

Beelines

Newsletter of The Beekeepers Club Inc. Est 1998.

September 2015.

Mission statement:

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



Photo: Gary Bourne.

3rd prize 2015 club photo competition

*Meeting venue; Senior Citizens Club. 895-901 Doncaster Road
Doncaster East. Melway 47k-1. Opposite Dan Murphy's.
Meetings held 3rd Thursday of each month 7.00pm for 7.30pm.
Guests and Visitors are Welcome*

Next Meetings.

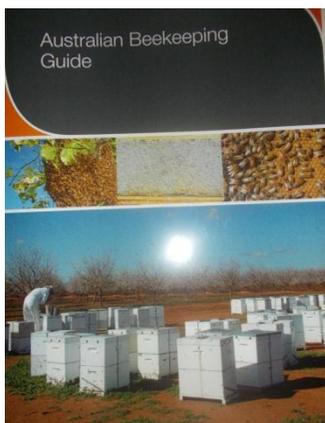
17th Sept 7.30 pm Ian Brown. Beginners Corner
8.15 pm AGM. Chaired by Sue Zuber

If your subscription remains unpaid as at 30th August you will be ineligible to vote at the AGM

15th Oct 7.30 Ian Brown. Beginners Corner
8.15 Andrew Wootton. Electronic Beekeeping..

If you are unable to attend the AGM, proxy forms are on the Club website to download and forward to your selected proxy holder, or if you want the Chairperson to vote your proxy, send directly to the Secretary.

Please download the Capilano Maryborough visit registration form and send to Don Muir no later than 30th September 2015. Further details on this event appear on page 13.



Additional copies of the Australian Beekeeping Guide have been purchased by the club and are now available.

Recently published by Russell Goodman and Peter Kaczynski the book is available at the club price of \$ 32.00 (RRP \$34.50). Copies are limited so if you intend buying this excellent guide then see Paul or Don at the September meeting, or email me Don at editor@beekeepers.org.au to reserve a copy.

The book of 125 pages, is ideally suited to both beginners and the more experienced and covers all aspects of beekeeping from the biology of the bee, hive components, handling bees safely, spring and summer management, honey extraction, flora types and many other topics. An excellent reference book.

Opening after winter.

By spring colonies that have survived winter will generally be low on stores and numbers of adult bees. As spring develops the bees will start to fly bring in pollen and the queen will begin laying in an effort to rapidly build up colony strength. This expansion if unchecked will be the basis of swarming intention.

On your first opening inspection pick a fine sunny day 16°C or above, with little wind and thoroughly check each frame for:-

1. Brood this will indicate the queen is well and laying
Check the brood pattern is it a good uniform pattern, or scattered. A scattered or poor pattern can be an indication the queen is failing, this can also lead to supercedure and swarming. Poor or scattered pattern should equal queen replacement.
2. Look at the number of drone cells are they excessive, this can be a sign of swarm preparation.
3. Look for Queen cells, a sure sign of swarm intention.

Check frames for signs of disease such as Small hive beetle, AFB, EFB, and Chalkbrood more specific details on these diseases follow on page 4

4. Check the bottom board and clean or replace if damaged or in need of maintenance.
5. Check and clean comb from box walls, and rebated frame grooves, if supers are damaged, rotting or need any repair, replace with good box.
6. Clean comb from bottom and top bars of frames and sides.
7. Clean and /or replace the hive mat.
8. Check the lid and ensure in good condition, clean and replace.
9. Check around the immediate hive area and remove weeds, ensure good level base to support the increased hive weight over next few months and that any rain water can drain away.



Common Diseases to check for on opening.

Small Hive Beetle:

Small black beetle, with 6 legs and 2 clubbed antennae fast moving likes to hide in dark corners under hive mats etc. If detected fit a beetle trap between top bars of the top box.

Chalkbrood.

A fungal disease which shows up as white to grey-black chalk like mummies in brood cells, and on the hive bottom board and can be on the ground outside the entrance.

