

# BEE NEWS

July 2021  
Issue 120

**Monthly newsletter of the Sunshine Coast BeeKeepers Inc.**

[www.sunshinecoastbeekeepersinc.org.au](http://www.sunshinecoastbeekeepersinc.org.au)

**Sunshine Coast Beekeepers**



Photo by Linda Blackwell, bees in wattle flowers

## President's Report

The Yandina club hives are on holidays on a property at North Arm. Unfortunately, because of the welcomed wet weather, resurfacing of the enclosure has had to be delayed until later this month.

We are slowly accumulating various kitchen utensils and crockery, but more plates would assist to keep the dishwasher fully utilized

## NEXT MEETING

**Saturday, 31 July at the Club House, 43 Farrell Street Yandina.**

**Morning tea and catch up starts 9.30am, BYO plate of food to share and a prize for the raffle.**

**Meeting to start at 10.00am, and followed by lunch - friends and family welcome**

while reducing landfill.

Two people so far have volunteered for the catering committee. Their first assignment will be lunch after our next monthly meeting.

The club will provide the food and all family and friends are welcome to attend.

Although it is still early in the year, there have been reports of swarming. There is quite a bit of food around and this will be boosted by the recent rain. Remember if the bees have put honey in the brood box and there is no room for the queen to lay, she will get restless.

Now is the time to be busy getting boxes and frames ready for spring which is just around the corner.

Look forward to catching up with everyone at the next meeting on 31st July. Keep well and bee safe.

*Alby Taylor*

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**Know someone interested in bees? Why not forward this newsletter to them!**

# Membership 2021

Renewal of membership for 2021 was due by **31 May 2021**.

**Cost is \$50.00.**

Renew now via direct deposit:

Account name: Sunshine Coast Beekeepers Inc.

BSB: 633 000

Account number:  
1633 79555

Reference: “[Your surname]  
2020 membership”

## Swarms

Northern Sunshine Coast:  
John Writer, 0409 118 888.

Southern Sunshine Coast: Ian Meyers, 0412 694 058.

Maleny and surrounds: John Baker, 0418 791 149.

## Mentors for New Beekeepers

**Beerwah** - Bruce Wallace 0418 833 997

**Backall Range** - John Baker 0418 791 149

**Buderim** - Rod Hutchinson 0411 477 241

**Caloundra** - Ian Meyers 0423 231 754

**Coolum / Perigian** - Katie Livock 0414 843 342, Sarah Keast 0435 388 425

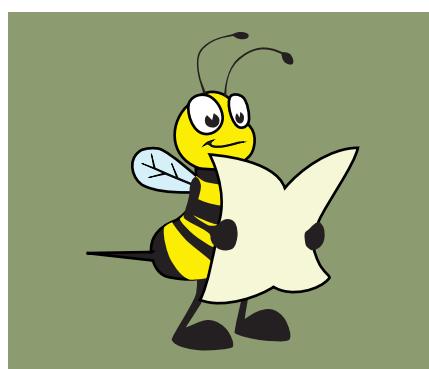
**Maroochy River** - Tony Minto 0419 661 843

**Woombye** - Chris Johnson, Shane Simpson 0407 520 078

**Yandina / North** - John Writer 0409 118 888

## Bee Buddy Register

For those members who would like a mentor, and for those who are happy to mentor, contact the Club Secretary Bill Spencer ([secretaryscbees@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryscbees@gmail.com), 0419 149 947).



## BEES IN THE NEWS

**NYPD beekeeper removes 25,000 bees from Times Square: fox5ny.com 6 July 2021**

“Nothing to BEE concerned about! Officer Mays the NYPD’s Beekeeper, swiftly responded to a swarm of bees in Times Square today, and gently removed approximately 25,000 bees from the location before transporting them to a safe location,” said the NYPD via Facebook.

**What can Covid-19 teach us about Varroa? BeeAware Newsletter - 5 July 2021**

Now more than ever, we are aware of how fast pathogens can spread. A single case can quickly be transmitted and turned into thousands more. Parasitic varroa mites are a lot like Covid-19. The mites are hard to spot, can spread easily, and it's a matter of ‘when’ they arrive in Australia, not ‘if’.

## Workshops for New Beekeepers

The upcoming Beekeeper Course on 14 August is fully booked. The next Course on 11 September has some places available.

**Booking is essential.**

Book online at:  
[www.sunshinecoastbeekeepersinc.org.au/workshops](http://www.sunshinecoastbeekeepersinc.org.au/workshops).



## The Club Online

To save our members time searching online, the Club’s website has links to the best beekeeping information and websites we can find.

[www.sunshinecoastbeekeepersinc.org.au](http://www.sunshinecoastbeekeepersinc.org.au)

Also, check out our Facebook page for more Club news.

