

BEE NEWS

February 2024
Issue 145

**Monthly newsletter of the Sunshine Coast
BeeKeepers Inc.**

www.sunshinecoastbeekeepersinc.org.au



The Club's youngest member busy extracting honey

NEXT MEETING

**Saturday, 24 February 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.**

**Guest speaker: QBA State Secretary
Jo Martin to talk about varroa mite.**

**The Club is putting on a sausage sizzle
and encourages all members to come.**

President's Report

Welcome back to beekeeping for 2024!

It was great to see so many people at our first meeting for the year in January. At the meeting we shared updates on all of the things that have been going on. One point that has been keeping our team very busy has been swarms! We have been inundated with swarms already this year, I think someone forgot to tell the bees that it's not time for them to swarm just yet! We would love to add some more members to our swarm collecting team. You are welcome to come along and learn from one of our regular team members and help us all out. Please contact Lynne if you would like to help.

Something to consider...make sure you check

your hives when this rain gives us a break! You just might avoid a swarm if you can get into your hives. They tend to get quite frustrated when they can't forage and clean.

Ron gave us a demonstration on using the varroa shaker and we reminded everyone to be vigilant. Thank you Ron for your demonstration and raise our understanding of the process (get it?). Our committee is working on speakers about the Varroa situation and hope to have someone coming soon. In the meantime, keep an eye online for all the latest updates.

We have registered for the Sunshine Coast Agricultural Show in June and will be calling for volunteers closer to the time.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at our next meeting. Thank you for your support of our club and of one another.

Have a bee-utiful week!

Kind Regards

Katie Livock

Our First Meeting for 2024

Queensland Bee Association you tube channel

We will be putting a link on our website to the QBA you tube channel where there are about seven 40 minute talks about different subjects that may interest some of our members.

Domain name

Our domain name has expired, and we have lost the passwords over the years. So we are creating a new domain name www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au. Kathleen will be updating our website and the domain name.

Bee swarms

There have been lots of calls about bees trying to enter houses. We need more help to go out to the swarms. Volunteers welcome to come along - please leave your name with Lynne. Not all swarms are retrievable. Grant is the expert to remove a swarm from houses. Peppermint Oil is a good way to repel scout bees from entering into a house. Once the queen has taken up residence it is too late. We have been recommending to spray the Peppermint oil to deter the bees. Use a 500ml Spray Bottle filled with water and add 10 drops of peppermint oil.

Merchandise for sale

White T shirts with Club Logo \$25 Blue Cap with Logo \$15. They will be also used to give to guest speakers.

Workshops for New Beekeepers

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

- 13 April 2024
- 8 June 2024

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

Booking is essential.

Book online at:

www.sunshinecoastbeekeepersinc.org.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.sunshinecoastbeekeepersinc.org.au

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

www.facebook.com/pg/sunshinecoastbeekeepersaustralia/posts/?ref=page_internal

Varroa mite test

Ron Hulm provided a demonstration on how to test for varroa mites. Shake the nurse bees (about 200 bees) onto the lid of an A4 box lid creased in the middle and cut out on 1 side in the middle. Wait about 30 seconds for the field bees to fly off. Fold the lid along the crease and pour the bees into the tester through the hole cut into one side. Use pure alcohol / metho in the shaker. Shake for a couple of minutes and view in good light to identify if any mites are present. Lastly, make sure that you register your test being either negative or positive. Test maybe every three months. You will find the form on www.qbabees.org.au. Click on Varroa Mite and you will find access to the Bee123 online portal to register your test. The Club is selling the Testers for \$5.

Saturday Rosters 2024

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

FEBRUARY

24/02/24	General Meeting	Elise Wonton Fran Burns	
----------	-----------------	----------------------------	--

MARCH

02/03/24	Open	Gerry Hannan Lindsay Cruickshank	John Baker
09/03/24	Open	Jason March Terry Ind	Kathleen March
16/03/24	Honey Harvest	Russel Cook Evan Sanders	Paul Bonner
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
----------	------	---------------------------	-----------

Varroa Mite Update

QBA Varroa Mite Regional Workshop

The QBA is having a Varroa Mite Regional Workshop at Sandstone Point on Monday 4 March 3pm- 5.30 with some great guest speakers from New Zealand and the US. John Baker and Grant Eissenmenger are both QBA members and will attend. We would like to encourage more members to attend the Workshop.

Biosecurity Champion for our Club for the Varroa Mite Prevention and Preparedness Program

DAF is looking for expressions of interest for a member from our Club to become a Biosecurity Champion who will regularly meet with a designated biosecurity officer and be the first to know about the latest research and development and management techniques for Varroa Mite. This person will be responsible for sharing their knowledge with our Club. John Baker has volunteered to represent our club and will be nominated.

Spring / Summer 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](#)

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
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 Strewe	David Lee
13/07/24	Open	Jason March Mel Simpson	Kathleen March

Queensland Biosecurity Update 13 November 2023

Queensland's transition to management of varroa mite

Following recent national changes, the Queensland government will be moving its varroa mite (Varroa destructor) response from an eradication program to a management program.

