

TREE WARDEN'S REPORT

In times of change

At this moment in time, the British environment is without doubt under severe pressure. Our trees are having to cope with a ghastly host of new and, more urgently, new pathogens and diseases, these being generously made more insistent through the greedy and thoughtless importation of diseased stock hailing from Europe and beyond. The inactivity from those in power and in a position to prevent this grim scenario unfolding is unbelievable at best and at worst criminal.

Of course, ash dieback is one of the main issues, but there are many others. Please see my previous reports regarding good practice when buying trees. Symptoms of ash dieback include dark smears down the trunk or branches and premature loss of foliage – general dieback presenting an unhealthy, diseased look.

It's now or never

Our pollinators – honey bees, bumble and humble bees and a host of others – are under the severest pressure, not just from diseases like nosema, various foul broods and the devastating attention of the varroa mite, but from a new and quite lethal range of insecticides – the neonicotinoids. Parishioners will probably be aware of these as there has been much media coverage and I have written regularly about them and their effect on our pollinators in my reports. Those researching the use and effect of this new class of insecticides are in no doubt of the savage detriment they present to bees and other pollinators.

Many countries including France, Germany and Slovenia have ceased using them until a full understanding of the science relating to these chemicals is reached. Not in the UK, though. One minister said, "We don't want to take a knee jerk reaction". Well, in the past 30 years, give or take, we have lost 50% of our wild bees – without some action, what will be the statistics be in 10 years time?

Lack of space prevents me from giving you any more data but I strongly recommend that we all take action now – lobby your MP or at least access one of the many websites that provide information, eg English Nature, Friends of the Earth, The Environmental Audit Committee, etc.

Please contact me if you would like to be a part of a Parish action group. Perhaps we can in some small way help to pass a beautiful, vibrant countryside on to those who come after.

Tree walk

There will be a tree walk with EDDC Tree Officer, David Coleman, on June 3, starting in the car park at 6.30 pm. (David is renowned for interesting and informative talks.)

Jubilee Oak

I have again to thank those who are negotiating this on our behalf. There are still some issues to be resolved but all is going in a positive direction.

Roger Clemens
Tree Warden