AFB (American Foulbrood)

In advanced cases the brood pattern will be scattered. Caps over sick or dead brood are generally darker and tend to be sunken, greasy looking and sometimes perforated. A rancid smell will also be detected.

European foulbrood.

This disease is most severe in the spring. The dead EFB larvae are twisted spirally around the walls of the cell. The gut line of EFB infected larvae is chalky white interspersed with yellow white or bleached bands. The white bands are pockets of the bacterium that causes EFB.

Sacbrood.

Sacbrood is a virus and is not generally a major problem. Larvae about 2 days old are the most susceptible to infection. In advanced cases combs show a suggestion of irregular brood pattern similar to foulbrood. Infected larvae change from white to yellowish colour. Cell caps may be discoloured and sunken.



A micro sensor being manually fitted to a bee records the insect's movement in and around bee hives. The program is being funded by CSIRO.

Figuring out where insects spend their time, how far they travel and what they are doing has traditionally been very difficult.

But the micro-sensing technology can reveal this information in unprecedented detail. As part of the world first swarm sensing research program, CSIRO have fitted tiny micro-sensors to thousands of bees in Tasmania, in order to monitor their movements and their environment.

The sensors are tiny radio frequency identification sensors that work in a similar way to a vehicle's e-tag, recording when the insect passes a particular checkpoint.

The sensors are 2.5mm x 2.5mm in size and weigh about 5 milligrams each. A new generation as small as 1.5mm x 1.5mm is being designed; less is more, as smaller sensors will interfere less with the insect's behavior.

AGM

September 17th 2015. 7.30PM

NOTICE

Members are reminded the September meeting will be the AGM.

Agenda items:-

1. Confirm minutes of the previous AGM
2. Receive and consider the annual report from committee
3. Financial report
4. Election of office bearers
5. Confirm membership subscriptions
6. Voting on any resolutions
7. General business.

If you are unable to attend but wish to register your vote please download the proxy form from the website and submit by either of the two options of:

1, Fill out your proxy and submit to the secretary@beekeepers.org.au for the chairperson to vote on your behalf.

2. Submit your proxy to your own nominated person to vote. Your proxy holder can be any current financial club member.

Proxy forms must be submitted to secretary@beekeepers.org.au for the Chairperson by Monday 14th September.

If you are giving your proxy to a club member they must take it to the AGM on the night and show the Returning Officer on sign in.

The meeting will be chaired by our Past President and Life Member Sue Zuber.

Geoff Bryan will be the Ballot Officer.

Doors open at 7.00pm for sign in.

At any time let me know of articles or information you want published. If you want information which could be obtained through open forum then contact me and I will publish.

If you want to buy, sell or swap send details to me with your name and contact details for publication in upcoming newsletter editions.

Swarm check.

Swarming is the natural way colonies reproduce. A normal swarm comprises on average about half of the colonies adult bees and usually the old queen.

The swarm creates a loud whirring noise on exit from the hive and will generally travel no more than 100 / 150 metres from the hive, settling on a tree, post or other suitable cluster point. The main swarm will remain in this position while scout bees decide on a suitable permanent nesting cavity.

Lose a swarm and about half your colony nectar gathering ability is lost, so prevention is a necessity.

Signs of swarming.

The main signs will include:-

- Queen cells under construction (These will generally be on the lower and side edges of comb)
- The construction of queen cell cups (like acorns) swarming will generally occur if the cups contain eggs or larvae.
- The signs as above will usually be accompanied by a lack of comb space for brood rearing and a high worker and drone population.

Above all, congestion in the hive is a major cause of swarming. So placing another super and frames on top will not stop a swarm if the above signs have been observed. If you detect a large population and space is

becoming short, and the above signs have not materialised then the extra super and frames may assist in the short term but at some stage you may have to split your hive.

