



**Amateur
Beekeepers
Association**
NSW PARRAMATTA

May 2020

Newsletter of the Parramatta Amateur Beekeepers

For information on the ABA including joining (re-joining) go to: www.beekeepers.asn.au

To go to the Parramatta Branch Page, click on <https://goo.gl/i4q87x>

Join us on Facebook



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/parramattabeekeepers/>

Welcome to new and renewing members!

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**Responsible beekeepers thoroughly
check brood frames at least twice per
year for signs of disease and AFB!**



***PAB welcomes
Margaret and Malcolm McGregor
to the Executive***

President: Robyn Alderton e: parramatta.president@beekeepers.asn.au
Secretary: Dave Wilson e: parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au
Treasurer: Andrew Bardsley e: parramatta.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au
Newsletter deadline to submit material – 20th of each month

President's Report

By Robyn Alderton, President

Reminder: With the intent of maintaining the club relationship with our members, we are running a (free) raffle.

Our Club Raffle is a means of maintaining relationship with our members during the Covid restrictions. Please note that tickets for this raffle cannot be purchased and members must either nominate themselves or be nominated by another member, but only once (a member cannot be nominated by two people for the same act of kindness). To be eligible to be in the draw, members can -

1. purchase goods through the club shop, earning one raffle ticket for each \$10 spent (or part thereof - \$7.50 being the rounding figure), eg, a purchase of \$18 will earn two tickets.
2. conduct a random act of beekeeping related kindness, either for the benefit of another member or the club itself, earning one raffle ticket for each occasion/nomination.

All appropriate nominations received by the President will have tickets allocated and the raffle will be drawn at the first club event to be held after the lifting of restrictions.

See below for inspiration!

Nominee	Reason	Nominator
Marina Tuskan	Completed the Find-a-Word puzzle	Robyn Alderton
Marina Tuskan	Pointed out the errors in the Find-a-Word puzzle	Robyn Alderton
Arthur Garske	Completed the Find-a-Word puzzle	Robyn Alderton
Arthur Garske	Tenacity in an attempt to find the word 'blue' in the Find-a-Word puzzle	Robyn Alderton
Timothy Kotlar	Completed the Find-a-Word puzzle	Robyn Alderton
Timothy Kotlar	Pointed out the errors in the Find-a-Word puzzle	Robyn Alderton
Gary Christoffel	Act of kindness - provided beekeeping advice to new members	Marina Tuskan
Marina Tuskan	Act of kindness - volunteered to review PAB materials	Robyn Alderton
Robbie Ashhurst	Random act of kindness - tidied the apiary	Robyn Alderton
Peter Clarke	Col Pulling quiz participant	Robyn Alderton
Steve Alderton	Col Pulling quiz participant	Robyn Alderton
Andrew Bardsley	Col Pulling quiz participant	Robyn Alderton
Sheryl McIntosh	Col Pulling quiz participant	Robyn Alderton
Guy Challis	Col Pulling quiz participant	Robyn Alderton
Norm Webb	Col Pulling honey entries	Robyn Alderton
Dave Wilson	Act of kindness - worked in the apiary	Robyn Alderton

Nominee	Reason	Nominator
Arthur Garske	Act of kindness - worked in the apiary	Robyn Alderton
Guy Challis	Act of kindness - worked in the apiary	Robyn Alderton
Timothy Kotlar	For submitting a photo for the 2021 calendar	Robyn Alderton
Bill Dick	Newsletter contributor	Robyn Alderton
Arthur Garske	Newsletter contributor	Robyn Alderton
Guy Challis	For submitting photos for the 2021 calendar	Robyn Alderton
Bill Dick	For submitting a swarm/nest photo for the Newsletter	Robyn Alderton

Prizes on offer are:

<i>Decapping pinwheel</i>	<i>Vented escape board</i>	<i>A bucket strainer</i>
		

All nominations to be sent to the President. The raffle will be drawn at the first club event where we can meet at the school. No tickets can be purchased for this raffle.

Stay safe, stay connected and I look forward to catching up at a monthly club event soon!

Executive Report -March/April

By Dave Wilson, Secretary

Due to the threat posed by Covid, all club activities have been cancelled, however, your Executive has been working behind the scenes to keep the club functioning until restrictions are eased regarding future events.

The Executive had a successful teleconference “executive meeting” on 15 April 2020. These notes are a summary of that meeting.

Sandy Harrison has been in contact with St Ives Show, Flower Power and Bunnings about future events. The impact of Covid has resulted in many of our events being cancelled. It seems likely that they may be rescheduled for later in the year. Sandy has organised the design and printing of placegetter certificates for the honey competitions held during the year.

