



# CBKA NEWSLETTER

Available online at  
[www.teesbees.co.uk](http://www.teesbees.co.uk)

Year 31/6  
February 2017

**T**wo things dominate this month's newsletter. Firstly the threat to our colonies from exotic pests and secondly how we can continue to improve our beekeeping by reading, attending meetings and working with each other. A third theme is the survey of members which we undertook in January. Thank you to all who responded; at almost half the members it was an impressive turn out.

**A**sian Hornets are probably the new pest we have been thinking about in the past 6 months, after all they are here in England. Whilst it is over 200 miles away the normal rate of spread in France is 60 miles a year, but in Italy the leap this year was about 180 miles and Tetbury is a long way inland from the nearest European sightings.

**S**mall Hive Beetles and Tropilaelaps are also pests we need to be prepared for. Ivor Flatman, the Regional Bee Inspector for the southern part of our area has written reminding us that the NBU has increased its emphasis on surveillance for exotic pests. Last year it revised and re-evaluated the risk points for the introduction of exotic pests and it perhaps comes as no surprise that, apart from the direct importation of bees, the major ports are considered to be in the highest risk category of incursion through transport etc. - perhaps in the north, particularly of Small Hive Beetle. Teesport is therefore high on the list.

**T**he NBU runs Enhanced and Voluntary Sentinel Apiary Programmes. This either involves regular seasonal visits by the seasonal Bee Inspector or sending in floor scrapings twice a year and checking for SHB and Tropilaelaps occasionally during the season. One or two volunteers South of the Tees and as near as possible to the port areas East of Middlesbrough, would be helpful. If you are interested please contact [Ivor Flatman](mailto:Ivor.Flatman@teesbees.co.uk) directly.

**L**earning more about Beekeeping is a responsibility we all have. On the right of this page are a series of opportunities ranging from our own winter meetings, the Yorkshire Beekeepers Spring Conference with speakers on Hive Products, the medical aspects of stings, workshops and drop in sessions, the North East Convention the flowing week or the National BBKA Spring event over a long weekend in early April. If you don't want to travel, or pay fees the [National Honey Show YouTube lectures](#) are great, there is a free training module on disease on [BeeBase](#) and I have just found out about the BeeCraft Hangouts, the [next one is live](#) at 8pm on 14 March, with [previous ones available](#) as well. If you prefer something a little lighter the Barkston Ash Beekeepers website has a number of [quizzes](#) based on the BBKA Modules.

**H**ere we have two projects. Firstly, training sessions for those taking the Basic Assessment in 2017. Secondly, a learning group for those preparing to take Module 1, honeybee management, in the November sitting. Please contact [Newsletter@teesbees.co.uk](mailto:Newsletter@teesbees.co.uk) if your interested.

## BEE INFORMED

The *at a glance* quick guide to local, regional and national beekeeping events and other important information.

**Technologies for Bee Health** Mike Brown, Head of the National Bee Unit, Tuesday 7 March 5.30 Curtis Auditorium, Herschel Building, Newcastle University

**Insect Photography** Monday 20 March, Paul Forster at Middlesbrough Bowling Club

**Carry on Beekeeping** Saturday March 25 in Poppleton, York. £25 Full details [here](#)

**North East Beekeepers Convention** 1 April, at The Beacon, Newcastle. Internationally recognised speakers. Cost £28—full details [here](#).

**BBKA Spring Convention** 7 to 9 April. includes Lectures, Workshops, Partner Programme and Beekeeping Trade Show at Harper Adams University, Shropshire. Booking now open on the [BBKA website](#)

**From Combe to Candle** Monday 10 April *NB 2nd Monday* Shirley Bond at Middlesbrough Bowling Club.

**Visit to the NBU, York** Monday 15 May. Depart Middlesbrough Bowling club at 5pm. **Booking essential** contact [Ian Peacock](#). There is a £10 fee to cover transport costs.

### Cleveland Beekeepers Association

*Survey:* 42 members completed the Survey and a print out of the results is attached to the newsletter. In February the committee held an initial discussion about how to take forward your ideas and will discuss the next steps in March so there should be more in next month's Newsletter.

