

THE WAGGLE

Newsletter of the Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc.

'Furthering knowledge in Beekeeping by assisted learning and practical experience'

www.gcrb.org.au

Edition: November 2021

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President's Chat

***What's Flowering
in the region***

Hive Report

**Honey
Competition**

For Sale

***Meeting
Report***

***Literature for New
Beekeepers***

**Tips and
Tricks**

New Members



Contents

From the Editor	2
President's Chat.....	3
Hive Report	3
New Members	4
October Meeting Report	4
Joke of the Month	4
Diary Dates.....	5
Club Biosecurity.....	5
Interesting bee facts.....	5
For Sale.....	5
Honey Competition.....	6
Tasks for November/December	7
What's Flowering in the Region	7
Tips and Tricks	9
Literature for New Beekeepers	9
Starting Beekeeping: Find a Beekeeping Mentor.....	9
GCRB Management Committee 2021/2022	13

The Waggle is the journal of the Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc. It is distributed to members monthly. The editor will consider adverts from businesses relevant to beekeepers to run free of charge where they contain a discount or special offer to GCRB members. Please email gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au

From the Editor

I am trying to work out where the year has gone as this is the penultimate edition of the Waggle for the year. The fact that Christmas is almost upon us is quite sobering.

I hope that you have at least thought about gifts for your loved ones, and if not, this edition has a few ideas in the For Sale section and Literature for New Beekeepers article.

Don't forget to get your Honey Competition entries in. The indication from Drew is there have been very few entries so far, so there is an excellent chance that if you enter you may walk away with the prize.

There has been a slight change to the What's Flowering section in that there are some highlighted Flora but I have also included a table of other Flora that is flowering for the month as well. Hopefully this will be useful to you.

Feedback is a way to judge how relevant this, YOUR NEWSLETTER, is to you. If there is something you would like to see added or something you find useless, please email me your comments so that adjustments can be made.

Time for my monthly reminder that I am always after articles for your newsletter.

See you at the next meeting

Yours Aye

Windy



President's Chat

It's great to be a part of a club where we all share a common passion and desire for the same cause, such is the feeling I'm experiencing with our club currently. We have had an injection of new members, keen to become involved and learn along with the rest of us. This in turn creates a kind of ripple effect for the rest of the club, caught up in the newfound motivation and energy, so we all end up benefitting, it's a kind of win-win.

Thank you to all who attended our AGM on the sixteenth of last month and to those brave few who put their hands up when the call went out for committee nominees. Thank you also to the remainder of the crew who have stayed on and are committed for another term to keep the club progressing. Congratulations must go to our two new Life Members of the club in Mike Hynes and John Polley, it's a fitting way to recognise the contributions of a couple of great club stalwarts.

Am I the only one that is alarmed that it's the middle of November, WOW. The club has some great fun activities planned to finish the



year off on a strong note. Personally, I'm looking forward to the club's honey competition in December followed closely by the Bunnings evening market. Oh, yeah, not to forget the club "CHRISTMAS PARTY" as

well. You would have already received all the information for these events thanks to our amazing Secretary Drew, I do hope you will be able to join us at them. Our next club morning on the 20th is our second last for the year, it will be another busy morning with more interesting bee stuff on the agenda, I look forward to seeing you there.

Until then,

Greg

"The Appy Apiarist"

Hive Report

On a clear sunny morning, with a large number of members assisting, the inspection gear was quickly setup which allowed us to get the hive inspections underway on time.

Fiona started us off by checking the brood in the newly queened hive 5.

Hive 1: With sufficient stores in the new super seven frames were removed from the hive for extraction.

Hive 2: Is going well and five frames were removed for extraction.

Hive 3: Is going very well with the new queen. No honey was extracted. Next month we will check the brood to ensure that all is well.

Hive 4: Not very strong and quite possibly needs a new queen. Fiona and helpers replaced the brood box and base, because the old ones were starting to rot.

Hive 5: While the brood was not strong there was brood present which is a good sign that the new queen is doing her job. There was no sign of chalk brood, although there were a few Hive Beetles in the traps. We will check the brood again next month to see how the queen is going.



