


THE BUZZ



The official newsletter of the Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers Society Inc. Est. 1979
Website: gcabs.net.au  [Gold Coast Amateur Beekeeping Society](https://www.facebook.com/GoldCoastAmateurBeekeepingSociety)



DATE SAVERS

- All General Meetings are cancelled until after Covid19 restrictions are removed.
- Mudgeeraba Show: Postponed until Oct 2nd -4th
- 20th May - World Bee Day

**SHAKE!
SHAKE!
SHAKE!**
**APRIL IS
SUGAR
SHAKE
MONTH**



President's Report



I never would have expected that I would be writing this month's President's article under such unusual global circumstances. It certainly means some changes to how GCABS will operate over the coming months, with all training & general meetings on hold while government social distancing restrictions remain in place. The committee will continue to meet online each month and drive forward our club projects, using modern technology to our advantage in these challenging times.

The securing of a GCABS club facility has also presented the committee with some challenges over the past month, with a change of management at Carinity Cedarbrook bringing an end to our opportunity to build there. We were offered a 3 year tenure by Carinity, but with a number of restrictions placed on us with regard to parking & toilet use: this did not provide a secure future for a club facility. The good news is that our committee are hard at work exploring new tenure opportunities, with two very promising and more suitable locations currently in negotiation. With such a large investment in this project, it is important that we get this right the first time!

Lastly I would encourage you all to use the current circumstances to do something positive for yourself and your bees. It's a great opportunity to reconnect with people (at a distance) and to reconnect with your bees. Bees are not only great to talk to, but they also demonstrate how focusing on achieving one small thing at a time together, can lead to great accomplishments. They haven't missed a beat and are continuing on facing the challenges of the world as they always have.

Travis Green
President

April Honey Flora - S.E. Queensland

Submitted by Jim O'Reagan

Banksia. Blackbutt. Broad-leaved Banksia. Broad-leaved Ironbark. Brown Bloodwood. Flooded Gum. Glycine. Golden Candlesticks. Groundsel Bush. Gum-topped Box. Hickory Wattle. Honeysuckle Oak. Malley Box. Mountain Coolibah. Paper-barked Tea Tree. River Sheoak. Rose Sheoak. Tumble-down Ironbark. White Box. White Stringybark. Easter Cassia (Easter Senna)



Easter Senna

Research & in The News

Why China's coronavirus lockdowns are such a big threat to beekeepers

Laura Zhou 25th Feb 2020

Coronavirus traffic restrictions are stopping many Chinese beekeepers from moving their hives in search of food. Read the full story [HERE](https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3052160/why-chinas-coronavirus-lockdowns-are-such-big-threat-beekeepers):

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3052160/why-chinas-coronavirus-lockdowns-are-such-big-threat-beekeepers>

Agriculture 'essential' as COVID-19 escalates

Tegan Scott 27th March 2020

In a week where many have questioned business closures across the country, one thing is clear: agriculture and more specifically, agricultural jobs, are essential to keep Australia moving. Read the full story here: https://farmers.org.au/news/agriculture-essential-as-covid-19-escalates/?fbclid=IwAR0D6lJ-DCsupEmIWqkROZEG_TFRFQ3bkjJCnvWOEUAGYyHEnNlxbqCuk4

Using probiotics to protect honey bees against fatal disease

By University of Western Ontario

Probiotics, beneficial microorganisms best known for promoting gut health in humans, are now being used by Western University and Lawson Health Research Institute scientists to save honey bee colonies from collapse. A new study published in the Nature journal ISME J demonstrates how probiotics could potentially stave off a common bacterial hive infestation called American Foulbrood. Read the full story here: <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/10/191030132715.htm>

Easter & Honey Bees: Superstition & Tradition

Facebook: Historical Honeybee Articles – Beekeeping History

A superstition in Oldenburg, Germany: "It is said that no bee will fly away the whole year, and that they will settle low down when they swarm, if they are fed on Maundy Thursday (Holy Thursday) before sunrise and the food is mixed with some earth thrown up by a mole the previous night."

