


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)



Spring has sprung & swarm season begun!

DATE SAVERS

- **Sat/Sun Sep 19th & 20th** Beginning in Beekeeping Course. Fully Booked.
- **Sun Sep 20th 10am-12pm** - **CANCELLED DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS**. Monthly Meeting
- **Sat/Sun Oct 10th & 11th** Beginning in Beekeeping Course. These courses fill fast, so book your place here: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/introduction-to-beekeeping-tickets-119850489039>
- **Sat 17th Oct** – Total Beekeepers Field Day, NSW. This will be live streamed through Facebook and Youtube. Register to attend at <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=322910252168514>
- **Sun 18th Oct 10am-12pm** – Monthly Meeting at Alan Betts's property in Currumbin Valley. There will be a presentation by Rebecca Laws – Queensland Bee Biosecurity Officer. Please bring a chair.
NOTE: Subject to Covid restrictions - update in October The Buzz and on our Facebook page.

From GCABS President



Hello to all GCABS members and welcome to any new members receiving the Buzz for the first time. Spring is officially here so says the calendar, though I'd say the bees would beg to differ as they started weeks ago. It's currently swarms galore across the sunny Gold Coast, the bees have awoken from our mild GC winter and maybe caught a few of us off guard. Seasonal management is key to ensure for a humming and productive hive, so dust off your gloves and veil and say hello to the 2020-2021 bee season.

Ross Krumbholz

AUGUST in Review:

Beginners in Beekeeping Course

Our second beginner training group for 2020 ran perfectly under the capable leadership of GCABS education officer, Kathy Knox.

Syd Richards helped deliver content and his knowledge & experience really shone throughout. Thanks also to Ann & Colin Allen for taking care of morning tea & to Leonie Schwarzel, Colin Allen, Rod Luke, Ricardo Torbidoni, Kate Miller & Christine McLachlan for training input.

Some of the trainees have already acquired their bees while others are eagerly awaiting nucs in the coming months.



AGM 16th August 2020

Our 2020 AGM was held at Country Paradise Parklands, a venue we expect to have a long association with. Fifty three members were in attendance, which was great considering Covid restrictions. The club had a Covid Safe plan for the day, which all ran smoothly.

The president's report was provided by Travis Green, summarising the club's growth over the last year. Highlighted was the progress on the new club building at Nerang Country Paradise Parklands, improvements in Training, joining the ABA, membership growth, wonderful team approach to 'The Buzz' to polish it's presentation, work done improving our website & marketing via social media and the great teamwork from the GCABS Committee.



Treasurer, Ross Krumbholz delivered the annual financial report which demonstrated overall growth and strong financial position moving into the year ahead.

Membership Officer, Rachael Kubinski presented a report on the membership status of the club. Club numbers continue to grow and we've seen a steady increase in the popularity of backyard beekeeping.



Guest speaker Neil Ross, Nerang Community Gardens

Training Officer, Kathy Knox tabled a report on training across the previous year. Beginners' courses continue to remain popular, with courses booked out for the coming months. Training continues to be an important revenue source during the pandemic.

The new committee for 2020-21 was elected with Ross Krumbholz moving into the position of President. See the full list of committee appointments at the end of the newsletter. We wish the new committee all the very best as they move the club forward into 2021.

Outgoing President, Travis Green; Vice President, Lisa Devereux; Secretary, Helder Fernandes & committee members, Steve & Melissa Walters; were thanked for the contribution to the club & presented with gifts and certificates from GCABS' members.

Olive & Jim Cavanaugh were presented with GCABS Life Memberships for their contribution & support to the club and our members. See the special report about Olive & Jim on page 8. We concluded with a very interesting talk from Neil Ross, who spoke about how the Nerang Community Gardens were set up to encourage pollinators.

Special thanks to Brad Hartley for supplying our audio equipment once again.

