

BEELINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC

DECEMBER 2017

Upcoming events

Club Monthly Meeting

Xmas Function and Social

21 Dec 2017 7:00 PM

Community Garden and/or Upper Hall, St John's Anglican Church, 1 Burgundy St, Heidelberg 3084

Please register via the website for catering (food by Sliders on Tyres).

Club Apiary Honey Harvest

Saturday 23rd December 0900-1400

Sign up via SignUpGenius webpage (email link sent).

February Beginners Course

10th Feb 2018, 0930-1630

Lower Hall, St Johns Anglican Church, 1 Burgundy St, Heidelberg 3084

Intermediate Workshop: Improving your beekeeping

10th March 2018, 0930-1630

Lower Hall, St Johns Anglican Church, 1 Burgundy St, Heidelberg 3084



Junior section members carry out a hive inspection.

Committee Contacts

President	Mat Lumalasi	president@beekeepers.org.au
Vice President	Helmut Huber	vicepresident@beekeepers.org.au
Secretary	Amanda Lamont	secretary@beekeepers.org.au
Treasurer	Stuart Stone	treasurer@beekeepers.org.au
Training Facilitator	Andrew Wootton	training@beekeepers.org.au
General Committee	John Treloar	committee@beekeepers.org.au
General Committee	Lyndon Joss	committee@beekeepers.org.au
General Committee	Dan Milic	committee@beekeepers.org.au
General Committee	Alan Walton	committee@beekeepers.org.au

The Beekeepers Club Insurance Scheme

Don Muir

By now all current financial members should have their 2017-2018 insurance certificates of currency. If you have not yet received your copy please contact donhmuir@optusnet.com.au and I will forward same to you.

With a large number of new members I thought it worthwhile to again summarise the scheme benefits.

We are very fortunate in having such a comprehensive scheme and we are the only club in Victoria which offers insurance protection as part of club membership.

The scheme covers all members for product and public liability to \$ 20,000.000.00 per event for all your beekeeping activities in Australia. The policy is held by the club for and on behalf of all financial members.

Class of Insurance: Public & Products Liability

Interest: Covering all sums for which the insured/members shall become legally liable to pay as compensation for personal injury or property damage caused by an occurrence in connection with the insured's apiary activities within Australia.

Limit: Public Liability \$20,000,000 any one occurrence; Product Liability \$20,000,000 any one period of insurance

Excess: \$500 each and every claim.

Geographical Limits: For all actions and/or hives placed anywhere in Australia.

The policy extends to members who have paid to join the insurance program of The Beekeepers Club Inc. The policy premium is included in your annual subscription.

Legal Liability cover is provided for claims in respect of bodily injury sustained by third parties and/or damage to property

arising out of a member of The Beekeepers Club Inc, beekeeping activities.

Insurance is automatically provided to Juniors, Single, Family and Associate member groups of The Beekeepers Club Inc, (each of whom is separately the insured) who are resident in Australia and have paid their annual club subscription.

Claimants cost are included up to the limits of the insurance policy.

All claims to be forwarded in the first instance to Don Muir donhmuir@optusnet.com.au 0404 38 1942 of The Beekeepers Club Inc, who will on-forward to the broker.

Members in the scheme will be deemed to agree to their name and contact details being made available to the broker and insurance company for the purposes of administration of the scheme.

The Public Liability cover also extends to you when at any organized club event, field day bus trips or club apiary. If you bring a guest to any organized club event the cover also extends to them.

As in all matters insurance the cover does not extend to include stupidity or intentional carelessness so please whenever you work your bees you do so in strict accordance with the Code of Practice requirements and club suggestions showing due care to your immediate surroundings and neighbours, observing all statutory requirements such as obtaining permits if using a smoker on days of total fire ban.

Remember your neighbours and the general public when you work your bees.

If an event arises from your beekeeping activities which may result in a claim, there is a list of procedures that should be followed on the next page.

