

# BEELINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC

MAY 2018



Scenes from the STEERING visit 22nd April. Twelve members inspecting a beautiful top bar brood frame.

## Upcoming Events (see website for full details and registration)

### Club Monthly Meeting

#### Annual Honey Competition

**A film will be shown during the judging**

17th May 2018, 7:00 PM

Doncaster Secondary College,  
123 Church Rd, Doncaster 3108

Please see page 5 for entry details.



Royal Highland Show,  
Edinburgh 2017

### Beechworth Field Trip

16th June

Selling out soon....

### Skep Making Course

7-8th June

Selling fast...

### Beginners Course

15th Sept

Good availability...

### Nuc Nanny Course

13-27th Oct

Selling out soon...

## Editorial

Winter has finally arrived and our club hives are safely packed down. On the 28th April we assembled a great team to go through all the hives including the two belonging to the gardeners. We were privileged to have Alan Riach, President of the Scottish Beekeepers Association there to add his wealth of experience to our observations. All but one hive were deemed to have adequate stores and one queen was put on a warning for raising feisty workers. There will be no further routine inspections until August. The club committee has approved the purchase of a freezer for cycling combs through, prior to storage.

Despite the slow down in bee action, club activities continue unabated. The Field Trip to Beechworth (16-17 June) has almost sold out and the Skep Making Course (7-8 July) will do so shortly. And of course our Annual Honey Competition will be hotly contested at the May meeting (17th).

Monthly meetings are one of the Club's most important activities and for many members may be their only interaction with the Club. The Committee is always seeking ways to enhance these, suggestions are very welcome. One new initiative we will be trying is an "Advice Surgery" at the end of the night. We are often bombarded with questions and would like to and provide time and access for some experienced help. Lately we have dropped the door prizes in order to squeeze in more time for Q&A and other functions.

The inaugural Victorian Beekeeping Clubs Conference in Ballarat on June 2nd has received over 160 registrations and recently expanded the auditorium to admit more. The Club Committee has given strong support and is bidding to take responsibility for the 2019 event.

We are rapidly approaching a record-breaking 400 membership tally. The committee looks forward to seeing you all at club events and especially to meeting and welcoming the new members.

Andrew Wootton, Secretary

## Wild Pollinator Count 15/4/18

The weather was dubious but enthusiasm was high. The tally was:

- 47 European Honey Bees
- 4 wasps
- 4 blue banded bees,
- 1 native wasp (?spider hunting wasp or mud dauber wasp?)
- 5 shield bugs (doubtful if these were pollinating rather than preying on aphids)
- 2 moths
- 1 fly
- 1 ant

We were unfortunate not to have chosen a warmer day, but everyone agreed how interesting the exercise was and how taking part had heightened their awareness of the diversity of pollinators.

Our thanks to the gardeners who rallied around with lunch and enthusiastically joined in the count



Unidentified wasp. Photo: Julie Wiltshire.

## Things to do in Winter

*Don Muir*

We are into the non-productive time of bee-keeping, so less colony work and more equipment maintenance.

Things to put into your calendar for the next few months should include.

Those supers that need to be repaired should be cleaned, any rot cut and filled, sanded and repainted. I am told concrete paving paint is a good medium as it will last longer and is usually a little cheaper to buy. I also go to a paint reseller such as Bristol Paints and look at buying mismatched or incorrect colours, I recently paid \$8 for 4 litres of a light sandstone colour. Your supers do not have to be painted white.

Cut out the comb from the 2-3 year old dark to black frames and either re wire or tighten existing wires. I do not replace with new foundation until early spring or until required.

Clean and repair old lids and bottom boards.

I use pine needles in my smoker and although I find them a good smoke source, the lid does get clogged with tar. Carefully scrape out inside and once all soot is removed, use a steel wool soap pad to lightly polish and clean, wipe dry after. You may have success by burning out the tar—use a tablespoon of methylated spirits to start it off.

Carefully unscrew the 4 screws holding the bellows and remove bellows from the smoker body. Clean the air holes in both the bellows and the smoker.

Again, lightly steel



*Cleaned and ready to go*



*Sooty tar build up*

wool the smoker body, wipe dry and check that the air holes are still clean. Check the bellows for tears and if all ok then refit to the smoker. I usually give my bellows a quick paint job front and back just to improve appearance. Paint or stain is ok.

Although you should have already done it at the last hive opening, give hive tools and any other equipment a good clean with steel wool and dry.

If your leather beekeeping gloves are covered in propolis, rather than trying to wash it off which will only make it stickier and spread it more, put your gloves into the freezer until they are just frozen, (not deep frozen). On removal from the freezer you will find that the propolis will crack away from the gloves. You can then wash your gloves in a mild solution of washing up detergent.

