

National Bee Unit 2010 Wales Regional Review



Inspections

Between March 29th and October 1st, Wales' 10 seasonal bee inspectors have made 1349 apiary visits, inspecting 4878 hives. Beebase recorded 311 new beekeepers in Wales, of these 120 self registered. Currently in Wales we have 2334 beekeepers with 13,968 colonies in 3023 apiaries on Beebase.

Seasonal Inspectors

John Beavan	S Clwyd & N Powys
Adrian Bowen	W Glamorgan & W Carmarthenshire
David Coles	Gwent
Jonathan Garratt	N Gwynedd
Peter Guthrie	Powys
David Hards	Clwyd
Peter Haywood	S Gwynedd & N Ceredigion
Ceri Morgan	Pembrokeshire & S Ceredigion
Mike Pett	Mid & South Glamorgan

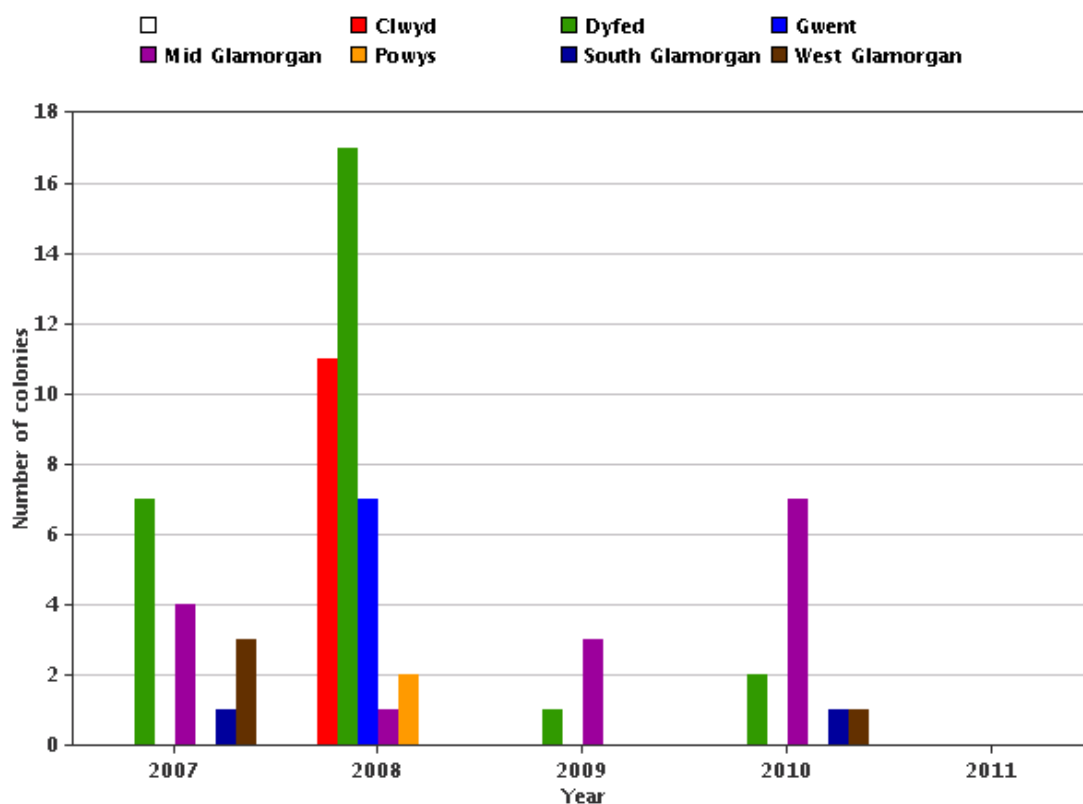
Unfortunately we lost the services of Gerard Worthington in Ceredigion mid way through the season as he decided to concentrate on his commercial beekeeping operation. Likewise Peter Guthrie has decided to retire from bee inspecting and sadly will not be with us in 2011, but we hope to replace them.

Disease levels

Disease levels remain relatively low. We dealt with 3 cases of American Foul Brood and 11 cases of European Foul Brood in 8 apiaries which resulted in 8 destructions and 6 shook swarm treatments.

