



NPTA
national pest
technicians association

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01

NEWSLETTER

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NPTA NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first edition of your new monthly newsletter from the NPTA. **The aim of this newsletter is to keep our members abreast of changes in what is an ever-changing industry.** It may seem to many of you out there that we are 'under the cosh' from numerous areas, including pressure groups trying to change the way we do things; animal rights groups; changes to pesticide labelling; scrutiny from the authorities - the list is almost endless. What we must not lose sight of is that we are here to **protect and promote public health** and providing we stay within the confines of the law and, to quote legislation, 'provide safe, secure and humane pest control', we are helping the environment in which people and animals live, not hindering it. Finally, as we are a member-driven organisation, we would be interested to hear from any member who would like to contribute or have an article included within this newsletter



An Opening Word from our New Chief Operating Officer Steve Hallam

John Davison (left) handing over the reigns to new chief operating Officer Steve Hallam. John, a founder member is still actively involved as a board member of the association.

I would like to introduce myself to the membership of the NPTA, I am Steve Hallam and I have recently taken on the post of Chief Operating Officer. I have over 25 years in the industry covering

a broad spectrum of Pest Control and I have a number of aims and objectives to improve the service we offer to our members.

One of my first aims is to develop a more effective method of communication to our membership. The use of E-mails seems to be a way forward so we can then inform all members of up and coming events and training. We have had to look at the Association going forward and recently had to completely redo our website which has caused problems for our membership, for which I apologise, but this was something that urgently needed to happen. The new website is still evolving, and I would welcome your input as to what as members you require from the website. The NPTA provides training and this is an area I want to expand on. I would be interested as to suggestions for courses. The Risk assessment Course has been highly successful and we have had a good take up from both members and non-members.

The training days are very popular, John Hope our Technical Manager has proved to be a real asset to the Association, providing advice to members and carrying out auditing. His forward thinking is helping to shape the Association.



Catch up with the latest info on the NPTA Facebook page

The PestTech exhibition planning is in full swing and I hope to see as many members there on 6th November 2019 at Milton Keynes as possible. A full update next month.

The association relies on the Board of Directors who are voluntary and give their spare time freely, to enhance the Association and our plans for the future. I thank them all for their continued support.

The office staff, Maxine and Donna, provide the first point of contact and continue to carry out all the extensive administration tasks in order to keep the Association going. Lastly, I would like to thank John Davison, who I took over from, for everything he has done for the Association, John is not going anywhere as he continues to play a big part in the NPTA and remains an active member of the Directors board.

The NPTA is an association for all our members to benefit. Please could I ask that if you have any ideas that will be of



John Hope, Technical Manager, on ITV recently, advising the Nation on rat problems.

benefit to all members please drop me an E-mail on steve.hallam@npta.org.uk I thank you all for your continued support of the NPTA.

Treat Bee or not Treat Bee, that is the Question?



As no doubt all of our members will be aware the approvals on Ficam D have now been reviewed and as a consequence, Bees have been removed from the label. Although it is not technically illegal to treat bees this does make the situation very difficult as this would be many technicians 'go to' product.

We have received numerous calls from concerned members about how to proceed when it comes to treating bees. This is of course a difficult question to answer and as has been the case for many years now, the decision to treat is subject to risk assessment and what product labels allow. However, treating bees is a potentially divisive issue, whereby many groups strongly discourage this practice due to the

beneficial nature of bees and their relatively low risk of causing harm.

In fact, some commentators maintain that if bees were to become extinct then we would follow soon after. They are also very much in the public eye and many groups and companies are advocating and even promoting them.

It is unfortunately the case that many customers are simply not happy to live with a colony of bees and will often cite such phrases as 'I'm allergic'. We would urge you strongly not to be swayed by such emotional statements as it is you that are responsible for any pesticide applications you decide to undertake and it is you that will bear the consequences of any resultant issues arising from treatment.

People are now more than happy to report bad practice and it would appear that the HSE WIIS team is becoming more prolific in their investigation of such cases.

Therefore, undertaking any treatment you should do a thorough risk assessment prior to carrying the work out and make absolutely sure that the product you intend to use is Approved for Use against these insects.

