

The Waggle

Newsletter of the Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc.

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

www.gcrb.org.au

President:

John Polley

Ph: 0 421 992 208

Secretary:

Tony Parker

Ph: 0408 879 826

Treasurer:

Roslyn de Boer

M: 0417 142 072

Next Meeting -

Saturday May 19 - start 10:00

**topic: Talk by Dave Perkins -
Horticulturist**

Vietnam Veterans

18 Leagues Club Drive, Nerang

**Your voice in local
beekeeping**

PO Box 319

Ashmore City Q 4214

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Notice Board - Pg 10

The Regional Report

It is not long now before the 3rd Australian Bee Congress (June 28-29-30) and the Australian Native Bee Conference (July 1), will be held at the Pines Resort on the Gold Coast. Full details will be found later on in my report.

On local issues, I received a call from a member enquiring about a "Pollen mites" infection in one of his hives. Having no knowledge of pollen mites myself, I tapped into the knowledge of both Peter Warhurst (QBA, DAF retired) and Graham Beech (NT Bees), for advise. Whilst Pollen Mites are not common on the Gold Coast, it appears that I the colony is smacked with nicotine (tobacco), in the smoker, that will help eradicate the mite, or you can feed the hive sugar syrup in a 1:1 ratio along with one drop of Thymol (Mouthwash), in the hives mixture.

Pollen mites are picked up from flowers as the bees forage.

Most common in Mason bees, I found this description on the web.

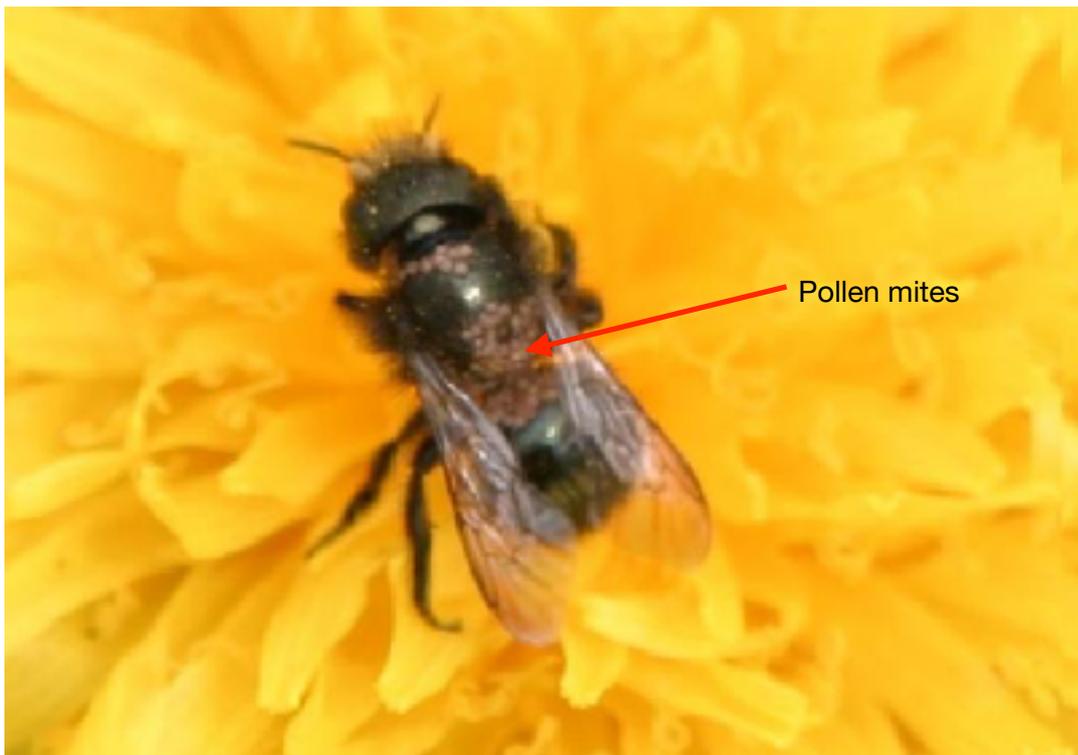
Pollen mites are very tiny, but most can be seen easily with a hand-held magnifier. The mites that plague the Osmia family of bees are called Chaetodactylus krombeini, Hairy-Footed Mite. (Not the same mites that are decimating honeybee populations.) These mites do little harm in the adult bees, but are believed by many researchers to kill the eggs inside the nests.

The most serious accumulation of mites occur while bees crawl through mite infested cells when exiting the nest, they can also pick up mites while gathering pollen.

These pollen mites are extremely small, less than 0.5mm in size, individual mites are hard to see so looking for a small cluster is easier.



