

The Waggle

Newsletter of the Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc.

'Furthering knowledge in Beekeeping by assisted learning and practical experience'

www.gcrb.org.au

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Next Meeting -

Drinks: Sun. Dec 3, 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Venue: Paul & Ellison Boles home
65 Hillview Parade, Ashmore

RSVP: ASAP - Paul 0404 243 358

Information & Training Meeting

Sun Feb 18 2018 - start 10:30am

Vietnam Veterans Nerang

**Your voice in local
beekeeping**

PO Box 319
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Member Profile

Returning in 2018



The Regional Report



Time, where has it gone, I'm still paying off last years Christmas pressies and now I have got to buy more. But seriously, how are your bees going? Are your records up to date, have you complied with the National Code of Practice requirements regarding inspections of your brood boxes for AFB, EFB, Chalkbrood and have you looked for any other signs of disease in your brood box.

As we have many "apprentice" beekeepers in our midst, several of our senior members are willing to help our newbie's carry out your inspections if required. If you are unsure of what is what, just pick up the phone and give me a call.

On the weekend I was fortunate enough to attend the Mt.Tamborine "Artisian Fayre" where I spotted this delightful canvas print of a honeybee on a flower, the original was recently sold to a beekeeper from China. The artists work was so detailed that it would pass as a photo rather than an oil painting.

Whilst on the mountain I dropped into the Witches Falls Winery (to get out of the rain), to see one of our members, Peter Jones, who is gainfully employed there (either that or he lives there). While discussion all aspects of beekeeping, the idea of holding a meeting arose so don't be surprised to see a meeting there on next years agenda. We have several

members who live and keep bees in the Mt Tamborine area and during my day I visited several shops that handled bee related products. The owner of “Apple & Radish” was complaining about the price that she was paying for bees wax, now she is paying less than 50% of her original price for bees wax and we have a very happy club member, willing to supply Katrina with whatever she needs.

As always when beekeepers get together, the subject of diseases was spoken of in detail, particularly the subjects of AFB (American Foul Brood) and SHB (Small Hive Beetle).

Currently I am going through the New Zealand AFB policies that have helped them drastically reduce the number of cases of AFB there. When you report an incident they either try to palm you off to your local Council or nothing is heard of the matter again. The Councils reaction is if it is not on public land to refer you back to QDAF, it is really an entertaining way to spend your day if you have nothing better to do.

The one BIG difference between Queensland and New Zealand is that the Government stepped in and policed the NZ outbreak and yet here all the Queensland Department of Agriculture (QDAF) and Fisheries do nothing, unlike basically every other State in Australia, Queensland’s DAF does absolutely NOTHING.

It has yet to appoint a Apiary Biosecurity Officer who will have the authority to enforce the **Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice**, that was endorsed nationally in July 2016. If we continue to wait for QDAF to act, Queensland will not have a Honey bee industry to worry about. Over the Christmas break I hope to complete the assembly of our own club AFB inspection policy that will comply with Biosecurity Code of Practice.

On that note, how many of our members have actually read the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice, you can print a copy from <https://honeybee.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Australian-Honey-Bee-Industry-Biosecurity-Code-of-Practice-V1-July-2016.pdf>, if you keep bees, you should be fully aware of the Code requirements and your obligations under the Code of Practice.

The club will be maintaining the Vietnam Veteran’s hives at Nerang and will also be installing club hives at the site in the future, the club will work the hives and the Vietnam Vet’s will extract and keep the honey. A win - win solution for



both clubs, enabling the apiary to produce spills/nuc's in the future.

Mike Hynes has been mentoring several members in his area and when I popped in last week, he and Gray Carswell (well... Gray was anyway, Mike was testing another serving of his home brew) were extracting honey from the frames they had removed.

The photo shows Gray hard at work, I just can't get over how much fun motorised extractors have taken out of beekeeping, but then when you get to Mike's ripe old age technology does have it's advantages.