Sandy has also provided advice about the management of club events in view of the risks posed by Covid.

Arthur Garske has been liaising with NSW Department of Fair Trading about our delayed AGM. The club is obliged to hold its AGM within 6 months of the end of the financial year. This means the AGM should be held before 30 June 2020. If that is not possible then Arthur will seek further clarification.

Arthur and Guy Challis did an end of season check of the club hives and removed the last of this season's honey. The honey was extracted by Peter Clarke and Dave Wilson.

It was particularly disappointing to see that the Warre hive had failed. There was general agreement that if the club is to keep a Warre and possibly a Flow Hive we will need a greater commitment from members with an interest in those kinds of hives.

Peter Clarke and Lod Porretta have ensured that the shop is well stocked, particularly jars and buckets for honey packing and bee box gear for spring. Sugar shake kits have also been purchased. Nucleus boxes for swarm collecting have been ordered.

Steve Alderton is exploring options for a club trailer to store and carry all the displays and equipment needed for shows. He is also looking at what kind of powered vehicle might be needed to tow the "honey" trailer from the apiary to the extracting room. A final decision has been delayed to later in the year.

Robyn Alderton has made great efforts to provide a quality news sheet for members given that we cannot have any physical meetings. Robyn is also investigating the possibility of providing the "Beginning in Beekeeping" course remotely rather than at a physical meeting.

Andrew Bardsley is overseeing our finances, distributing income and expenditure to appropriate cost centres in order that the Executive can monitor the financial position of the club. He reported an opening balance for March of \$8,799.34 and a closing balance of \$6,871.91

The meeting agreed that the honey extraction process needs to involve more members so that new beekeepers can improve their knowledge in these areas.

The meeting noted that the club was a winner at the 2020 Col Pulling Quiz with the team led by Andrew Bardsley. The great effort by Robyn Alderton was particularly appreciated.

There was general agreement that club honey could be sold to the public given the lack of scheduled shows. There would be a donation of honey to the school later in the year.

Club meeting records have been maintained by Dave Wilson. Should you want further information, please contact Dave on parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au

Attention to all those selling their honey

For those of you who are lucky enough to have available honey and/or honey products for sale, please ensure you follow good Covid protection practices, eg:

- request that money be deposited directly into your nominated account or to be left in a zip lock envelope at a nominated location.
- organise a safe place to enable the product(s) to be picked up with contactless pick up.

Look after your health and be vigilant!

PAB 2021 Calendar entries are now OPEN!

By Robyn Alderton

Our 2020 inaugural calendar was a huge success.

To have the opportunity to contribute to the PAB 2021 calendar, send your bee and/or beekeeping photos to:

parramatta.president@beekeepers.asn.au

Would you like your photos included in the 2021 Parramatta Amateur Beekeepers Calendar?

See below for inspiration

What are you waiting for? While you're hiding from Covid go out in the garden and snap away before winter hits us and it is too cold to take hive opening type photos.

Entries must be received **by 31 July 2020**. Voting / selection will take place at the 12 August 2020 Monthly Club Event or online.



Go out and snap away!

Preparing for winter

Arthur's advice will help you prepare your bees for winter

By Arthur Garske

Now is the time to prepare for winter by packing the hive down.

Take off the lid, placing it upside down on the ground. Smoke the top of the super, wait 30 seconds before removing and place on lid rim. Smoke the top of the next box, lift off and place on top of the box on the lid. Repeat until you have reached the bottom box, referred to as the brood box.

Have on hand your sugar shake jar - in addition to regularly examining the brood, all beekeepers need to comply with regulated Compliance Compulsory Sugar Shake, to test for the presence of varroa mite.

Smoke over the top of frames on both the brood box and the top box (or what you have taken off). Gently prise the second frame from the side wall, looking quickly for the queen. Pollen and sealed honey should be present. Stand that frame aside, puffing more smoke over the top of the remaining frames and remove the next frame, checking again for the queen and taking note of the brood pattern.

If brood is present, shake the bees off into the box and examine the frame carefully for eggs and larvae, abnormalities and signs of disease. If eggs are visible, there's no further need to locate the queen, as the presence of eggs indicate that she was there, laying, very recently. Turn the frame onto the flat and give a good shake. The nectar which the bees have gathered that day will shake out onto the top bars of the frames remaining in the box. This indicates how heavy or light the honey flow is, which will guide your preparations for winter.