Currently Queensland remains free of varroa mite. Our aim is to continue protecting our beekeeping and pollination-reliant industries for as long as possible. Varroa mite is still a prohibited matter and if found, must be reported to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

Please see [Queensland's framework for the transition to management](#) for a detailed explanation of Queensland's approach, which will be rolled out in three stages.

Stage 1 - Varroa mite is not present in Queensland

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 - secretaryscbees@gmail.com

Dates to Remember: 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.

- 17 February
- 16 March
- 20 April

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.

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.

Stage 2 – Initial detection of varroa mite in Queensland

Stage 3 – Long term management of varroa mite.

You can keep up to date with the latest information by visiting the [Varroa mite: Transition to management webpage](#). We also encourage you to subscribe to DAF's [bee e-alert](#) for more frequent updates.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries acknowledges the hard work by beekeepers, beekeeping and pollination-reliant industries, and government agencies in the transition to management.

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.

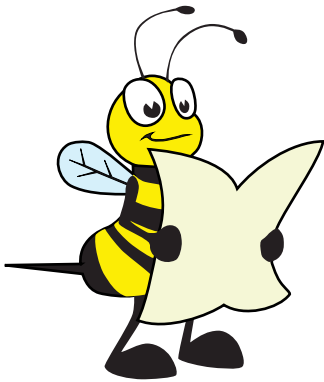
There is a strong recommendation for regular vaccinations which will provide protection against serious disease. The latest variant that is circulating is peaking around Australia and it is recommended to have another booster if your last was 6 months ago.

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 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

What to do when you find a honey bee swarm. Call an expert: ABC Rural, Jennifer Nichols, 12 February 2024

And while it is understandable for people to be intimidated by bee swarms, there are good reasons why he does not get badly stung.

It is not just to do with him keeping calm and not releasing fear pheromones (the unconscious smell produced by frightened people) that stir up bees.

"The reality is, they [swarms of bees] are super gentle," Mr Whitaker says.

"When bees are swarming, they're at really their most docile point because bees

are only going to defend an established nest."

Prolonged wet weather and a steady flow of nectar and pollen have caused a second surge of large bee swarms in south-east Queensland at a time when they are usually easing off.

Australian Honey Bee Industry Council investigates concerns about imported honey: ABC Rural, Brandon Long, 4 February 2024

Australia was never a big importer of honey.

That was until the millennium drought crippled floral reserves and prompted some companies to look overseas, lifting imports from 300 tonnes in 2000-01 to 3,000 tonnes the following year.

That number has since risen to 8,800 tonnes a year.

It came despite Australian beekeepers producing 20,800 tonnes in 2022-23, which excluded production from amateur beekeepers.

Beekeeper Andrew Farrugia said cheap imported honey was pushing prices down to unsustainable levels.

Most honey imported into Australia comes from China, with the remainder coming from countries including New Zealand, Argentina and Brazil.

Beekeepers demand transparency from South Australian fruit fly spray program after unexplained hive deaths: ABC Rural, Eliza Berlage, 25 January 2024

SA beekeepers have reported the sudden deaths of tens of thousands of their bees in recent months.

The government's fruit fly eradication program has been accused of contributing to the deaths.

PIRSA says it doesn't use the chemical Naturalure on properties known to have beehives.

Honeybees cluster together when it's cold – but we've been completely wrong about why: 25 November 2023

Honeybees in man-made hives may have been suffering the cold unnecessarily for over a century because commercial hive designs are based on erroneous science, my new research shows.

But my study shows that clustering is a distress behaviour, rather than a benign reaction to falling temperatures.

Honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) colonies don't hibernate. In the wild they overwinter in tree cavities that keep at least some of their numbers above 18°C in a wide range of climates.

2024 Executive and Committee

President	Katie Livock	presidentscbees@gmail.com	0414 843 342
Vice President	Grant Eisenmenger	vicepresidentscbees@gmail.com	0401 720 004
Secretary	Lynne Hulm	secretaryscbees@gmail.com	0421 720 628
Treasurer	Paul Bonner	treasurerscbees@gmail.com	0403 432 952
Newsletter Editor	Linda Blackwell	lineb@internode.on.net	0409 848 466
Facebook/website	Kathleen March	kathleenmarch00@gmail.com	
Committee	John Baker	mail@johnbaker.com.au	0418 791 149
Committee	Graham Gibb	graham@signedbyme.com.au	0414 288 814
Committee	Tom Cowburn	tjcowburn@bigpond.com	0418 143 206
Committee	David Lee	leesbees@lisco.com.au	0414 757 220

Club Patron: Alby Taylor

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

* Images and artworks are designed by Freepik www.freepik.com

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Sunshine Coast Beekeepers Inc. The Sunshine Coast Beekeepers Inc accepts no liability for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided in this newsletter.