

# BEE NEWS

March 2024  
Issue 146

Monthly newsletter of the Sunshine Coast  
BeeKeepers Inc.

[www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au](http://www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au)



## President's Report

What an amazing monthly meeting we had in February. We were lucky enough to have QBA State Secretary Jo Martin attend our club and give us so much important information

about the state of beekeeping in Queensland. The obvious focus was the current advice for varroa in Australia and the impact on Queensland so far. Jo would be the first to know and offer advice on action so we knew that we would be well informed should there be any developments. And just a few days later our first detection was announced... Things are not as bad as we worried at the start of the varroa journey in Australia, but we must remain vigilant. Some of the key points we all should heed to including consistent testing of our hives, reporting that testing, and record keeping. These are all areas we as individuals have control over. We don't have control over all of the things happening around us in terms of beekeeping, but we have control over our own hives and our own practices. I know that all

## NEXT MEETING

Saturday, 23 March 2024 at the Club House, 43 Farrell Street Yandina.

Morning tea and catch up starts 9.30am, BYO plate of food to share. Meeting to start at 10.00am.

of our members are registered, but if you know a beekeeper who is not registered, please do your best to encourage them to be responsible and informed by registering their hive.

If you missed our meeting, remember that Lynne has sent out information about where to find the recording of the meeting. Thank you to Ron who recorded for us. Jo also left us with enough booklets for recording your hive inspections for every member, so please make sure you pick one up. She told us that if you have a varroa detection that you will be asked to show your hive records so please keep that in mind and find a system that works for you. We should all be keeping records of our hives.

Thank you to the committee who supported our BBQ and to Dale for cooking up a storm for us. Jo sent us an email I wanted to share with you all. In it she said:

***My sincere appreciation for the invitation to speak at your club. My goodness the Sunshine Coast Beekeepers should be overwhelmingly proud for building such a beautiful club, full of enrichment and enthusiasm for beekeeping.***

I am so proud of our community and thank you for being a part of it! See you on Saturday at our meeting and have a great Easter everyone.

Have a bee-utiful week!

Kind Regards

Katie Livock

***Feedback from the QBA Workshop held at Sandstone Point Monday 4th March  
Linda Blackwell***

***Presentation 27th April - Grant Eisenmenger - Meadery in India***

***Special Thanks go to Dale for cooking and the committee for supporting the sausage sizzle at the meeting.***

***Special thanks also go to Grant Eisenberger and Tony Minto for mowing the lawn***

## Workshops for New Beekeepers

Our next Beekeeper's Courses will be held on the following dates:

- 13 April 2024 - fully booked
- 8 June 2024 - open

All participants must agree to the Club's covid rules.

**Booking is essential.**

Book online at:

[www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au/workshops](http://www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au/workshops).



\* Freepik

## The Club Online

To save our members time searching online, the Club's website has links to the best beekeeping information and websites we can find.

[www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au](http://www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au)

Also, check out our Facebook page for more Club news.

[www.facebook.com/pg/sunshinecoastbeekeepersaustralia/posts/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/sunshinecoastbeekeepersaustralia/posts/?ref=page_internal)

# Presentation Saturday 24th February – Jo Davis – State Secretary QBA

## 1. Registered Beekeepers Queensland:

- 10,123 with 162,272 hives
- 65% of the state hives are between Coolangatta and Bundaberg along the coastal strip.

## 2. Varroa mite

- Varroa mite does not fly but transfers from bee to bee on flowers or from robber bees. Once in the hive within 7 days they have increased in numbers considerably.
- 23 June 2022 confirmed in sentinel hive at Newcastle Port.
- 9 September 2023 arrived at a consensus that it was not technically feasible to eradicate varroa destructor from Australia.
- 9 February 2024 Transition to Management Plan announced to provide 12 months notional funding – establish courses and train Varroa Officers.
- States will then be approached for potential 3 year funding.
- QBA will lobby for state funding.

# 15 February 2024 Education Session - David Lee

A local group of Home Schooled Children whose parents organise monthly educational outings/ sessions came to the Bee Club at Yandina for education on Bees. The session was attended by 20 students aged 5 to 13 and 10 parents. Judging by the questions at the end of the presentation the session was enjoyed by the students. Unfortunately it was raining the entire time so a hive couldn't be opened.

Well done David!

- APVMA (Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority) is responsible for registering new chemical options from overseas and approving all chemicals for use.
  - It is illegal to use chemicals in Qld at present.
- ## 3. Beekeepers responsibilities
- Must test for varroa mite every 8 weeks. Bees to use are nurse bees preferably from the centre of the hive. Best practice requires an alcohol wash and uncapping of drone cells
  - RBE – Registered Biosecurity Entity
  - HIN – Beekeeping Registration Number – Must be on every hive
  - Keep records – this is required by law. The booklet handed out at the meeting can be back dated to provide 2-3 years records. Provides a framework to monitor and manage pests, record honey, movement of hive equipment and age and state of queen. Enter alcohol washes and drone uncapping.
  - Once varroa has been discovered in Qld if within 25 kms of your property you will receive a letter from biosecurity who will want to review your records. They need negative surveillance results.



