

BEEBIZ JANUARY 2024

The Newsletter of the Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Association Inc.

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| To Join log in to ABA.member jungle and follow the prompts | | | |

January Activity 4th February 2024

The next field day is at the home of Josephine and Brian Window, 54 Donnans Road, Lismore Heights. The activities will depend on the weather. If raining, it will be about beekeeping equipment. If fine, it will be looking through assorted beehives and diagnosing their status.

The day will commence at 9.30 am with a welcome by the President, and morning tea, and the beekeeping activities will start at 10.30 am. A lunch will not be provided. There will be a raffle of bee equipment and donated items at about 12pm, followed by a meeting of the club committee. Members are welcome to sit in on this meeting.

All attendees are asked to bring an item for morning tea. Extra raffle items are always appreciated. Raffle tickets will cost \$2.

So remember

- Morning tea item
- Raffle items, such as vegetables, bee gear, jam, potplants etc
- Chairs
- Nametags

Directions

From Lismore, take the Bangalow road. Just past the SES depot on the right and the Council workshops on the left, Donnans Road runs up the hill on the right. The property at 54 Donnans Road is on the left 540 meters up the hill, and the entrance is the first entrance on the left after passing Pandora Crescent. There is some parking in the grounds and parking in the street.

Please be considerate when you park.

President and Secretary Report

This month we have streamlined the procedures for approving new members. Instead of new members waiting for the monthly meeting, the “Membership officer” approves them and then presents the names to the committee for confirmation.

We are going to canvass the membership for interest in a new DPI initiative. They are seeking volunteers to be “sentinel” hive keepers. We believe this is an excellent idea. We hope to get Daniel Martin (Bee Biosecurity Officer, DPI, Wagga Wagga) as a guest speaker to presenting the initiative to members at a future meeting.

Does anyone have any tips and tricks that they would like to share with other members? (maximum 100 words) Perhaps your favorite smoker fuel / hand cream recipe / best technique for wax wraps / mead recipes etc or general knowledge to the “Beebiz” editor.

Elizabeth and Meg

Report on Last Field Day

The annual Xmas party was held in the picnic area at Rocky Creek Dam, near Dunoon on the 3rd December 2023.

The club when first formed in the 1990’s always had the Xmas breakup at this location. It used to have large Camphor Laurel trees, and the canopies provided good shade at a hot time of the year. Then Rous Water killed all the camphors, and planted lots of small rain forest trees which gave little shade, and the club stopped going there. Now all these trees are well grown, casting plenty of shade, and showing how beautiful these rainforest trees are.

It was a great spot to gather and celebrate the end of 2023. The catering included all the standard Xmas goodies, including ham and chicken, and nuts and lollies. We even had a Kris Kringle exchange of presents. Thank you to the committee for organising the event.



Bloodwood

There is also some flowering on the Hill Sheoak. This is good pollen unlike the Casuarina that grows along the creeks. It is unusual in that it has a husk collected with the pollen by the bees and discarded when eaten. It will normally find its way out the hive entrance and looks like sawdust. The trees are separate male and female. The male looks brown when flowering.



broad leaved paperbark

Flowering Report

Bloodwood is flowering. It very rarely gives a honey flow, in fact once only in my beekeeping lifetime. It does have good pollen though. The honey is typical of all the bloodwoods in that it tends to string rather like liquid malt. Pilliga Bloodwood is a reliable yielder. Ours moves down the coast. I once worked it at Bentley and then later at Whiporie.

And to top it off Tea Tree (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) is flowering. It will have a number of flowerings, which leads to a problem in that the larvae tend to be half starved either because the nectar flow stimulates the queen to lay, it then cuts off either because it is the end of that burst or because it rains. Either way this regular disruption tends to leave weak bees when they are asked to perform in the spring, unless there is good reliable pollen available before. The tree was known as Bellbowrie, the rain tree by the indigenous people.

Geoff

From the Hives

The hives have produced 2-3 boxes of honey since being moved to Gibberagee on the Bungawalgin Whiporie Road. The flow which was probably from swamp turpentine has stopped, and the hives are being prepared to move to near Coraki for the flowering of the broad leaf teatree. First, they have to be tested for mites, and this is running behind schedule because of the persistent rainy weather and very high humidity. (All beekeepers should be careful not to overheat while working hives. Take breaks, hydrate and be alert for the symptoms.)

Brian

Member Jungle

The new **Member Jungle** register is up and running, and it is a relief to have it all working. Our club officials are still learning the system, and our operations are being tuned to fit in with it.

DPI News

All beekeepers are reminded that the DPI requires them to submit reports on a four monthly basis of the result of surveying their hives for mites. This usually means an alcohol wash of half a cupful of bees from brood frames from all your hives up to ten. If 10 to 100 hives are in the stand, only ten have to be tested. Above 100. 10% have to be tested.

The information is important to track the spread of mites in the state.

There is also a new Biosecurity Code of Practice Course that members should do on line.(see attached)

Meeting North Coast Apiarists February 2nd

Madlen Kratz from TOCAL will speak about Varroa Mites and Supplementary Feeding. (see attached).

Free Beehives

Two beehives have been given to the club for beginners by a Lismore beekeeper. They were double 8 frame brood boxes from flowhives, 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 | | | |

Beginner Lessons

Remember that the club is still offering to give beginners an introductory session on a beehive to get them started. Contact the secretary, or a helpful member near you.

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, buys wax) (Alstonville) 0418 412 621

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

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

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