**Registered Charity 1168761**

Secretary: [Steven Jacklin](#) full details at [www.teesbees.co.uk](http://www.teesbees.co.uk) All welcome

### Is your BeeBase entry up to date?

Please check and make sure, so that if there is a local outbreak you are fully informed and protected

### Wanted — Mentors

As the beginners get their own bees we will need mentors. Can you help? Email: [Newsletter@teesbees.co.uk](mailto:Newsletter@teesbees.co.uk)

**G**raham Royle NDB, a Master Beekeeper from Cheshire, spoke at Ormskirk & Croston Beekeepers meeting in January on Asian Hornets. Graham is an experienced beekeeper and inspector and was the Inspector who found the Gloucestershire colony's nest. This article is based on notes taken by Margaret Wilson, our BBKA link trustee to whom I am most grateful.

**A**sian Hornets are larger than a Honey bee, the distinguishing features are a Black Thorax and bright yellow legs. Their wing structure is similar to a wasps, long and narrow, unlike those of a honey bee. In the same way as wasps and bumble bees, the Asian Hornet Queens hibernate in winter then start to breed in the Spring, usually about April, but subject to the weather conditions. As carnivores Asian Hornets eat aphids and such like, but honey bees are a favourite part of their diet. They are looking for the protein of the bees wing muscles so hover in front of the hive, facing outwards, catching foraging bees on their return. They take them, severing the head and abdomen then eat the thorax and its wing muscles.

**E**uropean arrival was in a consignment of clay pots delivered from China to a garden centre in France in 2003 where the Queen Hornet was hibernating in the protective straw packaging. The first Hornets nest was discovered in 2004, but because of a slow response by the French the Hornets spread rapidly over the next years and now cover most of France, and much of Europe with sightings in Portugal in 2011, Italy 2013, Germany 2014, Alderney and Jersey in 2016.

**T**he Hornets nest is round and can measure up to 1 meter across, the foundation which holds the brood is in one sided layers (or shelves) which are horizontal across the nest, the outside of the nest has small 'porches' for the hornets to enter, it is presumed that the porches allow access to each layer of brood, although it is impossible to confirm this at the moment.

**A**sian Hornets lay approximately 1000 eggs toward the end of each season which will develop into Queens. Even if only one in ten survives and nests, that is 100 Queens each able to produce a further 100 viable queens. That would be 10,000 queens in the second year so you can imagine how quickly they can spread!

**T**he first sighting in the UK was by a Beekeeper in Tetbury Gloucester on the 17th September 2016 where he captured 2 hornets in a wasp trap, at which time there was a full alert and a Disease Control Centre was set up to co-ordinate response. Every Apiary within a 10 KM radius was inspected but no sign of the Hornets in any of them. One of the Hornets from Tetbury was killed and taken by car to York and the other Hornet was freed in an attempt to follow and locate the direction of the actual nest. On the 20th September the Command centre was set up and the next day all bee inspectors, there are between 55 and 60 Bee Inspectors in the UK were alerted and converged in rotation to the site. Searches in all areas were conducted and traps were set. The searches started at dawn and continued till dusk as Asian Hornets do not fly in the dark with the Inspectors working in rotation.

**S**ome of the wasp traps containing beer were not effective as the bait was ignored as Hornets are carnivores so prawns mashed with a little water was substituted, and these trapped hornets most times. Some were sent to York and some were set free with a feather tied to them in order to track them. This was accomplished by sedating the Hornets and using a piece of cotton wrapped this round the petiole (waist) with a feather attached to the end of the cotton. The Hornets were then placed in the fresh air to revive them and they flew off in an very angry state with the feather still attached, This gave several lines which allowed triangulation to be calculated which gave a better chance of finding the nest.

**W**hilst all this searching was going on, the DNA of the Hornets was investigated, as we needed to know if the Hornet had come from China in a consignment or was it from the Hornets in France, but there was no conclusive answer. During the searches, all businesses who imported goods were visited to determine what good they did import either from China or France although the Hornet could have landed here in luggage, a caravan, or any other such mode of transport from France or China.

**O**n the 28th September Graham discovered the Hornets' nest in Tetbury as he was watching flying hovering at the top of a very large conifer tree; working in pairs the inspectors then concentrated on the top of the tree and discovered the nest 55ft up the tree. There was quick action and the nest was poisoned to kill the hornets, then a Cherry Picker was used to harvest the nest which was then sent to York for analysis and investigation. The inspectors continued searching for a further 10 days, but there were no more sightings either in traps or on the hedgerows.

