

# THE WAGGLE

Newsletter of the Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc.

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

[www.gcrb.org.au](http://www.gcrb.org.au)

Edition: September 2021

<p><b>President:</b> <i>Greg Foster</i> Mob: 0409 279 164 ~~~~~</p> <p><b>Secretary:</b> <i>Drew Maywald</i> Mob: 0400 959 043 ~~~~~</p> <p><b>Treasurer:</b> <i>Peter Handy</i> Mob: 0448 195 020</p>	<p><b>Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc.</b> E: <a href="mailto:gcrb.president@beekeepers.asn.au">gcrb.president@beekeepers.asn.au</a> E: <a href="mailto:gcrb.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au">gcrb.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au</a> E: <a href="mailto:gcrb.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au">gcrb.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au</a> E: <a href="mailto:gcrb.membership@beekeepers.asn.au">gcrb.membership@beekeepers.asn.au</a> E: <a href="mailto:gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au">gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au</a></p>	<p>Your voice in local beekeeping PO Box 389, Nerang, Qld, 4214</p> <p><b>Next Meeting:</b> Sat 18 Sep 21 8:30 am Hive Inspection and Rob 10:30 am – Swarm control and swarm boxes by Fiona Fernie and Mike Hynes</p>
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The Waggle is the journal of the Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc. It is distributed to members monthly. The editor will consider adverts from businesses relevant to beekeepers to run free of charge where they contain a discount or special offer to GCRB members. Please email [gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au)

## From the Editor

Ahh! September. The days are definitely getting longer and warmer, the footy season is coming to an end with all of the finals, but more importantly that honey flow is not all that far away (hopefully).

This edition is a rather meaty one with a relevant article on Swarms that the Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Assoc were kind enough to allow me to reproduce. I would like to think I have a good relationship with their editor and that we are able to share these informative articles between our Clubs.

With the longer, sunny days now in the offing, the use of a solar wax melter is a very effective way to melt down your cappings and old frames. If you do not have one, the club just happens to have a couple for immediate sale, and further orders can be placed with the Vietnam Veterans Men's Shed if you miss out on the first two.

This issue also has some information on our upcoming October AGM, and on our December Honey Competition, which should be fun.

As always, I am looking for articles to include in this, YOUR, newsletter. If you have any tips, funny stories or a bee in your bonnet please either email me, phone me or see me at our meetings. Happy to take handwritten articles or even make an audio recording with you.

See you at the next meeting

Yours Aye

Windy

## President's Chat

It's nice to feel the warmth of Spring sunshine as nature starts its amazing cycle once again. I hope you have spent your off season wisely preparing for the impending flow, rumours amongst wiser beekeepers than me lean towards it possibly being a good season ahead, here's hoping.

Wednesday the 25th of August saw our first Beekeeping Workshop with the Enterprise and Training Company (ETC) of Southport. Considerable time had been dedicated to making this workshop happen, it was considered a worthwhile venture by the committee and the ten participants were enthusiastic and went away with a completely different understanding and outlook of our wonderful bee. ETC hope that we can conduct the workshops on a quarterly basis, I'm excited to see how this initiative can possibly evolve in the months ahead. Thank you to Fiona and Mike for your time and assistance on the day.

You will be seeing more club information in the weeks ahead as we approach our AGM on the 16th of October. It has come around quicker this year as last year we deferred the AGM because of COVID. I hope you will give some thought at this time to how you may possibly give back to the club in some way, there are many ways this can be achieved, I'm always willing to have a chat in this regard.

I hope to see you on the 18th at our next club morning, the committee works hard to make each club day as informative, educational and enjoyable as possible for members, and our upcoming club morning won't disappoint. See you there!

Greg

"The Appy Apiarist"

## Hive Report

With the weather warming up we were able to get into the hives early, and the girls had been busy.

The lids of Hives 1, 2 and 4 were full of burr comb and the supers were choc-a-block. We managed to take 13 frames from these three hives.

This should give the Vets a reasonable amount of honey to start selling again this year.



The Flow hive had three frames robbed in location using the bucket adapter which worked well. The intention is to continue to rob the Flow hive in this fashion into the future.

Hive 5 is still suffering from Chalkbrood and the Queen has managed to get back up into the super. There were at least four frames of brood including Drone cells. A new excluder will be installed and the hive re-assessed before the next meeting.