Among the Germanic and Slavic races there was a belief that if one ate honey on Maundy Thursday he would gain protection for the year against all diseases, and if honey were sprinkled in a room on Holy Saturday it would kill all vermin.

On Good Friday in Masuren, the people feed the bees before sunrise with meal and bless the hives, going round them scattering the meal and saying:

„Ihr Bienen und Königinnen, setzt euch auf eures Herrn Acker und Wiese, wie es der Herr Christus geboten, zum Sammeln von Wachs und Honig, in Namen Gorres des Vaters, u.s.w.

(You bees and queens, settle on your master's fields and pastures, as the Lord Christ command, in the name of the Father, etc.)

In the Ukraine, pysanka (decorated eggs), were thought to protect households from evil spirits, catastrophe, lightning and fires.. Pysanky are typically made to be given to family members and respected outsiders. To give a pysanka is to give a symbolic gift of life, which is why the egg must remain whole. At least one egg was placed beneath the bee hive to insure good production of honey.



Ipswich and West Moreton Field Day

Sally Patch

We had a very inspiring day on Sunday 8th March at Ipswich. Starting at 9am, we enjoyed a very informative talk by Dr Rebecca Laws who works for Biosecurity Qld. She told us how and what to look for regarding pests in our hives, both those that we already have in Australia and those that may possibly arrive one day. She took us out to a little bee enclosure where she demonstrated different methods of checking for unwanted pests.

We also heard from Dr Simon Williams from the University of Sunshine Coast about trees (*Leptospermum*) that produce Manuka Honey in Australia. The east coast of Australia is one area where they are abundant. Dr Trong Tran from Southern Cross University was next, talking about his studies on honey bee Propolis and the different things for which it is beneficial. It is heartening to know that Australian academia is placing such importance on the humble bee.

The Ipswich Club provided some great food which we all enjoyed at morning tea and lunch. There were a variety of items for sale, all bee related. Finally there were the results of the judging of honey, beeswax, honey biscuits and cakes. Our club managed to win a few prizes. Congratulations to all the winners and also to the not so lucky entrants who had a go. A couple of raffles were drawn and the lucky door prize was won. Altogether, it was a very uplifting day and well worth the drive up. I was driven home in a daze of gratitude! Thank you to everyone.



When was the last time you conducted a sugar shake on your hives?

Sugar shakes are a great way of testing your bees for exotic bee pests like Varroa mite and Tropilaelaps mite. The Australian Honey Bee Industry Code of Practice stipulates a sugar shake should be conducted on your hives twice per year.

Why not make April your sugar shake month for the first half of 2020?

For a fact sheet on how to conduct a sugar shake visit: <http://beeaware.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Sugar-shaking.pdf>

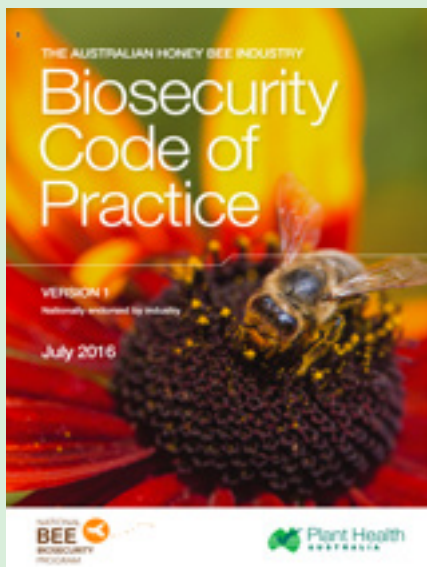
Watch the sugar shake demo on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCH8H6yXKcU>

Note: An alcohol test is an alternative to the sugarshake.

See more here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36oHVUI3INA>

Sugar Shake a requirement under the Code of Practice

As of July 1st 2020, the [Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice](#) will become mandatory. Part of the code includes compulsory inspections twice a year for exotic bee pests, including mites.