While the inspection was taking place a number of the sticky boxes were cleaned out as part of the Club's biosecurity procedures.

The format of starting the hive inspection with the educational component is proving to be a good practice and will continued at the next meeting. Altogether 12 frames were removed for extraction.

See you at the next inspection

New Members

The Club's membership base continues to grow and the President, Committee and Members would like to welcome our newbees

Mark Duncan
Kym Challis, and
Jasper Hanneken

Please make the new members welcome!

October Meeting Report

What a great meeting we had today!

It was great to see so many members helping with the hives, because there is no better way to learn beekeeping than to do it! At the club members have the advantage of experienced beekeepers present to answer questions and concerns. It was also great to see so many members help clean up after the inspections. Thanks to everyone who helped.

After the hive inspection, we moved indoors for a cuppa and the AGM. Greg introduced Dr David Schlipalius, who is the acting Qld Bee Biosecurity officer while Rebecca Laws is on maternity leave. We congratulate Rebecca on the birth of her baby daughter. David's contact numbers and email are the same as those for Rebecca.



We then held the GCRB Annual General Meeting. After the minutes of the previous meeting and reports were received, Greg put forward two founding members who the committee had decided to make Life Members of the club. The recipients were John Polley and Mike Hynes. Both members have given, and continue to give, a lot to the club, so congratulations John and Mike your life memberships are well deserved. Word

has it that to celebrate his Life Membership, Mike is going to buy a Flow Hive!

Before handing over to Kevin Finn to conduct the elections of officers, Greg thanked two committee members, Peter Handy and Mike Hynes for their hard work and contribution to the club, as they are both retiring from the committee. The elected committee for 2021/2022 is as listed below:

President	Greg Foster
Treasurer	Tony Perkins
Secretary	Drew Maywald
Membership	Julie Hewetson
VV Men's Shed Rep	Roger May
Committee	Fiona Fernie
Committee	Don Hewett
Committee	Debbie Hedges

Steve (Windy) Hill has also agreed to continue as the editor of the Waggle and look after our Facebook page and Web site.

After the AGM Greg introduced Rachael Kubinsky who gave a very detailed and most informative talk on preparing honey for shows and competitions. Thanks very much Rachael you were very thorough with great visuals and ably assisted by Ross Krumbholz. Rachael has agreed to be one of the judges at the club's inaugural honey competition in December.

The raffle prizes were a \$50 voucher to Bunnings (thanks Sarah), a sugar shake test kit, a \$40 Voucher to Vs Bees and a free one-hour massage by member Jeffrey Cox.

The sausages were very tasty thanks to Peter.

Thanks to all members who attended for their participation and attendance, and special thanks to Fiona, Mike, John and all members who helped, for their hard work on the hives, and to Kevin, Peter, Paul and Rachael.

See you next meeting.

Joke of the Month

Q. How do bees get to school?

A. On a school Buzz

Diary Dates

Sat 18 Dec, 2021

8:30 am Hive Inspection and Rob

10:00 am Honey Competition Judging and Presentation of Trophies

11:00 am Christmas Celebration

Club Biosecurity

What you can bring to meetings and What you can't

As the current COVID pandemic started to impact on our lives, the Club also realised that the biosecurity risks to the Club's hives also need addressing. After much discussion way back in 2020 the following biosecurity rules were implemented to keep both beekeepers and bees safe:

Veils/Bee suits - While the club does have a number of veils available for members and guests it was decided that personal veils or bee suits posed a low risk to activities. Members and guest can wear their own veil/bee suit while attending the Club Hives.

Gloves – This is a two-part issue with the bottom line being that only Club supplied gloves are to be worn. The first part is to prevent the spread of COVID. Latex inner gloves are to be worn by all members and guests who intend to put on bee-resistant outer gloves, which are the second part. The Club outer gloves are to be worn to protect both your bees and the Club bees from the transfer of pathogens between apiaries.

Hive Tools – Only Club hive tools are to be used within the Club apiary. This, again, is to prevent the transmission of pathogens between apiaries.

So, the bottom line is please bring along your veil/bee suit for use at the meetings but please leave everything else at home. This way both your bees and the Club bees have one thing less to worry about.

