa jacobsoni in honeybees.
Apistan 10.3% w/w Bee Hive Strip	17017/4000	Vita (Europe) Ltd	AVM-GSL	26/11/1998	Control of varroosis (Varroa destructor (formerly known as Varroa jacobsoni)) in honeybee colonies
Apiguard Gel (25% Thymol) for Beehive Use	17017/4002	Vita (Europe) Ltd	AVM-GSL	23/07/2003	Treatment of varroosis due to Varroa destructor.
Apilife Var Bee-Hive Strip for Honey Bees	23101/4000	Chemicals Laif S.P.A	AVM-GSL	24/06/2009	Treatment of varroosis due to Varroa destructor.
Thymovar 15 g Bee-hive Strips for Honey Bees	36234/4000	Andermatt BioVet GmbH	AVM-GSL	15/06/2010	Treatment of varroosis on honey bee (Apis mellifera) due to Varroa mite (Varroa destructor).
MAQS Formic Acid 68.2g Beehive Strips for Honey Bees	40476/4000	NOD Europe Ltd	AVM-GSL	26/02/2013	Treatment of varroosis caused by Varroa destructor in honey bees (Apis mellifera).
API-Bioxal, 886 mg/g powder for in-hive use	23101/4001	Chemicals Laif S.P.A	AVM-GSL	08/09/2015	Treatment of varroosis (Varroa destructor, parasite of Apis mellifera).
Apitraz 500 mg Bee-hive Strips for Honey Bees	20634/4009	Laboratorios Calier, SA	AVM-GSL	26/04/2016	Treatment of external parasitosis caused by Varroa destructor sensitive to Amitraz.
Oxovar 5.7%, 41.0 mg/ml Concentrate for Solution for Honey Bees	36234/4001	Andermatt BioVet GmbH	AVM-GSL	28/10/2016	Treatment of varroosis on honey bees (Apis mellifera) due to Varroa mites (Varroa destructor).
PolyVar Yellow 275 mg Bee-hive Strip	00010/4216	Bayer plc	AVM-GSL	07/03/2017	For the treatment of varroosis in honey bees caused by flumethrin sensitive Varroa destructor mites.



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VarroMed 5 mg/ml + 44 mg/ml Bee-hive Dispersion for Honey Bees	EU/2/16/203/001	BeeVital GmbH	AVM-GSL	05/04/2017	Treatment of varroosis (Varroa destructor) in honey bee colonies with and without brood.
VarroMed 75 mg + 660 mg Bee-hive Dispersion for Honey Bees	EU/2/16/203/002	BeeVital GmbH	AVM-GSL	05/04/2017	Treatment of varroosis (Varroa destructor) in honey bee colonies with and without brood.
Apivar 500 mg Bee-hive Strips for Honey Bees	48004/4000	Veto Pharma	AVM-GSL	15/09/2017	Treatment of varroosis due to Varroa destructor sensitive to Amitraz in honey bees.