



The Macarthur Beekeeper

April 2021

Views expressed in the newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the committee, the members, or the Association



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USEFUL LINKS

MBA Website:
<https://macarthur.beekeepers.asn.au>

MBA Public Facebook:
<https://facebook.com/macbeekeepers>

MBA Members Only Group:
facebook.com/groups/macbeekeepermembers

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Greetings fellow Beekeepers.

Post the AGM I took the opportunity to arrange for the 2021 elected Club Officers to meet together over a finger-food dinner at the Sustainability Centre for us to put faces to names, get to know each other, and discuss the year ahead for our club. It was a great night of interaction and some of the actions we discussed and agreed upon included;

- Establishing the official committee of 7 members, 4 Exec positions plus 3 Club Officers as per our constitution. The positions are - President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Apiary Officer, Membership Officer, and the Biosecurity/Education Officer.
- We also agreed to making committee meetings open for all Club Officers to attend if they wish to do so as we felt this would add value to discussions and assist in getting things done
- Altering the frequency of Committee meetings from monthly to bi-monthly or as needs dictate
- Encouraging a broader contribution of articles for the Club Newsletter both from Members and Club Officers

Continues on page 2...

- Inviting Members willing to participate to share contact details such as Name, Suburb, and Phone Number in a Club Members Directory in order to encourage broader membership interaction especially for those not in FaceBook or online.
- Purchasing of a shipping container for the secure storage of club equipment at the residence of the current Equipment Officer
- Reviewing and updating the Club Constitution (which was last updated in 2015)
- Seeking to establish a calendar of events for our Field Days so people know in advance what is planned to take place
- A resumption of honey Sales and a Bee Education presence at Bunnings and permitting the members who volunteer to man the stall opportunity to sell some of their own honey in addition to Club honey

These initiatives will take time to establish and implement though we are confident they will add value to the effectiveness of our club and I will seek to keep you updated on progress.

Touching once more on Covid-19, we will remain on our guard and continue to adhere to and update our Covid-Safe Plans in response to Government guidance. Based on the size of the MCSL meeting room, our Face-to-Face Club Meetings can now cater for up to 29 people and though we could increase numbers and still be compliant with Covid-19 guidelines we will continue to restrict Field Days to a maximum of 30 as that provides a workable number of 15 in the apiary and 15 on the lawn area outside. Our pre-registration system for the face-to-face participation in Club Meetings and our Field Days is working well so we will continue with this approach. I do encourage members to participate in both events where it is practical for you to do so. I encourage you to make the effort to get out and about as meeting with fellow members and guests is a great way to share knowledge and strengthen the viability of our club.

It is impossible to please everyone and I acknowledge there was a request via the FaceBook Group for Field days to be held on a Sunday. Longer term members will know the designated day has swapped back and forth between Saturdays and Sundays over the years as Saturdays suit some while Sundays suit others. The current arrangement is very well attended and I would prefer not to have the added complexity of alternating days each month though we acknowledge the request and the committee will consider potential options.

As the cooler weather approaches, we start to think about preparing our hives for winter. What is required can vary depending on your location and the presence or lack of foraging food available to your colonies. I have arranged for Miskell Hampton to be our Guest Speaker for April and she will be discussing Wintering Preparation and care.

As I say each month, continue to look at what is happening around your hives especially be on the lookout for changes. For example, this time of year you may see the drones getting 'kicked out' of the hive to reduce the size of the colony and manage the stores they have accumulated for winter food. If you are unsure of what you see or why it is occurring, please reach out to your fellow members as that is one of the great benefits of being part of our club.

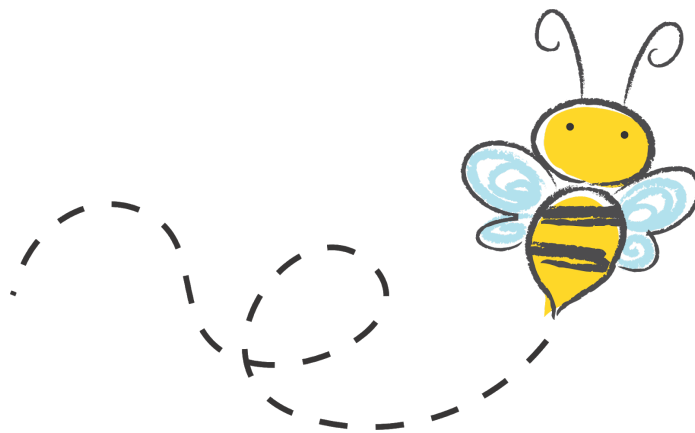
Happy Beekeeping!