Now assemble equipment needed for the sugar shake test. Take out the next brood frame, making sure the queen is not on it. If not, and it is unsealed brood, brush a good handful of these bees off into the sugar shake jar. If not enough, repeat with the next frame. Put the lid on the jar and set aside.

Continue the hive inspection, methodically assessing the health of the frames and the amount of pollen and honey stores available for the colder months. Any older brood combs which should have been worked out to the sides, should now be removed. Shake off bees and put to one side. Replace them with two frames of honey from one of the boxes on the ground, putting them into the space left by the removal of the other frames. Next put that box back on top of the brood box. If you use a queen excluder, don't put it back on top of the brood box - it must be placed on top of the second box. This is critical to the successful wintering of the hive. Then look at the honey frames in the super(s) and if the outside frames are empty or only partly filled, move them into the middle and move the full comb frames to the outside.

If you have more than one super, repeat the process and move the emptier combs into the box you just did and put the sealed frames into the box on the lid. You should end up with a top box full of sealed honey, with the next box containing the partially filled frames. Position the fullest nearest the side walls, with the leanest in the middle of the box. Replace lid.

If no nectar is coming in, the bees will be light on stores and NOW is the time to surplus feed the hive. The recommended ratio is two parts sugar to one part water, by volume. The bees will take up 1.5 - 2 litres every two days. Hefting the hive from the back (lifting the back cleats off the ground to gauge heaviness) is an effective way to determine when feeding can be stopped. The heavier the hive, the more stores the bees will have at their disposal.

The next step is to carry out the sugar shake. Carefully place one tablespoon of icing sugar mixture on top of the wire gauze and agitate with the back of the spoon until all the sugar has fallen through into the jar. Gently rotate the jar, thoroughly coating the bees in the sugar. Prepare a white bucket or bowl by filling with water. Rotate the jar again and gently shake the sugar out through the gauze into the water. Varroa mite, if present, will float on top of the water and is easily seen against the light colour of the bucket, being reddish brown. The sugar mixture helps detach the mite from the host, without any adverse effects to the bee. The bees in the jar can now be poured back into the hive, over the top bars. The sugar coating will be quickly cleaned up by the other bees in the hive.

Varroa has not yet been identified in Australia, however if you suspect the presence of a mite, scoop up the sample and preserve in methylated spirits in a small container. Photographing the sample is also recommended. Contact the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881, who will arrange collection of the sample.

What grubs?

By: Bill Dick

I helped a builder remove a hive from an upstairs balcony of a house in Quakers Hill. In the beginning I was planning to borrow the club's honey press to extract the honey however I wasn't able to due to timing and then came Covid and I missed out again.

We only have a small chest freezer, which was not big enough to store the comb. I stored the comb downstairs. The doors downstairs are always closed and the small hallway downstairs is poorly lit.

About two months ago, Rosemary, my wife said, 'What are all those grubs on the floor at the foot of the stairs'?

There were hundreds of them. They were SHB grubs.

For a while I was puzzled why the SHB grubs were clustered at the foot of the stairs. I eventually worked out they were attracted to the light shining down the stairs.

This was a huge relief because the grubs did not escape to the outside world.



Department of
Primary Industries



Beekeeping during COVID-19

DPI has received several requests from beekeepers to clarify whether or not travel for the purpose of beekeeping is considered a reasonable excuse to leave a person's place of residence under the Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order 2020 (the order).

Under the order, a person must not, without reasonable excuse, leave the person's place of residence.

The order provides examples of reasonable excuses including:

- travelling for the purposes of work if the person cannot work from the person's place of residence; and
- undertaking any legal obligations.

Working

DPI advises that persons who work operating or are employed by a beekeeping business have a reasonable excuse to leave their place of residence for the purposes of work (assuming that they cannot do that beekeeping work from home). Beekeeping is important to the community as a food producing industry.

Legal obligations

In addition to the excuse of travelling for the purposes of work, all beekeepers in NSW have a legal obligation to maintain their hives in a biosecure manner at all times - specifically, in a manner which (so far as is reasonably practicable) prevents, eliminates or minimises the known or reasonably known biosecurity risks of their hives.

This obligation is known as the General Biosecurity Duty (GBD) under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015.

Some beekeepers, including both professional and recreational beekeepers, will need to travel from their place of residence to attend to and manage hives that are situated elsewhere in order to observe their GBD.

DPI advice – beekeeping during Covid (cont'd)

This may include but is not limited to carrying out brood inspections, feeding, requeening and other beekeeping activities that are required to ensure hives remain healthy and free from serious diseases like American foulbrood.

