

# BEELINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC

SEPTEMBER 2019



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

### Special General Meeting

This will be held 6 PM - 7 PM, prior to the club monthly meeting.

### Club Monthly Meeting

19th September 2019, 7:00 PM

NewHope,  
3 Springfield Rd,  
Blackburn North VIC 3130

### Amanda Diamond

#### **Apitherapy: Healing with bees**

Amanda has studied in Slovenia & Romania where Apitherapy is common practice.

### Cherry Hill Orchards 2019 Blossom Festival

The Club invites all members to a social gathering at Cherry Hill Orchards for their annual Blossom Festival.

Wander through rows of cherry blossoms, sip on cherry-based drinks, enjoy live music. Food trucks will be present.

474 Queens Road  
Wandin East, VIC 3139

28th September 2019  
11:30 AM—5 PM

Please register (free for members; guests \$10). Each ticket includes a complimentary bottle of Cherry Hill's Cherish Spritzer.

### Beekeeping Beginner Courses

The September & October courses have sold out. Watch the web site for upcoming beginner courses.

### Nuc Nanny, October 2019

Due to limited resources this program sold out very quickly.

## Annual General Meeting

The club held its AGM on August 15th. Mat Lumalasi presented an annual report and Tony Penwill presented the treasurer's report.

There were single nominations for each committee position. These were read out and those nominees were duly elected for the coming year.

## Committee for 2019-2020

President	Mat Lumalasi
Vice President	Helmut Huber
Secretary	Vanessa Kwiatkowski
Treasurer	Linda Ferguson
Training Facilitator	John Treloar
General Committee	Nicole Owens Debbie Webber Paul Davies

## President's Report

What a fantastic year for the club.

Our first real success was to instate the first ever gender balanced committee of the club.

Over the last decade we have seen the dynamic of the membership base change enormously and now for the first time we have a committee that reflects that, with logical and efficient decisions being made without effort.

We saw our membership continue to stabilise around the 350-400 member mark throughout the year, seeing us as the biggest recreation bee club in the state.

The 2019 Recreational Clubs' Conference was organised and hosted by our club and was hugely successful.

Over 8 months of planning came together perfectly for a wonderful day of education and fun.

We saw around 420 people attend the conference, some from as far as Queensland and Tasmania.

Feedback has been very positive for both the event and for our club.

One of the trickiest tasks we took on was

finding a new home for our meetings and after a few months of visiting potential venues, we found the NewHope center.

Our goal was to move away from the lecture style venue we were using at Doncaster Secondary College and to something more social and more importantly, cheaper to work into our budget.

Our insurance was another thing we reviewed to address some concerns. After some investigation we found that the policy was not as thorough as we believed. A new policy was sought and we are very happy with the current offering as well as the saving it also brought.

With the natural cycle of membership every year, we had found that library resources had dwindled from books not being returned. We have now implemented a digital lending system to track our library assets and to automate the reminders, lending and returns of books.

The committee's ambition to fulfil our goals without impacting our stellar education program was successful. On top of our other projects, we were able to deliver a full program of courses and workshops throughout the year. A total of 184 people participated in 9 club courses/workshops over the last year. Something the education officer and facilitators should be proud of.

The apiary and club room in Heidelberg continues to impress in terms of function, if not looks. We acknowledged and addressed this with a social meet up over winter to remove old furnishings and set up some new storage shelves and workbench, with plans to continue to improve the site over the next year.

Apiary opens throughout the beekeeping season have been enjoyable for both attendees and committee members and in order to continue the social use of the site, we ran some winter workshops over the non-beekeeping season.

On the back of the committee accomplishments over the year, we sought to increase social activities with basic "club room" events over the colder months and now as spring ar-

rives, we are continuing to plan our social program for the year ahead.

Our last task we hoped to have in order by tonight was our Incorporated Association rule review. The committee has spent considerable time reviewing the current rules our club runs under and we agree that there are some changes urgently needed.

Our professional advice was not received in time to announce the "special resolution" and therefore we have scheduled the SGM for September's meeting, as you would have seen via email this week.

I'd like to take to opportunity to thank the hard working committee for making all this happen in such a short amount of time and supporting me as president over the last year.

It has been a pleasure to work with everyone as a team to make this club what it is.

Lastly, I'd like to thank all of the members for your support and patience over the last year.