Ed

WELCOME NEWBEES

Welcome to our latest members!

Mario Morizzi



APIARY GOINGS ON

April Field Day

Ed welcomed our members to our field day at the Sustainable Centre.

Outside the apiary, Ed explained his method to lighting a smoker successfully and the members had the chance to practice lighting the smokers provided. Rob showed how to improve lid insulation for the coming winter season. We discussed the importance of pre-planning our inspections to avoid taking too long and stressing the bees or forgetting to undertake important tasks as we can be distracted by what we find when opening a hive. We also covered the importance of record keeping both for our own benefit as Beekeepers in monitoring the status of our hives but also to satisfy our legal Biosecurity obligations. Ed demonstrated "Beetight" one of the many beekeeping record apps



currently available for Beekeepers showing how apps like this can make record keeping easier. They can assist in more effective inspections by linking a to do list record at the last inspection to specific hives plus providing the beekeeper a good indication of overall health and productivity with the recording of harvests and so forth.

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In the Apiary our members not only learnt how to do the "Sugar Shake Test", but also had the opportunity to participate in all the steps for doing the test. We opened a hive, searched for the queen, collected the bees into a jar, added sugar and shook it. While doing this we spoke about the importance of this test and that Australia is still Varroa free. We discussed what would happen if Varroa arrived in Australia, its impact, how to detect it, monitor and control.

Our members also were given a Hive Inspection sheet to do a practical recording after learning about it at March's field day. We spoke about the importance of keeping records of all our hive inspections to align with the Code of Practice.



Members also had the opportunity to have their doubts and questions addressed. They enjoyed the day and happily went back home with a little more knowledge tucked away.

James and Ed



VICE PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Firstly, I would like to thank the members for the privilege of being nominated to the role of Vice President for the next year. I am looking forward to learning as I go and will give it 100% with help from our President, Ed.

I have confirmed that we will be having Sheila Stokes, President of the ABA, as our guest speaker in person at our May meeting. Looking forward to learning, along with our members, about the functions of the ABA, and the amazing help they can be to each and every one of us.

Rhonda Savva

GOVERNMENT GRANTS FOR FLOOD IMPACTED

Following the recent floods, the NSW and Australian Governments have announced assistance measures to support those impacted. Financial assistance by way of grants is being made available for the clean-up and restoration costs involved. Special disaster grants include:

- Up to \$75,000 for primary producers, and
- Up to \$50,000 for small business owners and not-for-profit organisations.

For more information on these grants, as well as other forms of assistance being offered, contact the Disaster Customer Care Service on 13 77 88 or visit www.service.nsw.gov.au.

BEE INFORMED

Member contributions/Research articles

World Bee Day



Did you know May 20 is World Bee Day

- The purpose of World Bee Day is to raise awareness of the importance of bees on our environment.
- Around 90% of wild plants and 75% of leading global crops depend upon pollination. Around a third of the food we eat relies on pollination by bees.
- There are over 20,000 species of bees around the world.
- The honey bee is the world's most important single species of pollinators. Honey Bees live in highly complex societies and demonstrate highly social behaviour.
- Bees are flower feeders and derive their protein from pollen and their carbohydrates from nectar.
- Bee numbers have been declining as bees face multiple and interacting causes of death: diseases and parasites; pesticides especially neonicotinoids; monocultural farming; and flowerless landscapes.

How we can help:

- Plant bee friendly flowers. Bees are attracted to blue and purple flowers in particular as these produce the highest volume of nectar. Use local native plants, use a range of colours, plant flowers in clumps; include flowers of different shapes; have a diversity of plants, flowering all seasons. Provide suitable water (build a bee bar).
- Avoid using Pesticides in your garden.

We Need Bees

Brett

The Importance of the Sugar Shake Test



NSW GOVERNMENT | Department of Primary Industries

AUTUMN IS SUGAR SHAKE SEASON

Bee Alert!