See you at the next inspection



## August Meeting Report

Our August meeting got off to a flying start with the hive inspections and rob, and with so many members jumping in to help, it was all over well before 10:00am. During the rob Roger and Mike started to extract the honey. Thanks to everyone who helped out it was good to see.

We also welcomed a couple of new members Lucy and Dave. Windy took charge of selling the raffle tickets with 4 members going away with either a \$50 voucher to K Mart, or a sign for the home donated by Roger May, or a sugar shake test kit or a club cap.

Greg outlined what is currently happening in the club and the small solar beeswax melter made by the Vets Men's shed, was on display. Greg then introduced long term member and experienced beekeeper, Kevin Finn who gave an excellent talk about nuc's and splitting the hive without looking for the queen.

Thanks to all members who attended for their participation and attendance, and special thanks to Kevin for yet another excellent presentation. Kevin's beekeeping knowledge and skills are extensive and he is always willing to share his knowledge and skills, for which we are very grateful.

See you next meeting.

## Joke of the Month

I don't mean to "drone" on but I think you'll love this bee joke!

**Q - What's more dangerous than being with a fool?**

A - Fooling with a bee.

## New Members

The Club's membership base continues to grow and the President, Committee and Members would like to welcome our newbees

Stephen Ludlow  
Matthew Thorpe  
Neil Mahoney  
Anthony Perkins  
Grady Rodgers  
Amber Spencer  
Roger May  
Libby Merrifield  
Michael Spencer, and  
Debbie Hedges

Please make the new members welcome!

## Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the GCRB will be held on October 16, 2021 at the Vietnam Veterans complex. If you would like to be more involved in the club then it is time to think about being on the committee.

There is not a lot of work for committee members and if you are unable to attend our committee meetings then you can do so through Google Meets (Google's answer to Zoom).

If you need more information please give our Secretary, Drew Maywald, a call. You will receive more information about the AGM, closer to the date.

## Did You Know??

- What do cows, horses, goats, buffaloes and bees, all have in common? Under Biosecurity legislation they're all livestock!
- If you have bee hives, they **must** be registered with Biosecurity Qld.
- This registration is **free** for up to 100 hives.
- Here is a link to Biosecurity Qld where you can register your hives: [Registrable biosecurity entity application \(bees\) \(daf.qld.gov.au\)](https://daf.qld.gov.au)
- Or, contact the GCRB secretary Drew Maywald on [gcrb\\_secretary@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:gcrb_secretary@beekeepers.asn.au) or phone 0400 959 043 if you need help with registering your hives.
- When you have registered your hives with Biosecurity Qld you will be given a Hive Identification Number (HIN)
- The Act requires a beekeeper to place a HIN on 1 hive out of every 50, but we recommend that you brand all your hives as proof of ownership and to help with recovery in the event of loss or theft. This is particularly important if your hives have old brands.
- Biosecurity Qld advises the HIN number should be displayed on your hives as follows:

You must ensure that hive markings stay legible. You must mark or brand the HIN:

- on the front of the hive
- in block letters, at least 25mm high.



The first HIN on a hive must be placed in the centre of the front of the hive (position 1). If a hive is already marked or branded, you must place any subsequent marks or brands of the HIN in the corners of the front of the hive in a clockwise sequence, starting from the top left-hand corner (position 2).

- The Gold Coast City Council requires that all Gold Coast beekeepers' hives are registered with Biosecurity Qld.
- The Gold Coast City Council requires that all Gold Coast beekeepers are a member of a registered Beekeeping club.
- Failure to register your hive(s) may result in seizure of your hives by GCCC.
- The Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers club requires all members' hives are registered with biosecurity Qld.
- Failure to register your hives may result in your membership to GCRB and any other Qld Beekeeping club being rescinded.
- Not registering your hives with Biosecurity Qld is poor beekeeping practice and helps to spread diseases like AFB

## What Are Those White Worms in My Honey?

Is My Honey Still Safe if I Found Worms in It?

***Editor's Note: I found this article on an American site that I follow. It indicates the importance of straining your honey at least once prior to bottling!***



**Q:** I recently started selling my honey. Just a few weeks ago, during the extraction process, I saw a few small white worms in it. Is that normal? The honey is from wild bees in a tree hive.

**A:** The little white "worms" we sometimes see in honey are not actually worms at all. Instead, they are the larval stage of the wax moth. Just like honey bees, wax moths go through four stages of metamorphosis: egg, larva, pupa, and adult.