Do not submerge the gloves, I wear them and wipe with a damp cloth of the detergent solution. A medium bristle nail or toothbrush will help move some of the trickier stains. You can then hang them up to dry; do not put them into a tumble dryer. Once dry put your hands into them to ensure they have stayed in shape. Some people suggest if you have leather or goat skin gloves a light application of olive or any natural oil will

soften them up and prevent them from cracking.

After removing the veil, your jacket can be machine washed on a gentle cycle cool temperature (30°C). Higher temperatures will soften the elastic and will not remove propolis stains and may only soften it, potentially leading to sticky deposits left in your washing machine drum. Hang to dry, do not tumble dry. Of course, you can also just give your jacket a good hand wash in lukewarm water which I always prefer to machine. Hand wash the veil being careful not to damage the mesh. Check the mesh for any tears and if seen you may be able to fill hole or tear using a glue heat gun. Refit veil after the garment is fully dry again.

## Biosecurity

All members are reminded that under the nationally endorsed Biosecurity Code of Practice, a beekeeper must have a knowledge of the pests and diseases that are notifiable diseases in the State or Territory in which they are located.

The BOLT program has been in place now for over a year so every member should have had time to complete the course. The Biosecurity on line training program can be accessed by the [www.Beeaware.org.au/training](http://www.Beeaware.org.au/training), or [www.beeaware.org.au](http://www.beeaware.org.au) and go to search BOLT. The cost is \$ 20 and on completion of the online test you will receive a certificate of completion.

The training session and fact sheets will take you through all aspects of biosecurity , pests and diseases and you will find it an excellent module to undertake and assist you in beekeeping. It would be a great winter project to brush up on your skills.

## Victorian Beekeeping Clubs Conference

Saturday 2nd June 2018 9am – 5pm

### Speakers

- Professor Ben Oldroyd, University of Sydney
- Best Selling Author Doug Purdie
- Stuart Anderson, Flow Hive
- Vanessa Kwiatkowski and Mat Lumalasi, Melbourne City Rooftop Honey
- Benedict Hughes, CERES Beekeeping
- Danielle Lloyd Prichard, NSW DPI Honey-bee & Native Bee Educator

### Location

Mercure Ballarat  
Hotel and Convention Centre,  
613 Main Road,  
Ballarat



## Who needs an extractor when you can crush and strain?



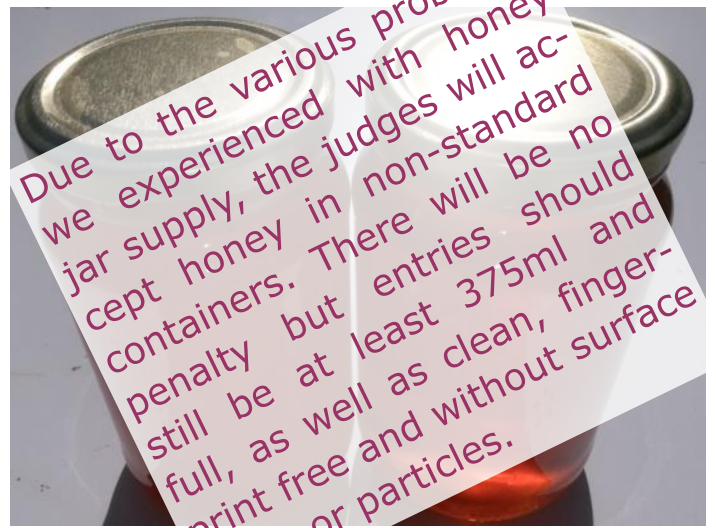
*Bruce Black's water powered wine press put to good use at the Steering visit*

## Annual Honey Competition

Results announced at the May 17th meeting

Categories:

- ◆ Light Honey
- ◆ Medium Honey
- ◆ Dark Honey
- ◆ Creamed Honey
- ◆ Comb Honey
- ◆ Wax Candles / Sculptures
- ◆ Mead / liqueurs
- ◆ Honey cakes, biscuits, slices
- ◆ Photos



### **Honey and mead entries to be lodged at the May meeting.**

- ◆ Ensure you use the correct honey jars.
- ◆ Jars are available from the front desk at the March meeting.
- ◆ Marks are deducted for odd size jars.
- ◆ Comb honey can be in any container with lid.
- ◆ Capped honey frames should be in a suitable stand or container.

Photos (digital submission) to be emailed to [photo@beekeepers.org.au](mailto:photo@beekeepers.org.au) by April 30, 2018.

Entries for photo print competition (15x10cm) at the event itself (May meeting).

Entries for honey cakes, biscuits, slices to be brought to the event itself (May meeting).

All baked items require a minimum of 3 pieces per plate. Preferably use a paper plate. Honey from any source can be used.

### *Terms and conditions of entry*

- ◆ Late entries will not be accepted for judging.
- ◆ By submitting photos, entrants agree that these may be used in the club newsletter or other material published by the club.
- ◆ Photos may also be taken of other exhibits and used in club material.
- ◆ Entries will be stored by the club in a safe and secured area and returned at the May meeting.

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