Remember too, that we are not just talking about Honeybees, but also all the other species of bees that the general public are so scared of. Try and educate them first before going down the control

route.

The legal position may of course change over the coming months/years and we will keep you informed if and when this occurs. You should also consider that Ficam D was the first insecticide to go through re-registration and as others follow, the invertebrates currently covered may well change, so it is always best to keep a close eye on any pesticides ordered as these labels have a habit of changing without prior information being given.

In effect, the treatment of bees should only be considered where there are no other alternatives.

You will need to ensure that any entry/exit holes to the nest are effectively blocked off to help ensure that honeybees from local hives do not try to 'rob' the treated—and now unguarded nest. This can be a very difficult process as there can be multiple entry points and even if these are blocked, Bees will try and access the nest wherever they can.

The Pest Management Alliance has produced a code of practice that we would advise everyone to familiarise themselves with.

<https://www.pmalliance.org.uk/codes-of-best-practice/>

As the approval for bees in Ficam D has now been removed this now raises the question of what pesticide can be

used. We would urge you to talk to your suppliers about what suitable products they have, but you will need to consider the active ingredient and formulation. Many Bees (particularly honeybees) can exhibit an 'all or nothing' response. This should be taken into account when selecting the active ingredient. For example, how effective would a wet spray be and could this just cause more issues than were there to begin with in the first place? Ficam D has been used against wasps and bees for many reasons; its fast action is one, but consider that as a carbamate, it does not agitate the insects.

Pyrethroids on the other hand will agitate and the customer may end up with a worse problem with 'angry bees' than before you arrived! Therefore,

treating nests can sometimes be more hazardous than just leaving them alone.

This is a particularly difficult subject as I am aware that many people will not want to accept the presence of Bees. However, to stay on the right side of the law, we as an industry need to ensure that we are following industry codes of practice and the legal requirements of pesticide labelling.



Paperwork is Your Friend!

Now we approach the subject of record keeping.

This is sometimes seen as laborious and tedious area, particularly when treating domestic premises. However, record keeping is your friend! At the NPTA on the road days, Martin Ball who oversees the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme stated that this is the biggest area of frustration for his team and that quite often inadequate records are kept leading to his team having to draw the conclusion that an illegal activity has occurred.

As a minimum, you should be recording what you have used; how much pesticide has been applied; steps taken (or ruled out on practical grounds) to prevent using non-lethal methods and what advice has been left with the customer. Should the worst happen, and you find yourself being investigated by the WIIS team, these records can be the difference between prosecution or not.

Also, consider your application equipment; it is illegal to mix products and although most of us don't do this intentionally, this can occur by simply forgetting to, or not adequately, cleaning out your equipment between changes of insecticide. It should go without saying that any sprayers; dusting equipment etc are cleaned and maintained on a regular basis and definitely between changes of products and active ingredients.

Finally, it is not for us to say whether you should or shouldn't treat bees, but we would strongly advise that you seriously consider the alternatives prior to carrying out any treatment and full assess the risks and of course, It goes without saying that you should also adhere to the product label conditions.





Bird License Update

Finally, we have now been issued new General Licenses following the change for the control of licensing under Natural England to DEFRA. This occurred following intervention by the Secretary of State, Michael Gove and you may be forgiven for thinking that not much has changed! The new licenses are as follows:

- GL26 To prevent serious damage to livestock - Carrion Crow
- GL28 To prevent serious damage to crops – Wood Pigeon
- GL28 To preserve public health and public safety – Canada Goose
- GL34 to kill or take birds to conserve wild birds and to conserve flora and fauna (11 species)
- GL35 to kill or take birds to preserve public health or public safety (7 species)
- GL36 to kill or take birds to prevent serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, fisheries of inland waters. (10 species)

Without doubt the withdrawal of General Licenses for the control of 'pest birds' has caused significant consternation and difficulties for our members. The NPTA, along with other interested parties have been working

closely with DEFRA and Natural England and submitted a declaration in support of the need to control certain bird species, particularly when it comes to the need to protect public health. Now it seems that common sense has prevailed.