Catching Bees in a Swarm Trap

Learning how to catch bees in a swarm trap is both handy and good fun.

What is a swarm trap?

A swarm trap is a baited hive box that is used to attract swarms of bees into occupying the box. This can be achieved by making the box appealing to bees by way of size, structure, scent and location.

The basic idea of a swarm trap is that when bees decide to swarm, they will hopefully find the swarm trap and establish a new beehive in there.



What is a swarm trap made of?

A swarm trap is typically made of timber, but a number of different materials can be used such as styrofoam, plastic, metal or even fabric. Generally, the best swarm traps will simply be just plain old timber hive boxes. In this box will be a scented lure and standard beehive frames. There are a number of criteria that will determine the likelihood of success of a swarm trap. We'll cover these a little further on below.

There are a number of reasons why you may want to catch bees in a swarm trap:

- Catch your first bee colony for your new beehive (although buying a nuc is far more dependable!)
- Add additional beehives to your apiary
- To reduce losses from your own hives swarming
- Prevent bees from nesting in known bee swarm areas.
- We will now cover these reasons in a little more detail, before moving onto an explanation of how to set up and use a swarm trap.

The PROS of swarm trapping your first bees:

- Costs very little. You already have the hardware and equipment, all you need to buy is the lure.
- No need to move the bees. By placing the swarm trap in the spot you want to permanently keep the bees, you don't have to worry about moving the bees again.
- The bees arrive when they are ready. Bees are clever, and will typically only swarm when the conditions suit them
- Can get more bees than what you would with a nucleus colony. Some bee swarms are massive, and you can end up with a colony that fills a full 8 or 10 frame brood box straight away.

And the CONS:

- May not be successful. Like any kind of trapping, it will only be successful if the bees are in the area. No bees swarming in your area, or if you don't set up the trap properly, you won't get any bees at all.
- Might only get a small swarm. You may end up with a small or weak colony that never prospers.
- Limited to seasonal availability. In most places, bees do not swarm all year round. For many people, having to wait months before your bees arrive may become frustrating.

As beekeepers, one of our primary tasks is to prevent our beehives from swarming. This can be achieved by tending to our hives at the required intervals and by following good beekeeping practices.

Bees will be bees though, and sometimes as beekeepers, we get things wrong and a hive will swarm on us.

In order to prevent losing that colony of bees to the wild, it can be handy for a beekeeper to place swarm traps proximal to their own apiaries.

This can help to ensure that any of their own hives that do in fact end up swarming, can be easily recaptured and remain with the beekeeper.

Swarm traps to prevent bee swarms in certain areas

Swarm trap advantages for established Beekeepers:

- Prevent colony loss
- Easy way to boost hive numbers. With lots of traps around, a beekeeper can quickly grow their apiary size with swarms that they catch.
- Time-saving. Arguably less time taken compared to catching swarm clusters.
- Beekeepers can choose when to take the bees. Unlike with catching swarm clusters, a beekeeper can leave the bees in the trap for an extended period of time before moving them.
- It's easier and uses fewer resources than making splits. There is no need to take bees or resources from your established beehives in order to have a new beehive.

Disadvantages of swarm trapping for existing beekeepers:

- Disease risk. Catching wild bees comes with the risk of bringing diseases or pests to your apiary. This risk can be mitigated by quarantining, but it is worth noting.
- Can end up with too many bees. Not really a problem for most, unless you don't have anywhere to put them.
- Fuels addictive personalities. It's hard to know when to stop!