Interesting bee facts

Honey bees sleep between five and eight hours a day, some bees hold each other's legs as they sleep. Colonies are divided into different sectors of work. There are cleaners, nurses, security guards, also collection bees whose sole job is to cache nectar in the comb. Promotions happen as well.

For Sale

Display Boxes - The club has been given three frame display boxes for competition judging, as in the photo attached. One of the painted ones has only one sheet of glass while the other two are complete and ready to go. The varnished one has not been used.

They are available for members to buy and anyone who is interested can make an offer. I was thinking they would be worth around \$30 each noting they go for well over a \$100 from suppliers.

If you are interested in purchasing any of these units, please contact Drew.



Solar Melters - The Men's Shed have built two solar wax melters which are for sale. The larger of the two is 855mm long x 595mm wide x 200mm deep so would be suitable for someone with a large number of hives. The cost for this unit is \$250.



The Veterans Men's Shed have finished an upgraded small solar wax melter. These newly designed melters are able to hold a whole frame or two, and include metal melting tray, and mesh to put the wax on, with a hinged glass lid. Painted black inside and with 3 coats of clear lacquer on the outside, the lid also has a catch installed so that they can be stored on their end when not in use. These wheeled melters are ideal for the small beekeeper. The melters are approximately 700 mm long, 300 mm wide and 250 mm deep. Cost will be \$185.00.



Both units can be viewed at the club. If anyone is interested, please contact either Greg, Drew or Peter.

Masks - These stylish masks are being offered by Drew for a measly \$10. There are two designs to choose from. Double layer of cotton fabric, wire nose piece and adjustable ear straps. If you are interested, please contact Drew at drewmaywald@gmail.com or phone on 0400 959 043 to order yours.



Honey Competition

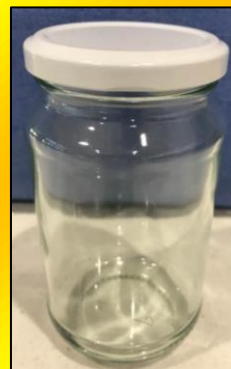
Just a quick reminder that next month is our inaugural Honey competition so if you haven't got your entry ready yet, now is the time!

Classes – classes for the competition will be:

- **Light Honey** – Open to all members
- **Medium Honey** – Open to all members
- **Dark Honey** – Open to all members
- **Novice Beekeeper Honey** - for any member who has only been keeping bees for the last 12 months
- **Beeswax** – Open to all members
- **Baked Goods or slices** – Open to all members.

Rules – The following rules apply for the competition:

- Open to all GCRB Members.
- All Honey must be bona fide produce from the exhibitor's own hives.
- Only First in each class will be announced.
- All honey classes judged for the GCRB champion honey.
- Prizes will be suitable trophies.
- One entry per class unless honey is from a different floral source.
- Each entrant must supply one 500g glass jar of honey per class. The jars must have a white lid and are available from Vs Bees.
- Entrants can enter all or as many classes as they are eligible to.
- Entries in the beeswax class must submit two x 30-gram blocks of wax.



- Entries are not to have any identification marks on their jars of honey, or beeswax
- The baked foods or slices must be presented with 6 slices only, on a white plate or white disposable plate no more than 200 mm in diameter, with no labels or identification marks on the plate.
- Entry fee of \$2 per entry.
- Entries to be collected at the end of the meeting or GCRB will donate the jars of honey and wax to a local charity.
- Any baked foods or slices left over will be eaten by all members present as part of the club's Christmas celebrations
- The judge's decision is final with no correspondence entered into.

Scale of Points for Judging

Liquid Honey	Points
Flavour	25
Density	25
Colour	25
Aroma	10
Clearness	10
Cleanliness	5
Total Points:	100
Beeswax	Points
Colour	35
Clearness	25
General Appearance	30
Aroma	10
Total Points:	100

Tasks for November/December

During November you should continue to lift your brood and replace your brood comb (by rotating it into your honey super). You should look at completing this task by December.

November/December is the time to requeen your hive(s) if the incumbent queen is not up to the task.