Pollen Mites



Pollen mites

Photos: Google Images



After a couple of days rain it was decided to change the Vietnam Veterans' Small Hive Beetle (SHB), traps from diatomaceous earth (DE), to oil, as moisture will set the DE to a plaster like finish.

Upon removing the slide out traps from the bottom boards, both Peter and myself were confused to see a fluffy cotton wool like green mixture filling both trays. After checking all the local flora out, it

had Peter and I baffled as to what it was, so we decided to inspect the brood box for any indicators as to the cause of the fluff.



It turned out that when the new club box was being transported to the site, a copy of the “Country Life” newspaper was used to prevent the frames in the box from moving about. **It appears that the bees were fully up to date with Queensland cattle prices and had reached the page with the heading “Animal Welfare”, we were lucky they had not reached the page with the No Win No Fee ad from the solicitors.**

All hives at the Vets’ are going very well and will be looked at during our next meeting, so please bring your Veil and protective clothes that you normally wear for working bees.



With the annual **Mudgeeraba Show being held over the 23rd and 24th of June** we will be setting up a roster for volunteers to help out at our next meeting, these events are the mainstay of fundraising for our club, so now is the chance for you to have a bit of fun while helping the club out.

Please contact Kevin Finn at email: waratahapiary@gmail.com, with days and times you will be interested in helping out.

Setup Friday 22nd Sat. Sun. 23, 24 - morning / afternoon

The Mudgeeraba Show is being closely followed by the **Queensland Beekeepers Association 114th AGM & Conference on Wednesday 27th June 2018 1pm – 6pm at the RACV Royal Pines Resort, Gold Coast**, followed by **3RD Australian Bee Congress at the same resort from the 27th until the 30th of June.**

Kevin Finn and myself will be acting as stewards assisting the Honey Judges for the competition at this event.

On the **1st and 2nd of July the 1st Australian Native Bee Conference** will be held at the same location, so if you are into bees you will get a real buzz for the end of the financial year.



For the new beekeepers in the club, remember that you should be leaving at least 5 to 6 full frames of honey in your supers to carry your hive over winter should we have a colder than normal winter here on the coast. Over the next couple of months you should be preparing and getting your hives and spares ready for the upcoming season.

All beekeepers should have at least one spare brood box complete, as a standby for swarms from your hive in spring, when a hive swarms you can lose up to 50% of the bees from your hive, the old queen will leave with a major porting of the hive workers leaving the existing hive weakened and at risk of attack from Small Hive Beetle (SHB) or other diseases. A swarmed hive can often take around 8 to 10 weeks to get back to full production again and if you are fortunate enough to have recovered the swarmed bees you have gained another hive and more honey for the next year.

By attending our regular club meetings and talking with some of the older beekeeping members you can pick up a mass of information that you won't find on YouTube or in books, so whilst helping out with the Nerang hives it will help you gain more experience and improve your skills at the same time.

Club member Peter Cabak, who is a Paramedic, has offered to run a basic first aid course for club members at the Vietnam Veterans' Nerang site free of charge to the club, for up to 20 members. The club will use this offer as a fundraiser. Whilst this will not be a certificated course it will cover basic first aid such as CPR and stroke management and will include practical sessions with special first aid training mannequins.

Date/s, time and fee will be advised under separate email.

Register your interest by emailing Treasurer Roslyn de Boer (treasurer@gcrb.org.au or roslyn@rojo trading.com)

payment will be in advance by EFT to the club account

Account name: GCRBI BSB: 484 799 Acc. No. 123519066

Positions will be allocated after payment is received on a first paid first enrolled basis.



At the May meeting, Club member and horticulturist, David Perkins will talk on his recent 12 months working with the Isreal Botanical Gardens and local beekeepers in Israel.

Looking forward to catching up with you all at the next meeting.

Cheers

JP

How Does Smoke Work?

Lynae Ovinge

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Lethbridge

“We can drive cattle and horses, and, to some extent, even pigs, with a whip; but one who undertakes to drive bees in any such way will find to his sorrow that all the rest of the animal kingdom are mild in comparison, especially as far as stubbornness and fearlessness of consequences are concerned. You may kill them by thousands; you may even burn them up with fire, but the death agonies of their comrades seem only to provoke them to new fury, and they push on to the combat with a relentlessness which we can compare to nothing better than a nest of yellow-jackets that have made up their minds to die, and to make all the mischief they possibly can before dying. It is here that the power of smoke comes in; and to one who is not conversant with its use, it seems simply astonishing to see them turn about and retreat in the most perfect dismay and fright, from the effects of a puff or two of smoke from a mere fragment of rotten wood. What could we bee-keepers do with bees at times, were no such potent power as smoke known?”

