



**Amateur
Beekeepers
Association**
NSW MANNING VALLEY

Newsletter

June 2020

Your Club News

From the President

Hi all, welcome to our third newsletter for the year. The newsletter is developing with contributions from a number of people, myself, Vicki and Pat, who has taken on the job of putting it all together. I'm not sure what job description / title we can give Pat but thanks for doing a great job. In the not too distant future, perhaps the next club meeting, we can discuss in some detail how we can go forward with the newsletter and get more people involved.

Talking about newsletters, we have a few name suggestions for you to vote on, see box to the left.

Winter is here and the bees are settled in the brood box nice and cosy till at least the beginning of August. Hopefully they have enough honey supplies to get them through that time and come into spring fit, healthy and strong and start producing brood again for next honey season.

I am fearful that some of my hives will be struggling over winter as they have very little capped honey and will need feeding to get through. I have not extracted any honey this season, sort of unbelievable really. The fires went through our place pretty severely, some local areas worse than others, but on the bright side, the rains did come, better late than never of course. What the rains did create was a spring at the tail end of summer, all a bit (weird) unusual and unsettling, the local flora and fauna seemed a little confused. Plenty of growth came from the rain but no significant eucalypt flowering, hence very little honey produced.

The AGM has been put back this year because of Covid 19, still can't give you a date, hopefully it will be towards the end of the year all going well.

Stay well,
Robert

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NAME OUR NEWSLETTER

Some great suggestions for the name for our newsletter. Now it's over to you, our members, to vote for your favourite.

Here are the suggestions:

- The Pollinator
- The Honey Drip
- The Honey Shake
- Buzz Words
- Bee Words
- The Bee Whisperer

Email your vote to Robert
(robertodibben@hotmail.com)
by the end of June

Contributions for the next
newsletter are also welcome –
again, email them to Robert



World Bee Day was celebrated on 20 May 2020.

The purpose of World Bee Day is to raise awareness of the importance of the role bees & other pollinators play in keeping people & the planet healthy. It provides an opportunity for governments, organisations, civil society and concerned citizens everywhere to promote actions that will protect and enhance pollinators and their habitats, improve their abundance and diversity and support the sustainable development of beekeeping.



The date was chosen because it was the birthday of Anton Jansa (1734 -1773), a Slovenian beekeeper who was a pioneer of modern beekeeping & one of the greatest authorities on the subject of bees.

Information from <https://www.worldbeeday.org.au/> & https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anton_Jan%C5%A1a



Meet our Members

Meet new beekeepers Ian and Sue Allan. Here's their story:

"It was in the early fifties that my father, an economist living in Artarmon, chose bees for a hobby. My memories of that time are of the clean sweet smell of the foundation wax; the distinctive fragrance of the remnant burnt pine needles in the smoker; the messy stickiness of the drained honeycomb and propolis on the edges of the frames; and the delicious chunks of dripping comb and my father's advice to spit the wax 'cause it might clog our insides.

One day when tending the hives with his friend some sticky tape joining the supers gave way and they were chased to the house. About 40 stings caused partial loss of consciousness. Medical advice called for an end to his endeavours. He later went back to keeping hives despite the risks. During this time I was an avid listener and learnt a few things but did not get hands on.

Living in Orange in the seventies and seeing a swarm, I took action and captured it, but conditions in winter were too hard and they only lived for a few months. A lack of experience and attention would have contributed!

At the end of 2017 we moved from our farm at Upper Lansdowne to Tuncurry and after renovating a new hobby was required. What about bees in the backyard? Gear was acquired, a bee biosecurity course attended and we awaited the 2019 swarm season.

As if on cue in early September we were alerted to 2 swarms in Forster and Tuncurry and (with help from YouTube) there was confidence to catch them.

One colony was weak and ultimately didn't survive. Eventually it became queen-less so on the advice of Scott from the Association it was combined with the stronger hive, separating them initially with newspaper. On the day they were combined, foragers from the weak hive returned and attempted to join the strong colony but were repelled and there were many dead bees as a result.

Disappointingly no honey so far.

We wait patiently for next season.



Biosecurity Obligations



From 1 July 2020

From 1 July 2020, it will be compulsory for beekeepers registered in NSW to ensure their management practices meet the minimum standards outlined in sections of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice (the Code).