There are currently a large number of library books overdue, if you have taken a book or two, and forgotten to return please check and bring back any overdue books to the September meeting. There is always a great demand on the books and it would be appreciated if they were returned after 30 days.

If you have any queries or you need to discuss your overdue book speak to Helmut at the September meeting

The club has sourced good quality medium cost beekeeping gloves and stocks are now available for sale. Sizes are large and extra-large \$ 13.50 a pair.

All members are reminded that even though you have paid your subs direct into the bank you also need to fill out an application form and hand to Paul Pynaker. This ensures you are registered and on the mail list for all club correspondence. So if you have not filled out a 2015/2016 membership form when you paid please do so at next meeting.

Mentors wanted in the Warrandyte North Eltham or close areas. We have a couple of new members who would like to work with someone with some experience in the above areas, they are willing to physically work and learn if you can help please contact Don at editor@beekeepers.org.au

OPEN DAY Sept 6th Anne and Marie's

We again had a very successful field day at Anne and Marie's in Beenak..

Attended by 70 members and visitors the day held a lot of interest for beekeepers of all levels.

The morning consisted of a welcome morning tea of fresh scones tea, coffee and soft drinks. After refreshments the day got off to a start with 3 presentations on aspects of beekeeping.

The first speaker was a presentation by Paul Pynaker on the importance of hive record keeping.

This was followed by Bob Owens who talked on the topic of Queenraising and genetics and disease resistant strains, and various diseases affecting Victorian bees, such as chalkbrood, nosema, sacbrood etc .

Ian Brown was the last speaker before lunch and spoke on what we should expect to find on the first opening after winter and the importance of good frames. The point being good frames make good hives.

Lunch was again a great effort by Anne and Marie with some help from Paul Pynaker on the BBQ. I should also add a big thanks to Annes husband Bob who worked tirelessly throughout the whole day, many thanks Bob.

After lunch saw the opening of hives led by our hive masters Paul Pynaker, Helmut Huber, Andrew Wootton and Ian Brown.

I am not aware of anyone being "kissed" by any bees so no-one had to pay a fine.

All in all the day was a great success, mainly in part to the large number of members who attended and participated in the day, many thanks to you all for supporting this event.

The three speakers.



Paul Pynaker addressing some of the crowd on hive record keeping.



Bob Owens telling us all about Queens



Ian Brown. Good frames make good hives.

If Bees did not interest goats did,



The lunch area did good business,



Down to work.

The next generation of beekeepers.



Heads down, all learning from our hive leaders how to light a smoker in 7 seconds.

Capilano day trip.

The club is organizing a trip to visit the newly re-opened Capilano packing plant at Maryborough.

Capilano Australia's largest honey packer and supplier is a publicly listed Australian company. They have recently acquired Chandlers Honey and this has necessitated the re commissioning of the Maryborough plant.

The proposed date of the visit will be October 17th. 2015. But still to be confirmed by Capilano

Travel will be by Jaytee Coaches who we have used on previous trips and the bus will leave from a central location at 8.00am arriving Maryborough approx. 11.00am. Entertainment will be provided on the bus.

The factory tour will last about 2 -2½ hours after which we will go to the Maryborough Golf club for lunch, before heading home hopefully arriving about 5.30pm.

The cost is to be announced at the September meeting but is expected to be \$ 40.00 per head including lunch. I am currently negotiating with the Golf club for a slightly cheaper set menu and I will be in a position to confirm everything at the September meeting.

Passenger numbers will be limited to 57 so if intending to go please see me at the September meeting to confirm, or alternatively I will have registration forms on the club website after 20th Sept, fill in and email back to editor@beekeepers.org.au.

Worldwide there are more than 20,000 bee species, as well as a large number of subspecies and races, not all of which have been described by science. Despite this large number, only a fraction of these bees produce and store honey and build long-lasting nests (hives) made of wax. The well-known honeybees belong to the genus *Apis* and are known collectively as the *Apini* tribe.