How to Catch bees in a swarm trap

1. Assemble a solid box of approximately 40 Litres internal volume. This can be an 8 or 10 frame beehive box, or two stacked 5 frame nuc boxes, or a custom-designed swarm box of your own dimensions. There is some science behind what makes the ideal entrance hole for the swarm trap. We've found that a simple 25-30mm hole has worked fine, as has a standard hive opening, being a horizontal slit about 10mm high, by 150mm wide.
2. Install frames into the beehive box. The type of frame you use does not matter. Just ensure you have some kind of removable frame for the bees to start working on when they arrive.
3. Add a scented lure to the trap. This scented lure is best 'dabbed' around the inside of the hive, the entrance and on the frames inside the hive. Do not add too much, use just enough so that you can smell it. Too much scent may make bees avoid the trap. See below for more detail.
4. Ensure the trap is secure. Make sure the lid and base are firmly attached and that there is minimal chance of light or water ingress.
5. Place the trap in the field. Find a safe place to put your swarm trap. Up in trees or somewhere high is great if you have a way of securing the trap safely. You can do this, or simply place the trap somewhere convenient to you.
6. Watch and observe. At first, you'll often find bees start checking out your trap straight away. It is common to confuse this scout bee traffic as meaning a colony has moved in. A sure sign that your trap has been successful is when there are lots of bees coming into the hive with pollen. Scout bees do not carry pollen. The fact that bees are coming into the hive with pollen is a key indicator that the trap is now an active beehive! (If the trap has not been successful, it may be necessary to re-bait the hive. Simply put some more scent around the hive every couple of weeks, or whenever is convenient for you).
7. Move the bees. So you've caught a swarm, congratulations. It is ideal to leave the bees in the trap alone for a couple of weeks. This is just so that they can get established and start raising some brood. When you are ready simply move the beehive to where ever you would like.

That's the guts of it!

Not all traps will be successful, yet some will catch several swarms in the same spot in a single season. We find that the best swarm traps are ones that have been previously used.

Scent to use for attracting bee swarms

While you can catch a swarm of bees by simply placing an empty box out, the success of the traps is improved by using a lure.

The aim of this lure is to entice scout bees into noticing the trap in the first place and then to reassure them that it is a bee-friendly space.

This can be done by imitating the smell of a queen bee's pheromones, and the smell of a well used beehive.

Ideal scents to encourage bee swarms to occupy your swarm trap include:

- Lemongrass oil
- Propolis
- Wax
- Old brood comb
- Queen tincture
- Artificial pheromones

https://perthhoneycompany.com.au/how-to-catch-bees-in-a-swarm-trap/?fbclid=IwAR09oyCypxqQ4W4HOCBRNG9O3fB11I1kArQhHjPseTluXxPRbM_4ZWY1HjA

September Honey Flora - S.E. Queensland

Thanks to Jim O'Reagan

Black Sheoak, Blue Gum, Brisbane Black Wattle, Brisbane Golden Wattle, Broad-leaved Banksia, Caley's Ironbark, Dogwood, Dusky -leaved Ironbark, Flat Weed, Forest Boronia, Fuzzy Box, Glycine, Golden Candlesticks, Grass Tree, Grey Ironbark, Hairy Bush-pea, Mexican Poppy, Mountain Coolibah, Mugga, Narrow-leaved Grey Gum, Narrow-leaved Ironbark, Orange Tree, Prickly-leaved Paperbark, Red Bottle-brush, River Sheoak, Scribbly Gum, Spotted Gum, Swamp Sheoak, Tallowwood, Tumble-down Ironbark, Turnip Weed, White Bottle-brush, White Clover.



***A warm welcome to our newbee members
who joined GCABS in August:***

*Brad A, Scott G, Ty J, Helen L, Janelle L, Sarah Mc, Mark S, Kel T, Barb T,
Matthew D, Ewen S, Jason S, Tim W, Gillian V-J, Justin R, Autumn B, Jacel B,
Lawrie B, Michell G, Keith H, Paul N, Therese N.*

Contamination of our pure Australian bee's wax is of great concern to our industry. An important message from the Australian Honeybee Industry Council.



BEESWAX IN AUSTRALIA

Concern has been expressed over several years now about the importation of beeswax, both as foundation or block, into Australia.