**CHECK YOUR BEES USING THE SUGAR SHAKE TEST
HELP DETECT AN EXOTIC PEST INCURSION EARLY**

**SHAKE, INSPECT
CALL IF YOU SUSPECT**

External bee parasites such as varroa, tropilaelaps mite and braula fly have not been detected in NSW



Braula fly (top), varroa mite (right), tropilaelaps mite (bottom)



Braula fly on the thorax of a queen bee



Varroa mite feeds on a bee pupa

**IF YOU NOTICE ANYTHING UNUSUAL CALL THE EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE 1800 084 881
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.DPI.NSW.GOV.AU/BIOSECURITY-BEES**

Image credit (left): Food and Environmental Research Agency (FERA), Crown Copyright | Image credit (middle): Lindsay Boulter | Image credit (right): Scott Bees, USDA

Amateur Beekeepers Association

Autumn is time to inspect your hives for exotic bee pests such as varroa mite and tropilaelaps mites and report the results to the NSW DPI.

In previous years, April has been promoted as Sugar Shake Month. However this year NSW DPI is encouraging beekeepers to inspect their hives any time during autumn.

If you find a suspect exotic bee pest, you must contact NSW DPI immediately. You can report suspect pests by calling the Exotic Plant Pest hotline on 1800 084 881. Early reporting of an exotic bee pest like varroa mite as is one of the most important factors in eradicating any incursion.

Once you have conducted your sugar shake test you can submit your results to NSW DPI via an online form. Recording negative results is just as important as positive detections as they help the DPI to prove ongoing freedom of exotic bee pests in NSW.

Sourced from the DPI

What is Varroa Destructor?

The Varroa mite can reproduce only in a honey bee colony. It attaches to the body of the bee and weakens the bee. Varroa Destructor can cause at least five debilitating bee viruses, including RNA viruses such as the deformed wing virus (DWV). A significant mite infestation leads to the death of a honey bee colony, usually in the late autumn through early spring. This mite is the parasite with possibly the most pronounced economic impact on the beekeeping industry.

Varroa is considered to be one of multiple stress factors contributing to the higher levels of bee losses around the world. Currently, there is no Varroa Destructor in Australia.

The adult female mite is reddish-brown in colour, while the male is white. Varroa mites are flat, having a button shape. They are 1–1.8 mm long and 1.5–2 mm wide, and have eight legs.



Monitoring

Several methods exist for monitoring levels of Varroa mites in a colony.

The recommended test from the DPI is a powdered sugar roll where the sampler collects about 300 bees and places them in a jar with a wire mesh screen lid (1/8") along with 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar. They then gently swirl the bees for about a minute before turning the jar upside down and shaking for two minutes over a tray to capture the mites as they fall.

The sugar roll is typically done with the intent to prevent killing the sampled bees, but whether the vigorous shaking causes damage is not known.



Sources: NSW DPI, Wikipedia

James

LIAISON OFFICER REPORT

My name is Rebecca Rinaldo and I am the new Liaison Officer for The Macarthur Beekeeper.

As a new beekeeper, one of the very first things I did was register with the <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au> as a beekeeper before acquiring bee hives. The DPI then sends you your Registered Hive Brand and this unique hive brand number needs to be placed preferably and clearly on the front of your hive box.

I have also only just completed the Biosecurity Online Course it's FREE for the moment, so go to <http://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au> scroll to Biosecurity for Beekeepers then register. I found it very informative and you can do each module at your own pace.

Hopefully, I'm going to do a bio on a New and Experienced Member, it's just a bit of fun and to also introduce you to Club Members.

Rebecca

MEMBER PROFILES

New Member: Rebecca Rinaldo

How did you hear about Macarthur Beekeeping?

My mother was a member back in the 90's.

What got you interested in beekeeping?

Always been interested, Mum had 3 hives at our place in Ingleburn and now I just have the time and my brother Scott has the acres at Pheasants Nest.

What is your current setup?

1 hive - 10 frame Langstroth.

If you could fly overseas for a holiday, where would you go and why?

Motorcycle Touring through Eastern Europe





Experienced Member: Don Johnson

How did you hear about Macarthur Beekeeping?

He couldn't quite remember but he said more than 15 years or so ago he was at the Camden Fair and there was a stall advertising Macarthur Beekeeping Association.

What got you interested in beekeeping?