**Actions:** Every Beekeeper should have traps and they should be checked every week. Bait your traps using carbohydrates in spring so beer or jam, but later in the year as they like protein use mashed prawns crab sticks or pet food. One queen destroyed is 100 fewer colonies next year

# **Cleveland Beekeepers Association**

## **Survey of Members**

### **January 2017**

A survey was sent to members in January 2017. 42 replies were received by 28 January. Most responses were received in the period immediately following the initial email, with a further surge after the newsletter emailing. The following pages give details of the replies.

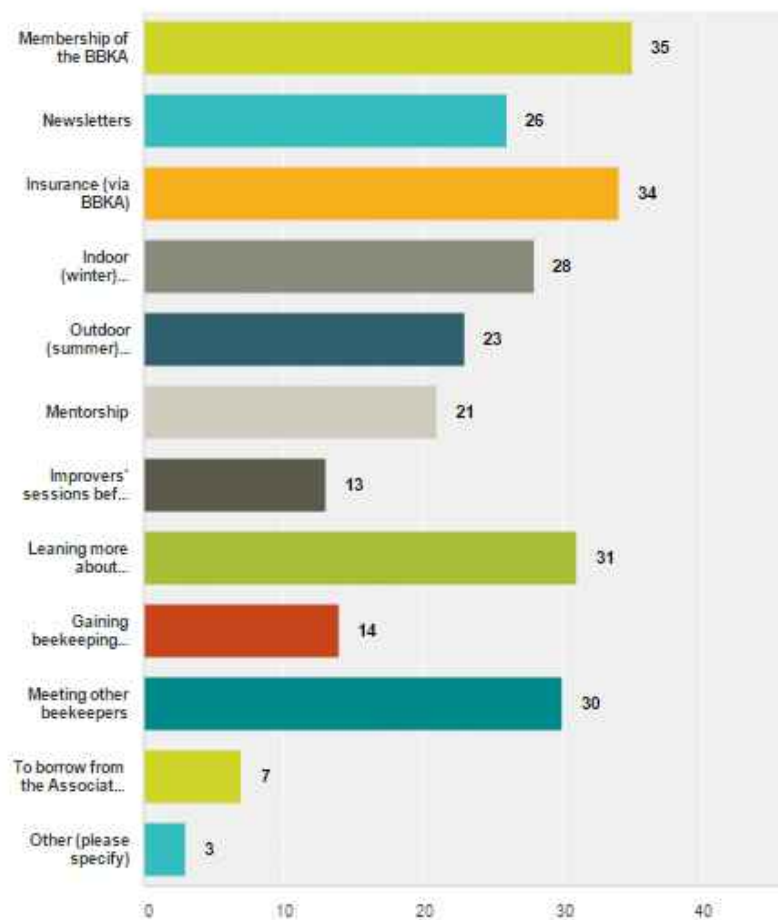
Individual comments have been omitted as some of them enable the contributor to be identified, something which was neither intended nor explained in the survey.

Unfortunately, the quality of the images is not ideal as the free version of Survey Monkey does not allow downloads so Screen Prints have been used, and the licence cost is prohibitive.

Some initial comments are attached; if you have any further comments please let us know [newsletter@teesbees.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@teesbees.co.uk)

## Which of the following are your reasons for being a member of Cleveland Beekeepers Association:

Answered: 41 Skipped: 0



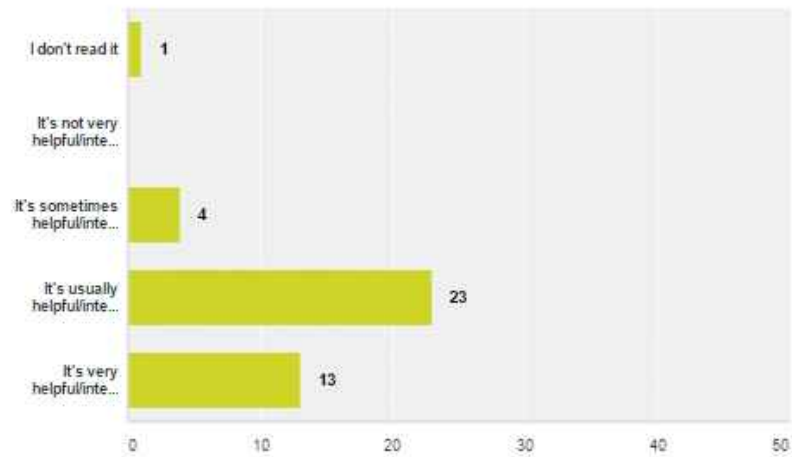
These results are helpful in helping us plan for the future, in particular the desire of members for more education and opportunities to meet other beekeepers.