Hopefully by now you are able to rob and extract the liquid gold the girls have been producing. BUT REMEMBER – only take FULLY (at least 95%) capped frames. If you extract uncapped honey there is a very high probability the liquid will ferment and you will have to dispose of it. Also remember to leave enough stores for your girls!!

What's Flowering in the Region

During November/December many of the flowering plants from the previous month continue to support our bees throughout the region. These include, but not limited to, the following:

Ironbark – At least three varieties of Ironbark are flowering during November/December and include the Narrow-leaved, Grey and Tumble-down varieties. The honey from these trees has a medium density and mild sweet flavour, while useful quantities of pollen can be obtained to assist in maintaining colony strength.



Additionally, the Red Ironbark, more commonly known as Mugga, is also flowering.

Gums – At least four varieties of gum are now flowering including the Blue, Tumble-down, River Red and Narrow-leaved Grey gums. Valuable pollen and nectar supplies are obtained regularly from varieties with the honey being of a very light colouring.



Weeds – A large variety of weeds are now starting to show up, not only in your garden, but alongside roads and in vacant blocks that will attract your bees. Some of these weeds are:

- **Flat Weed** – Flatweed is a herb to 400 mm wide with yellow daisy type flowers up to 30 mm diameter borne on simple or branched, leafless stalks at any time of the year with a flush in spring to early summer. The large quality of bright orange pollen and small amount of nectar obtained simulate brood-rearing



- **Mexican Poppy** – A greyish prickly plant up to 1m with prickly toothed leaves, yellow juice and large cream or pale-yellow flowers. While the plant is considered a weed in Qld, the plant is highly sought by beekeepers for the reliable pollen supplies obtained during the lengthy flowering period. Only insignificant quantities of honey are obtained from Mexican Poppy.



- **Turnip Weed** – is a herb up to 60 cm high with rough thin leaves and yellow flowers.

It is a weed in crops, pastures and natural environments. The plant is a major source of pollen but only a minor source of honey, which has a strong flavour and aroma.



- **Blue Heliotrope** - is a low, bushy, hairy plant with small blue flowers. The plant is a medium source of both honey and pollen for the apiary.



The table below shows all Flora that is flowering in November.

Plant	Honey Source	Pollen Source	Honey Colour
Blue Gum	Mi/Me	Ma	Pale Amber
Blue Heliotrope	Me	Me	Dark Amber
Broad-leaved Banksia	Mi	Mi	Dark Amber
Cadigi	Me	Me	Dark Amber
Flat Weed (<i>Dandelion</i>)	Mi	Ma	Lt Amber
Flax-leaved Paperbark	Mi	Me	Dark Amber
Glycine	Mi	Mi	Lt Amber
Golden Candlesticks	Mi	Mi	Dark Amber
Grass Tree	Mi	Mi	
Grey Ironbark	Ma	Ma	White/Ex Light
Maize	Nil	Ma	
Mexican Poppy	Nil	Me	Lt Amber
Mintweed	Mi	Ma	Ex Light
Moreton Bay Ash	Nil/Mi	Nil/Mi	Lt Amber
Mugga	Mi	Me	Dark Amber
Narrow-leaved Grey Gum	Me	Me	Pale Amber
Narrow-leaved Ironbark	Mi/Ma	Ma	Ex Light

Plant	Honey Source	Pollen Source	Honey Colour
Plunketts Mallee	Erratic	Ma	Lt Amber
Red Stringybark	Me	Ma	Pale Amber
River Mangrove	Ma	Ma	Ex Light
River Red Gum	Ma	Ma	White/Lt Amber
Silky Oak	Mi	Me	
Swamp Mahogany	Me	Nil/Mi	Ex Light
Tumbledown Gum	Me	Ma	Ex Light
Tumbledown Ironbark	Mi/Ma	Me	Ex Light
Turnip Weed	Mi	Ma	Lt Amber
White Bottlebrush	Mi	Me	Med Amber
White Clover	Me	Ma	White/Ex Light
White Mahogany	Me	Ma	Pale/Med Amber
Wild Mae (<i>Baeckea</i>)	Mi	Me	Dark Amber
Wild Mae (<i>Leptospermum</i>)	Me	Me	Dark Amber
Yellow Box	Ma	Nil	White/Ex Light

MI = Minor / Me = Medium / Ma = Major

Tips and Tricks

Flowerpot for emptying you smoker –

With summer rapidly approaching, and the threat of fire bans, beekeepers need to be extra vigilant when disposing of smoker contents when completing inspections.