After five to eight days in an egg, the larvae hatch and crawl around looking for something to eat. Although they appear to eat wax, what they really want is leftovers from honey bee brood rearing, such as empty cocoons or bits and pieces of bee. For this reason, you are much more likely to see wax moth larvae in comb that was once used for brood rearing.

In a situation like yours, where the honey came from a tree hive, it is not unusual to see wax moth larvae in the honey. The wild bees most likely used that comb for brood rearing before they filled it with honey for the winter. Beekeepers who use box hives, such as the common Langstroth, can use queen excluders that prevent the queen from laying eggs in comb that will be used for honey. Since that comb never was used for brood rearing, it is less likely to attract wax moths.

A few wax moths in the honey is more an annoyance than anything else. Honey has many chemical and physical properties that prevent pathogens, including bacteria and viruses, from surviving in it. In fact, honey has been used for generations as an antibiotic agent in human health care. Honey is highly hygroscopic, meaning it pulls water from living organisms, causing them to wither and die. It is also very acidic, produces hydrogen peroxide, and contains pathogen-resistant plant chemicals.

The best thing to do is what you already did—simply strain the honey to remove any moths that remain. This is good practice anyway because straining also removes any wax bits, bee wings, or pollen pellets that may detract from the honey's appearance. The raw honey that remains is pure and healthful.

## From 8 to 85! - A lifetime of being interested in bees

by Julie Hewetson-Crawford

As a child, my husband, John Crawford, watched with fascination his father managing



his beehives on the family farm in Griffith. At the tender age of 8, John collected a swarm of

bees. Seeing his interest, his Dad gave him a hive to manage, which held John's interest for about a year.

Fast forward to May 2020, John's interest in beekeeping peaked again, as a result of casual conversations with a friend, Drew Maywald. They decided to attend a meeting of the Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers in May 2020, and joined the club.

John's main beekeeping passion lies with



the Flow Hives due to their ease of honey extraction. As time passed, he became fascinated with other

types of hives, and built a Kenyan Top Bar hive.

Following that successful build, and after



reading numerous articles and hearing Windy talk about his Slovenian hives, John liked the idea of their frame accessibility. He set about tackling building a Slovenian AZ hive for himself from plans

purchased from Ben of 8FrameHoney, and he modified it to accommodate flow frames. It

was quite the challenge, with several hiccups along the way. The finished Slovenian AZ hive, modified to accommodate flow frames, was ready for bees in early September, 2021.

Not bad for a kid who was told he was pathetic at woodworking in Grade 9.

### For Sale

The club has been given three frame display boxes for competition judging, as in the photo attached. One of the painted ones has only one sheet of glass while the other two are complete and ready to go. The varnished one has not been used.

They are available for members to buy and anyone who is interested can make an offer. I was thinking they would be worth around \$30 each noting they go for well over a \$100 from suppliers.

If you are interested in purchasing any of these units, please contact Drew.



Additionally, the Men's Shed have built two solar wax melters which are for sale. The larger of the two is 855mm long x 595mm wide x 200mm deep so would be suitable for someone with a large number of hives. The cost for this unit is \$250.



The smaller unit is 500mm x 400mm x 200mm and would ideally suit someone with less than half a dozen hives. The cost for this unit is \$125.



Both units can be viewed at the club. If anyone is interested, please contact either Greg, Drew or Peter.

With the current COVID-19 restrictions, a mask is mandatory when indoors and what better way to show the world that you love bees than to wear one of these stylish masks being offered by Drew for a measly \$10. There are two designs to choose from. Double layer of cotton fabric, wire nose piece and adjustable ear straps. If you are interested, please contact Drew at [drewmaywald@gmail.com](mailto:drewmaywald@gmail.com) or phone on 0400 959 043 to order yours.



## Tasks for September/October

By now all of your equipment for the upcoming season should be ready to go with new hives painted and completed, and frames wired ready to have foundation embedded.

September is when you should start to lift your brood and replace your brood comb (by rotating it into your honey super) but not all at once. Do this over the next three months at least.

Now is also when you can make up your Nuc boxes if you intend to expand your apiary.

## Native Beehive Project

If you are interested in lending a hand to make or paint hives, or helping to bud hives into wild hives, please contact Drew Maywald on 0400 959 043.