AHBIC has written to the Federal Department of Agriculture about these concerns and received a response. The Department advised that as beeswax is not a food then they cannot regulate the importation or even check that it is beeswax. It is now up to the beekeeping industry to start a campaign to ask beekeepers and the public not to buy or use any imported beeswax, particularly beeswax foundation.

In the past AHBIC has had beeswax tested from China and there have also been other people who have had beeswax analysed. The results are that this imported beeswax contained several chemicals that were probably introduced during Varroa mite controls and are not permitted in beeswax in Australia. Disturbingly the results also showed there was a high amount of paraffin wax in what was being sold as pure beeswax.

AHBIC is asking all State Associations and beekeeping groups in Australia to ask beekeepers not to use imported beeswax foundation. This is the only way we can make sure that our beeswax stays pure and the price premium for that clean wax can be maintained on the world market. The message also needs to be extended to the public to build awareness of the potential exposure to chemicals in purchasing overseas beeswax. Australian beeswax is pure and needs to stay that way. Buy only Australian beeswax to protect our industry and use only Australian beeswax for your own wellbeing. Use your journals, meetings, newsletters and social media to get this message out.

AHBIC asks beekeepers, if you have purchased imported beeswax foundation, supply AHBIC with a sample and they will have it analysed. If the foundation is found to have unwanted chemicals or is adulterated with other waxes then AHBIC can lodge a complaint with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and ask for a prosecution.

It is up to Australian beekeepers and the public to make sure that we maintain our clean beeswax.



GCABS Life Members 2020: Olive & Jim Cavanaugh

At the AGM on August 16th 2020, life membership to the GCABS was conferred upon Olive and Jim Cavanaugh, two very special members who have served our club cheerfully, skilfully & tirelessly for the past 8 years.

So let's learn a little about this generous, motivated couple. Olive was born in Beaudesert then spent most of her youth on her family's dairy farm at Byrrill Creek in the shadow of Mt Warning in the beautiful Tweed Valley. As children, they got to know the local beekeeper who kept bees in the surrounding forests. It was through him that the family acquired 3 hives. With their dad busy milking 100 cows twice a day, it fell to Olive & her brother to care for the bees & extract the honey; hot, hard work but Olive thrives on such challenges. As the years passed, Olive attended high school in Murwillumbah then started her nursing training at Murwillumbah Hospital.



Winding back the clock once more, a young lad called James "Jim" Cavanaugh, moved with his family from his birthplace in Tully, North Queensland to Byron Bay, then settled in the little town of Woodenbong north west of Kyogle. When it came time for high school, Woodenbong was too small to have one! So, Jim went to boarding school in Lismore. Then, with school behind him, he moved to Murwillumbah where he met the lovely young Olive.

In 1963, Olive finished her nurse's training. Jim joined the police force and the two moved to Sydney & married. Together, they worked hard over the ensuing years & raised 3 beautiful daughters.

After their respective 44 years of nursing & 40 years with the police force, Olive & Jim retired in 2002. They spent the next 10 years as grey nomads roaming our great land with their 24 ft caravan. What a wonderful lifestyle & amazing adventures!

Eventually they decided to return to their "roots", so spent 3 years looking for the right home around the Northern Rivers & Qld border region before settling in Nerang. Olive, a keen gardener, planted passionfruit & was dismayed when the fruit didn't set. "We need bees!" she announced. So, they joined the GCABS, acquired their bees & were well mentored by another life member, Lyle Read.

Since then, Olive & Jim have been very generous with their time & home: hosting the GCABS' hives, hosting meetings, running countless mentoring sessions & equipment building workshops in their shed & manning the GCABS stall at numerous shows & events. Olive also served the GCABS as treasurer and as equipment officer. In addition, in 2018, they became patrons for the Tweed Agricultural Society, establishing & financing the Honey & Hive Product Competition at the annual Murwillumbah Show.