Flinders Island beekeeper

Andrew Matthewson is a bit like Johnny Appleseed.

Instead of planting apple trees through America's west, Andrew Matthewson is spreading tea tree seeds across his Flinders Island home.

He said the Tasmanian island was a new frontier for active medicinal Manuka honey.

"Several of the leptospermum species seem to be active," he said.

"They can test it for the active component and the higher that is, the better the price.

"It seems that there's more than one variety of leptospermum that's active, and we've got several here on the island."

As a grower of Silvan berries, boysenberries and loganberries, Mr Matthewson wanted a beehive to aid pollination.

He got started by catching a colony in a cupboard and, because Flinders Island is remote, he is largely self-taught from books.

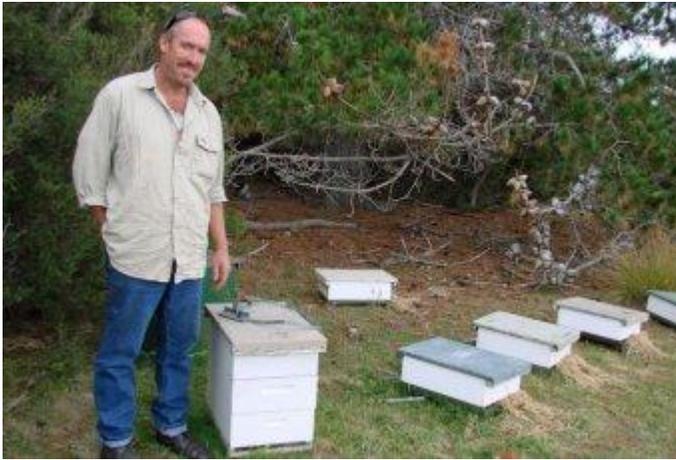
"I found some information in old English beekeeping books on drumming bees; moving them out of containers and drums you don't want them in," he said.

"A lot of smoke and a pair of sturdy sticks belting on the side of the box for about 15 minutes.

"I don't think they like the vibration.

"They moved up into a good clean hive where I could work them."





After learning to catch swarms and split hives, Mr Matthewson expanded from one hive to more 60 in his first two years.

Ten years on, he is now fully occupied harvesting about six

tonnes of honey each year.

Mr Matthewson said the Manuka or jelly-bush honey was very hard to handle because it was very viscous.

However, prices for the active honey were at least double those of meadow honey, encouraging Mr Matthewson to spread native leptospermum seeds for the future.

"I'm probably at my best when I'm working a hive and I love it when my bees are healthy," he said.

"I've done really well here on Flinders."The island is absolutely infested with bees. "You find them in houses and wombat burrows, sheds.

"I catch a lot of those feral swarms every summer, but they're not a very nice bee to work.

"Excitable would be the word I'd use - they'll sting you, but probably the worst is they'll follow you and sting you and your kids and dogs. They're mean.

"But making lots of honey makes me happy. Being on the island makes me happy. I don't think I'd want to be anywhere else."

From ABC rural.

For those members who may not be aware a very interesting newsletter from Plant Health Australia called “bee aware” can be subscribe to at no cost. Go to beeaware.org.au to subscribe.

Quick notes:

Sugar Shake:

Daniel Martin has received the names of sugar shake volunteers and will forward to each person a new version DEDJTR sugar shake test kit ASAP.

Books.

We have about 15 copies left of the Australian Beekeeping Guide at \$32.00 each .See Paul or Don at next meetings.

Gloves.

We also now have received extra-large beekeeping gloves price \$ 13.50 again see Paul or Don to purchase.

Bees make more than honey. Around one third of what you eat is pollinated by bees

The pollination services of bees are worth around US \$220 billion globally

Disclaimer: Material and information published in any publication, training course, leaflet or web site of the Beekeepers Club Inc, Doncaster is produced for general information only. Although published in good faith, the Club and/or any officer of the club will not be liable for any loss suffered by any person for action taken on the basis of such information