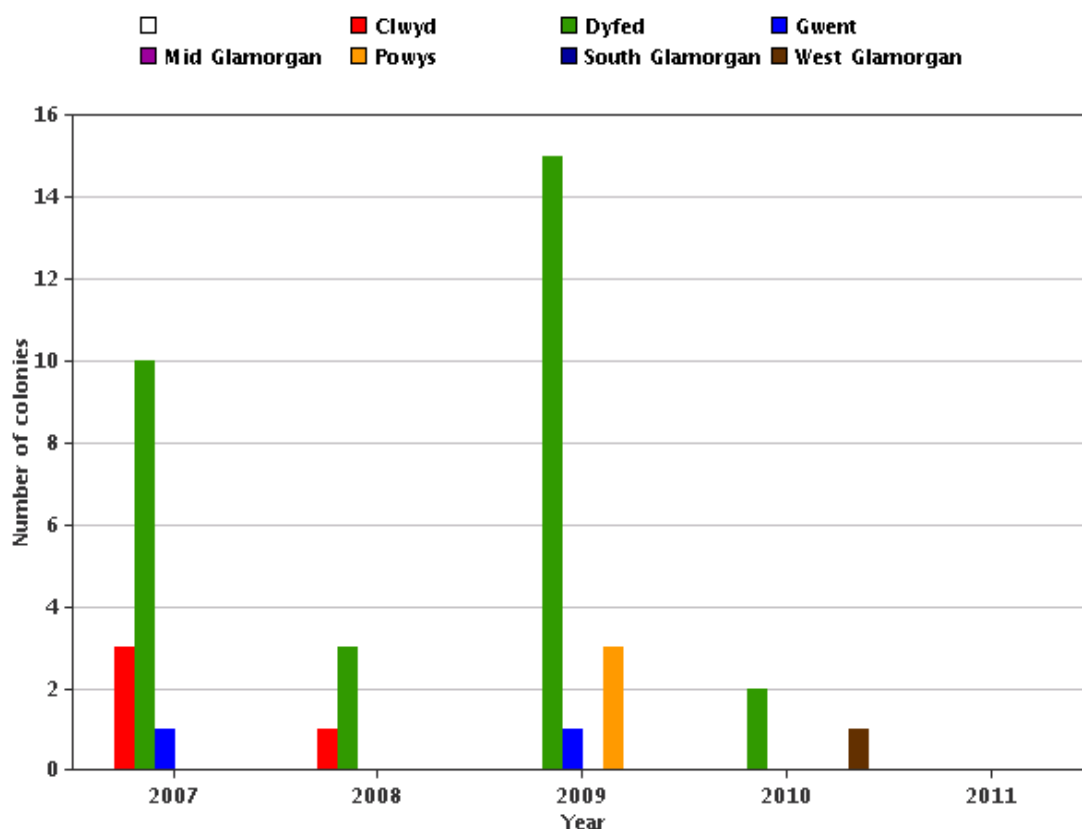
We recorded a colony loss rate of 13.8% for 2010 in Wales, this is down from 19.2% in 2009. Colonies went into the winter well stocked from a good ivy flow in autumn 2009.

County trends for EFB are as follows:



County	10 km Squares where EFB Found	Area Name	Number of Colonies Infected	Month EFB Found
Dyfed	SN50	N LLANELLI	2	April
Mid Glamorgan	SS88	PYLE	1	July
Mid Glamorgan	SS89	MAESTEG	2	May
Mid Glamorgan	SS89	MAESTEG	1	June
Mid Glamorgan	SS89	MAESTEG	1	July
Mid Glamorgan	SS98	PENCOED	2	June
West Glamorgan	SN70	YSTALYFERA	1	August

County trends for AFB:



County	10 km Squares where AFB Found	Area Name	Number of Colonies Infected	Month AFB Found
Dyfed	SN10	WISEMANS BRIDGE	2	August
West Glamorgan	SN70	YSTALYFERA	1	August

Exotic Pest Surveillance

We carried out 110 specific exotic pest inspections and set up 15 sentinel apiaries to monitor for exotic pests. These are both targeted to identified risk points and randomly situated. As well as visual inspection, the sentinel apiary hive floor debris is sampled twice a year and monitored for Small Hive Beetle and Tropilaelaps at the NBU laboratory.

Varroa

Varroa levels are predominantly low, this is probably due to better beekeeper varroa control through IPM. However there are signs of colonies developing some resistance, with more feral colonies reported. Many beekeepers are now monitoring levels carefully and only treating when necessary. The most popular treatments used are thymol and oxalic acid based, which represents a softer chemical regime than synthetic pyrethroids.

Random Apiary Survey (RAS)

Some RAS results are now available, with apologies from the lab for the time taken to post results on Beebase. Please see below for how to access your results. Many thanks to all the beekeepers who allowed us to sample from their hives and build up a picture of the pathogens present throughout the country.

Beebase

If you've been inspected, you will be registered on Beebase: contact nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk for your username and password to access your records. Beebase now issues email alerts of disease in specific areas which you will receive if your email address is in your details. It also has a comprehensive list of factsheets concerning disease and husbandry.

Talks and Demonstrations

We have been involved in 158 talks, demonstrations and educational events in Wales, covering varroa management, swarm control, foul brood recognition, exotic pest awareness, colony feeding, nosema health checks, honey extraction, hive hygiene and husbandry, the role of the bee inspector and the work of the NBU in disease control and colony health checks.

Honey

The season started off so well but effectively finished early in July. Those taking a good crop either took it off at the end of June or have done well later with Himalayan Balsam in flower. Others report a poor season overall with some colonies near starvation in August. Yields have been better in east Wales and in coastal areas than in central Wales, and very varied.

Stores

With adequate feeding most hives are going into winter with good stores, although we did not have an ivy flow like in autumn 2009. Heft hives periodically to assess their weight and don't be afraid to feed with candy or fondant if feeling light. Wrap fondant in plastic to keep it moist and apply by cutting a hole to fit over the feed hole in the crown board.