— Al Root, *The ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture*. 1910. pp 303.



Photo Credit: Lynae Ovinge

***When I’ve been asked who my hero is....
My answer is The dude who invented smoking bees.***

But how does smoke work? I've seen that the bees avoid it, and are calmer, but what else is going on?

It turns out that the answer is (at least) two-fold: smoke interferes with alarm pheromones and smoke causes the bees to engorge with honey.

Smoke interferes with alarm pheromones

Honeybee alarm pheromone is the reason why sometimes you don't get stung once - you get stung 10 times. When worker bees sense a threat or have stung, they release alarm pheromone (containing over 40 compounds), which recruits other workers to be defensive and also sting (Free 1987). You may have heard it smells like bananas and that you shouldn't eat bananas around hives. It does smell like bananas (Winston, 1987); as for whether you should eat bananas around hives, Ryan Poelman reports getting stung on the mouth right after having eaten a banana.

Visscher et al (1995a) performed an experiment where they removed a bee's antenna, and connected it to an antennograph. They then applied smoke to the antenna and showed that the antennal response to alarm pheromone was half of the response when no smoke was applied. They also repeated the experiment using a floral odor instead of the alarm pheromone and achieved similar results, which suggested that smoke was interfering with general antennae response, rather than specifically blocking alarm pheromone. Basically the bees are calm because their ability to "smell" is diminished, so agitated bees are unable to use alarm pheromone to recruit others to come sting you. Visscher et al also showed that the effect of smoke on antenna only lasted for 10-15 minutes, which is related to a beekeeper's need to repeatedly smoke colonies.

Interestingly, in a later study, Visscher (1995b) also evaluated the effect of smoke on yellow jacket wasps and bumble bees and found it reduced defensive behavior in yellow jackets by ten-fold and bumble bees by two-fold!

Smoke makes the bees engorge with honey

Several studies have shown that smoking a hive causes bees to engorge with honey (Free 1968, Biamonte 1974): the effect is greatest two minutes after smoking (Newton 1968), and lasts up to two hours (Free 1968). However, it is unlikely that this feeding response entirely accounts for the effects of smoke on bees as the effects of bees engorging with honey can last up to two hours, but beekeepers need to frequently reapply smoke to hives (Visscher et al. 1995a).

Biamonte et al (1974) and many others have suggested that this feeding response is because workers respond to smoke in the air by eating lot of honey in case they have to leave the hive due to a fire. Furthermore, the theory goes that when workers have eaten that much honey, their abdomens become large, which makes it more difficult for the stinger to work.

There's a few flaws with the fire theory. One is that the effect of smoke is clearly immediate, but it would take a while for the bees to consume enough honey to render their stingers ineffectual. Secondly, beekeepers have seen hives burn (several threads on beesource.com), and generally the bees burn with the hive as they're unwilling to abandon brood.

In summary, smoke works because it masks alarm pheromones that would otherwise recruit additional aggressive bees, and the workers are busy eating honey.

Some other tidbits:

- When the entrance to a hive is smoked, the number of guard bees is decreased for at least 10 minutes (Newton 1969).
- Some early Varroa mite monitoring and control methods included smoking the colony with tobacco smoke (Witherell and Bruce 1990)
- Liquid smoke contains smoke particles suspended in liquid and can sprayed on bees during high fire hazard.
- Some smoker fuels: hay, grass clippings, wood chips, egg trays, burlap, corrugated cardboard, dried leaves, sawdust, pine cones, dried dung, alfalfa pellets, pine needles, tobacco, compressed cotton, dried grapefruit prunings <http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/smofuel.html>
- Smoke is neither necessary nor very useful with swarms, partly because they have no honey stores to feed on, partially because they are not normally aggressive

VEGAN HONEY

AHBIC’s attention has been drawn to a product available in Australia labelled as vegan honey. As honey is a prescribed name under the Food Standards Australia and New Zealand standards, this product does not comply with the definition of honey. AHBIC has lodged a complaint re this product. Vegans do not eat honey as they say it comes from or is produced by animals. I wonder how they get on with food such as pumpkins, watermelons, apples and all those other foods out there that our honey bees pollinate directly or provide pollination for the seed production such as carrots and onions. Do they not eat these because bees have played a part in their production?

I note from a tweet on the ABC Rural website that France has outlawed the use of dairy and meat related words when describing products which are neither - phrases such as vegan sausages, tofu steaks, vegan cheese, meatless bacon - even soy milk and all those flavoured waters pretending to be milk – BANNED.