## Polyandry: what is it and why should beekeepers care?

**By Nadine Chapman**

<https://extensionaus.com.au/professionalbeekeepers/polyandry-what-is-it-and-why-should-beekeepers-care/>

Polyandry, a fancy word for something that all beekeepers know: honey bee queens mate with multiple males. The average is 12, but two Australian studies suggest this is an underestimate, with 28 mates being more likely.

Previous research has shown that the number of times a queen mates can have important repercussions for beekeepers. Too few mates results in colonies having increased likelihood of death, disease and queen replacement. Honey production is also lower in colonies headed by queens with low mate numbers.

In a bee colony the worker offspring from one father are referred to as a 'subfamily' or 'patriline.' The greater the number of subfamilies in the colony the better because

workers from different subfamilies have different propensities to perform different tasks. For example, it's great to have some hygienic bees in the colony to remove diseased brood. But if all the bees were fixated on this task other important things might get neglected. More subfamilies means that the colony can better adjust to changing conditions, such as temperature and floral resources.

Take temperature as an example. The optimal temperature for brood incubation is 34.5 C. If all workers in a colony are 'programmed' to begin fanning the nest to cool it down when the brood nest temperature reaches 36 degrees then the brood will get too hot. Sudden excessive fanning may then result in the brood becoming too cold. However, if there were a mix of subfamilies in the nest, each 'programmed' to start fanning the nest at slightly different temperatures, then the optimal temperature is more easily maintained.

In this video Professor Benjamin Oldroyd from the University of Sydney talks about how the mating habits of queen bees influence queen quality in their research apiary.

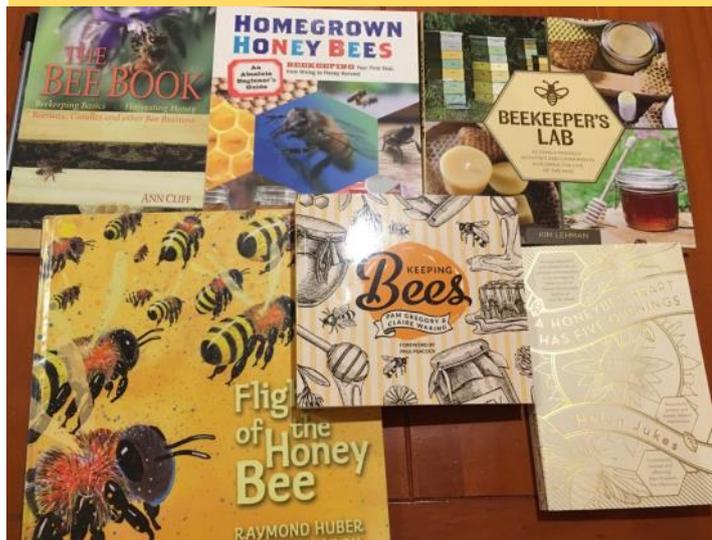


<https://youtu.be/mnegrAwwvoo>

## Welcome Club Newbees

Richard Beardall	Box Hill
Craig Burton	Croydon North
Matthew Burton	Mount Evelyn
Helen Chen	
Geoff Cox	Eltham
Natalie Doran-Browne	
Bec Field	Burwood East
Liz Grayden	Heathmont
Mustafa Hamimi	Narre Warren East
Tony & Natalie Robertson	Wheelers Hill
Andrew Sankey	Blackburn
Michael Schramm-Clark	Oakleigh

## Library News



Look out for these new books in the library.

### Keeping Bees,

Pam Gregory & Claire Waring

This book offers practical and informative advice on how to get started, how to achieve and collect good harvests, beekeeping through the seasons, troubleshooting, queen rearing and more. It also suggests ways of encouraging bees for 'non-beekeepers'.

### Beekeeper's Lab, Kim Lehman

This book gives you 52 bee-inspired activities and experiments to do all year long, and are accessible enough to share with the family. It includes weekly activities from around and about the hive, including art projects, recipes, experiments, garden activities, and more throughout the entire year. Try a new technique every week.

### Homegrown Honey bees,

Alethea Morrison

This beginner's guide outlines what you'll need to know to make it through the first year. With in-depth discussions of allergies, colony hierarchy, bee behaviour and more.

