

BEE LINES

October 2016

Newsletter of The Beekeepers Club Inc. Est 1998.

Mission statement:

To enhance the learning and better practices of the art of beekeeping within our community.

Meetings:

3rd Thursday of each month
7.00pm for 7.30pm start.

Venue:

Senior Citizens Building.
895-901 Doncaster Road Doncaster
East. Melway 47k-1.
Opposite Dan Murphy's.

.....Guests and Visitors Welcome.....



2016 competition. Photo Vanessa Kwiatkowski

Enquiries and information:

editor@beekeepers.org.au
beekeepers.org.au

NEXT MEETING:

Thursday 20th October 2016.

7.30pm - Swarm management and collection.

8.15pm - Development beekeeping in Africa
Presented by Kris Fricke.



Swarm co-coordinator

Please refer to

<https://beekeepers.org.au/swarms>

for contacts and assistance relating to swarms

JUNIOR'S CLUB

33 Saxton Street East Brunswick. Mel. 29 H-7

Saturday 15th October 10.00am – 12.00pm. **** Please note new start time****

10.00am - Revision corner:

- Making frames
- the importance of using good frames in a hive.

10.30am - Opening the hive.

- Looking for FEDSS. Food, Eggs, Disease, Space and Swarming.

* Remember to wear strong enclosed shoes or boots.

Our new bee suits have arrived.



UPCOMING EVENTS.

Beginners Course.

16th, 23rd and 30th November

3rd and 4th December- Hive opening days

Venue: Senior Citizens Rooms.

895-901 Doncaster Rd Doncaster.

Hive opening: 33 Saxton St, East Brunswick.

Queen breeding.

5-6th November 2017

Workshop and practical training on raising queens.

SOLD OUT

Venue. Community Rooms Saxon St Brunswick.

Microscopy workshop.

Bee anatomy and honey testing.

Postponed until February 2017

Venue: Community Rooms, 33 Saxon St Brunswick.

Keep an eye on the events page of club web site (beekeepers.org.au) for registration and future event details.

The October beginners course is underway and we have a full class of 27 attending. I welcome those new members into the club, and trust you have many years of rewarding beekeeping ahead. Please take advantage of the many resources the club offers.

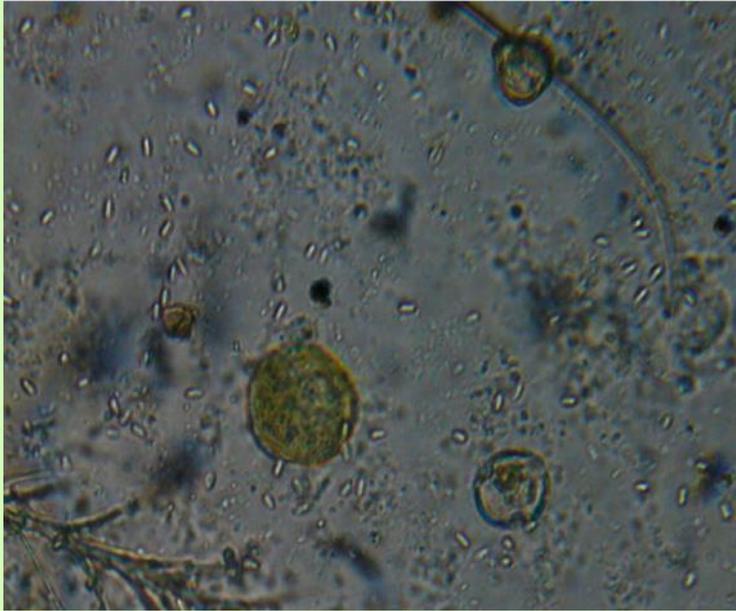


Helmut taking the frame making demonstration



Andrew using our latest teaching aid the interactive hive

NOSEMOSIS..... what is it?



Nosemosis, or Nosema disease is caused by two species of microsporidian parasites (a type of spore forming fungus) called *Nosema apis* and *Nosema ceranae*. Both species can infect worker bees, queen bees and drones. Both species produce spores which are ingested by adult bees through contaminated water or food, by food exchange with other honey bees and or

cleaning contaminated combs. The spores then germinate in the mid-gut of the bees and infection may result in shortened adult honey bee life and reduced colony health and performance.

