

How are *Tropilaelaps* spread?



Beekeepers are the main cause of *Tropilaelaps* transmission. Migratory beekeeping is common in western Asia and eastern Europe. The sale of bees in the form of queens, packages and colonies also pose a significant risk for spreading *Tropilaelaps*. Every year UK beekeepers directly import thousands of queens from Europe. Bees also enter mainland UK via the Eire / Northern Ireland trade route.

Wild colonies and swarms on shipping containers, cargo ships and planes also pose a risk of transmission.

It is important that beekeepers are vigilant to the threat of *Tropilaelaps*.

What should I do if I spot *Tropilaelaps* in my hives?

Tropilaelaps are a statutory notifiable pest and any suspect sightings must be reported to the National Bee Unit www.nationalbeeunit.com, 0300 303 0094, nbu@apha.gov.uk.

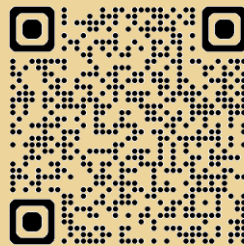
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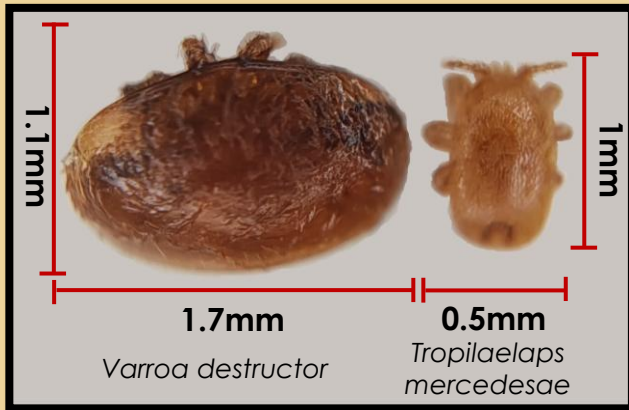
BEWARE OF THE THREAT OF TROPILAE LAP S!

What is *Tropilaelaps*?

Tropilaelaps are parasitic mites that originate in South East Asia and feed and reproduce in honey bee brood. This parasitisation damages the brood and transmits viruses, weakening a colony and often killing it.

Tropilaelaps mercedesae has spread westwards out of Asia and were confirmed in Eastern Europe for the first time in 2024.

REMEMBER!
Tropilaelaps are about 1/3 the size of *Varroa* and they are very difficult to detect in a colony.

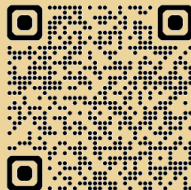


Identification.



Tropilaelaps are red brown in colour and measure approximately 1mm long by 0.5 mm wide. They have eight legs, but their front pair can often be mistaken for antennae.

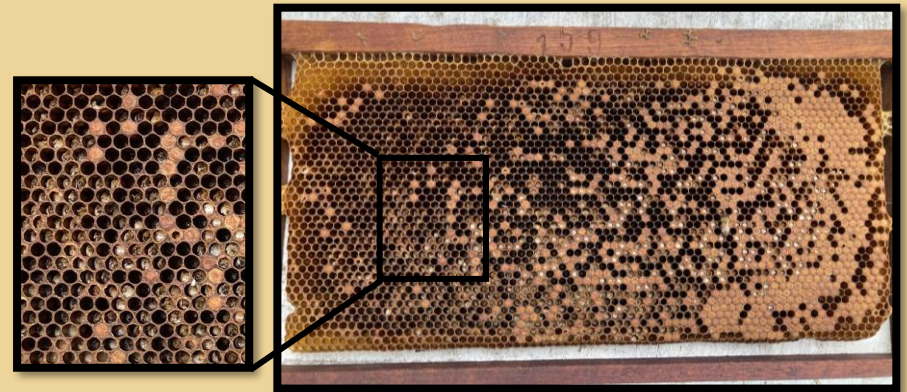
They are fast moving and will characteristically run around the rim of open brood cells. Scan the QR code to watch a video of their movement.



Colony symptoms.

The symptoms of a *Tropilaelaps* infestation are very similar to that of *Varroa*. If you see any of the following you should investigate further to determine the cause.

- Patchy “pepper pot” brood pattern with perforated brood cappings.
- Dead chewed down and cannibalised brood.



- A general weakening of a colony.
- Adult bees with stunted abdomens and deformed wings.

REMEMBER!

A colony can be infested with *varroa* and *Tropilaelaps*. The symptoms are very similar. Don't assume *Varroa* is the only issue in a failing colony!

