

BEEBIZ APRIL 2024

The Newsletter of the Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Association Inc.

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April Activity 28th April 2024

Daniel Martin, Bee Biosecurity Department, Plant Biosecurity and Product Integrity/Primary Industries, from Wagga Wagga will be the guest speaker at the next NRABA meeting.

When: 28th April at 9.30am

**Where: Ruthven Hall
900 Coraki Rd Ruthven.**

Daniel's presentation will cover the DPI biosecurity surveillance initiative to establish a statewide network of sentinel hives for the early detection of exotic pests and diseases (including *Varroa jacobsoni*, *Tropilaelaps* mite, Tracheal mite and key honeybee viruses).

In the light of the recent detection of 1 mite in the Ballina area, don't miss out on this opportunity to learn about and discuss this initiative and other timely relevant information.

The event will start with morning tea (delicacies appreciated) and finish after a free barbeque lunch (bring a salad to share). . Non-members are welcome.

There will be a raffle held, so do not forget those chokos etc. (Chokos taste much better when you are an adult) Raffle tickets will cost \$2.

So remember

- Morning tea item
- Salad for lunch
- Raffle items, such as vegetables, bee gear, jam, pot plants etc
- Nametags

Directions

From Lismore, take the Bruxner Highway towards Casino; about 5km out of town, turn left on to the road to Coraki, follow this until you reach Ruthven Hall on the left just before the Pelican Creek Bridge.

From the south, come via Coraki.

President Report

We are looking forward to welcoming Daniel Martin from the DPI to come and talk to us on 28 April about the initiative of setting up sentinel hives in our area. I hope you can make it. We will be having our usual morning tea as well as a sausage sizzle for lunch so please bring along a salad to share.

With the DPI Varroa heat map now showing mites in the Northern Rivers area, we will all have to be extra vigilant in our hive surveillance.

The Committee has chosen our new logo. We are progressing well with work on the club brochure, business cards and face book pages, hopefully all will be in place before Primex in mid-May. Many thanks for Peter Johnson and Jamie Martin for all their work.

Elizabeth

Secretary Report

I look forward to seeing you at the Ruthven Hall.

Meg



Report on Last Field Day

Well, another enjoyable day beekeeping, this time at the home of Jamie Martin and Catherine Goulding in East Ballina!

The weather was full cloud, and very light rain, so it was decided to skip the hive work (Everybody present had seen the inside of a hive before), and concentrate on the small scale extraction of honey instead. Catherine and Jamie had removed some good honey frames to practise on, and had an interesting assortment of extraction gadgets.

So the first tool was the honey paw. It was operated off steam using a Bunnings wall paper steamer. No one knew how it should perform, and it was

not clear that it was being operated with enough steam. Catherine (pictured) passed it over the frame cappings, with a pawing motion, and fractured them. There were still uncapped areas which had to be treated with a scratcher.

The traditional manual way to remove the cappings is with a steam-heated hot knife, made of steel to keep a sharp edge, and with copper tubes soft soldered to the steel as close as possible to the sharp edge through which the steam passed. The steam was provided by a small gas heated boiler. These knives still do a better job than all the newer gadgets available today. The steel does not rust presumably because of the honey and wax. *(If you see one of these in a beekeeper clearance, snap it up).*

The modern ones are made with stainless steel, which has low thermal conductivity compared with steel, and the heat is not conducted effectively to the cutting edge. Some of the electrical ones have a copper sheet sandwiched between stainless steel sheets, spot welded all the way around the edge, Jamie had a stainless steel electrically heated knife, which Brian (pictured) demonstrated cutting the cappings off some frames; it was too hot, and burnt the honey. Brian suggested a foot switch for the power may help the operator to control the temperature. The importance of having a spike on which to rotate the frame was discussed.

The honey was extracted in a three frame manual extractor (see the next article about tangential extractors). William commandeered the handle, so no one else got to have a go. It did look very well balanced, and did a great job.

The merits of using settling vessels rather than sieves were briefly mentioned

Thank you to Catherine and Jamie for an informative day. Brian



Tangential Extraction

Some people advocate that the frames should be inserted in a tangential extractor so that the bottom bar leads in the direction of rotation. This is because the cells are slightly angled up towards the top bar, and they believe that this will help the honey spin out. But simple physics says that it will not make any difference.

A typical extraction involves a short speed -up period (say 10 seconds) and a long period at high speed (say 5 minutes), followed by a slowing down period (say 10 seconds). Little honey comes out in the first period, as it is

basically spinning too slow most of the time, and most of the honey is removed during the second long period of high speed uniform rotation.

A body moving with uniform circular motion is acted upon by a force which points along a radius back through the centre of the circle e.g. think of a weight on length of string swinging in a circle. The force is directed along the string or radius. There is no tangential component of the force for a body rotating at constant speed; I think this is where the misunderstanding comes in. If there was such a force, the two sides of the comb in a radial extractor would behave differently; they do not.