Nosema apis causes general symptoms such as crawling honey bees with swollen and greasy abdomens and dislocated wings, honey bees crawling onto and around the hive entrance, dysentery within and around the hive, a reduction in queen bee egg laying ability and her possible supersedure, as well as the rapid dwindling of colony strength and heavy winter losses.

Nosema ceranae will cause similar symptoms; however, none of the dysentery or crawling honey bee behaviour that is related to the *N.apis* infection has been reported for the *N.ceranae*.

NOSEMOSIS (cont.)

Signs of Nosema are more evident when nutrition is poor and weather conditions are cold and wet, such as we have just encountered. This again emphasises the fact you should leave ample stores in the hive for winter, and not resort to sugar feeding if at all possible.

What should you look for:

When inspecting your hives look for colony symptoms such as a declining population, poor honey production, reduced brood production, dysentery in and around the entrance of the hive, poor survival over winter and worker bees crawling around the hive with swollen and greasy abdomens.

How is it spread?

Nosema spores are passed from infected honey bees to non-infected bees through contaminated water or food, by food exchange with other honey bees and from cleaning contaminated combs within the hive.

It is also spread through bees removing waste material, specifically faeces from within the hive and the entrance. The spores are long lived and can quickly spread throughout the hive. Nosema can also be spread between colonies by using contaminated equipment and through the drifting behaviour of worker bees and drones.



How can I protect my hives from Nosemosis?

Like all things beekeeping, good management practices such as appropriate nutrition, young queen bees with populous hives and comb rotation every 3-4 years will keep colonies strong and remove possible causes of stress.

Place your hive in a warm and sunny position over autumn, winter and spring periods allowing the colony to regularly forage and defecate outside of the hive to prevent the accumulation of Nosema spores in faeces deposited in the hive.

You should also ensure that any hive equipment that may have been infected with the spores is cleaned before and after use.



IN THE NEWS

Seven types of bees once found in abundance in Hawaii have become the first bees to be added to the US federal list of endangered and threatened species.

The listing decision, published approximately 2 weeks ago in the Federal Register, classifies seven varieties of yellow-faced or masked bees as endangered, due to such factors as habitat loss, wildfires and the invasion of non-native plants and insects.

The bees, so named for yellow-to-white facial markings, once crowded Hawaii and Maui but recent surveys found their populations have plunged in the same fashion as other types of wild bees – and some commercial ones – elsewhere in the United States, federal wildlife managers said.

A BASIC GUIDE - WHAT THE BEEKEEPER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HONEY BEES

1. Outside the bee hive:

a). Size of the hive is not always important. Counting the number of supers (boxes) does not always equal colony strength.

b). Watch for bee flight. On a warm and clear day dozens of bees should be flying in and out of the hive.

2. Inside the bee hive:

a). The best indicator is to view the colony population.

b). The brood area must have developing young and adult bees.

c). Serious honey bee diseases should be controlled or eradicated.

3. Colony strength guidelines:

a). Strong single story colony (1 deep hive box).

b). When opened, bees should cover tops of frames.

c). 4 to 6 frames of brood.

d). When a frame is lifted out, bees cover most frames.

3b. Strong 2 storey colony (2 supers)

a). Numerous bees on top when lid is removed.

b). When supers divided, a blanket of bees should be seen on frame tops.

c). 6 to 8 frames of brood.

3c. Strong 3 deep hive colony (3 supers)

a). 8 to 12 frames of brood in the lower and middle supers.

b). When lid is removed, bees seen on top.

c). With the top super removed, bees should blanket top of middle super.