After 56 years of marriage, Olive & Jim don't look like slowing down yet. They currently run 12 hives, host meetings and continue to mentor beginners. Olive is a quiet powerhouse of knowledge & action. Jim loves a good chat, has a great sense of humour & is keen to help everyone. Together, they are a mighty team. We are so fortunate for their enriching presence & contribution.

Meet Your 2020-21 Executive Committee



President Ross Krumbholz

I live in Ashmore and moved to the Gold Coast in 1982. I currently keep two langstroth hives in my back yard. 2019 saw me take on the role of Treasurer of The Gold Coast Amateur Beekeeper's Society Inc, which I have enjoyed & now President for the coming year. The 2020/21 Management committee is full of capable and dedicated individuals who volunteer their time to ensure a thriving and sustainable amateur beekeeping industry. It benefits the industry when all beekeepers are learning about and encouraged to use best practices in promoting bee health.



Vice President Rachael Kubinski

I'm truly privileged to say that my bee journey is by lineage and I've been blessed with 3 wonderful mentors, Vern (Hubby) and Parents In-Law (Willi & Annette). The Kubinski family kept bees from the mid 80's, on their 7 acre property at Merrimac. General chores for the four brothers included tending to the poultry, bees, cows & seasonal crops. Since Vern showed a real passion for the bees, it was only natural that he'd become the successive Beekeeper, plus one apprentice (Me). I'm currently working on raising my own apprentice to continue the lineage.



Treasurer Rod Luke

Coming from a 35 year career in agriculture I've enjoyed lots of contact with beekeeping, but never kept bees myself. Now, having moved from a hobby farm in Central Victoria to a suburban block on the Gold Coast, I am happy to report that I am now taking delivery of my first nuc (thanks to GCABS member John Vallance). Joining GCABS in July it was fortuitous that a vacancy for Treasurer arose, to which I can lend some expertise developed from a background in agricultural consulting, farm management and business analysis. It has been a very enjoyable experience so far and I look forward to honing my new skills in such a friendly environment.



Secretary Colin Allen

I've lived on the Gold Coast for 23 years, and around 2 years ago my wife Ann (also on the committee) and me attended a GCABS Beginners Course. It was great to meet such a warm, friendly group of people, and learn so much! We now have three hives, two langstroth, and one top bar, and love our bees and the honey they share with us. Ann and I have been on the committee for most of those two years we have been beekeepers, and I've been Secretary since earlier this year. It is great to be able to work with the committed and enthusiastic group of people we have on our committee and I'm looking forward to a great 2020/21, lockdowns and all!

JOBS in Your Bee Yard this month

- Spring pest & diseases check – keep notes
- Watch for signs of swarm preparation and act to stop your bees swarming
- Begin to cycle out old dark combs and replace with fresh frames & foundation for your bees to draw fresh comb.
- Ensure the growing population has sufficient nectar & pollen stores.



Library Corner

The September edition of The Australasian Beekeeper includes the following articles and is available for loan. It looks a great issue! Please contact librarian, Ann Allen to borrow (contact details on back page).

- Road verges could be havens for pollinators
- Taking the sting out of home schooling! Send your kids to virtual Bee School
- Science sweetens native honey health claims
- Mandibles are made for many things
- Bee Space
- Pesticides in the news
- The Origins of Flowering Plants and Pollinators
- A Closer Look: Flower Constancy and Other Foraging Behaviour
- Fungicides and Bees in Canola



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Beekeeping for Beginners Course

Sat 10th Oct 9am - 1pm, Sun 11th Oct, 11:00am - 3:00pm

\$115.00 Existing GCABS member

A course over two half days: theory & practical. Suited to the 'curious', the absolute novice, or the beekeeper in their first season with active colonies of bees. Suitable for traditional or alternative honey bee hive designs & Flow hive enthusiasts.

Venue: Saturday: Labrador Scout Group Den
224 Turpin Rd, Labrador.



[Click here to register](#)



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