In the case of GL35, the birds covered are:

- Carrion Crow
- Jackdaw
- Magpie
- Feral Pigeon
- Rook
- Canada Goose
- Monk Parakeet

Licenses are now available through gov.uk and permit landowners, occupiers and authorised persons to carry out control. Sound familiar? The important aspect being that users do not need to register to use the license. So, a waste of everyone's time and effort? Perhaps, but it has given us cause for reflection on the reasons why we take pest birds. To that end, the user needs to consider that they have satisfied the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Therefore, the approval holder can take the birds listed providing they have satisfied the requirements of section 4 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Detailed below is the relevant paragraph of this section, but in essence, if you can demonstrate that the presence of birds is detrimental to public health and have considered (and ruled out) other non-lethal means of control, you can

proceed.

Notwithstanding anything in the provisions of section 1 or any order made under section 3, an authorised person shall not be guilty of an offence by reason of the killing or injuring of any wild bird, other than a bird included in Schedule 1, if he shows that his action was necessary for the purpose of—

- (a) preserving public health or public or air safety;
- (b) preventing the spread of disease; or
- (c) preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, fisheries or inland waters].

So is this the end of the story, possibly not! Wild Justice have issued a new legal challenge with regard to the newly issued GL26 which covers the killing of carrion crows to protect pheasants. They, and I quote, have stated that this license is a 'shoddy' document, arguing that it does not form a sound basis to justify "widespread, unmonitored, unlimited control of Carrion Crows to protect livestock".

Please however, note that there is no licenses currently available for the destruction of gulls. Applications would need to be via an individual license.

So, for now there is a return to normality and common sense, but it remains to be seen whether the storm has completely calmed. We will of course keep you up to date with any developments via our website, Facebook page and through this monthly newsletter.

Glue Boards Under Scrutiny – Again!

It is unlikely to be common knowledge but glue boards under once have come under scrutiny. A petition was lodged by a small animal rights activist group with the Scottish Parliament in 2018 this following the ‘unstuck’ campaign launched by Humane Society International a few years ago. The Pest Management Alliance have been discussing this issue and about how best to approach it over the intervening period and were asked to provide expert witness at the Scottish Parliament in Holyrood on the 20th June 2019.

A representative panel of John Hope (NPPTA); Dee Ward-Thompson (BPCA) and Tom Bell of REHIS appeared in front of Select Committee to argue the case and provide evidence to a group of MSPs. We argued the case that we have a Code of Practice that has been in force for a number of years and that professional pest controllers do use these products responsibly.

There were the obvious questions around animal suffering and potential improvements to the Code of Practice. Also discussed was the potential to develop a training programme aimed specifically at glue board use.

However, we argued vehemently that we need to keep glue boards to protect public health and that this petition was being targeted at the wrong group of people as, I’m sure our members will agree, it is the amateur use market that needs to be scrutinised. The panel seem to accept this and appeared

somewhat surprised and appalled that these products are so readily available to the General Public where no controls exist at all - just look at eBay, they were told!

We also emphasised that these products are only used where all other treatment methods have failed and that this is documented, or where there is an imminent risk to public health. The example given was would an operating theatre be willing to wait up to 35 days for anti-coagulants to take effect? To which there were nodding of heads.

At present this only affects members in Scotland (rest assured we are fighting your corner), but as with many things, once they gather momentum, there is the potential for things to spread south of the border.

We believe that we won the argument and put a good case forward for (1) keeping these products and (2) restricting amateur use (which I’m sure most if not all of our members would agree with. The upshot is that we may need to compromise and there may need to be revisions to the Code of Practice, as we would like to keep these products in our armoury.

The PMA have been invited to reattend a further hearing later in the year and we will of course keep you updated with any further developments. In the meantime, can we ask that as professionals you familiarise yourselves with the code of practice and continue to use glue boards responsibly – after all we don’t want to add more ammunition to our detractors.

<https://www.pmalliance.org.uk/codes-of-best-practice/>

More Insects found to carry Bacteria than previously though!