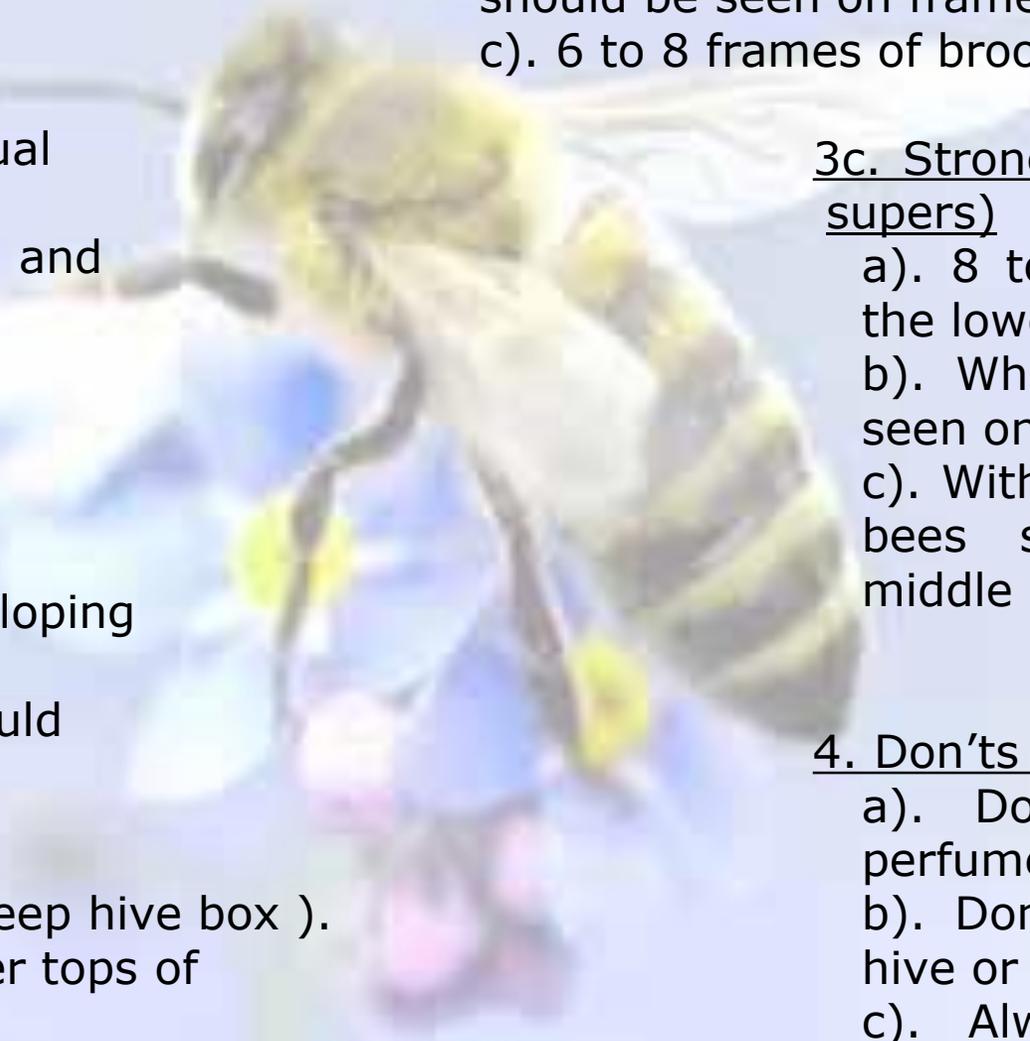
4. Don'ts to prevent stings.

a). Don't wear after shave, perfume or hair oils.

b). Don't stand in front of the hive or block the bees entrance.

c). Always work your hives, calmly and smoothly.

d). Don't over smoke the hive while working.





Senses and communication

The senses of touch and smell, particularly through the antennae, are very important to bees in finding sources of food, in identifying members of their own colony, and sometimes in finding their way home. Their compound eyes are sensitive to certain groups of colours though colour-blind to red. In the darkness of the hive they must depend on touch and smell to carry out their activities. They find their way to and from the hive by learning the landmarks in the vicinity and steering by the position of the sun.

A bee which has found a rich source of food will return to the hive and execute a dance on the surface of the comb. It takes the form of a figure eight with a straight section in the middle. The length of the straight section is proportional to the distance of the flowers from the hive, and the angle it makes with the vertical represents the angle between the position of the sun, the hive and the source of food. In addition, the dancer may make

wagging movements of her body on the straight section, which indicates distance. Some of the foraging bees in the hive follow the dance, touching the dancer with their antennae.

From time to time the dancer stops and, regurgitating a little of the nectar she has collected from the flowers, she feeds the attentive workers. The dance pattern, the taste of the nectar and sometimes the scent of the flowers on the dancer's body enable the workers to find the feeding ground from which the dancer, has just returned.

Swarm List

The Committee's primary aim is to provide a collection service for the general public and to facilitate the passing on of excess swarms to new members of the club who have just completed a beginner's course.

In previous years, there were issues due to the practice of the public "shopping around" to find the lowest price for a swarm collection. This often resulted in beekeepers taking multiple phone calls and scheduling collections only to be told they were not required – inconvenient at least. For this reason last year we introduced the computerised "Postcode Locator" which provided 3 names and telephone numbers to the public when they typed in their location. Last season there were unusually few swarms (for presumably weather-related reasons) and no one reported receiving any calls.