The minimum standards are as follows:

All beekeepers must:

- Be registered
- Report notifiable diseases
- Regularly inspect hives for pests & diseases
- Control or eradicate pests & diseases & manage weak hives
- Maintain records of biosecurity-related actions & observations
- Have hives appropriately constructed & branded
- Not allow hives or appliances to become exposed or neglected
- Allow their operation to be assessed



Be Registered

- A beekeeper must register with their relevant state or territory authority & pay prescribed fee (if any) set by that authority
- At the time of registration an accurate count of hives must be provided
- The register of beekeepers & their contact details can be used to notify beekeepers in the event of a disease outbreak or natural disaster.



Department of Primary Industries

Under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015, all persons who keep European honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) in NSW must be registered under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015. This condition is currently enforced and will continue when the Code becomes mandatory from 1 July 2020.

Report Notifiable Diseases

- A beekeeper must report the detection or suspicion of any notifiable disease to the relevant state or territory authority by the quickest practicable means.
- A beekeeper must have knowledge of the pests & diseases that are notifiable diseases in the state or territory where their hives are located



Under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015, persons who suspect notifiable bee pests or diseases must report them to NSW DPI. This requirement is currently enforceable and will continue when the Code becomes mandatory from 1 July 2020. The notifiable pests and diseases are American foulbrood, European foulbrood, (cont next page)

Our Happy Bees

Here are some photos of members' bees hard at work in the garden



A pollen-laden bee happy in the flowering agave in Janne & Tony Moran's garden. Janne says the plant is covered with bees!



One of the happy bees in a camellia flower in Pat Powell's garden. How they manage to get inside the flower I don't know, but they do!



And another one in the evolvulus in Pat's garden – every day it's covered with bees

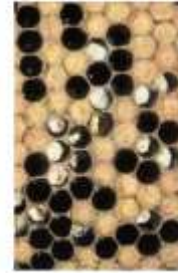
Come on everyone – show us your bees!

Chalkbrood and Nosema. Beekeepers who manage 50 or more hives must demonstrate a minimum level of knowledge of pest and disease identification & knowledge. To do this it is suggested they complete a course on pest and diseases. This is also a good idea for any beekeeper. Plant Health Australia offer the online course Biosecurity for Beekeepers (Biosecurity Online Training BOLT). The course costs \$20 and is recommended that it be completed every two years.

Notifiable Diseases

Duty to notify within one working day of becoming aware of the presence of:

- American Foulbrood
- European Foulbrood
- Nosemosis
- Small Hive Beetle
- Chalkbrood



Regularly Inspect Hives for Pests & Diseases

Beekeepers are required to inspect:

- All their hives for pests and diseases at least twice per year & to keep accurate records of their findings.
- One hive per apiary at least twice per year must be examined for the presence of arthropod pests, including Varroa and Tropilaelaps mites using one of three methods.



Beekeepers should already be inspecting for pests and diseases as part of their management practices. The change in this condition is that from 1 July 2020 a minimum number of inspections per year with record keeping (specified in the Code) will become compulsory. Beekeepers who do not meet the requirement may expose themselves to compliance action.

Control or eradicate pests & diseases & manage weak hives

- Manage weak hives & remove any hives to prevent robbing
- In event of AFB take appropriate action as per DPI requirements including:
 - Destruction of all bees in the hive
 - Rendering & maintaining hive & appliances bee proof until they are cleaned, sterilised or destroyed
 - Not using antibiotics for the purposes of controlling AFB



Under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015 beekeepers must manage known biosecurity risks to meet their General Biosecurity Duty. This requirement is currently enforceable and will continue when the Code becomes mandatory from 1 July 2020.

Maintain Records

All beekeepers must keep legible records of:

- Dates of apiary inspections & observations from inspections
- All actions taken to manage any pests & diseases
- Actions taken to determine presence of AFB
- Movements of hives
- Biosecurity related training

Beekeepers must already keep records of hive movements, theft, sale and disposal. New requirements in relation to this condition will be the keeping of additional records for pest disease inspection and sampling

Here are some more bee friendly plants to get your spring garden ready for the bees

VIBURNUM



SCAEVOLA



GREVILLEA



Hives Must Be Appropriately Constructed & Branded



This requirement is currently enforceable and will continue when the Code becomes mandatory from 1 July 2020. All hives must be branded with the beekeeper's registration no.

Hives Not To Become Exposed or Neglected



Allowing hives or appliances to become exposed or neglected is an offence in all states & territories.

This requirement is currently enforceable and will continue when the Code becomes mandatory from 1 July 2020.