[www.facebook.com/pg/sunshinecoastbeekeepersaustralia/posts/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/sunshinecoastbeekeepersaustralia/posts/?ref=page_internal)

## **Victoria prepares for 2021 Almond pollination: BeeAware Newsletter - 5 July 2021**

Beekeepers participating in the 2021 almond pollination season are reminded to adequately prepare their hives

## **Improving biosecurity and better understanding bee health in Australia – Agrifutures Australia**

AgriFutures Australia has released a report on projects delivered by PHA to improve biosecurity resources for the honey bee industry and to provide a better understanding of honey bee health in Australia. Activities included the development of an online biosecurity course, the inclusion of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice on the Bee Aware website, and the National Bee Biosecurity Program. The report also describes the results of an annual survey, focusing on pests and diseases, colony loss and pollination services.

## **Sticky fingerprints reveal true origins of honey - Physorg**

DNA testing Australian honey can reveal where it was produced and its main floral sources according to research published by Australia's CSIRO and partners at the University of Melbourne and Curtin University.

## **Growing Kimberley bush honey business for indigenous beekeepers – ABC Rural**

The gentle hum of honey bees, hard at work building their hives on Roebuck Plains

Station in WA's north-west, has become a familiar sound to Yawuru woman Naomi Appleby. The apprentice, 31, feels at home working under the shade of the melaleuca trees, where she has spent many months mastering the art of queen bee rearing, 30 kilometres north of Broome.

## **Biosecurity for Beekeepers: training course at the Plant Health Australia**

An [online training course](#) has been developed to make it easy for beekeepers to find out how to care for honey bees in accordance with the new Australian Honey Bee Industry

Biosecurity Code of Practice.

The Biosecurity for Beekeepers course explains why biosecurity is important, describes the main pest threats to bees and shows how to check hives for signs of pests and diseases.

It's designed for people with a basic understanding of beekeeping practices, but all beekeepers should find it helpful.

The course was developed by Plant Health Australia and the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council with funding from AgriFutures Australia.

## **Beekeeper of the Month - Katie Livock**

Each month in our newsletter we aim to profile one of our Club Members so we can all get to know each other a little better. Our July BoM is Katy Livock.

Katie became interested in beekeeping around five years ago after seeing the Flow Hive on Facebook and thinking, 'I might be able to do that!'

Before buying her first hive, Katie first joined our club as she wanted to learn from the best on the Coast. Her first meeting was at Buderim, when meetings were held from venue to venue before we obtained our permanent amazing home at Yandina.



**Katie Livock with one of her langstroth hives**

On walking into that first meeting she met Ron and Lynne Hulm who helped her learn so much. They were incredibly kind and she will be forever grateful. They showed her the importance of having mentors.

Katie was then invited onto the committee, where she continued to encourage mentoring to become an important part of the club's ethos. The importance of being part of a community really makes a difference in helping others feel confident to learn.



Katie, far right, at the opening of the Club House

Since being elected Vice-President of the club, each month she is responsible for running the 'Introduction to Beekeeping Course' at our clubhouse ('The Hive'). In Katie's daily life she is a teacher, so running the course wasn't a big stretch for her and she feels lucky to be able to help 'new-bees' gain new knowledge and learn to feel confident around this daunting new venture.

The school where Katie teaches encourages everyone to be lifelong learners and beekeeping is something she decided to learn more about - and since starting knows she will be learning about bees for the rest of her life! She is very grateful to her friend and current president Alby Taylor for trusting her with running the course. She knows what it feels like to start off with nothing more than a thought or dream to do something good for our environment, and how scary it can be. If she can help put people at ease about this then she knows that she is doing what Ron and Lynne did for her.

Katie is proud to have been a part of our ever-

growing club and hopes that everyone who is a member now, remains a member! Katie has only missed two meetings since joining the club both times she was out of the country.

In Katie's school, the little kids know her as the 'bee lady' because she dresses up in an inflatable Queen Bee costume and gives talks to the little kids about bees and pollination. A lot of fun!