Approximately 30 or so years ago he read in a Gardening Paper the sale of Bees and he thought he's got to get him some of that.

What is your current setup?

He used to have 10 hives but it became too much work, he now has 3 Langstroth hives and one flow hive out at Grasmere.

If you could fly overseas for a holiday, where would you go and why?

Don would like to fly to the UK to visit his two sisters, he proudly told me that is where he is from, Manchester.

BEEKEEPER'S PUZZLE**MBAi - Who is Who?**

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. First name of the Club Apiary Officer | A. Dallys |
| 2. First name of the Club Webmaster | B. Lindsay |
| 3. First name of the Club Newsletter Editor | C. Melanie |
| 4. First name of the Club Biosecurity Officer | D. Rob |
| 5. First name of the Club Vice President | E. Brett |
| 6. First name of the Club Treasurer | F. Rebecca |
| 7. First name of the Club Gardening Officer | G. Ed |
| 8. First name of the Club Liaison Officer | H. Caroline |
| 9. First name of the Club Library Officer | I. James |
| 10. First name of the Club Secretary | J. Torsten |
| 11. First name of the Club President | K. Anthony |
| 12. First name of the Club Equipment Officer | L. Rhonda |

[Answers on the last page!](#)

MOTHER'S DAY BUNNINGS STALL

This year we have secured the Mother's Day stall at Narellan Bunnings!

Saturday 8 May

Time: 9 am - 4pm

Come along and volunteer. A roster will be sent out to those interested.

You are welcome to sell your own honey and products as well, but ensure it is well labelled and priced in line with MBA honey sales.

Please contact Jeanette at Macarthur.marketing@beekeepers.asn.au

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Please check the calendar on the MBAi website for event updates: macarthur.beekeepers.asn.au
Deadline for submissions for our next newsletter is Sunday 9th May.

Submit articles with photos separately (not embedded in the document) or advertisement requests to Christine at: macarthur.editor@beekeepers.asn.au

PLEASE NOTE

Club meetings will continue to be held online via Google Meet till further notice. There will be pre-registration for a small number of people to attend at the MCSL

MAY 2021

8th - Field Day
9th - Close for Newsletter
16th - Newsletter out
19th - Meeting 7:30pm

JUNE 2021

12th - Field Day
13th - Close for Newsletter
16th - Meeting 7:30pm
20th - Newsletter out

JULY 2021

10th - Field Day
11th - Close for Newsletter
21st - Meeting 7:30pm
18th - Newsletter out

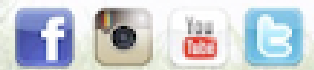
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Ph: 02-46267022

Trading Hours: 8.30am - 5.00pm



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CLASSIFIEDS

Club Shirts

Contact Jessie or Michael at the next meeting
With Name \$65
Without Name \$60

Club Honey

Now available in 500gm
1 kg Tubs Contact Jessie on 0409845625

WANTED TO BUY
Large quantities of honey on a regular basis.
Call Mark on 0408 412 272

For Sale \$20.00 Flow Hive 2 - Ant Proof Petals

To protect your Flow Hive 2 from ants, these screw on to the flow hives existing threaded legs. The smaller bottom petal is partly filled with oil while the top petal acts as a roof to keep rain and bees out of the oil. Currently available in yellow or red. Pickup from Mt Annan. Contact Ed. 0439 303 422 or ednap1960@gmail.com



Newsletter Advertising Short line with phone nos. = Free, Size up to 60mm by 40mm (one per member) = Free. Non-member = \$10/per month Required to renew your ad each month. Provide artwork to: Macarthur.editor@macbeekeepers.asn.au

Club equipment available to Members

The following equipment is available for use by club members:

- A two-frame manual extractor.
- An electric uncapping knife.
- A Cappings draining tray set.

For use contact Ed
Via email macarthur.president@beekeepers.asn.au
Or phone: 0439 303 422

All equipment must be returned in a clean condition ready for the next user.

BEEKEEPER'S PUZZLE ANSWERS (PAGE 11)**MBAi - Who is Who?**

- | | |
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| 1. First name of the Club Apiary Officer I | A. Dallys |
| 2. First name of the Club Webmaster D | B. Lindsay |
| 3. First name of the Club Newsletter Editor C | C. Melanie |
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