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From the President

Hi everyone.

I hope you all enjoyed yourselves, and thanks for coming to the last meeting at my place. I picked up a few new ideas that I plan to incorporate into my beekeeping, and hope you also learned something that may help you with your beekeeping. Thank you for sharing your time and effort to make our club what it is: a friendly, helpful group of people who are passionate about bees.



NRABA Members Inspecting Robert's Bees

Thank you to Sally, our secretary, and Sandy, our treasurer, who are there at every meeting, helping our new and old members, and organising everything – not just at each meeting, but all the things that make the meetings happen.

Well, it is almost another year gone by. Our next meeting is the last for the year. I hope to see you all there.

Happy beekeeping

Robert

From The Hives – November

An early morning move of nine single-deck hives brought the apiary numbers up to 32, with two extras. The help of another club member to make the move was greatly appreciated.

The hives have been out in Bungawalbyn for a month now, and most of them have three quarters of a super full of honey, with the strong hives close to a full super. It is difficult to determine what is flowering, with little obvious in the close vicinity, but the area has a good variety of honey trees. There are red gums flowering, and swamp box should be starting.

The emphasis now will be to get the new hives up to production; small hives are susceptible to hive beetle attack if given too much room. In addition, the removal of honey from hives with full supers will continue, along with the continual checking of brood for the presence of a laying queen. The hives do have underfloor traps with diatomaceous earth, and these should be serviced.

Brian

November Flowering

Not much has changed in practice since last time. However, I notice that there is more grey ironbark flowering than I first thought was budded. The only thing I can say in my defence is that it is quite late in my lower country and there is certainly not a complete budding. One site I have is maybe half budded/flowering. The next site about 2km away has no bud or flower in sight. My property is in forest country and, so far, I cannot see any bud on those trees.

You will notice brush box flowering around the district. While it flowers regularly, it seldom – if ever – yields until one gets further west, say the Richmond Range. It has yielded well once in over 40 years at my place on the Mackellar Range. When it goes, it can yield a super a week for a month. However, even in the better country it can be years between honey flows. Bert Roots waited 20 years before he got his first crop on the Richmond Range. It can yield four or five years in a row before having a rest again.

It has another problem as well. It flowers later as one goes west, so on the previously mentioned Richmond Range it flowers in January, perhaps a bit into February. It is not uncommon for it to rain most of that time here in the Northern Rivers. Therefore, even if it was going to yield, it may get washed out.

I recall one year when it started, then so did the rain. The rain stayed north of the Bruxner Highway allowing for a record crop around the Gibraltar Range area. I was asked to judge at the Glen Innes show that year. Everyone had top brush box honey. It nearly turned me off showing and judging for life.

Also starting to flower now is our local *Angophora*. Rough barked apple: it is rough barked of course, and called apple because when an axe is used on the timber it looks like a cut apple. I have never known it to yield honey, but it does have useful pollen. A smooth barked species grows west of the divide and is sometimes called western spotted gum. Again, it has good pollen and I have had

honey from it. Very dark indeed. But the flavour was okay.

White mahogany is still flowering and while it is also a shy nectar yielder, the pollen makes up for the lack in the grey ironbark, both often growing in the same country and flowering at the same time.

If you are to take a trip from Lismore to Kyogle, you will notice that there are large numbers of black bean flowering along Back Creek on your right. Why there is so much along this creek and so little elsewhere, I have no idea. It is a good cabinet timber, and this may account for its lack elsewhere. On one occasion, back when the world was young, it yielded very well for me. However, since then, as far as I know, it has not even contributed to the overall crop. Even when there was no nectar coming in, and it was easy to see it in the flowers, the bees seemed to ignore it. No idea why; it tastes okay.

While the grey ironbark may have been a bit late in my country, I see some swamp mahogany/turpentine (the *Lophostemon* one) has already had a flowering. This flowers a number of times, rather like paperbark does. Again, it seldom yields, but does on occasion. Just don't hold your breath.

Geoff

Flow Hive Report

October Flow Hivers put their names, addresses and contact details in a list for the NRABA to help them connect with other Flow Hivers close by. In addition, we were given a handy information sheet that Sally had put together. This included contact details for nuc suppliers and NRABA Flow Hive support, as well as important DPI requirements regarding notifiable diseases such as AFB and EFB, and reporting phone numbers/links. If you would like a copy, please contact Sally McMahon (contact details are at the start of the newsletter).

If you do not want your contact details shared, please let Sally know.

There has been a mostly okay flow of honey for October and easy harvesting reported. Flow Hivers at the October meeting said they/we would appreciate and use the service if NRABA had parts available for sale. Members are happy with their Flow Hives, and some are contemplating buying a second hive.

There is a club discount code for Flow Hives. The link is <http://mbsy.co/honeyflow/31578432> You receive a discount and the NRABA gets a credit.



Harvesting from a Flow Hive

Thanks for the photo Sandy.

Suzie

New Equipment

Stephen and Janet Fowler carry stocks of most common beekeeping equipment, as well as pots and jars for honey sales. Please collect your order from their shed at 5 Robb Street, Alstonville (in the Russellton Industrial Estate). Call Stephen on 0418 412 621 to arrange a convenient pick-up time.

A reminder that the Fowlers buy clean wax at market rates for milling. Foundation is available for purchase by NRABA members.

The equipment-building workshop planned for November will now take place on Saturday, 2 December 2017. Please contact Stephen to register your interest.

NRABA Shirts and Hats

NRABA shirts and hats are available to try on for size at the next NRABA meeting. Long sleeve shirts are now available at \$55, in addition to the short sleeve option at \$50.

If you are interesting, please see Sandy at the next meeting or contact her to place an order using the details at the start of the newsletter.

Hives and Nuclei

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

Keep Your Contact Details Up to Date

NRABA members are reminded to go to the ABA's website <http://www.beekeepers.asn.au> and check their contact details. Click on the drop-down menu at the top right of the homepage to sign in.

Next Meeting – Sunday 26 November

The next meeting will be the NRABA Christmas party.

Location: Meldrum Park, on the corner of Fox and Norton Streets, Ballina 2478.

Time: 9.30am.

Transport: Personal transport.

Directions: Travelling from Lismore, make your way towards Ballina following the Bruxner Highway. At the large roundabout under the Pacific Highway, take the Ballina exit onto River Street. Follow River Street for approximately 3.5km. Turn left onto Kerr Street, at the Shell service station intersection. After approximately 750m, turn right onto Bentinck Street, and then drive for approximately 1.2km to Norton Street. Turn left onto Norton Street. Meldrum Park is about 250m along Norton Street, on the right, at the Fox Street intersection.

If travelling from the south on the Pacific Highway, the Ballina exit takes you to the large roundabout mentioned above. From the roundabout, follow the directions above.

If travelling from the north on the Pacific Highway, take the Ballina exit onto Tamarind Drive. Travel straight through the roundabout at the highway exit, staying on Tamarind Drive. Stay on this road for around 6km, heading towards the town centre (it eventually becomes Bangalow Road and then Cherry Street for a short distance). Turn left onto Fox Street, at the Ballina Homestead Motel. Follow Fox Street to the end. Meldrum Park is on the left.

What to bring:

- A plate to share
- Picnic utensils
- Chairs
- Shade/hat/sun protection/sunscreen
- Insect repellent

Please see the flyer at the link below.

<https://www.beekeepers.asn.au/news/2017/10/17/northern-rivers-last-meeting-for-2017>