## Saturday Rosters 2024

Thank you to all our volunteers who work at the Shed on a Saturday.

### MARCH

23/03/24	Open	Michele Campbell Chris Blignant	Graham Gibb
30/03/24	General Meeting	Jo-Anne Brayshaw Damien Casserley	

### APRIL

06/04/24	Open	Denis Illott Kym Maver	David Lee
13/04/24	Course	Ken Evans Bill Spencer Catering - Mary Spencer	Katie Livock
20/04/24	Honey Harvest	Ron Hulm Smita Djapermal and Adam	Lynne Hulme
27/04/24	General Meeting	Kylie Aallbers Frances Davison	

### MAY

04/05/24	Open	Jason March David Macklyn	Kathleen March
11/05/24	Open	Dominique Flannigan Griffin Pengally	John Baker
18/05/24	Honey Harvest	Ken Harrison Kevin Willis	Tom Cowburn
25/05/24	General Meeting	Sylvia and Bob Barns	

### JUNE

01/06/24	Open	Ashley Frost Peter Petsch	Graham Gibb
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## Summer / Autumn Swarm Season

There are currently so many calls for the removal of swarms we are calling for more volunteers to become trained as a swarm catcher.

Please refer to the articles found on the website for more information - [Resources for Members - Useful Articles for Members](#)

### Swarms

Southern: Ian Meyers, 0412 694 058.

North Coast, Sippy Downs: Grant Eisenmenger, 0401 720 004.

Buderim: Tom Cowburn, 0418 143 206.

North and central areas: Alby Taylor, 0418 882 282.

Maleny and surrounds: John Baker, 0418 791 149.

## Queensland Biosecurity Update 26 February 2024

***Varroa mite detected at the Port of Brisbane - a movement control order is in place***

A single varroa mite has been found in a sentinel beehive at the Port of Brisbane after a routine inspection by Biosecurity Queensland.

08/06/24	Course	Dioanna Bannick Ron Button Catering - Mary Spencer	Katie Livock
15/06/24	Closed	Stall at Nambour Show	
22/06/24	Honey Harvest	Evan Sanders Katie Michel	Paul Bonner
29/06/24	General Meeting	Arlene Rutherford Dianne Lynch	

## JULY

06/07/24	Open	Rob Questral Chris Strewé	David Lee
13/07/24	Open	Jason March Mel Simpson	Kathleen March
20/07/24	Honey Harvest	Evan Flower Tom Symons	Tom Cowburn
27/07/24	Meeting AGM	Cheryl and Gary Azsentief	

If the dates don't suit OR you are unable to attend please email Lynne Hulm - [secretarysbees@gmail.com](mailto:secretarysbees@gmail.com)

## Honey Extraction Dates

NOTE - all members wanting to use the Club facility for extraction of honey must first book with Lynne Hulm the Secretary to make sure we are not overbooked. You must let Lynne know how many frames that you want to extract honey from.

- 20 April
- 18 May

Please ensure that you assist with the cleaning up following extraction of honey.

### Borrowing the Clubs spinners to extract honey at home:

- The spinners have been bought for the use of all members.
- Contact the Secretary Lynne Hulm to place your name on the list to borrow a spinner.
- The Spinner must be returned to the club by 9:00am the following Saturday cleaned and ready for the next member to borrow.

Diagnostic testing has confirmed the species is *Varroa jacobsoni*, not *Varroa destructor*. Secondary testing is now being conducted to determine if the mite is carrying exotic viruses of honeybees, and if any other exotic bee pests are present.

Biosecurity Queensland is undertaking tracing activities to identify the potential source of the mite and likelihood of spread.

Surveillance will be conducted in conjunction with the Queensland bee industry and the Australian Government to determine if there are any more varroa mites in the surrounding area.

## Your Club and Covid Safety

Covid has become a circulating virus we will need to be prepared for from now on into the future.

Mandatory masks are not going to be recommended and will be left to personal choice.

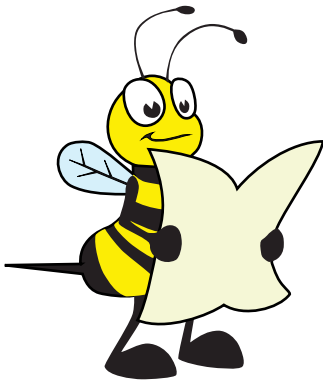
There is a strong recommendation for regular vaccinations which will provide protection against serious disease. The latest variant that is circulating is peaking around Australia and it is recommended to have another booster if your last was 6 months ago.

Do not forget the lessons learned during the pandemic - hand hygiene and social distancing and if you are sick stay home and get better.