## Honey Competition

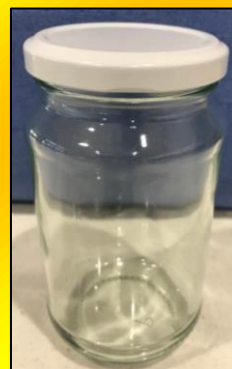
At the April GCRB Committee Meeting, the committee decided to hold a club honey competition to be held in December 2021. We are planning to make this an annual club event.

**Classes** – classes for the competition will be:

- **Light Honey** – Open to all members
- **Medium Honey** – Open to all members
- **Dark Honey** – Open to all members
- **Novice Beekeeper Honey** - for any member who has only been keeping bees for the last 12 months
- **Beeswax** – Open to all members
- **Baked Goods or slices** – Open to all members.

**Rules** – The following rules apply for the competition:

- Open to all GCRB Members.
- All Honey must be bona fide produce from the exhibitor's own hives.
- Only First in each class will be announced.
- All honey classes judged for the GCRB champion honey.
- Prizes will be suitable trophies.
- One entry per class unless honey is from a different floral source.
- Each entrant must supply one 500g glass jar of honey per class. The jars must have a white lid and are available from Vs Bees.



- Entrants can enter all or as many classes as they are eligible to.
- Entries in the beeswax class must submit two x 30-gram blocks of wax.



- Entries are not to have any identification marks on their jars of honey, or beeswax
- The baked foods or slices must be presented with 6 slices only, on a white plate or white disposable plate no more than 200 mm in diameter, with no labels or identification marks on the plate.
- Entry fee of \$2 per entry.
- Entries to be collected at the end of the meeting or GCRB will donate the jars of honey and wax to a local charity.
- Any baked foods or slices left over will be eaten by all members present as part of the club's Christmas celebrations
- The judge's decision is final with no correspondence entered into.

### Scale of Points for Judging

Liquid Honey	Points
Flavour	25
Density	25
Colour	25
Aroma	10
Clearness	10
Cleanliness	5
<b>Total Points:</b>	<b>100</b>
Beeswax	Points
Colour	35
Clearness	25
General Appearance	30
Aroma	10
<b>Total Points:</b>	<b>100</b>

## Swarms – and how to collect them

This article is reproduced with the kind permission of the Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Assoc with some minor changes.

As the weather warms up, beekeepers start to think about bee swarms. There are a number of good sources about swarms on the net, covering why it happens, when it happens, how to catch them etc. Just use Google to find them.

Some information relevant to our area may be of interest to club members. First, collecting a swarm in early summer is a good way to acquire a hive. Only strong hives should swarm, showing that they had little disease and they have a vigorous queen, and the practice of hiving the swarm onto foundation should reduce the likelihood of disease even further.

### Advertise

Bees leave the hive usually between 10 am



Figure 1 - Bee's pole dancing  
- photo Geoff Manning

and 12 am and congregate on a neighbouring object usually within 100m of the source hive. While there, the scout bees decide on a new hive location. It is at this congregation stage that the beekeeper

can easily trap them. Most swarms are gone by the end of the day.

There is no way a swarm is going to drop into your lap; you need to advertise. Contact your local Council and WIRES to say you will collect swarms for free, and leave them your mobile number. Also, put your name on the ABA and Club swarm catcher list.

Put a note with your mobile number in letter boxes in the vicinity of a stand of hives. Hives are highly likely to swarm in Spring, and the beekeeper is unlikely to be there to catch

it. The residents usually are delighted to have them removed.

## Be Prepared

It is best to catch the swarm with a catcher box, rather than try to hive it on the spot. You can then put the hive where you want it, rather than having to move a hive later. It is much easier to juggle a light box than a hive with a loose base, a loose lid, and an Emlok. You can also leave the swarm in your box in the shade for a day or two if you need to make up bee equipment.

You should have your swarm catching gear in your vehicle ready at all times. Swarm catching gear should include your bee protection gear (but not essential), and a box to put the bees into; it must be able to be sealed so that bees cannot get out in your car, and it must be such that a large swarm will not overheat (be wary of any polystyrene foam box). Cardboard boxes are OK, but some holes may need to be taped; for large swarms a netted ventilation panel would be a good idea. You want it to be light so you can climb a ladder with it and juggle it under the swarm, and large enough that it is an easy target when you brush or shake the bees off. A fifty litres container is OK. Also, ladder and secateurs may be useful



Figure 2 - Swarm on a wild cotton - photo Geoff Manning

## Get Details

When the call comes in, it is important for you to get some details; how big is the swarm (cricket ball, football, and bucket size are acceptable units), how high up (always less than it really is), do the people have a ladder, is it hanging off a tree, branch, fence, how long has it been there? If it has been there for a few days, it may now be a hive and should

be treated differently. Get their phone number.