### A Honeybee heart has five openings,

Helen Jukes

An insightful and inspiring account of a novice beekeeper's year of keeping honeybees, which will appeal to readers of H is For Hawk and The Outrun.

## The Bee Book: Beekeeping Basics, Harvesting Honey, Beeswax, Candles and other bee business, Ann Cliff

Anyone interested in growing food, who wants to find out what a beehive or two will give them, even on such a small scale as the suburban backyard or the terrace-house garden, will find this book an indispensable introduction to keeping bees



## Announcing NEW Membership Cards

These will be available for members from the September meeting onwards. It is a snap off card with key tag.



If you forget to bring your membership card with your name, you'll be able to be scanned in from the snap off key tag as well. Members will also each receive a snap tag and id card holder.

The cards have been colour coded green, in line with the Queen Marking code:

International Queen Marking Color Code:	
Color:	For Year Ending In:
White (or gray)	1 or 6
Yellow	2 or 7
Red	3 or 8
Green	4 or 9
Blue	5 or 0

## Beeswax Workshop



We had 38 attendees at the workshop at St John's in Heidelberg.

Ben Moore and his assistant beekeeper visiting from Poland did a fabulous session on how to make your own wraps. Three methods were explained and everyone got to make and take one home.

There were some big smiles as members left empowered with new knowledge and know how. Some great feedback was received on the day as well as after the event. I bet that there will be lots of Christmas Beeswax Wraps on their way to the family and friends of the members who attended.

Big thanks to Ben for delivering this workshop to the members.



## Swarm Collection List & Data Collection

With the season on our doorstep it is that time of the year to make sure the list on our web site of those willing to collect swarms is up to date.

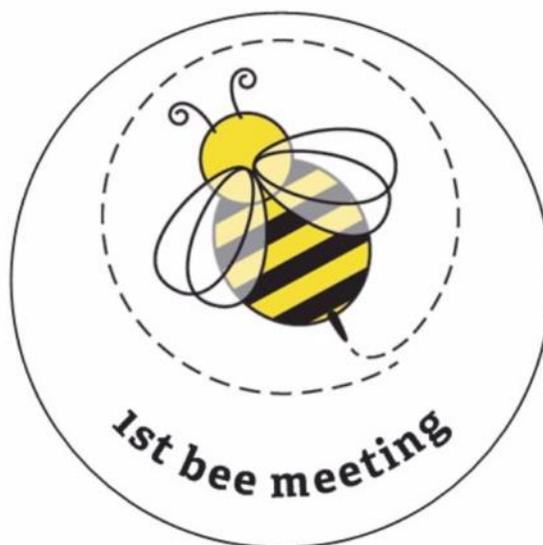
You can check the list at:  
[beekeepers.org.au/swarms](http://beekeepers.org.au/swarms)

If you'd like your name added to the list, please contact [secretary@beekeepers.org.au](mailto:secretary@beekeepers.org.au)

We are also once again collecting information on swarms—size, postcode and date. If you have seen or captured a swarm this season, please log on to the web site and report it. You will find the link under **Members-Only, Swarm Data Collection**

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

## First Bee Meeting Stickers



It can be daunting for new members to attend their first monthly meeting. We are introducing these stickers to help break the ice.

If this is your first meeting, please let us know when you check in & we can pop one of these stickers on your shirt.

Regular members, please look out for our new members and introduce yourself and welcome them to our club.

## Varroa Update

August 7, 2019 By Aust Honey Bee Industry Council

*No further varroa mites found at Townsville Port since May 2019*

Response activities are continuing following the detection of varroa mites on an Asian honey bee nest at the Port of Townsville in May 2019.

The Asian honey bee nest was located and destroyed on 16 May 2019 and found as a result of bee lining activities where foraging bees are tracked.



The mites were sent to the CSIRO's laboratory in Canberra for identification to species level, with results confirming *Varroa jacobsoni*.

Biosecurity Queensland is continuing its heightened surveillance activities at the Townsville port area, and further out in the Townsville local government area.

To date there have been no further detections of Asian honey bee or varroa mite.

The Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests (CCEPP) has met to discuss this detection and determined that based on the evidence, this incident is considered technically feasible to eradicate.

The committee is considering a response plan that has been put forward by Biosecurity Queensland, which is the lead agency responding to this incident, supported by the Australian Department of Agriculture.