New mentors for 2017 are now being sought, if you think you could help please let us know [newsletter@teesbees.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@teesbees.co.uk)

If you are a mentor, or would like to be one the possibility of a support group *Mentors4Mentors* has been raised. Would this encourage you to be a mentor?

## Turning to the Newsletter

Answered: 41 Skipped: 0



(no label)	Total	Weighted Average
I don't read it (1)	1	1.00
It's not very helpful/interesting (2)	0	2.00
It's sometimes helpful/interesting (3)	4	3.00
It's usually helpful/interesting (4)	23	4.00
It's very helpful/interesting (5)	13	5.00

Comments (0)

Basic Statistics				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	5.00	4.00	4.15	0.78

The fact that the Newsletter is read and helpful is very reassuring to those who write articles and compile it!

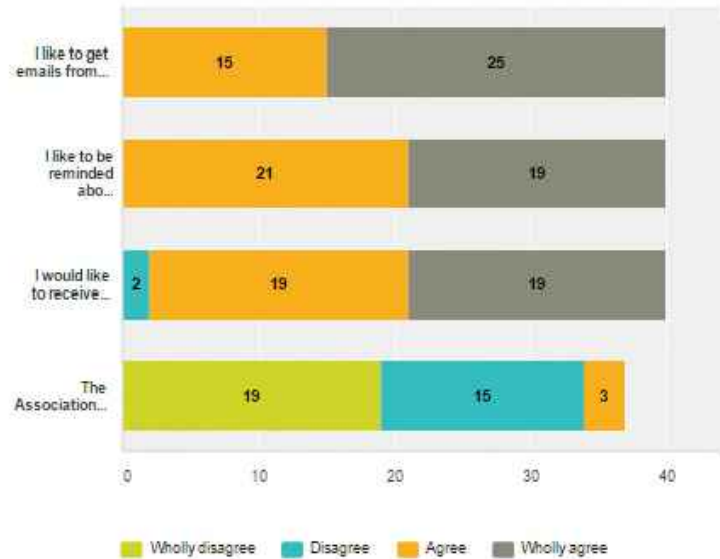
Some comments added to the replies in this section are very helpful. These include

- Monthly bee related crossword/quiz
- Accounts of experiences both positive and negative from all levels of beekeepers
- A monthly beekeeping anecdote or even beekeepers joke would bring a bit of fun to the newsletter. Members could be invited to send them in.
- A heads up for the tasks we should be doing next month
- A brief section highlighting different members. Let them talk about their bees, how they got into beekeeping and what help/advice they might offer etc

Please let me have your anecdotes, quizzes, crosswords and task list [newsletter@teesbees.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@teesbees.co.uk)

## Members of the Committee email you from time to time. Please help us to get our communications right

Answered: 41 Skipped: 0



	Wholly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Wholly agree (4)	Total	Weighted Average
I like to get emails from CBKA	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	37.50% 15	62.50% 25	40	3.63
I like to be reminded about meetings	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	52.50% 21	47.50% 19	40	3.48
I would like to receive emails with news items about beekeeping	0.00% 0	5.00% 2	47.50% 19	47.50% 19	40	3.42
The Association should use its Facebook page rather than emails	51.35% 19	40.54% 15	8.11% 3	0.00% 0	37	1.57