## Catching the Swarm

Most can be pruned, shaken, brushed or scraped into the box. Some are difficult to get into a catcher box, and a bee box or hive with frames will be preferred. Remember that bees always crawl up. So, a swarm on the lawn can be collected by placing a bee box with frames on top on a few spacers.

Another situation is where the swarm is high up in a tree; this can be collected using a length of plastic drainage pipe with a funnel on top, placing this into the swarm, and shaking up and down. A packet of bees will slide down to land in front of the hive and walk in. If an end stop is on the pipe, the bees can slide to the bottom, and are then tipped into or in front of the hive. This process can be repeated after the swarm re-settles (invented by Bill Ferris).



Figure 3 - Ferris Swarm Catcher - photo Geoff Manning

When you arrive at the swarm, get it in your catcher box ASAP; it is annoying if you are standing there talking to the property owner and the swarm takes off. Talk after catching.

Once the swarm is caught, it can be left in the catcher box in the shade for a day or longer before hiving. This is when you prepare their new home, not when you

are rushing to go out to collect the swarm. Do not worry if some bees are left behind. Chances are that the parent hive is nearby, and those bees will return there later in the day.

## Hiving the Swarm

When the bee hive is ready with its complement of frames with foundation, the bees can be hived. After a sharp bump on

your box, they can be poured into a gap in the brood box left after removing half the frames, and the frames replaced on top to float down.

Another method is to put a wide ramp up to the entrance at the front of the hive, dump the bees on the ramp, making sure that some land at the hive entrance, and they will all march in following the pheromones blown out by the bees at the entrance. It is usually possible to see the queen walking in.

Most swarms will stay in the hive after they go in, particularly if the site is well away from their original location. A small percentage will abscond; que sera sera! Some beekeepers put a piece of queen excluder across the entrance or a frame of brood in from another hive to guarantee they stay.

## Diary Dates

### Fri 17 – Sun 19 Sep

Mudgeeraba Show

### Sat 16 Oct, 2021

8:30am - Club Meeting Hive Inspection and Rob plus Queen Assessment by Fiona Fernie & Mike Hynes

10:30am - **Annual General Meeting**

10:45am - Preparing Honey for Shows and Competitions by John Polley (TBC)

### Sat 20 Nov, 2021

8:30am - Club Meeting Hive Inspection and Rob conducting Brood Inspections by Fiona Fernie & Mike Hynes

## Swarm Register

We are now well into the period for swarming, and swarms are a great way to get FREE BEES but do require the beekeeper to be prepared to act quickly. As mentioned in the previous article, if you want to collect swarms you need to advertise your intent such as a local letter-box drop, contacting the GCCC or WIRES and placing your name on the ABA and club swarm registers.

However, there are a number of considerations you need to make before you commit to being a swarm collector.

The following information is provided to members with the intent of assisting them in deciding if swarm collecting is appropriate for them to pursue. The information is not exhaustive and is provided as an aid, members should carry out their own due diligence before committing to collect swarms.

- You are collecting swarms privately, under no direction or authority by the club, and in accordance with the ABA NSW Swarm collection database. Therefore, any damage caused is the swarm collectors' responsibility to rectify.

- Do you have appropriate public liability insurance cover for this purpose? The ABA does have insurance to cover swarm collection.

- Do you have the necessary skills and experience to collect swarms? If not, do you have a mate that can give you a hand to collect the swarm.

- Swarms can be a Biosecurity threat; will you be adhering to all Biosecurity Qld requirements?

So, if you are fully prepared to collect swarms, and you want to be listed on either the ABA NSW or GCRB swarm collector register, you can register by contacting Steve 'Windy' Hill at [windy738@hotmail.com](mailto:windy738@hotmail.com) or on 0414 617 716.

## What's Flowering in the Region

During September/October many of the flowering plants from the previous month continue to support our bees throughout the region. These include, but not limited to, the following:

**Brisbane Wattles** – Two varieties of this tree are currently in flower, the Black and the Golden wattle. Both provide a moderated source of pollen to the bees.