Despite these best efforts on behalf of the membership, there continues to be concern about the swarm collection procedure. As a consequence I have recommended to the Club Committee that we post to the website a list of volunteer club members who wish to be on the swarm list with their telephone numbers. These individuals will then make arrangements directly with callers and there will be no Committee involvement. Naturally if members wish to donate collected swarms to beginners we will facilitate this.

Andrew Wootton
Club Secretary.



Bees have made preparations to swarm by building queen cells.

Once the bees are building queen cells preventive actions must be taken or they will swarm. In spring check your bees 7 to 10 days for queen cells, the period ensures that if at the last inspection no cells were found then the bees have not reached the point of swarming at the next.

With queen cells present: small invert acorn cells with an egg, larvae or a sealed vertically hanging external cell, the bees are making preparation to swarm. Artificial swarm techniques must be used to control the impulse.

Relocate the original hive within the same apiary site a few metres away. In its place put down a floorboard, an empty box with frames (foundation will do) and a cover and remove a frame. Find the queen and place her into the centre of the box. It is very important to destroy any queen cells that are on the frame with the queen, otherwise the bees will still swarm. All of the field bees will return to the original location, in effect creating a swarm, but with ample space for the queen to lay and little reserves the bees settle in to their "new home". The colony should be inspected regularly and provide additional space as they can build up rapidly.

In the queen less colony, the population declines as the remaining flying bees join the old queen leaving the young nurse bees behind.

As swarm is comprised mostly of worker bees; the emerging queen will kill her siblings and with so few flying bees is unlikely to swarm.

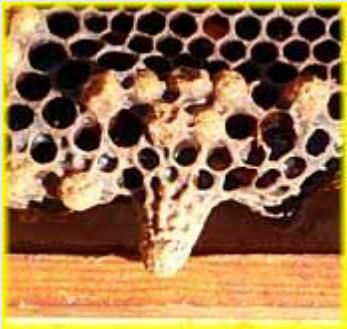
At the end of the swarming season, the two colonies can be united together, placing the wanted queen on top of the newspaper.

The artificial swarm technique is not 100% successful. Further swarming preparations may take place from both colonies.

Reduce the likelihood of swarming with swarm reduction techniques



Queens cells



It is good beekeeping practice and swarm prevention to have young queens in your colonies. A young laying queen produces maximum pheromones that discourage the bees from building queen cells.

Give her plenty of space in the brood nest. If the bees haven't built queen cells, the following techniques will reduce the likelihood of swarming: but won't eliminate it.

1] Add an additional super before the bees become overcrowded while ensuring they can occupy the added space comfortably. Do not pile on empty supers for the sake of it.

2] Create a pyramid structure of brood. Lift up 2 to 4 frames of brood up from the brood nest into the super above, push the remaining brood frames together and add empty frames in the space. Brood arranged in this pattern requires more nurse bees to cover and care for it forcing them to spread out relieving congestion in the brood nest. From my experience, this method is the most successful and easiest to implement. As the brood hatches, cycle empty frames around.

3] Find and isolate the queen. Remove 3 or 4 frames of bees and brood containing eggs, grubs and sealed brood to form a nucleus. Shake 2 additional frames of bees in as the flying bees will return to their original home. Site next to the main colony. Return the queen to the parent hive pushing the remaining brood frames together and adding empty frames into the space. When the swarm season finishes and the new queen in the nucleus is laying, requeen the parent hive by killing the old queen and uniting the two colonies together using the newspaper method.

4] For very strong colonies, physically split them in half. Move one of the boxes to another location while the other remains in its original location with a super added. Ensure both colonies have eggs, grubs and sealed brood so the queen less one can raise a new queen. This technique will increase your colony numbers without losing swarms.

Thanks to Paul Davies for permission to reprint this article.

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LIBRARY BOOKS:

We have added new books to our library over the last weeks.
I urge you to take advantage of this great club resource.
Books can be taken on loan for 30 days.
See Helmut at the library table for further information.

BUY SELL SWAP

If you want to buy, sell or swap any beekeeping item send Don the details along with your name and contact details. It will be announced at meetings and published in the next edition of Beelines.

Details to
editor@beekeepers.org.au



CHRISTMAS PARTY 2016

Thursday 15th December
Local venue to be advised

Register your interest at
beekeepers.org.au with your name and if you are bringing a guest.

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