An old flower pot, with a hole in the bottom, is a safe option of disposing of the contents. Simply empty the contents into the pot and then pour water into the pot to cover the contents. This will douse any smouldering embers, and let the water drain away.

Editor's note: I am always on the outlook for tips and tricks from people. If you have an idea for how to do something you think others may find interesting, please let me know at gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au

Literature for New Beekeepers

Looking for a Christmas present or gift idea for the Apiarist in the family, then why not a good book for them to learn more about beekeeping.

The following books are good for general bee information and standard (Langstroth) hives. They do also cover off on Warre hives and Top Bar hives:

- Backyard Bees – A guide for the beginner beekeeper by Doug Purdie (ISBN 978-1-743-36508-3)
- The Bee book – Beekeeping in Australia by Peter Warhurst & Roger Goebel (ISBN 978-0-734-50330-X)
- The Bee – A natural history by Noah Wilson-Rich (ISBN 978-1-78240-596-2).
- Beekeeping for Dummies by Howland Blackiston (ISBN 978-1-119-31006-8)

The following is mainly to do with Top Bar hives:

- The Barefoot Beekeeper by Phillip Chandler (ISBN 978-1-326-19225-9)

For Slovenian (or A-Z) hives this book is about the only one out there:

- A-Z Beekeeping with the Slovenian Hive by Janko Bozic (ISBN 978-1-545-50916-6)

If you are interested in Native bees then this book is very informative:

- The Australian Native Bee book by Tim Heard (ISBN 978-0-646-93997-1)

Another handy book regarding the flora to be found that will support your bees is:

- Honey Flora of Queensland by S T Blake and C Roff (ISBN 0-7242-2371-1)

Starting Beekeeping: Find a Beekeeping Mentor

Raising Honey Bees Can be Learned Through Help from Others

By Laura Tyler

Editor Note: I found this article online on an American site and realised it also stands true for Australian beekeepers.



Mentoring is a traditional way for beekeepers to teach people starting beekeeping about tending bees. However, finding a mentor, someone who is both knowledgeable about hive management *and* interested in teaching you, can feel difficult, especially if you don't know anyone who keeps bees in your area.

Beekeeping organisations partially meet the demand for education by offering classes and other events to people interested in starting beekeeping. While these are terrific opportunities that work out well for most, they don't always fulfill the needs of those seeking a more personal, ongoing connection with an experienced beekeeper.

Sometimes you just want someone you can call when things go sideways in the hive. What happens when the queen bee dies? Should I feed syrup, bee fondant, or pollen patties this time of year? How will I know when I have given them enough food? Or you may want a relationship that goes beyond the transmission of how-to; helps you meet your potential as a beekeeper, and helps you become a part of a larger beekeeping community.

Close mentoring relationships *do* exist in beekeeping and can evolve into friendships

that span decades. However, they can take some time to find and cultivate. Here are a few ideas for people just starting beekeeping who would like to find a beekeeping mentor.

Say Yes to Quiet Invitations

One of my biggest regrets in beekeeping is not getting to see a dear friend and mentor one last time before she passed. One day, not long after moving from her condo to an assisted living facility, she invited me for a visit. While I was, of course, delighted to receive the invitation, I didn't fully understand its importance. So rather than jumping up right away to attend, I fiddled around on email in an attempt to organize a group visit with mutual friends. Days passed. Alas, to my sadness and regret, she died before I got that last visit in, and I lost my one last chance to be with her, sit near her, and hear what she was thinking.

The most rewarding mentoring relationships in beekeeping have a personal quality. Sometimes special invitations to participate in life arrive quietly, so quietly that you may not recognize them for what they are. If someone you admire, someone you like or are interested in getting to know better invites you in, do say yes. Because you never know if and when you may receive that unique opportunity again.

