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### **From the President**

Hi everyone. As I didn't do the bus trip on September 25<sup>th</sup> I can't comment on the day but I guess it was enjoyable and worthwhile. What I can say is that I don't know where the last month has gone. One day rolls into another and my days never seem to go as planned. It's funny how bees can do that to you.

I had planned to split a number of hives this spring as I had lost a lot with AFB last summer, but they are basically splitting themselves by swarming. I've been lucky enough to recapture all of them (I think).

I've had a lot of enquiries from people wanting to get into bees and also bees wanting to get into people's houses. Most of them moving on without settling, which is a relief sometimes and I apologise if I didn't get back to anyone regarding the above. Hopefully we may catch up at the next meeting on October 30<sup>th</sup> at the residence of my wife and I, and if all committee members could stick around at the end of the day, we'll have a committee meeting.

See you all there.

Regards,

Tony. 15/10/16

### **Last Meeting**

The last meeting took the form of a field trip to the Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers Society open day, at Mudgeraba, Queensland.

The day was popular, with close to four hundred people in attendance, including a mini-bus load of beekeepers from the Northern Rivers.

Presentations were given by Des Cannon, Trevor Weatherhead, Hamish Lamb and Stuart Anderson. Our own Geoff Manning and Janet Fowler spent a busy day judging honey and wax entries.



*Janet and Geoff on Judging Duty*

Thanks to the GCABS for organising the open day.

### **New Equipment**

Stephen and Janet Fowler carry most common beekeeping equipment, including a range of extractors, both manual and electric. They also carry a range of jars and pots for honey sales.

Please contact Stephen or Janet regarding your equipment requirements (see the Equipment Officer contact details above).

## Hives and Nuclei

Please contact Stephen Fowler if you are able to supply hives and nuclei to other club members.

## Steritech

Please contact Brian Window or Stephen Fowler regarding your Steritech requirements.

The club will organise a consignment of beekeeping gear to go to Steritech in Narangba for sterilisation in early November. A number of members already have infected gear or gear of an unknown status to be irradiated.

It is suggested that club members carry out a brood inspection now that the spring rush is tapering off. This will enable them to clean up any hives found to be infected with AFB and to get the equipment ready for the consignment. If a hive has swarmed, this inspection can also confirm that the hive has managed to raise a new queen.

Information on how to diagnose AFB and how to treat it can be found on the DPI website. Perforated cells whose contents rope out on testing with a match are probably the easiest symptoms to observe.

Get an experienced beekeeper to have a look if there is any doubt.

Remember that any cases of AFB must be reported to the DPI.

## Update - Townsville Varroa Mite Incursion

A seventh detection of Asian honey bee (*Apis cerana*) occurred in Townsville on 23 September. There were no Varroa Jacobsoni found in this nest.

Since this nest was found, there have been no *Apis cerana* drones or workers sighted.

The biosecurity restricted zone has been increased to cover the entire Townsville City Council area.

Updates on the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council website can be found at the link below.

<http://honeybee.org.au/category/news/>

## From The Hives - October

It has been an excellent flowering of the macadamias for beekeepers, running from July to October. But it has created problems for growers, in that a pest, *Segastus weevil*, has reached plague proportions. And so the owners of the properties next door where the macadamias are, want to spray and have given a week's notice to allow the honey to be harvested and the bees moved.

The guoia is just starting to flower, but it is a mixed blessing to the beekeeper; lots of honey but of such a strong flavour that the honey is downgraded in value. So after a mammoth extraction with amateur gear, the 32 hives have been moved out to Gibberagee, which is on the Bungawalbyn road to Whiporie.

Many of the swarms from the hives have been caught and they are being used to start off new beekeepers. Many of the hives still have incredible bee populations, and more swarms are inevitable. Maybe they will calm down a little when they are off the red soil.

The Bungawalbyn area is a national park or nature reserve, and has mixed eucalyptus species. There were some nice flowering red gums on the way out, but not much obvious near the bee sites. Maybe the honey in the shed can all be extracted before the next flow.

Brian.

## October Flowering

The white mahogany and some red gum are still flowering as I write and should continue for a few weeks. Most of the red soil has guoia. This has an aromatic flavour, similar to Tasmanian Leatherwood. Ironbark in the more forested country is probably out of range for most members.

So, as soon as the timber mentioned finishes, there is nothing other than general ground flora on the horizon. Still, some of this is clover, and whilst unreliable for honey, it does have excellent pollen.

From December on, there is the possibility of some timber however. Bloodwood, brush box and grey box are unreliable but can perform on occasion. Most members though would not be near to good stands. Bloodwood flowers regularly, and gives good pollen, but rarely nectar.

Geoff.

### **A Swarm on the Blueberries**

Geoff Manning took this picture of a swarm that had settled on the inside of the net at a blueberry farm. The swarm was caught successfully. Thanks for the photo Geoff.