Allow Your Operation To Be Assessed

All beekeepers may at some time have their records examined by the Bee Biosecurity Officer or other authorised person.

If a beekeeper is notified that they will be subjected to review of their records by an Assessor for compliance with the Code the beekeeper must, within 30 days of any request:

- Comply with all reasonable requests from the Assessor for access to records & any other relevant information
- Comply with all reasonable requests from the Assessor to inspect the beekeepers' hives and appliances

This requirement is currently enforceable and will continue when the Code becomes mandatory from 1 July 2020.

Link for Plant Health Australia Biosecurity for Beekeepers Online Training Course
<https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/resources/training/biosecurity-online-training/>

We usually take our Winter break at this time of the year and resume our meetings in August. At this point in time we are hoping that we will be able to resume our meetings as normal in August. If we can, we may need to make some changes to accommodate social distancing. As soon as we know what is happening we will contact members.

Until then, please stay safe.

Vicki

Some Weird Bee Facts

HONEY NEVER SPOILS.

When sealed in an airtight container, honey is one of the few foods known to have an eternal shelf life. There are even reports of edible honey being found in several-thousand-year-old Egyptian tombs. Honey's longevity can be explained by its chemical makeup: The substance is naturally acidic and low in moisture, making it inhospitable for bacteria.

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HONEY WAS A HOT COMMODITY IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE.

In 11th century Germany, honey was so highly valued for its beer-sweetening abilities that German feudal lords required their peasants to make them payments of honey and beeswax.

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NOT ALL HONEY IS MADE BY BEES.

While bees are most associated with honey, the Mexican honey wasp also produces honey on a large scale, a fact known to the pre-European Native Americans. In 2013, researchers surveyed honey wasp nests in Texas to attempt to get insight into honey bee behaviour. But be aware, this honey can occasionally be poisonous thanks to the flowers that the wasp likes visiting.

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HONEY VENDORS WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO ATTRACT CUSTOMERS.

In the 1830s (and maybe even earlier), some honey vendors started sporting "bee beards" to draw attention to their products. This was done by holding a caged queen bee under your chin and allowing the bees to cluster across your face. Today, bee beards are more fashionable than ever. There's even a competition held in Ontario, Canada, each year to create the most impressive bee beard.

Source: mentalfloss.com

CAN HONEY BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM? By Ana Martin

We all know honey is delicious and as beekeepers we understand the work that goes into making it. What is also amazing is the health benefits that raw honey seems to promote on our bodies.

Humans have been using honey as a medicine for thousands of years: Sumerians mixed it with river dust and oil to treat infected skin ulcers, Egyptians used it not only for open wounds but also to embalm their dead, Indian Ayurveda traditions use honey as a treatment for a wide range of conditions, and Chinese medicine associates it to the lung, large intestine, spleen and stomach meridians.

Honey seems to stimulate the production of antibodies whilst inhibiting the production of cortisol, which in turn inhibits the immune system. And even though we mostly think of it as sugars, it contains in fact more than 180 substances including 5 enzymes, 6 different vitamins, 8 distinctive lipids, 12 minerals, 17 trace elements, 18 bioflavonoids (also known as antioxidants), and 26 aroma compounds.

Taking into account the situation during the last couple of months and that the traditional flu season is upon us, we might want to take advantage of our easy access to this natural health bomb.

We have been using this easy recipe that we got from **Sharon** from **Little River Kitchen**. It combines the powers of honey and garlic to make sure you don't catch any nasties this winter.

Here it is:

Fill a jar to $\frac{3}{4}$ full with peeled garlic cloves

Fill your jar with the raw honey until it just covers the garlic. I usually put about half in, then using a skewer or chopstick I move it around a bit to make sure every nook and cranny is filled, then fill the rest. Don't be tempted to fill up to the rim as you need some headspace at the top of the jar. It will release gas as it ferments, and the last thing you want is sticky garlicky smelling honey all over your kitchen.

You now need something to weigh the garlic down as it needs to stay under the honey. You can use a glass disc made for fermenting but you can also use something as simple as a clean disc-shaped pebble.

Place the lid on, then every morning and night for about 7 days, open the lid to release any gases that have built up. Don't forget to do this as it can get quite fizzy and result in the lid popping off. Do this until the gas has stopped forming.

The honey is ready after 7 days (mine sat for 6 months) but if you want to use the garlic for cooking or for eating, let it sit for another month or so to mellow. This is good especially if you want to eat a garlic clove to further boost your immune system.