This radial force is the force holding the honey in the cells. It does not matter which way the frames are rotating, the cells are at the same angle to the force.

When the honey releases from the cell, it no longer has this radial force and flies off at a tangent (not along a radius). It then strikes the inside of the container.

(Another good example of uniform circular motion is that of the earth spinning around the sun. The only major force is the gravitational attraction directed towards the sun, keeping the earth in circular motion.)

So, frames can be inserted any way in the extractor baskets. It does help the balance if they go in the same way. Just remember to extract in three stages to avoid blowing out frames: one side for a while at a low speed, second side at a high speed, and back to the first side at a high speed. It is worth checking if the comb is supported by the outside mesh.

There is no advantage in reversing the direction of rotation for radial or tangential extractors.

Brian

World Bee Day

World bee day is on the 20th May.

This year, World Bee Day will see a host of events and activities taking place in communities across Australia, focused on the 2024 theme – Celebrating bees and their vital role in global food production systems.

You can find out more about World Bee Day at www.worldbeeday.org.au

Beginner Lessons

Remember that the club is offering to give beginners free introductory sessions on a beehive to get them started. Contact the secretary, or a helpful member near you. The club offers this service instead of a beekeeping course; it introduces beginners to a member who can later act as a mentor.



Bee Stings

An [excellent report on allergies and beestings](#) by Jim Wright. Very allergic people should have an EpiPen handy. Also, for the rest of us beekeepers, it is a good idea to have some commercial antihistamine medication available; it could give more time to get medical help.

Flowering Report

Mostly just read last months report. Red Gum budded well. Brian said he noticed some flowering at Coraki. Grey Ironbark is budded.

As I write there is a burst on the Tee Tree, should bring on the rain. There is still Golden Rod flowering in places. It is slowly spreading so should be useful in a few years.

Geoff

For Beginning Beekeepers

All amateur beekeepers should read the article on the net for beginner beekeepers put up by Randy Oliver (google scientific beekeeping first year beekeeping). Randy is a commercial beekeeper (queens and pollination mainly) near Sacramento, California, who also does research relevant to beekeeping as distinct from bees. His work is first rate, (self-funded or by donations), and his writing is excellent. He gives advice on all aspects of beekeeping (including bee stings) right up to the treatment for Varroa mites.

Hive Identification

Members are reminded that all hives should have their DPI Number painted on the brood box in letters about 40-50 mm high. If they are away from home, it is a good idea to have your name and contact number also on them.

The simplest way to do this is to print with a cattle ear-tag pen, available from rural supply stores. If you like really neat lettering, Jamie Martin 0435 295 533 will make you a stencil for a small charge.

ACE Instructor

ACE Community College is looking for someone with industry experience and a love of bee keeping to deliver a course in Lismore. They have in the past delivered successful courses. The past trainer has retired, and they are currently looking for someone to take on this course.

The college provides the space and facilities and takes care of the publicity and marketing, the college pays \$40 p/h to trainers, and the course runs with a minimum of 6 participants.

Contact **Liliana E. Correa** if interested liliana.c@acecolleges.edu.au

From the Hives

The teatree (melaleuca quinquinevia) are having a second (?) flowering at the time of writing, and all the hives near Coraki are busy. Because of the local soil structure and all the rain, some of the stands are sinking into the ground as the boxes fill up. They will need larger pads inserted under the legs.

At least, I have not been bogged there yet this year.

Brian

Aps for Beekeeping

Jamie Martin uses these apps for beekeeping records.
Beeplus (a \$15 once-off fee) and ApiManager (free app)
Talk to Jamie Martin 0435 295 533

Free Bees

Two beehives have been given to the club for beginners by a Lismore beekeeper. They were double 8 frame brood boxes from Flow Hives, and are being converted to double box hives with an excluder.
Brian

Beehives for sale

Ray Smith has been told by his doctor to reduce his number of beehives. These are full beehives with varying amounts of honey, and are at McKees Hill. Contact Ray 0427 734 954

List of Helpful Members

Kevin Virgen	Federal	6684 9213	Brian Window	Lismore	0466 790 736
Ray Smith	McKees Hill	0427 734 954	Paul Towner	Rous Mill	0418 321 305
Geoff Manning	Lismore	0400 221 602	John Bull	North Casino	0414 842 903
David Fairhall	Richmond Hill	0444 513 771			

Services Directory

Summary of available products and services

NRABA Members

Brian Window (nuclei, and advice) (Lismore) 0466 790 736

Not NRABA Members

Stephen Fowler (nuclei, hives, all sorts of bee equipment) (Alstonville) 0418 412 621

Merv McDonald (nuclei, hives, hive care)(Alstonville) 0439 166 016

Rob Stone (cells, mated queens, nuclei)(Casino) 0487 598 105

Ross Wood (mated queens, nuclei)(Grafton) 0421 817 710