Genetic testing indicates this Asian honey bee detection is not related to any previous incidents in Australia, including those present in Cairns, or subject to the current national eradication program underway in Townsville.

In relation to the 2016 Townsville varroa mite detection, the national eradication program is on track for declaring this infestation eradicated in August 2019, providing no further Varroa mites relating to this detection are found.

The Asian honey bee is approximately 10mm long with yellow and black stripes on the abdomen. Click for link to more information about the Asian honey bee: [Fact Sheet](#).

Port and transport workers are encouraged to be on the look-out and report suspect bees that may have come in on cargo via the See. Secure. Report hotline on 1800 798 636.

The general public can report suspect Asian honey bee detections to the national Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.

Townsville bee keepers are asked to be especially vigilant in reporting any suspect Asian honey bee sightings and/or varroa mite detections.

Information about bee biosecurity and photos that will help identify varroa mite and Asian honey bee are available on the Bee Aware website at [beeaware.org.au](http://beeaware.org.au) or the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries [website](#).

## Bee Biosecurity Officer

*Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions*



Ally Driessen was an amateur beekeeper and permaculture enthusiast during the Varroa scare in Victoria mid-2018. This drove her to swap a corporate career for a 'bee-change' and become part of the driving force in reducing the risks of exotic and established honey bee pests.

Before becoming the Victorian BBO, Ally worked for more than ten years in coaching, training and project management. Her professional background is a welcome addition to the National Bee Biosecurity Program team.

## In the Hive

Well, how is it looking out there?

Blossoms are out, bees are on the flowers of our stone fruit and I've noticed people out in public without jackets.

All this says that spring is here.



*Spring blossom, club apiary, Heidelberg*

So, what's going on in your hive?

Hopefully you have had an opportunity to get into your hive and get an idea of how they have wintered over and what they are up to.

For all of you who are familiar and confident with inspecting your hives, now is the time of year when we are very hands on with hive management and those with less confidence or understanding of hive management, this is the time of year when courses and other education programs kick off.

We have seen drones in some hives with the possibility that they stayed in the hive throughout the mild winter. Either way, active flying drones indicate that queens are laying

and bees are preparing to mate..... And swarm.

Ground moisture is still excellent for flowering and nectar production and like every year, we are speculating a bumper season.

Rapid expansion of brood production with nectar collection, on top of remaining winter honey stores can very quickly escalate to a honey bound hive, where the bees have displaced themselves and the frames are now full, can be the main cause for swarming in spring.

The good news is that most of the hives we are seeing and hearing about have come out of winter quite strong and if managed well would give beekeepers the ability to split in order to increase hive numbers or be strong productive hives for honey harvesting.

If you haven't already been through your hive this season, be sure to take advantage of the next chance the weather lets us have and look inside.

Happy beekeeping.

Mat Lumalasi.



## In My Apiary

### John Treloar

I have two hives side by side that both overwintered in two deep boxes. On August 17<sup>th</sup> the weather was pleasant enough to do the first inspection of the season. Watching entrance activity, the number of bees orientating and seeing thermal camera images over preceding weeks I had a pretty good idea of what to expect inside the hives.

Hive 1 was full of bees and brood. A prime candidate for swarming early, not only because there was not a lot of room for the soon emerging bees but also because the brood nest was congested. I "pyramid up" two frames of capped brood into an added third box, the earliest I recall having to do so in the season. These two frames were replaced by drawn comb, giving the queen immediate space to keep laying. Foundation frames wouldn't be drawn until the weather warms up and a nectar flow starts.

In contrast the bottom box on hive 2 had relatively few bees and little else. It consisted of good drawn combs and frames with foundation. As there were no old combs to replace, I simply reversed the two boxes, putting the brood box below. Bee colonies tend to expand up rather than down, have brood closest to the entrance and nectar/honey furthest away.



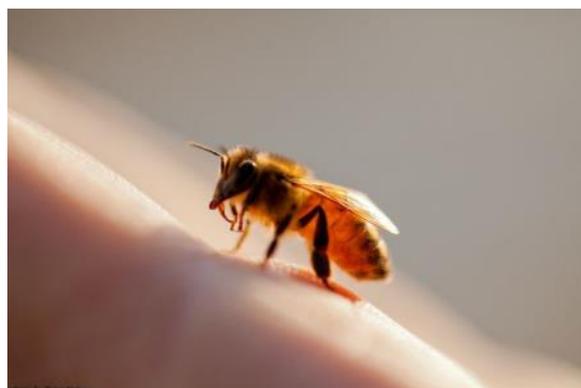
*Thermal image of hive after reversing boxes*

## 40th Annual Beekeeping Field Day

Facilitated by Bendigo Branch V.A.A. Inc.