Sunday 3rd of December will see Paul and Ellison open their home to club members to get together for a few Christmas drinks from 5pm. They are located at 65 Hillview Parade

Ashmore, you are welcome to bring any fancy drinks that you may have thirst for and a tray of nibbles to share.

On Sunday 10th of December Mike is opening up his shed to members who would like a hand to assemble equipment or just to ask questions about beekeeping just pop in after 10am. His address is 106 Berrigans Road Mudgeeraba, just follow his long drive way and make sure that you shut the bottom gate after you enter. It would be best to wear a pair of old shoes/boots as cow pats have a different meaning as well as making a mess of your car mats.

If you are interested in collecting swarms, have a hive box ready and send me your details and availability, we have relocated several swarms already this season to volunteer helpers sites and it is offer an easy way to get started, especially as Nuc's and bee batches have been in short supply this year. One warning I must add is that the club takes no responsibility for the health of swarms collected, if you already have hives keep the swarm separated until you are satisfied that they are a healthy hive.

I wish you all a Happy and Healthy Christmas break, but please remember that the girls in your hive do not observe statutory holidays or days off so just because you are taking it easy, it is the busiest time of the year for them.

Merry Christmas and a Happy and Sting Free New Year to you all.

JP



Rookie Mistakes (with Drone lava)

by Paul Boles

I am a young Beekeeper of approx. 2.5 years experience.

I would like to think I'm a diligent student of Beekeeping, listening to Mentors, continuing regular maintenance with my hives, and all the while enjoying the very steep learning curve associated with learning about Bees.

So, when John Polley and Kevin Finn started talking about "splitting hives" I began salivating at the chance to organically grow my Bee/ Honey empire, from 4 to 6 hives.

My earlier experience last year wasn't great. Splitting 2 hives and losing 1 to hive beetle fairly quickly, was very disappointing. One of the new brood boxes just wasn't strong enough to fight the beetle. But after a shitload of effort, I had an extra hive.

So this year, smarter, experienced and much more careful, I was determined to split 2 more hives. Armed with the knowledge, timing and rat-like cunning, I selected my hives to split, ordered my new queens and started building new boxes and frames. I had 4 weeks to plan.

One mentor, who will remain nameless, cautioned me against this strategy, suggesting there was better ways to grow the empire. But I was determined.

When I had word the Queens were close, I dived in and created the "new brood boxes, selecting frames showing newly laid eggs (brood) and several honey frames. Inserted above the Queen excluder. I was good to go! First rookie mistake – timing.

Then to my disappointment, my Queen distributor was late in getting me the Queens. Stress starting to show, as young bees were hatching before the new Queen arrived. "Don't worry Grasshopper" was the remark – cautioning me again against my strategy.

When the Queens finally arrived, they looked good (not that I have any idea, but that's what they said). Then the next day I magically extracted the new Brood box from the triple stacks, taped up the front, inserted the new Queen and moved each box to a new location.

Each box looked ok when I pulled back the tape in the new location, but I was concerned they looked weak. So the waiting game began. Each night I would check them looking for activity, and my concerns were soon deepening as activity wasn't growing. My Mentor said not to open the hives for at least 2 weeks, to allow the bees to adopt the new Queen.

Then one night in a lucid moment, I realised my first mistake. I had forgotten to insert Apithor mats. Hive beetle was about to wreck havoc yet again!! I had to open both the next day and check, even though the 2 weeks hadn't transpired.

Next day, my concerns were realised. The bloody hive beetle had got in and I had maggots in the ceiling with Burr Comb. Interestingly however, I checked frames and could see no other evidence of beetle lava, so I scraped all the Burr comb and maggots away, and discarded them into a plastic bag. I was please however that the bees numbers were beginning to grow in both hives despite the evidence beetle lava.

New Apithor matts and plastic beetle traps were inserted and the wait began to see if they could recover.

I then called my Mentor, who said to check the text books to identify the maggots. Having had a disaster the year before however, I knew I was in trouble, and ignored the advice. Second rookie error!