*A Swarm on the Blueberries*

### **Bees Wax**

Thank you to Suzie Deyris for finding this information online. The full article, which has been reproduced in part below, may be found at the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/BensBees/photos/a.329136073857290.66558.329133007190930/967891456648412/?type=3&theater>

*Beeswax (or cera alba, from the Latin and meaning 'white wax') may not be the first product that comes to mind when one thinks of bees, but it is arguably*

*the most useful. Beeswax is normally associated with honey bees of the genus Apis, since this is the source of beeswax harvested by humans, but it is also made by bumblebees and the social species of Australian native bees.*

*Beeswax is derived from the sugars in honey, and bees must consume 6-9 times as much honey, by mass, to produce the wax. It has been estimated that the bees fly 530,000 kilometres to yield a single kilogram of wax! The wax is essential for the construction of the hexagonal (six-sided) cells that comprise the brood comb and honeycomb. These are used to house larvae and pupae, and to store honey, nectar and pollen. The accumulation of surplus honey, which is stored in cells capped with a layer of wax, enables the hive to survive winter, when it is not possible for the bees to forage for food.*

*The wax is secreted by worker bees from special glands on the sternites (ventral plates) of the abdomen. In summer, the worker bees' lifespan is only about 35 days. They are most efficient at producing wax at an age of between 10-16 days, and after around 18 days, the glands gradually atrophy. Beeswax is formed in tiny flakes, or scales, about 1,100 of which are needed to make a gram of wax. The workers chew the wax scales, adding saliva, to make the wax more malleable. New wax is clear and colourless, but during mastication pollen oils and propolis is also incorporated, which causes the wax to become progressively more yellow or brown. Beeswax darkens in appearance with age and use and can range from yellow to orange, red and brownish-black.*

*Various esters form the major components of beeswax, which is highly flammable and melts at 62-66°C. It also becomes brittle if too cold; honey bees maintain their hives at a temperature of about 35°C, at which the texture of the wax is ideal for manipulation. Although edible, beeswax is of insignificant nutritional value to humans and other mammals, as it is largely indigestible.*

*Wax from the brood comb is usually darker than that from the honeycomb, due to the accumulation of impurities and debris, and is clarified by a process*

of rendering. The residue, called slumgum, sticks to the bottom of the cake of wax. It burns readily and can also be used to make crude fire starters, and as a fertiliser.

### **Bee-Powered Tracker**

The CSIRO has developed miniature radio frequency ID tags that are powered by the kinetic energy of bees in flight. The energy generation unit has small components that move and vibrate as the bee flies. The power generated is stored in a micro-battery and used to power a sensor.

The tags are just under 3 mm square, and can be fitted to the back of bees. The CSIRO is aiming to develop tags 1 mm in size for use in smaller insects.



*A Bee with a Sensor Fitted (Source: [www.abc.net.au/news/](http://www.abc.net.au/news/))*

The article can be found at the link below.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-07-01/nrn-bee-powered-batteries/7560644>

### **Mackay Beekeeper's Battle with Council**

An article that appeared recently in the media reported on a battle between the Mackay Regional Council and a local resident. In summary, if the zoning of a beekeeper's property is residential, they are required to submit a development application to seek approval to conduct a beekeeping operation, even for the keeping of a single hive.

The article may be found at the link below.

<http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2016-10-05/beekeeping-creating-a-sitcky-situation-in-mackay/7904782?pfmredirect=sm>

### **Upcoming Events**

20-22 October, 2016 – North Coast National, Lismore.

30 October, 2016 – Monthly meeting, Tomki.

18-19 May, 2017 – NSW Apiarists' Association Inc. Conference, Ballina

21 May, 2017 – Colonial Pulling competition and AGM of the ABA, Ballina.

### **Newsletter Submissions**

Thank you to all members who contributed to the newsletter.

Newsletter submissions can be emailed to [Newsletter\\_NRABA@bigpond.com](mailto:Newsletter_NRABA@bigpond.com) by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Photos are always appreciated.

### **Next Meeting – 30 October, 2016**

The next meeting will take place on 30 October at the home of Tony and Dianne Lamont, 85 Schielers Road, Tomki.

The day will start at 9.30 am with a flow hive meeting, followed by morning tea commencing at 10 am and the general meeting at 10.30 am. Lunch will be at around midday following the beekeeping activity, at a cost of \$5 per head.

The planned beekeeping activities for the day include splitting a hive, upgrading a nuc to a 10 frame hive and a talk on dealing with bees wax.

Please remember to bring along either a morning tea item or a salad to share. Raffle items are always appreciated.

Starting at Lismore, take the Bruxner Highway towards Casino. Continue out past Bunnings for approximately 19 km then turn right onto Schielers Road (the turn is approximately 1 km past the bridge over Tomki Creek). Follow Schielers Road for approximately 800 m to the Lamont residence on the left.

Bee meeting signage will be in place.