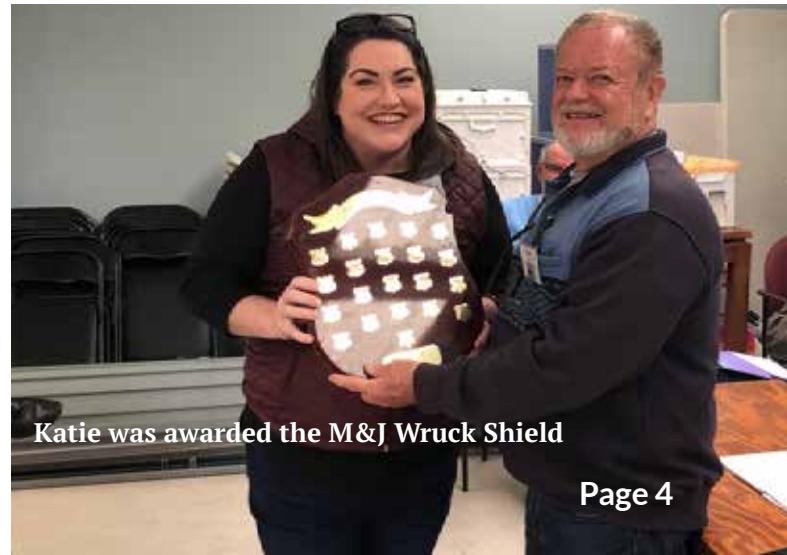


Katie in her Queen Bee costume

Beekeeping has also taught Katie that she is allergic to bees and how to manage stings.

Currently she holds 2 club trophies- The Best Honey in the World' and the 'M&J Wruck Shield' for the most awards at the Sunshine Coast Agricultural Show.

" I love being part of our community and supporting one another. It is so nice to have so many friends who I would not have met if it hadn't been for the Sunshine Coast Beekeepers. I feel very grateful to be on the committee with some very hard-working people who I am lucky enough to call my friends."



Katie was awarded the M&J Wruck Shield

# What's Flowering Now

Linda Blackwell

We have had a relatively mild winter with plenty of rain to encourage the flowering of our native trees and ground covers.

Acacias have been flowering since mid-June and will continue well into August – starting with **Queensland Silver wattle** (*Acacia Podalyriifolia*) followed by **Zig Zag wattle** (*Acacia Macradenia*) then by in bud **Brisbane Wattle** (*Acacia Fimbriata*), to name but a few.



Queensland Silver Wattle in flower



Hairpin Banksia



Happy Wanderer



Zig Zag Wattle in flower

Also flowering is the **Hairpin Banksia** (*Banksia Spinulosa*) plus groundcovers **Happy Wanderer** (*Hardinbergia Violacea*), **Pigface**, **Fan Flower** (*Scavola Aemula*), **Yellow Buttons** and **Snake Vine** (*Hibbertia Scandens*). You may also see the **Yellow Native Hibiscus** (*Hibiscus Tilleaceus*) in flower.

Many of our large trees are also flowering at this time of year from **Sassafras** in July to a number of eucalyptus varieties flowering

from May through to August – **Western White Gum** (*E. aragophlochia*), **Gympie Messamate** (*E. cloeytonia*), **Red Ironbark** (*E. crebora*), **Rose Gum** (*E. grandis*) and **Tallowwood** (*E. macrocarpa*).

The best heralder of trees in flower is the noise from rainbow lorikeets feasting on the nectar.

If you live near tea tree forests the common **White Tea Tree** (*Melaleuca Quinquenervia*) flowers from April to August.

Around Tanawha I haven't heard the lorikeets but there has been enough wattle flowering to keep the bees busy storing pollen.

In short our bees should be doing fine and spring should bring on a bumper honey flow.



Flowers of the White Tea Tree

If you want to keep up to date with what's flowering now in our region check out the facebook page of Mooloola Landcare Riverwatch as they post flowering indigenous plants weekly.

Mould growing under one of the hive's lids



# North Arm Hive Inspection

14 July 2021, notes taken by Kathy Lynch

## Hive 1

Box needs replacing as spilt in some corners and mouldy. Not a strong hive.

Brood: Queen NOT sighted. Capped honey, capped brood, larvae, eggs. One frame replaced with sticky as very dirty and mouldy.

Super 1: A little capped honey

## Hive 2

Not a strong hive.

Brood: One frame replaced with sticky as very dirty. Queen sighted and re-marked. Some capped honey and eggs.

## Hive 3

SHB and mould

Brood: Queen re-marked. Lots of pollen, larva, capped honey. A few drone cells and drones.

Super: Capped honey

## Hive 4

Lots of bees. Good hive. A few SHB.

Brood: Queen sighted. Eggs, larvae, capped brood, capped honey, pollen, no nectar

## Hive 5

Lots of lovey quiet bees. Good hive.

Brood: Queen sighted and re-marked. Eggs, larvae, capped brood, capped honey

## Hive 6

Not a strong hive.

Brood: Queen sighted. One frame replaced with sticky as very dirty and mouldy. Some capped honey, nectar, queen not very active.

## Hive 7

Not strong but ok hive.

Brood: Queen sighted and re-marked. Some eggs and larvae, capped brood

Super 1: Not much happening.

## Hive 8

A strong hive (best of the bunch). Some SHB.

Brood: Queen sighted. Lots of eggs, larvae, capped brood, pollen

Super 1: Some capped honey

## 4 Frame Nuc

Queen sighted. Lots of bees, larvae, capped honey.