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING

The time for the two year transition period for the Country of Origin Labelling (CoOL) ends on 30 June 2018. So as from 1 July 2018 the new labelling requirements re CoOL will be law.

Some have suggested that the transition periods should be extended but the Government has said that this will not be the case.

So make sure all your labels are ready and compliant for the new CoOL when it becomes law on 1 July, 2018.

This item will be covered in detail in the June Edition of the “Waggle”

Quick Tips To Wax Your Body Hair With Honey

With thanks to Ruth Tam. www.benefits-of-honey.com

What is Waxing

Waxing is perhaps one of the most common ways to get rid of body hair and ensure that you have smooth skin. Women undergo this painful process almost every month so that they can have smooth arms and legs and dress the way they want. There are a number of women who even choose to wax their facial hair so that the skin on their face looks smooth.

Go For Natural Wax

While waxing is one of the best ways to get rid of hair for a really long time, it is also essential for you to consider using natural wax as compared to the ones that have a lot of chemicals loaded in them. Instead of visiting the salon to get a chemical wax the smarter solution would be to prepare natural wax using honey.



(after having my wife do a small test area on my leg many years ago. I would not care how much a

Preparing Honey Wax

Honey is amazing for your skin and it has a lot of health benefits that not only ensure you wax a lot better but it also keeps your skin supple, healthy and glowing. In case you're wondering how you can prepare wax at home using honey then here are a few common methods that you could try.

One of the easiest ways to prepare honey wax is to combine sugar with lemon juice and a little honey and stir it on low heat till you get the right consistency. To do this, all you need to do is follow the below steps:-

1. Take two cups sugar and cover it up with half a cup of honey and the juice of three limes.
2. Heat this till all the sugar melts and the mixture begins to bubble.
3. Always use medium low heat to make wax, using a very high heat will burn the sugar and it will separate from the rest of the mixture.

This is natural and safe and it is a lot better as compared to any chemical wax that you will find in the market. While honey can soothe your skin after you have waxed the lemon present in the wax will help to lighten your skin and get rid of any tan marks that you have.

This form of waxing is definitely better and highly recommended for people who have sensitive skin and aren't very used to waxing at a salon. The chances of you getting in growth are a lot less when you use honey wax because it is milder, safer and easier to use. It does take a little time for you to get the texture and the consistency right and in case you are wondering how you will be able to figure out whether or not the wax is made correctly then all you need to do is try a small batch and see whether or not it is sticking in between your index finger and your thumb. If the wax feels sticky enough you can take it off the heat. While you can store this wax and use it at room temperature as well it is more effective when the wax is heated up.



Apply Honey Wax

Once you have a batch prepared you can wax your legs, your arms and even your face using the wax. Always make sure that you keep the surface that you choose to wax dry and clean. In case you have a tendency of sweating too much, powder the area before you apply the wax because this helps the wax to stick better. Use non-stretchable fabric wax strips. You can also DIY by cutting strips of different sizes from a piece of fabric. After sticking the fabric strip on top of the waxed area, make sure you pull it out quickly in the opposite direction of the hair growth. While applying the wax always make sure that you apply it towards the direction that the hair grows because this makes it easier for you to pull off when you are pulling the wax strip in the opposite direction. If you miss out on a few strands of hair while waxing there is no need for you to panic you can simply repeat the process with smaller strips of wax.

Club Contacts

President / Editor	John Polley	Mob: 0421 992 208	president@gcrb.org.au
Secretary	Tony Parker	Mob: 0408 879 826	secretary@gcrb.org.au
Treasurer / Membership	Roslyn de Boer	Mob: 0417 142 072	treasurer@gcrb.org.au
Webmaster:	Nasser Kaviani	Mob: 0409 440 595	
Editor:	Pam Gray	Mob: 0428 628 434	
Committee	John de Boer	Mob: 0417 142 073	
	Kevin Finn	Mob: 0413 282 836	
	Wayne Mole	Mob: 0409 511 560	
	Mike Hynes	Mob: 0418 766 085	
	Paul Boles	Mob: 0404 243 358	

Notice Board

Upcoming Events

Sat May 19 2018	David Perkins talk - Working with the Israeli Botanical Gardens and local beekeepers in Israel Venue: Vietnam Veterans, 18 Leagues Club Drive, Nerang	10:00 start
Sun June 17 2018	Committee Meeting Topic: TBA Venue: Vietnam Veterans 18 Leagues Club Drive, Nerang	10:00 start

WARNING ON WAX MELTING

Wax can explode if not handled in the proper manner and with great care, when melting. PLEASE contact one of the Committee members for tried and tested safe methods and cautions.

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