Insurance Claim Procedure

1. Contact me (Don Muir) for a copy of a claim form. (donhmuir@optusnet.com.au or editor@beekeepers.org.au) or mobile 0404 38 1942.
2. The completion of the form does not constitute policy acceptance by the insurer.
3. Failure to notify a matter immediately after the event or after you become aware of the event may enable the insurer to reduce or avoid any liability incurred.
4. Please ensure that you answer all questions in full and honestly. The form must be signed and dated.
5. If you do not believe a question is applicable, please write 'n/a'.
6. Original hard copy records are required by the insurer. Should you require them to be returned, please include a written request advising same. Photocopies are not acceptable for audit reasons.
7. If anyone holds you responsible for their accident or injury, please insist that their claim must be in writing.
8. Do not admit liability to any claimant and do not disclose to the claimant the existence of any insurance you may have in place.
9. If there is insufficient space or further comment required on claim form on any area and is considered necessary, please use additional pages.
10. Salvage remains the property of the insurer.
11. Any attachments will form part of the claim report and the declaration will include them.

PLEASE NOTE AND ABIDE WITH POINTS 7 & 8 ABOVE

What is a hive mat and why use one?

Don Muir

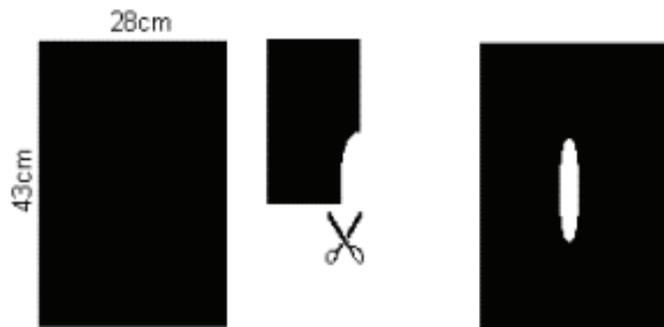
Most beekeepers insert some kind of inner cover between the top super and the hive lid; this is known as a hive mat. The most common materials for a hive mat can be vinyl, carpet, canvas or other similar materials. Soft materials such as woven cloth like "chux", hessian, paper etc. can be chewed and removed by the bees. A hive mat should be approximately 20mm smaller than the overall top box dimensions as detailed in the image.



Mats are recommended for a variety of reason including deterring of building of burr comb on the inner of the hive lid; it may also encourage bees not to propolise ventilation holes in the lid. I have found the use of fluffy backed vinyl sheeting acts as a very effective SHB trap, if the fluffy side faces up; the beetle gets trapped by its hooked feet and cannot move making it easy to kill on opening the lid.

I have seen some mats with a centre opening, cut to allow air to rise on all four edges of the mat as well as up between the top bars of the central two frames of the top super. This cut mat for the standard 8 frame hive should be approximately 28cm, no longer than 43cm. The rectangular sheet is then folded into quarters and a section cut out of the folded edge such that, when the sheet is opened out, an elongated oval hole is made in the sheet. The resultant

hole should be 2 to 3 cm across and 15 to 20 cm long.



Cut outs for hive mat

The mat either cut as above or plain is laid across the top of the frames under the lid, providing a ventilation gap all around and if cut as above provides ventilation between the middle top bars. The main principle behind a hive mat, apart from limiting build-up of comb is to protect the health of the colony in winter not so much for cold, but from excessive moisture. The cluster is the effective temperature management tool of the wintering colony; but wetting of the cluster by condensation of moisture expelled by the bees can greatly reduce that effectiveness. The central opening in the mat allows the colony to regulate ventilation of the winter cluster and better control humidity and temperature within the hive. The mat is also effective in minimising the development of burr comb in the hive lid. Comb will not be built in the area between the mat and the lid unless the beekeeper is slow in adding additional supers when a flow is in progress and the colony runs out of room below the mat.