## Sale, Purchase, Swap

A separate sheet is attached to the newsletter each month headed "Sale Purchase Swap". This will be for the information of members only and will not be downloaded onto the website with the newsletter.

If you would like to list anything could you please send an email with photograph if required to the Newsletter Editor at the following email address: [lineb@internode.on.net](mailto:lineb@internode.on.net) by the Friday the week prior to the meeting each month. This will coincide with our committee meeting when any additional inserts to the Newsletter are discussed. This provides me with a deadline.



## BEES IN THE NEWS

### AHBIC Industry Update - Varroa jacobsoni Port of Brisbane, 12 March 2024

Apis cerana Nest Located as of 12th March 2024, Biosecurity Queensland have confirmed a single nest of Asian Honey Bee; Apis cerana has been located within the Port of Brisbane

The nest has been destroyed, and bee samples have been sent for testing for parasitic mites and exotic bee viruses (slow bee paralysis virus, deformed wing virus, acute bee paralysis virus and Apis mellifera rhabdovirus). The test results will be communicated when completed.

### Almond pollination season under threat if varroa mite stops bee movements, growers say: ABC Rural, By Hamish Cole and Emily Doak, 14 Mar 2024

In short: NSW apiarists are unable to move bees interstate due to varroa mite restrictions.

Almond growers in Victoria and SA rely on the bees to pollinate their crops, with hives usually moved in March.

What's next? A national plan is being developed to address the spread of varroa mite.

### Detection of braula fly in NSW poses issues for beekeeping industry: ABC Rural, Kim Honan and Lara Webster, 2 March 2024

In short: The bee parasite braula fly has been detected in an apiary near Tamworth.

The wingless fly looks similar to a varroa mite but only has six legs and is less destructive.

What's next: The DPI says it will not attempt to eradicate the pest from NSW.

Once considered a major threat to the commercial

beekeeping industry, DPI manager of plant biosecurity, prevention and preparedness Chris Anderson said it was now considered a minor and insignificant pest.

"There's no scientific or economic justification for attempting to eradicate braula fly from NSW," Dr Anderson said.

### As Varroa spreads, now is the time to fight for Australia's honey bees - and you can help: The Conversation, 27 February 2024

A tiny foe threatens Australian beekeepers' livelihood, our food supply and the national economy. First detected in New South Wales in 2022, the Varroa mite is now established in Australia.

The parasitic mite, which feeds on honey bees and transmits bee viruses, has since spread across New South Wales.

It is expected to kill virtually all unmanaged honey bees living in the bush (also known as "feral" honey bees), which provide ecosystem-wide pollination. Honey bees managed by beekeepers will survive only with constant and costly use of pesticides.

As the last holdout against Varroa, Australia has a key advantage - we can still take action that was impossible elsewhere. We know Varroa-resistant bees would be the silver bullet.

Unlocking the genetic key to resistance

The best way to find them is to measure genetic changes

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before and after Varroa infestation. But to do that, we need bee populations largely unaffected by Varroa.

This is where our unique Australian opportunity comes in. We have a small and vanishing window to collect bees before the inevitable rapid spread of the mites, and the mass die-offs, occur.

My lab at the Australian National University's Research School of Biology has started collecting data on feral bee populations around New South Wales to identify pre-Varroa genetic diversity.

**National plan to slow varroa mite spread in Australia focuses on beekeeper education: ABC Rural, Kim Honan, 13 February 2024**

In short: A \$100 million plan to manage varroa mite in Australia has been agreed.

32 industry officers will support bee keepers.

What's next? Control measures will focus on slowing the spread.

The plan will include 100 full-day workshops for beekeepers across the country, as well as 32 extension officers to support the education campaign.

"At the end of the day about 70 per cent of the resources that sit within the plan are devoted towards providing training and extension for beekeepers," he said.

The varroa development officers will be in every jurisdiction across Australia and they will work one on one with those beekeepers.

**The Wheen Bee Foundation: The Latest Buzz, 5 March 2024**

Global food producer takes lead on bees

Samir Mecwan, agronomist at ofi in the Sunraysia region, understands the importance of ensuring the best conditions for bees and other pollinators on farms.

Five ways to support bees and other pollinators on farms

Offer forage that provides good nutrition for bees and other pollinators.

Provide bloom of different flowering plants throughout the growing season, especially in early spring and late autumn.

Offer clean water for bees to drink and cool their hives.

Provide permanent habitat for nesting through features such as hedgerows, natural brush, buffer strips, or bare ground.

Reduce or eliminate the use of chemicals and practise Integrated Pest and Pollinator Management.

*Time to prepare for World Bee Day 2024*

On 20 May each year, World Bee Day raises awareness of the important role bees play in ecosystem health, biodiversity and food security.

Now is the time to start thinking about how you'll celebrate World Bee Day 2024.

## 2024 Executive and Committee

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**Club Patron:** Alby Taylor

**Life members:** Merv Wruck, Chris Johnson, Bill Spencer, Ken Evans

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