Sunday 13th October 2019  
9.30 AM - 3.30 PM

Harcourt Leisure Centre  
Bingham's Road, Harcourt



**PRACTICAL OPEN HIVE DEMONSTRATIONS**  
(Bring your own protective equipment - or buy it here)

**HOBBYIST OR BEGINNERS CORNER**

**MATED QUEEN BEE SALES**

To avoid disappointment please order well ahead of the date. (To Order Contact Max Maunder 03 5446 7911 P.O.A.)

**AUCTION OF BEE GOODS**

An opportunity to make some cash after cleaning out your sheds. Sales will be on a commission basis. For further information please contact Bill Shay 0419 337 276

**EXTRACTING HONEY • SPECIALISED MACHINERY**

**REFRESHMENTS** (including lunch)

**ENQUIRIES:** Carol 03 5446 7911

Further Program details closer to the date.

## Pesticides

*URGENT – Proposed legislative changes to the Victorian Public Health Act in regards to the control of vector-borne diseases through Insecticide spraying without community consent.*

### Dav Howard

I live on the Mornington Peninsula where, I'm sure you have heard by now, we have a problem with the possibility of mass spraying of people's homes over an area of 25 square kilometres in an "experiment" to see whether Buruli Ulcer is being spread by mosquitoes.

For the moment the excitement has died down, with the community having voiced fairly strong disapproval of the spraying, particularly in light of the revelation that a reduction in the number of mosquitoes can be achieved using other safer methods.

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is requesting expert advice on the various issues involved and plans to consult more thoroughly with the community. The Shire also talks of offering an 'Opt-in' system for those residents who want their properties sprayed.

Unfortunately, the Victorian Government might have other ideas...



### Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations Review

On August 20, 2019, the Victorian Government released on its 'Engage Victoria' website a Community Consultation regarding proposed legislative changes to the Public Health & Wellbeing Act INCLUDING proposed changes regarding the control of vector-borne diseases, mosquitoes in particular.

The Government wants to change legislation so they have the power to spray insecticide without community consent under a hypothesis that mosquitoes need to be controlled as a vector for disease.

The current legislation only allows for the control of Mosquito's at the larval stage.

The proposed legislation seeks to control Mosquito's at all stages, which can only mean, larvicide, fogging and residual sprays will become legislation under the Health and Wellbeing Act.

The full consultation can be found here <https://engage.vic.gov.au/phwr-sunset-review>

Submissions can be made until September 30 by clicking on the link above.

The regulatory impact statement for vector-borne disease control can be found here <https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.vic-engage.files/5215/6592/0323/Sunset-Review-of-Public-Health-and-Wellbeing-Regulations-RIS-Chapter-1-Vector-borne-infectious-disease-control.pdf>

This impact statement is somewhat deceptive. On page 19 we are offered 3 options:

- Option 1: Retain the current regulations without changes
- Option 2: Amend some aspects of the current regulations
- Option 3: Remove or reduce the requirements of the current regulations

Option 2 is what the government is hoping we will support, without qualification...however, it is quite misleading in that there is no mention of insecticide spraying in the ensuing discussion of what the three options actually call for when it comes to mosquito control.

The only mention of insecticide spraying is to be found on page 18, discretely tucked in at the end of a short section entitled 'Hazard':

The current regulations limit the potential to control the hazard and do not address alternative control practices such as adult mosquito spraying or residual insecticide application.

\* \* \*

I am hoping that people will write submissions objecting to these proposed legislative changes.

Possibly some club members have media contacts and friends in the right environmental places who might also want to write submissions.

A submission doesn't have to be long or complex if you are pressed for time. Just a few well-written lines outlining your objections to spraying without an opt-in mechanism for residents to decide for themselves will be more than enough.

It is not only vital to the environment, but equally vital to both our health and our dignity as citizens and community members that no Government be given the right to spray our homes without our consent.

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