

BeeAware Newsletter



New Bee Biosecurity Video Series

A series of 12 videos on honey bee biosecurity is now available on the BeeAware website. The series covers a broad range of topics including honey bee biosecurity and surveillance programs, a hypothetical *Varroa destructor* incursion in Australia and what it might mean for beekeepers and crop producers, information about the life cycle of Varroa and hive inspections, and ways in which Varroa can be controlled if it enters and becomes established in Australia.

[Read more](#)



Hawaiian study highlights a new threat to bees

A recent Hawaiian study has found a new virus named Moku in the invasive wasp, *Vespula pensylvanica*. The research warns that transmission of these kinds of viruses, especially from invasive species which can spread viruses to new locations, is a threat to pollinator health worldwide. Honey bees are particularly under threat, and are prone to a range of emergent diseases.

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Paid pollination on the rise amongst beekeepers

The big commercial operators in beekeeping are looking to move from mass honey production to pollination. Technical specialist with the NSW Department of Primary Industries, Doug Somerville, said demand from almond and blueberry farmers was behind the change. The increase in demand will make pollination more profitable for apiarists.

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Apis cerana and Varroa jacobsoni in Townsville – update

On 18 October 2016 a very small cluster of Asian honey bees was found at Belgian Gardens in Townsville. This is about 4 kms from the original find at the port and about 400 metres from a previous find in the neighbouring suburb of North Ward. No Varroa mites were found on the bees and currently no foraging Asian honey bees have been seen.

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Preparing live bees for export

Tasmanian apiarist Lindsay Bourke has shared his knowledge in preparing live bees for export in the first episode of a series of industry best practice videos. Australia exports an average of 17 pallets of bees at the end of each season to beekeepers in Canada.

[Watch the video](#)[Read more](#)

New medicine to protect honey bees against Varroa mites

The Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use (CVMP) has recommended granting a marketing authorisation in the European Union for VarroMed (oxalic acid dehydrate / formic acid). VarroaMed is intended to be used as part of an integrated Varroa control programme, together with non-chemical methods like queen trapping or drone brood removal. The recommendation will now be sent to the European Commission for adoption.

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New web-based tool for fast identification of bee mites

The USDA has released a tool to help biosecurity specialists and beekeepers identify the mites of greatest concern. Bee Mite ID allows for identification of adult and immature mite life stages found on bees and in their nests, focuses on important bee pollinators, and can

help in distinguishing harmful from non-harmful mites.

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Many factors in high bee colony losses

Pests, pathogens and pesticides are a lethal combination that can lead to high honey bee colony loss, according to a leading beekeeper. While some studies have blamed neonicotinoids for the increased rate in bee deaths, there is a growing body of work that argues the Varroa mite is the key culprit. Others blame the combination of pests, viruses and pesticides, including those used by the beekeeper themselves, for honey bee colony losses.

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BEE on the lookout

Plant Biosecurity Apiary Inspectors Andrea Johnston and Simon Eyres are working in collaboration with Department of Water and Resources to stay ahead of possible incursions of exotic bees and bee pests in and around Fremantle. The inspectors and staff from the Office of Scientific Services have mapped all flora located in the port area. Surveillance via sentinel hives, 'floral sweeps' and other methods at and around major ports is vital to identify and keep out exotic bees and bee pests before they establish.



Rock-boring bees burrow into sandstone

A species of rock-excavating bees discovered 40 years ago but not reported in the scientific literature finally gets the spotlight. It's been named *Anthophora pueblo* for the Puebloan sandstone cliff dwellings that dot the deserts of the southwestern United States.

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**Australian
Pollinator Week
2016**

**EPA
re-registers
sulfoxaflor for
crop use**

**Car fumes
confuse honey
bees**

Australian Pollinator Week acknowledges Australia's important and unique insect pollinators. It runs from 20-27 November 2016, when community, business and organisations can come together to raise awareness of the importance of pollinators and support their needs.

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New measures to protect honey bees and use on fewer crops are part of the latest registration of sulfoxaflor, an insecticide that was cancelled last year. The Environmental Protection Agency subsequently approved it for use on cotton and sorghum under a federal Act which allows for the 'emergency' use of pesticides.

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Research from the University of Sydney has found that exhaust fumes from cars, the leading cause of air pollution, can reduce a bee's memory for floral scents, threatening pollination and honey production.

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