Mite inspections can be performed in one of three ways, sugar shake testing being one. Conduct your sugar shake test this April and start meeting your Code obligations before July.



Sugar shake test involves capturing bees in a container and coating bees with icing sugar. (Image: NSW DPI)



Available now from V's Bees, Nerang

Bee Venom

Bee venom, or APITOXIN, is a bitter, colourless liquid containing proteins which generally produce local inflammation. Chemically, bee venom is a mixture of histamine, pheromones, enzymes, peptides, amino acids and other acids, with 63 components in total.

The venom itself comes from the female bee's stinger, a modified ovipositor, which the bees' ancestors used to deposit their eggs into the bodies of insect hosts. As the drone cannot sting at all, and the queen generally does not leave the nest (despite her being able to sting repeatedly), it is the worker that attacks or defends herself. So, although worker honey bees never usually lay eggs, they have retained the modified ovipositor to defend the hive.



A thrust of the stinger sends the venom, or apitoxin, deep into the tissue, causing the painful sting we have grown to experience. In a recent study conducted by the University of Melbourne, it was found that bee stings actually cause twice as many hospital admissions per year as snake bites, and account for an almost equal number of deaths (due to anaphylaxis).

Allergic Reactions to Stings

The honeybee sting is the most common cause of allergic reactions to insects in Australia (after wasps & ants). Anaphylaxis from stinging insects results in an average of three deaths per year in Australia.

Bees usually leave their barbed sting in the skin and die. Flicking the sting out as soon as possible will reduce the amount of venom injected. Use the edge of your fingernail, a car key or credit card. If possible try not to squeeze the venom sac, as this may increase the amount of venom injected.

MILD Reaction: Most insect bites and stings result in a localised itch and swelling that settles within a few days. While uncomfortable, this is a common non-threatening reaction.

SEVERE / Life Threatening: ANAPHYLAXIS

Bee venom from a single sting can cause a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) in some people. Symptoms include an all over rash, swelling of tongue or throat, trouble breathing, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, vomiting and a drop in blood pressure (shock).

People who are at greatest risk of anaphylaxis:

- those who have previously had anaphylaxis following a sting.
- older people and those with difficult breathing are at greatest risk
- Adults are at greater risk of anaphylaxis than children.
- Allergic reactions to stinging insects tend to persist, although children are more likely to improve than adults.

SEVERE ALLERGIC REACTIONS, ANAPHYLAXIS, CAN BE FATAL.

What to do if someone appears to be going into anaphylactic shock.

Act quickly! Call 000 and then:

1. Get them into a comfortable position and elevate their legs. This keeps blood flowing to the vital organs.
2. If they have an EpiPen, administer it immediately.
3. Give them CPR if they aren't breathing until the emergency medical team arrives.

Allergen immunotherapy can reduce the severity of allergy

Allergen immunotherapy (AIT) is also known as desensitisation and can help to switch off allergy over time and this is effective treatment for allergies to bee and wasp stings. Rebates are available for this treatment on the PBS in Australia and by Pharmac in New Zealand.

Diagnosing the cause of your allergy

A doctor will normally ask a series of questions that may help to narrow down the list of likely cause of reaction. This approach will help to exclude conditions that can sometimes be confused with anaphylaxis. Skin testing or blood allergy testing can help confirm or exclude potential triggers.

Reference: <https://www.allergy.org.au/patients/insect-allergy-bites-and-stings/allergic-reactions-to-bites-and-stings?fbclid=IwAR3TgZIPgDirGqk71rZpeHfuSJhkFli4yhFRMPNRKH5MUpc-genL9M7iQjsc>



Macro photo of a stinger after removal from a person's hand after being stung.

History of the Honey Extractor

“The Austrian Count von Hruschka, having observed a naughty boy swinging round his head a lump of honeycomb tied to a piece of string and sprinkling the bystanders with the fine streams of honey thereby projected from the cells, conceived the notion of making the combs revolve round a movable axis in a kind of pail or cylinder of tin”.