Matthew Davis, Technical Manager at Killgerm, in association with PhD student Federica Boiocchi and Professor Anthony Hilton, both of Aston University, have been carrying out research into the numbers and types of insects that carry pathogenic bacteria and the results are surprising. We are used to stating that cockroaches, houseflies, pharaoh ants etc carry potentially disease-causing pathogens, but new research

has highlighted that many more insects can carry potentially dangerous bacteria than previously thought.

Out of a huge sample of around 20’000 insects, the study showed that 9 out of 10 insects carried potentially harmful bacteria and worryingly over 50% of these strains were found to be resistant to antibiotics

True flies made up the majority of the sample, a group which includes midges and common houseflies, with a further 14% being ‘true bugs’ including aphids. The study also collected smaller samples of ants, wasps, bees and moths. The sampling was undertaken over an 18-month period, with naturally higher numbers being collected in spring and summer.

The most commonly found bacteria strains were Enterobacteriaceae, a common bacterium found in the gut of humans and animals, E-coli and salmonella. This of course, places greater emphasis on the need to control insects as the risk of disease transmission is obviously present.

A more comprehensive summary of the research project can be found on the Killgerm website URL:

<https://www.killgerm.com/bugs-with-bugs-hospital-insects-harbour-drug-resistant-bacteria/>

NPTA TRAINING IN RISK ASSESSMENTS IN PEST CONTROL



This June we again carried out a training session of our ever-popular Risk Assessment in Pest Control course. Based at Church Farm near Basingstoke,

students are taken through the basics of how to perform a General Risk Assessment, including a practical session before learning about how to write COSHH Assessments. The day concluded with the theory and practicalities of conducting an Environmental Risk Assessment.

The attendees are encouraged to ask questions with regard to their own 'real life' scenarios thereby adding a further degree of realism to the subject.

Being based at Church Farm is a major draw for many attendees where Alex Wade of Pelgar conducts a tour of the rodent pens, further educating people on some of the lesser known aspects of rodent behaviour and biology

The course is available to both NPTA and non NPTA members and can also be conducted at a site and area of your choice, so please contact the NPTA office or John Hope (Technical Manager) for further details.

MEMBER PROFILE



Patricia Page, of North West Pest Control Ltd, Derry, Northern Ireland became the first female pest controller in the UK and Ireland to receive the RSPH Level 3 advanced certificate in Integrated Pest Management.

NW Pest Control became an Accredited Member of the NPTA last year, when Pat also became a qualified Biologist.

Congratulations Pat, to you and all your colleagues!!

DAIRY DATES

On the Road Training Days

We will be conducting an additional three 'on the road' training days' in 2019, where attendees get to hear a variety of speakers on different subject areas, including asbestos awareness, rabbit control, past present and future as well as a variety of different subject areas.

These training days are **FREE OF CHARGE** to NPTA members. Non-members are welcome to attend for a small charge to cover lunch.

Upcoming Dates for 2019

Tonbridge, 1th Sept.

Hadlow Manor Hotel, Maidstone Rd, Tonbridge TN11 0JH

Farnborough, 19th Sept.

Holiday Inn, Lynchford Road, Farnborough GU14 6AZ

Dudley, 16th October

Village Hotel, Castlegate Dr, Dudley DY1 4TB

These are **FREE** to NPTA Members and a hot lunch is provided.

Details of the presentations to be given on our website in due course.



Martin Ball, Head of the Wildlife Incident Investigation Team (England) tells NPTA Members at our Manchester event what to expect 'When an Inspector Calls'. He is expected to speak at both the Farnborough and Dudley events.

PestTech 2019

The event for pest control technicians, this annual gathering of more than 1,000 pest controllers will showcase the very latest information, featuring over 50 exhibitors and a full programme of presentations.

Following on from the amazing success of last year's event at the custom-built Marshall Arena in Milton Keynes, we have decided to hold our PestTech event there again this year.

The feedback we received for the 2018 event was overwhelmingly positive, from both exhibitors and pest controllers who attended. More info in the August edition of this Newsletter.

CPD points available for attending the exhibition as well as for every seminar and demonstration.