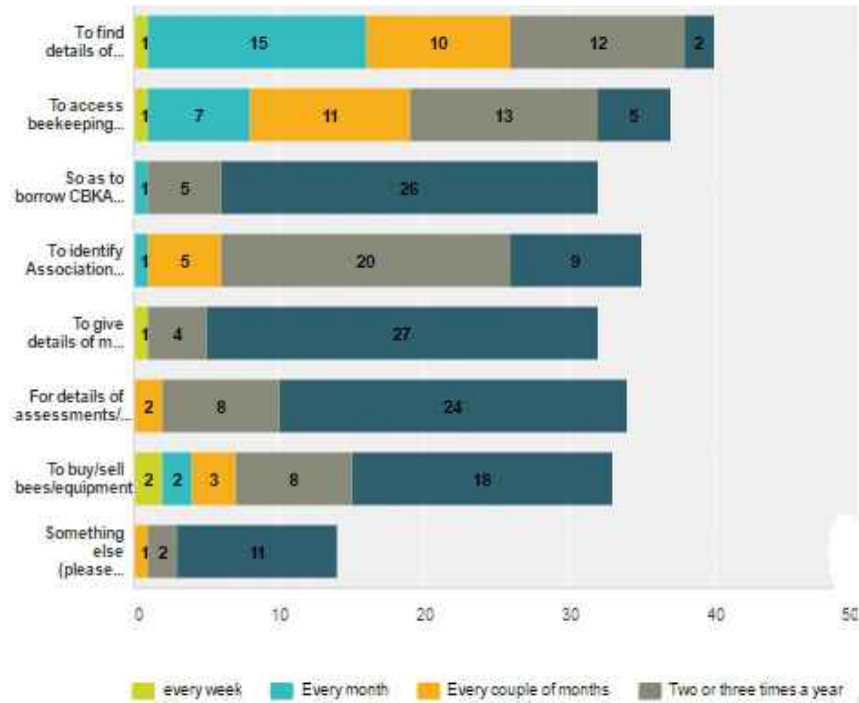
Comments (11)

Sending emails is always fraught with concern. Are there too many, not enough, is the personal email over intrusive. It seems to be about right at present.

Facebook is meant more for the public, and it seems that the majority of members responding prefer it that way.

**The Association has a website  
www.teesbees.co.uk. Please let us know  
how you use it**

Answered: 41 Skipped: 0



Maintaining the website up-to-date is a never-ending task, and we must thank Graham for his hard work in doing that. Some other association websites don't manage that.

If there are links or material you would like to see please let us know.

## What more can CBKA do for you?

Answered: 39 Skipped: 2



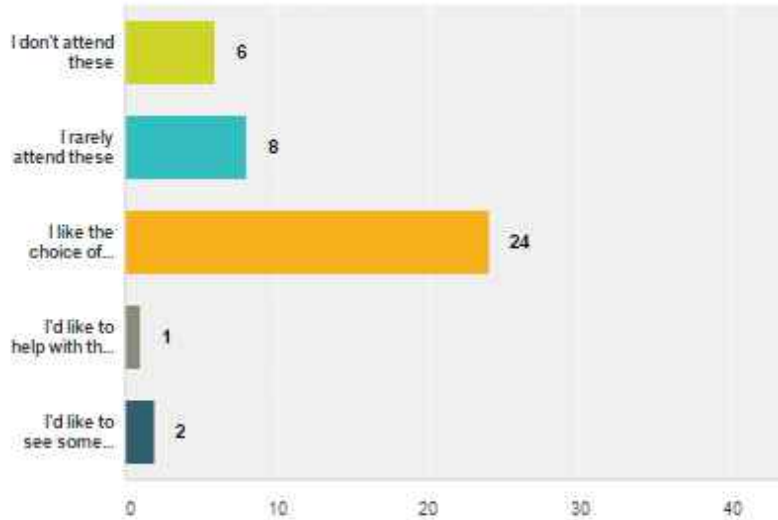
During the next couple of months the committee will be looking at these areas. So far, we have expressed an interest in the Bee Breeding Assessment being piloted by the BBKA and asked members interested in preparing for the Basic or Module 1 to identify themselves.

Please look out for the emails which will go out to members over the spring and summer seeking interested members for these activities



## Turning to the Indoor meetings (September to April)

Answered: 40 Skipped: 1



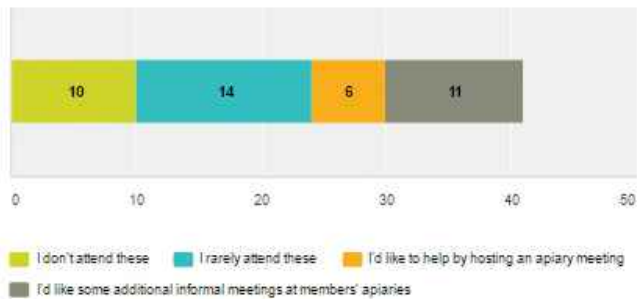
It is reassuring to the Programme Secretaries that the choice of topics is liked, but we are always wanting more ideas.

