

# Minutes from Cornwall Invasive Species Forum

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Porthcurno Telegraph Museum

1. Nicola Morris, SINNG coordinator/Cornwall College- Set up a SINNG/ORKS invasive species recording option to be added to a database. Members of the forum will be able to access resources.
2. Niki Clear: ERCCIS- explains wildlife information service, creating an account, recording sightings with photo verifications and privacy options (censored option - low-resolution image, full resolution image for admin user only). Submit to explore page, from there you can filter and download the data if needed. Once the recording is entered, it goes through the verification process, which involves a couple of levels of autonomic checking (passing checks on whether it's good or not). If it is bad (pass/fail) it will flag up that that species is in the wrong area/is problematic. The page also allows users to access historical data and taxonomic groups (biological records) – get in touch if you wish to download records.

## Questions:

Kate Hills – Priority species/areas?

Tim Bird – Cornwall Council's data added?

Mike White – Have you considered the national bee unit as a base for recording/sharing records?

Nicola Morris- protection/sensitivity of record – site name and grid reference will be blurred; only the admins of the group will be able to see the data. As the recorder, you can edit the privacy options and update the info via a link 'Actions'.

Tim Bird and Richard White – management programme: can we share that info? – possibility of adding this option to the recording page.

Trevor Renals – Negative data must be updated. Management and historical data is a priority so that the information is relevant and useful to land manager/home owners/monitoring purposes.

## DEMO: [ORKS.org.uk](http://ORKS.org.uk) (not all species are on the website yet)

- Drop down list of all species and info on sighting, such as whether it/they were dead, alive, a colony etc.
- Lock option to keep info on that page
- Online app
- Internet access not needed (until submission)
- User guides printed out



- Cornwall college students could test out the ORKS app.
- 3. Martyn Hocking, beekeeper, Devon – Background (teacher in maths and physics), now a beekeeper
  - Highly concerned about the Asian hornet- huge underestimated threat
  - ID sheets on SINNG page, ‘not easily confused with any other species’
  - Himalayan balsam and bees – bees are aiding in the invasive success, visiting Himalayan Balsam in preference to native plants.
  - The Asian hornet predates on honey bees (can take 40 in one day), caterpillars and other Asian hornets (sisters)
  - Explains personal experience with Asian hornets in his apiary in Devon

**Question:**

Mike White – did your bees behave differently/refuse to leave the hive or fly following the Asian hornet attack? – Yes, they were on edge and behaving differently, they tried to attack me!

- Martyn emailed the NNSS to report his sighting of the Asian hornet – they responded saying that a sighting of such would be highly unlikely and requested photo verification
- National bee unit claims to have a rapid and reliable protocol for dealings with Asian hornets but with an estimated 50,000 beekeepers in England, there is a lack of “hornet busting groups” (access points, support groups, information outlets etc.).
- Local associations need to be forming “hornet busting groups” – this is the way forward. However, more awareness needs to be raised in the right areas
- I.D has to be 100% right
- Martyn Hocking created a mailing list for anyone concerned with Asian hornets – please contact him on [martynhocking195@btinternet.com](mailto:martynhocking195@btinternet.com) if you wish to be added to the list

**Questions:**

James Parkin – Do you know whether the hornets have any landscape/nest preferences (i.e. 4 metres up in a tree)? Asian hornets go anywhere that is convenient to them – sheds, shelters, structures – they even hitch rides in caravans etc. (vehicles are vectors).

Micheal Grindley – suggested obstructing access point for hornets.

- 4. Niki Clear Demo – Mapping system/group discussion
  - Really useful tool (ORKS website) especially for Cornwall
  - What about native invasive species? - Send files to NNSS



- Regional management plans (Trevor Renals)
  - Shared objectives to be prioritised (James Parkin) – Meeting in the new year to discuss this
  - Core management group and record interrogation (Trevor Renals) to find areas of concern in the region and prioritise them
  - Raising awareness – Mike White commented that organisers of National Hornet Day contacted a number of organisations and some didn't even reply (angling associations) – he suggested getting involved in events to raise awareness, getting other organisations on board, putting logos on everything, sending out letters, emails with all organisations included (used the Cornwall plastic coalition/project as an example of an organisation that does this)
  - Invasive Species week 2018 – raising awareness through social media etc.
  - Group email for car share next time a meeting is arranged would be useful.
5. Field trip led by Simon Hocking to Porthcurno beach and back to the museum to look at some of the problematic invasive species in the area.

Thanks go to Simon Hocking (National Trust) for providing the venue and catering, Rhiann Mitchell-Holland for all her help in organising the Forum meeting, guest speakers, Forum members and SINNG volunteers for your help on the day.