Shortly afterwards I received an encouraging phone call checking on the hives. "All good" I said, bees numbers growing, and starting to fill out the hive. No Hive beetle activity thankfully.

"Did you check the text" he asks? Sheepishly, I fessed up and said no. "You killed bees you idiot" he says. What!!!! "Yes, they were Drone lava you mongrel"! You didn't need to worry, they were perfectly normal for the hive. He had also just seen the same phenomenon that week. While I was elated to know it wasn't Hive beetle, sadly I did the wrong thing.

So it turns out Drone lava are large white "maggot looking" lava that are born at this time of year (in Spring).

And lessons learnt are, back yourself, research any doubts and listen and take notice of your mentor, and don't kill Drone lava.



Drone lava found in comb



Comparable size of Drone lava found



Drone brood



Small Hive Beetle infestation - much smaller



Minding our beeswax: Humans have been using honeybee products for at least 9,000 years

ABC Science
by Dani Cooper



A hollow log hive in Cévennes, France reveals the details of circular comb architecture in *Apis mellifera*. (Eric Tourneret)

Humans were making use of honeybee products such as beeswax as early as 7000BC, according to new research released.

Previously the use of bee products was dated to around 2400BC with ancient Egyptian murals and iconography depicting beekeeping.

However, scientists reveal today in *Nature* that based on an analysis of ancient pottery this date can be pushed back by almost 5,000 years.

The finding comes against a backdrop of concern over current honeybee populations, which are under threat from modern pesticides and diseases that have wiped out colonies in some parts of Europe and the US.

Detecting beeswax in pots allows us to say that early farmers were exploiting hive products (beeswax and honey) Dr Melanie Roffet-Salque

First author Dr Melanie Roffet-Salque, from the School of Chemistry at the University of Bristol in the UK, said although the honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) was the most studied of social insects, debate was still ongoing over the origins of the bee-human relationship.

"The honeybee holds a unique place in human culture," she said.

"Notwithstanding its present-day economic importance, it has been revered over the millennia for the sheer beauty and complexity of the social organisation within its colonies."

Dr Roffet-Salque said their work showed a regular association between honeybees and humans developed as the Neolithic agriculture-based society emerged and moved from the Near East around 6800BC and finished around 3500BC in the UK.

"By then the Europe of nomadic hunter gatherers becomes the Europe of sedentary farmers," she said.

Early farmers' pottery was used to hold honey and beeswax

The pottery containers of these new farming communities held the key to determining if bees were present.

Dr Roffet-Salque said honeybees produced a beeswax made up of complex lipids that lead to a unique chemical signature, similar to a fingerprint.

These compounds were also largely resistant to degradation and could be recognised even after thousands of years.

"Honey cannot be detected directly as it is mainly composed of sugars which are very soluble and do not survive through archaeological times," Dr Roffet-Salque said.

"Detecting beeswax in pots allows us to say that early farmers were exploiting hive products (beeswax and honey)."

For the study the team examined residue on more than 6,400 pottery artefacts from more than 150 Old World archaeological sites looking for the chemical signature.

In total the team found 50 new finds of beeswax residues providing evidence for the widespread exploitation of the honeybee by the early agriculturalists and pastoralists of the Near East, Europe and North Africa.

The oldest evidence for beeswax was found on pottery sherds from Neolithic sites in Anatolia, modern-day Turkey, dating from the seventh millennium BC.

Dr Roffet-Salque said these sites were the locations of the oldest pottery vessels in Europe and Eurasia.

"The association between men and bees is probably older than the first pots — however, it is difficult to prove it as there are no pottery vessels from before that time and thus no remains of beeswax," she said.

Importantly their study also found no evidence of beeswax at Neolithic sites above the 57th parallel North, which crosses through Scotland and Fennoscandia.

Dr Roffet-Salque said this might indicate the natural ecological limit to honeybee populations.