Some of the comments suggested that meetings should see some more practical topics as although talks are great, sometimes you need to see how things are actually done; we do have a practical session in September.

Another theme was from those with regular commitments for work or family on Monday evenings. The committee has had a brief discussion on the other weekday evening options for next year. We may also be able to consider avoiding clashes with neighbouring Associations.

## Turning to the outdoor meetings (May to August)

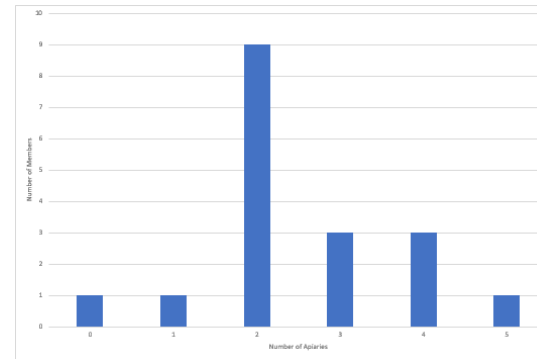
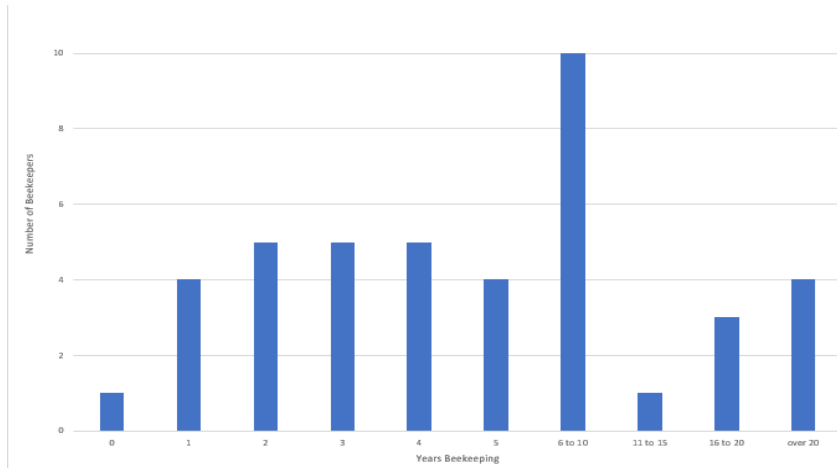
Answered: 37 Skipped: 4



There is some appetite for informal meetings at neighbour's apiaries, and offers to host meetings. We are very conscious of the need to protect apiaries from unwanted visitors and therefore don't identify them on the website but send out details by email. This may be inconvenient, but is, sadly, necessary.

If you have made an offer, we may be in touch!

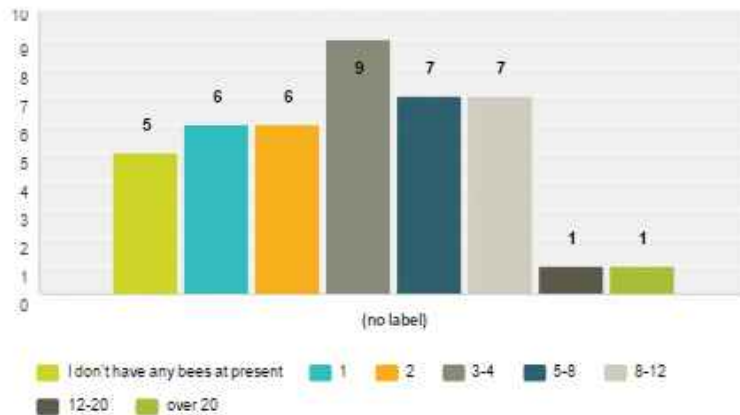
The last page is some information about how we keep bees and how long we have done it. The age profile is too personal, so isn't included.



Finally, the good news that all respondents with bees are registered on BeeBase. Don't forget to keep your entry updated.

### How many colonies do you have entering the winter?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 0



Thank you to all who completed the survey