From: ON SOME OLD BEE-MASTERS. Day, RC The Gentleman's magazine; Feb 1890

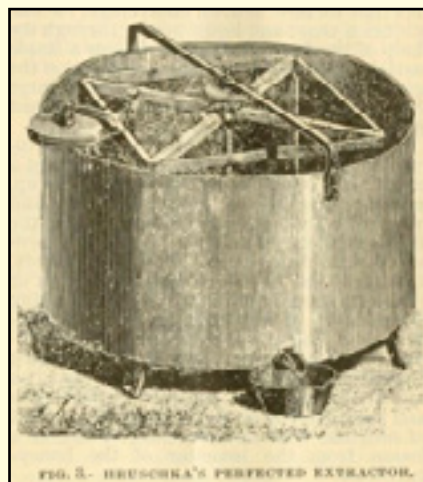
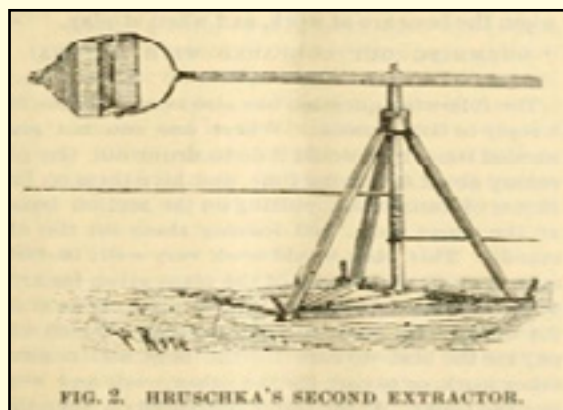
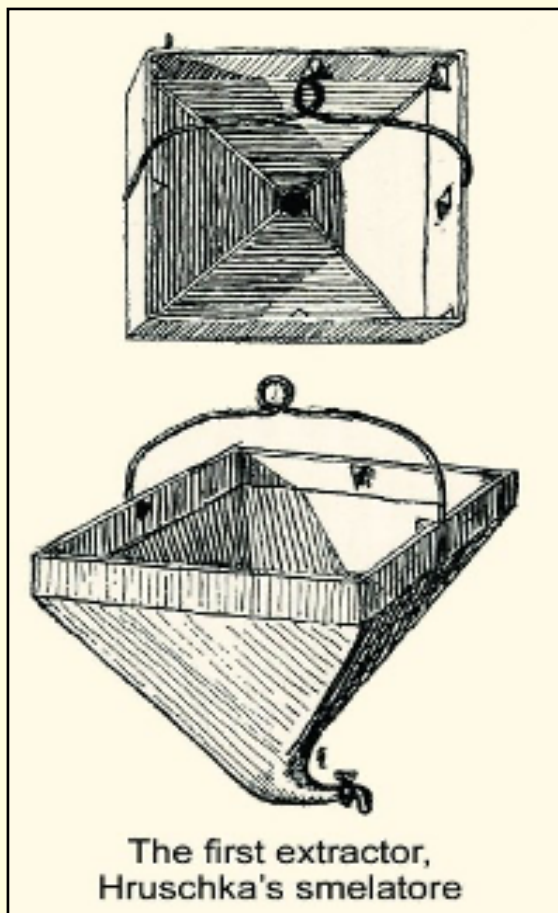
It is likely that this story is a rather colourful version of the origin of the Hruschka extractor. The date of the invention was probably July or August 1865. Hruschka had knowledge of centrifuging machines used in sugar refineries at the time and it is not impossible the jump to the honey extractor took place then.

The benefits were listed as follows:

- Faster harvest speed
- Respect of the quality of the honey especially with large quantities
- Preservation of the honeycomb for reuse in the hive.