Gardener dies after being stung by bees at Dunkeld property in western Victoria

ABC News 15 November 2017



Photo: The Dunkeld man was stung by several bees and died at the scene. (AAP)

A 27-year-old man, believed to be a gardener, has died after being stung by bees at a western Victorian property. The ABC understands emergency services were called to the upmarket Royal Mail Hotel at Dunkeld, near the Grampians National Park, shortly after 10:00am.

The Dunkeld man died at the scene. WorkSafe Victoria investigators are at the property.

There have been 22 workplace deaths this year, compared with 25 fatalities at the same time last year, WorkSafe said.

Honey Banana Pops

Ingredients

- 1 1/3 cups ground toasted almonds or ground coconut
- 4 just ripe bananas, peeled
- 1/2 cup honey
- 8 popsicle sticks



Directions

Makes 8 servings

Spread ground nuts (or other topping of choice) on a plate or plates. Cut bananas in half crosswise. Insert a craft stick into each cut end. To assemble, hold each banana half over plate or waxed paper to catch drips. Spoon about 1 Tbsp. Bee Maid Honey over banana, rotating and smoothing honey with back of spoon to coat all sides. (Or, squeeze honey from a plastic honey bear container and smooth out with spoon.) Roll banana in topping of choice until coated on all sides, pressing with fingertips to help topping adhere. Place pops on waxed paper lined cookie sheet. Repeat with remaining bananas, honey and topping. Serve at once.



New species of teddy bear bee discovered



The new species of teddy bear bee. *Image Credit: Robert Whyte - Story National geographic*

Yet another new species of teddy bear bee has been discovered in northern Queensland during a 'bush blitz' of the area.

A NEW species of teddy bear bee (*Asarapoda*) has been discovered in the small town of Laura, located in the Cape York Peninsula of northern Queensland, during a 'bush blitz' of the area.

According to Remko Leijds, a biologist from the South Australian Museum, who discovered the new teddy bear bee, the bee is yet to be named as Remko is currently conducting a revision of this particular family of bees.

Remko told *Australian Geographic* that he spotted the new teddy bear bee on a hibiscus flower.

"It was clear that female bees liked to collect pollen from hibiscus plants, but also were attracted to garden plants in the village, that probably provided a reliable nectar source for the bees."

This new bee is one of five new species of teddy bear bee that has been discovered during the Bush Blitz project, first started in 2010 with the aim of highlighting Australia's vast biodiversity.

"It is great that a lot of new species of native bees are being discovered, so we still do not know completely what is out there," Remko said. "On the other hand some species discovered about 100 years ago have not been found again," he added.

Remko said that he knew this particular bee was a new species the moment he spotted the unique bands that cover the bees abdomen.

"Most other species in this group do not have clear hair bands but are almost entirely fluffy orange-brown. That is why they have been called Teddy bear bees," he said.



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Notice Board

Upcoming Events

Sun 3 December 2017	Christmas Drinks & Nibbles	5:00pm start
	Paul & Ellison Boles home 65 Hillview Parade, Ashmore	
Sun 10th December 2017	Informal Beginners hive assembly day	10:00am start
	Mike Hynes shed 106 Berrigans Road, Mudgeeraba	
February 2018 TBA	Committee Meeting	09:00
	I & T Meeting	10:30
	Vietnam Veterans	
	18 Leagues Club Drive, Nerang	

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice

The Code requires beekeepers to inspect hives at least twice per year (minimum 6 months apart). Keep accurate records of their findings, records may be electronic or paper based and kept for 3 years minimum. If it is not recorded they deem that the inspection has not taken place.

Under Requirement 6.4 of the Code

“each hive must be clearly and legibly marked with the Beekeepers allocated ‘Hive Identification Number’ (HIN) in accordance with relevant state of territory legislation.”

URGENT REMINDER

All Beekeepers MUST be registered with DAF / DPI in order to keep bees. This IS LAW!

QLD: www.daf.qld.gov.au Animals > Bees > Register as a beekeeper

NSW: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au Animals & livestock > Honey Bees > Beekeeper registration