Bees will often block or reduce the size of ventilation holes in the hive lid with propolis; however, when a mat is used it is rare for those ventilation holes to be even partially propolised. A mat is particularly useful when supers of extracted comb are stored on the hives over winter. One super of empty comb can be stored on each hive, above a mat. The bees will not occupy the

stored frames in normal circumstances but, in warmer times over the winter, they will venture into the stored box and generally keep it free of wax moth. If an unexpected flow occurs in early spring, the bees will use the stored combs if they run out of space below the mat.

A hive mat will provide a drip-proof cover and a degree of insulation for the brood nest or winter cluster while allowing for a free flow of air. As air is rising around the hive edge next to the walls, the brood nest should not be subjected to a chimney effect. An incidental advantage is that feed containers can be stood on the mat in the roof cavity, or sugar can be placed directly on it if feeding is required during winter.

For all the reasons above, I believe a simple inexpensive mat is a very good management tool; Leave your mat on all year round as it will conserve heat in winter.

Queen Raising Workshop Report

Andrew Wootton

“Should we postpone?” Apocalyptic rain on the way for the one weekend when we need to go into the hives 3 days in a row. “If we can beat the coming storm Friday morning, we only need to whip off the hive top and remove the frame of larvae and then replace with the grafts on Saturday!” Crash through or crash?

Friday we set up a starter finisher hive and a swarm box (and did avoid the rain). Saturday saw 8 enthusiastic tyro queen raisers assemble in the tennis club tea-room at the club apiary, with rain teeming down outside. We swung through theory and practiced grafting with sesame seeds



and yoghurt. Then it was on for real. The bees hardly noticed our visit and in a trice we were back inside with head torches and reading glasses, transferring 24h larvae to queen cups. Grafting bar into hive (stealth!) and again back inside to talk about splits.

Sunday morning assembly for genetics and outside once more for the result check. Success! 14 out of 15 cells started and filled with life sustaining royal jelly.

However, the second bar in the second starter a complete failure, illustrating how tricky it can be to get all the ducks in a



row.

“Let’s leave the good cells to be finished and decide whether to make some nucs.”

What a pleasure to work with such a receptive group. Exuberant plans for using these new skills were hatched and all left thoroughly satisfied.



A week later and the sometimes capricious nature of bees was highlighted. Our cells had been spurned and a set of wild queen cells raised instead. Probably we should have transferred them to a conventional finisher hive instead of leaving them in the starter – but it WAS raining. We cut out some wild cells and used these – all valuable experience.

State Quarantine Response Team (SQRT)

Don Muir

On Saturday 18th November, Beekeepers Club members Dean Harapas, Stuart Stone, John Treloar, Ralph Lynch and I attended the State Quarantine Response Team (SQRT) training day conducted by the DEDJTR led by Daniel Martin, Joe Rioridan and Jessica Hartland at the State Incident Control Centre Attwood.

It was encouraging to see members from a number of other local and country clubs attend and interesting to talk to other club members with good information exchange between participants.



Varroa mites

The purpose of the exercise was to train apiarists for inclusion in the State Quarantine Response Team in the event of an exotic pest's incursion.

When a suspect incursion of Varroa is notified, the team members will be asked to be available to conduct surveillance for the mite in any designated region. The aim of the training day was to introduce participants to the various surveillance techniques and expected duties and performance as a Response Team member.

It was a full day and covered topics such as OH&S, working with State Government staff, expectations of SQRT team leaders and beekeepers and a rundown of the equipment included in response team kits. Further sessions throughout the day covered Apiary Incident Management, arriving and conducting operations at suspect

infected premises and decontamination techniques.



The correct technique for fitting Bayvarol strips into each brood box.

Lastly before practical hive inspections and implementing DEDJTR standardised in-hive varroa surveillance procedure, a practical demonstration was performed by Daniel and Joe, before letting us loose.



We thank Daniel, Joe and Jess for their outstanding effort in organizing the day as well as the clear concise way they imparted their knowledge. Also congratulations to Jess on her recent engagement, and upcoming marriage.

All photos supplied by Barry Cooper.