

Surrey Beekeepers' Association (BKA) – Bee Disease Insurance (BDI) report 2024

The County of Surrey and the area of Surrey BKA are not the same. Kingston and Wimbledon divisions of Surrey BKA, are included in Greater London area statistics for reporting of bee diseases and pests.

The overall ongoing trend in the last four years has been a reduction in the numbers of colonies diagnosed with AFB and EFB which is pleasing.

In 2024, the National Bee Unit (NBU) reported on BeeBase that the total number of colonies inspected in the County of Surrey was 399 and, of these, 40 colonies were found dead and in the Greater London area, 641 colonies were inspected and 47 were found dead.

American Foul Brood (AFB)

AFB is a bacterial disease, *Paenibacillus larvae*, that is reportable to the NBU usually via the local bee inspector. AFB was reported in Farnham (1), Godalming (7), Weybridge (10), Staines (5) and Leatherhead (1)

In England, most the outbreaks of AFB were diagnosed to be found again in Devon and Cornwall.

European Foul Brood (EFB)

EFB is a bacterial disease, *Melissococcus plutonis*, that is reportable to the NBU usually via the local bee inspector. In 2024, outbreaks occurred in Hazelmere (13), Godalming (72), Guildford/Woking ((123), Cranleigh (8), Weybridge (61), Dorking (24), Leatherhead (6), Kingston & Esher (40), Reigate & Horley & Banstead (46), Epsom & Sutton (24), Smallfield (20)

In Greater London that is part of Surrey BKA area, EFB was found in SW London (66), Caterham & Oxted (3), Croydon (11)

Other diseases and pests

Varroa

The varroa mite, *Varroa destructor*, is a parasitic mite of adult bees and brood and is notifiable to the NBU via Bee Base (the Animal and Plant Health's National Bee Unit website to help beekeepers) so that its spread can be monitored. Varroa is now considered to be indigenous in the UK.

Asian Hornet

Asian hornet, *Vespa velutina*, is notifiable to the Non-Native Species Secretariat. Monitoring for arrival of this insect is strongly encouraged throughout the UK, but especially in areas where likelihood of arrival is considered to be highest (S & SE England) and this includes the area of Surrey BKA. In the UK, Jersey has the greatest incursion of this insect which destroys and consumes honey bee colonies. Unfortunately, it has no known predator.

Up until 2023, the number of Asian hornets found in England was relatively small, but this year, there has been a significant increase where 64 incursions have been reported, predominately in south-east England but they have gradually been spreading further north. Surrey BKA has been monitoring any incursions carefully and reporting them.

Tropilaelaps and, small hive beetle

If any member thinks they have seen *Tropilaelaps* (*Tropilaelaps clareae*, *Tropilaelaps koenigeru*) or small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*), they need report the sighting straight away to their local bee inspector.