Do Some Research

Videos, online forums, books, and articles offer a range of perspectives from the instructional to the more personal. Use these resources to get a feel for whether starting beekeeping and attending to its seasonal tasks is a good fit for you. You can make yourself more appealing to a potential mentor by acquiring a baseline of beekeeping knowledge and vocabulary. This will give you a better understanding of what you are asking more experienced beekeepers to do for you when you reach out to them for support.

Join a Beekeeping Organisation

A first step toward finding a beekeeping mentor is to check out your local beekeeping

organisation. If your area doesn't have a local club, find a state or regional beekeeping organisation to connect with. Most beekeeping groups offer some kind of organised mentoring for people starting beekeeping whether it is a workshop, conference, social media site, or online forum where you can ask questions and get answers. These organised, group opportunities are not only terrific sources of information, but they are also the places where you get to *meet* the people who may eventually become your mentors. Get out, attend events, ask questions and volunteer to get the most out of these meet-and-greet opportunities. And while you are there, pay attention to the more experienced beekeepers who respond to your questions. People who respond helpfully to your inquiries in a group setting are *already* mentoring you.

Invite a Beekeeper to Visit *You*

In places where interest in beekeeping is on the rise, the demand for instruction by people just starting beekeeping can overwhelm experienced beekeepers whose main concern may be carving out time to care for their own bees. We receive numerous requests at our apiary each season from people interested in "helping out," in exchange for us teaching them about beekeeping. Or sometimes people will ask me to set them up with someone who "knows how to start a honey bee farm." While these requests are understandable (who *wouldn't* want free beekeeping lessons scheduled at their convenience?) they are difficult to say yes to because they lack specifics and sound time-consuming. Extra hands in the bee-yard aren't necessarily helpful hands unless they are trained. Also, training sessions can be hard to schedule with looky-loo newcomers because so much of beekeeping — new package installation, swarm collection, making splits, and so on — has to happen on the bees' timetable with humans serving in a responsive role and adapting accordingly.

Rather than inviting yourself to a potential mentor's apiary for free lessons, consider inviting him or her over to visit *you* to help you troubleshoot a specific problem in one of



your hives. Some beekeepers offer hive visits and mentoring as a paid service. Others offer them for free. I am often delighted to visit other beekeepers' bee-yards to see where they keep their bees. It is interesting to

observe different setups. And while I don't presume expert status, I do enjoy offering diagnoses and help as I can. For me, defined tasks, as opposed to an open-ended shadowing session, are easier to schedule. Other beekeepers may feel differently. Respect the time of the person who is mentoring you.

Raising Honeybees: Find a Peer Group to Help

In the absence of experienced mentors, a peer group can provide an excellent source of support for people just starting beekeeping. Consider starting a beekeeping book club with an eye toward building a mutual support community where nearby beekeepers can get to know each other over time. Seeking hands-on advice? Try organizing a local hive tour or series of roving inspections where a small group of beekeepers visits each other's' apiaries to observe different setups and hive handling techniques. Events like these provide invaluable opportunities to observe a range of situations, see who is thriving, who is struggling, and with the help of others, try to determine why.

While expert advice from experienced beekeepers is often the most valuable input you can receive, when that is not available, try putting heads together with your peers to brainstorm solutions to your beekeeping problems. As your group matures and gains in experience, each individual participant has the potential to become a mentor moving forward, providing beekeeping guidance and

support to those who come up after. Also, working side by side with other beekeepers to solve mutually interesting problems is a rewarding way to build relationships that can serve you over time.

Keep an Open Mind

Beekeeping mentors come in many forms and most of us will have the good fortune to have more than one throughout our beekeeping careers. Some may be older than you, others younger. You will meet some in person. Others you may encounter online. Some may move in and out of your life like a breeze with a single anecdote or piece of advice that changes beekeeping for you. Others have the potential to become a reliable part of your network of friends over time. All have value to new and experienced beekeepers able to keep an open mind.

GCRB Management Committee 2021/2022

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GCRB IS PROUDLY AFFILIATED WITH THE



**Amateur
Beekeepers
Association**
NSW

The club would like to thank Rachael & Vern for their generous support

www.vsbees.com.au



V's Bee's
Beyond Beekeeping

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

Beekeeping Supplies

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