**Banksia** – This tree provides ample nectar and pollen for bees, and often flowers in association with paperbark trees. Honey colour is dark amber.



**Sheoak** – A number of this species are currently flowering during June including the Black and River varieties. These trees provide a useful supply of pollen. It is not a nectar source.



**Ironbark** – At least four varieties of Ironbark are flowering during June and include the Caley's, Dusky-leaved, Grey and

Tumble-down varieties. The honey from this tree has a medium density and mild sweet flavour, while useful quantities of pollen can be obtained to assist in maintaining colony strength.



Additionally, the Red Ironbark, more commonly known as Mugga, is also flowering.

**Hickory Wattle** – Apiaries sited near Hickory Wattle may obtain a good supply of pollen; however, the light-yellow pollen is poor food and doesn't proportionally simulate brood raising.



**Gums** – At least three varieties of gum are now flowering including the Blue, Scribbly and Spotted gums. Valuable pollen and nectar supplies are obtained regularly from the Blue Gums during late winter and early spring but there is limited pollen and next to no nectar from either the Scribbly or Spotted Gum.



**Hairy Bush-pea** – A spreading shrub with a graceful weeping habit if given space to fully mature. In coastal districts this bush flowers

annually and is worked freely by bees for large amounts of pollen.



**Flat Weed** – Flatweed is a herb to 400 mm wide with yellow daisy type flowers up to 30 mm diameter borne on simple or branched, leafless stalks at any time of the year with a flush in spring to early summer. The large quantity of bright orange pollen and small amount of nectar obtained simulate brood-rearing



**Mexican Poppy** – A greyish prickly plant up to 1m with prickly toothed leaves, yellow juice and large cream or pale-yellow flowers. While the plant is considered a weed in Qld, the plant is highly sought by beekeepers for the reliable pollen supplies obtained during the lengthy flowering period. Only insignificant quantities of honey are obtained from Mexican Poppy.



**Turnip Weed** – African turnip is a herb up to 60 cm high with rough thin leaves and yellow flowers. It is a weed in crops, pastures and natural environments. The plant is a major source of pollen but only a minor source of honey, which has a strong flavour and aroma.



## Tips and Tricks

**Repair your bee suit.** – The veil of my bee suit had a tear in the black mesh fabric. I was meaning to mend it, but I kept putting it off. At the last meeting, I kept seeing a bee in my peripheral vision. I thought, “That’s funny, she looks like she’s on the inside.” Turns out, she was. And she proved it. Ouch! So go get a needle and thread — don’t wait.

**Rose Geraniums and Mint.** – Planting Rose Geraniums and Mint under your hives has been known to deter Small Hive Beetles. While the Rose Geraniums will remain pretty muck in place, you will need to either plant your mint in containers, or find a native non-invasive variety.

**Editor’s note:** I am always on the outlook for tips and tricks from people. If you have an idea for how to do something you think others may find interesting, please let me know at [gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au)

Position	Incumbent	Ph No.	Email
President:	Greg Foster	0409 279 164	<a href="mailto:gcrb.president@beekeepers.asn.au">gcrb.president@beekeepers.asn.au</a>
Treasurer:	Peter Handy	0448 195 020	<a href="mailto:gcrb.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au">gcrb.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au</a>
Secretary:	Drew Maywald	0400 959 043	<a href="mailto:gcrb.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au">gcrb.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au</a>
Membership Officer:	Julie Hewetson	0439 202 500	<a href="mailto:gcrb.membership@beekeepers.asn.au">gcrb.membership@beekeepers.asn.au</a>
Viet. Vets. Delegate:	Roger May	0406 196 124	<a href="mailto:rogmay45@gmail.com">rogmay45@gmail.com</a>
Committee:	Mike Hynes	0408 766 085	<a href="mailto:m.j.hynes043@gmail.com">m.j.hynes043@gmail.com</a>
Committee:	Fiona Fernie	0436 359 934	<a href="mailto:ferniefiona@gmail.com">ferniefiona@gmail.com</a>
Waggle Editor	Steve 'Windy' Hill	0414 617 716	<a href="mailto:Gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au">Gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au</a>
Swarm Collection Coordinator	Steve 'Windy' Hill	0414 617 716	<a href="mailto:Gcrb.swarms@beekeepers.asn.au">Gcrb.swarms@beekeepers.asn.au</a>



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