His first version was a simple tin box with a wire cloth bottom and a funnel-shaped bottom. He designed a second upgraded version with a triangular frame anchored to the ground. A vertical shaft was attached to a 12 feet long horizontal beam with the first version bucket attached at the end. A rope was wrapped around the shaft and pulled. This would propel the honey outward using centrifuge force. Because of the length of the beam, the speed of extraction was significantly faster but the size of the machine made its operation cumbersome.

Finally, he designed a smaller more compact extractor with a hand crank, two wheels and a string. All honey extractors are a derivative of this final model.



BeEducation

It's time for YOUR Autumn Pest & Diseases inspections

The Buzz editor knows of 4 cases of American Foul Brood found in backyard hives during the first 2 days of April. The locations were Gold Coast and just south of NSW/Qld border. SO INSPECT YOUR HIVE/S NOW.

- Under Biosecurity regulations, you MUST visually inspect every cell on every frame in your brood box/es for pests & diseases. The recommendations are to inspect at least during AUTUMN & SPRING.
- Inspect NOW and test/act if you see anything suspicious (Examples: low bee numbers, patchy brood laying pattern, sunken, discoloured or perforated brood cell cappings, discoloured or dry larvae in open cells, wax moth or hive beetle grubs, unusual or unpleasant odour).
- You could start with your brood inspection & finish with your sugar shake.
- Remember to make notes of the date & your findings: good & bad.
- If you are suspicious of something & not sure what you are seeing, take photos & post on the GCABS' Members Forum Facebook page for help or a second opinion. We are here to assist.

Pests & Diseases are NOT just problems of other beekeepers. YOUR hive is NOT immune. Hive management is ALL of our responsibility.



Library corner

Here are a couple of several publications available for members to borrow:

1. Honey and Pollen Flora of SE Australia
2. Published 2019 by NSW Dept of Primary Industries
3. The Australasian Beekeeper

The March issue includes:

- What is Apitherapy?
- Drought/Fire affected Bee Management
- Why are Bees stripey
- Learning where your bees are foraging
- Treatment of the Nosema Problem
- Honey Storage and ripening
- Pollination to support healthy bees and healthy crops

If you wish to borrow copies please contact Ann Allen – ann@mincherallen.com.

Out of consideration for others, the latest copies of this magazine are asked to be returned within 2 weeks.

www.vsbees.com.au

V's Bee's
Beyond Beekeeping

Monday - Friday [8am - 5pm]
Saturday [8.30am - 12pm]

Beekeeping Supplies

Unit 3 / 90 Spencer Road
Nerang
Located Inside
Allied Bearings & Seals



0415 192 662
vsbeesqld@yahoo.com

COMMITTEE

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------|--|
| President | Travis Green | 0418 450 465 | goldcoast.president@beekeepers.asn.au |
| Vice-president | Lisa Devereaux | 0404 053 231 | goldcoast.vp@beekeepers.asn.au |
| Secretary | Helder Fernandes | 0412 801 437 | goldcoast.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au |
| Treasurer | Ross Krumbholz | 0412 974 468 | goldcoast.treasurer@beekeepers.asn.au |
| Buzz Editor | Leonie Schwarzal | 0428 177 450 | goldcoast.editor@beekeepers.asn.au |
| Asst Editor/Librarian | Ann Allen | 0402 996 101 | admin@gcabs.net.au |
| Committee | Kathy Knox | | admin@gcabs.net.au |
| | Colin Allen | 0414 596 096 | colin@colinallen.com.au |
| | Stephen Walters | 0411 658 300 | stevezmail@me.com |
| | Melissa Walters | | admin@gcabs.net.au |
| | Tiffane Upton | | admin@gcabs.net.au |
| Memberships | Rachael Kubinski | 0415 192 662 | goldcoast.membership@beekeepers.asn.au |
| Extractor Hire | Warrick Fraser | 0458 030 725 | |
| Extractor Hire | Rachael Kubinski | 0415 192 662 | V's Bees, 3/90 Spencer Rd, Nerang |



***Happy Easter
Everyone!***

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