For this reason, DPI advises that both professional and recreational beekeepers may have a reasonable excuse to leave their place of residence for the purpose of undertaking activities required to meet their legal obligations under the GBD in accordance with the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015.

Recommendation when travelling

DPI recommends all beekeepers to carry a copy of their current DPI issued certificate of beekeeper registration when travelling in case they are questioned while on the road. Beekeepers who require a copy of their certificate of registration should contact bfs.admin@dpi.nsw.gov.au

You may also wish to print this advice and carry a copy with you.

Please remember that you must continue to practice social distancing at all times when carrying out beekeeping activities.

Further information

Should beekeepers require information around the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on primary industries, please visit the [DPI COVID-19 information website](#) or email the COVID-19 Primary Industries Liaison Team covidinfo@dpi.nsw.gov.au

What do you think?

By: Robyn Alderton

I recently lost 5 hives and being concerned for the remaining hives even though they are very strong, I sent cut-outs of brood comb from the 5 lost hives to the DPI for AFB and EFB testing.

I sent the samples on a Thursday and the following Monday, I received the results by email. I'm happy to report that no AFB or EFB was detected.

So, what was the cause of the 5 dead-outs? I believe that with the extreme heat, nectar sources were drying up way too fast and resulted in a shortage of food sources. My stronger hives then robbed the weaker hives. The weaker hives starved and died.

Thank goodness that I discovered this before SHB and wax moth had a chance to slime out the dead-out hives and leave a disgusting putrid mess to clean up.

PAB Apiary clean-up

“A poor bee stung my watch band when I was taking the photos – not a good reason for losing its life”, Robbie



Spot the difference – from this



..... to this



Thank you very much, Robbie and Bruce
*The Executive values its members and volunteers,
Robbie has a raffle ticket with her name on it!*

Club shop

By Lod Porretta, Stores Officer

Due to Covid-19, the club shop is closed however you can email your order to the Stores Officer.

Submit your order by Monday. The Stores Officer will advise the cost. Payment to be submitted electronically. After clearance of funds in the club account, an advice will be sent and goods can be collected the following Wednesday from Castle Hill (pm).

Members are encouraged to support PAB by purchasing their beekeeping goods from the club shop whenever possible.

Special!

To help you out, our executive has been hard at work treating, assembling and painting boxes for sale in the shop. We have 10 available for the low price of \$45 each. These boxes are of superior quality, they are:

- Shaped with rounded corners
- Nailed in all dove tails
- Dipped in copper naphthanate to prevent rot
- Primed with oil based anti bleed primer paint
- Box faces painted with two coats of full gloss acrylic paint
- Box edges painted with two coats of full gloss oil based paint

This product is produced in Australia and made from A-Grade timber.

A quality product made by beekeepers for beekeepers.

Members are encouraged to support their club shop and purchase their beekeeping goods from the club shop whenever possible.

Shop email: Lod Porretta parramatta.stores@beekeepers.asn.au

The following items are available to purchase in the Club Shop:

- Beetle Traps
- Bottom Boards
- Boxes
- Bee Brush
- Cleats
- Chemicals
- Eyelets
- Electric Embedder
- Foundation
- Frames
- Frame Wire
- Glass Jars
- Gloves
- Hive Closers
- Hive Locks
- Hive Tools - J
- Honey Gate
- Jackets/Suits
- Lids
- Plastic Buckets
- Risers
- Smokers
- Spur Wheels
- Strainers & Cloths
- Uncapping Boxes

If the item(s) you seek are not listed above, just email your friendly Stores Officer to see if, in fact, the item is in stock.



Handy contact details

Position	Position Holder	Contact Details
President	Robyn Alderton	parramatta.president@beekeepers.asn.au
Vice President and Bio Security Officer	Dave Wilson	parramatta.vp@beekeepers.asn.au
Secretary	Dave Wilson	parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au
Treasurer	Andrew Bardsley	parramatta.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au
Stores Officer	Lod Porretta	parramatta.stores@beekeepers.asn.au
Apiary Officers	Dave Wilson and Arthur Garske	parramatta.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au awgarske@gmail.com
Events Coordinator	Sandy Harrison	parramatta.events@beekeepers.asn.au
Member Officer	Steve Alderton	parramatta.membership@beekeepers.asn.au
Colony Distribution Officer	Bill Dick	parramatta.swarms@beekeepers.asn.au
Education Officer	Arthur Garske	awgarske@gmail.com
Extractor Custodian Officer - east	Sandy Harrison	parramatta.events@beekeepers.asn.au
Extractor Custodian Officer- west	Andrew Bardsley	parramatta.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au

What's on in 2020

All events cancelled until further notice

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