## Flow

Not checked.

## Top Bar

Lots of bees. Didn't check every frame, but comb formed and some capped honey.

## Native

Not checked.

Top bar hive is going well



The hives have been moved to North Arm



# 2020 - 2021 Executive and Committee

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## Disclaimer

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# Splitting Your Hive

## Why split your hive

Splitting a hive can be beneficial to both bees and beekeepers. Both should get what they want:

- An additional hive for the beekeeper to increase honey production or to sell as a nuc.
- Prevents bees from swarming and thus losing 50% of the hive.
- Bees gain additional space to keep the queen busy and to store more honey.

Swarming is the way bees without our assistance achieve their goals:

- Their hive may be weakened due to disease or pests, most commonly small hive beetle but more seriously American or European foul Brood.
- A strong hive may be out of room both in the brood box and or the super or both.
- Swarming is also a way in their early origins they increased their numbers and spread ensuring their survival.

Regular inspection of the hive, both brood and super, is the beekeeper's method of managing the hive in relation to disease and pest management and preventing the bees from swarming.

Allowing bees to swarm is costly from the beekeepers point of view as the hive is weakened and will take time to regain strength and in addition our neighbours may not appreciate bees seeking a new home in their home range.

## When to split your hive

On the Sunshine Coast we are lucky to have a mild climate with reasonable rainfall and good tree coverage for the bees to forage.

Most beekeepers split their hives in spring, from September to January, as they are concerned to allow time for their hives to recover before the cooler winter period.

If a beekeeper makes a plan to split a hive in the first half of the year (January to April) they must analyse a number of factors to ensure they do not put their hive at risk for the period when they will be relying on their store of honey.

The best time to make a split is during the swarming season which is spring as this way you are working with the bees natural instincts.

## What to check before splitting your hive

- **Climatic considerations:** weather, temperature, rainfall, local indigenous trees in flower able to provide the nectar and pollen needs of the foraging bees.
- **A strong hive** with a large number of bees: on opening the hive you must observe large numbers of bees in both the super and brood box, across the top of the hive and on each frame.
- **Favourable characteristics and qualities of the bee-hive colony to split:**
  - Docile and friendly bees.
  - Strong and healthy – resistant to pests and diseases.
  - Prolific bees – eager to maintain a strong colony and produce honey.
  - Wintering – the hive is strong in early Spring.
  - Low urge to swarm.
  - Good grooming and housekeeping characteristics.

- The **brood box** has a solid pattern of brood:
  - The brood takes the shape of a football with the outside two frames being mostly honey with the brood increasing as you move towards the centre three frames of the hive. Look for a solid block of brood being formed in the central frames (frames four, five and six) all stages – eggs, pupae and capped brood.
  - There may be the occasional empty cell but, for the most part, the brood area should be reasonably solid across the foundation.
  - Spotty coverage could be a cause for concern, since many diseases show this as a calling card.
  - Pollen and honey will form above the brood in a rainbow shape.
  - The cap on brood cells should be smooth and slightly convex. If the caps are sunken, rather than raised, then this could indicate a disease.
- **Queen cells** and their position within the hive:
  - Queen cells are peanut shaped.
  - The colony will often “build up and tear down” queen cells, with no particular intent to fully develop a new queen - a practice run.
  - If the queen cells are built along the sides of the frames then the colony may be thinking of supersedure i.e. replacing the current queen with a new one.
  - If the queen cells are along the bottom of the frames then this should be taken seriously as a sign that the colony is considering swarming.
- The availability and presence of **drones** is essential if intending to allow the hive to create their own queen.

## How to split your hive

Before you split your hive using any of the following three methods, you will need:

- An empty five frame nucluus hive (“nuc”)

with the ability to close the entrance so that you can relocate the new hive to another site away from your apiary (min five kms).

- Protective gear i.e. bee suit etc.
- Smoker and hive tools
- Five frames with foundation or stickies, to replace the frames taken from the original hive.

### 1. A “walk away” split

This split allows the new hive to create their own queen. A novice would be advised to seek a mentor to go through the procedure as outlined.

- Take the following frames from the original hive and place into the nuc: one frame including eggs, and day three larvae (this larvae is extremely small), one frame of brood, a large number of nurse bees, one frame of pollen, one frame of honey and one frame of foundation.
- From egg to adult queen takes 16 days.
- Maturing and the mating flight can take another seven days
- The new queen should start laying on her return with another 21 days for a worker to hatch.
- This method will take between 30 and 50 days before new bees hatch.
- Timing is critical and a clear knowledge and understanding of the bee life-cycle is key. Identifying the eggs are critical as the new queen will be raised from one of the eggs rather than the larvae.
- Remember the queen has very different dietary needs and she is indulged from an early age.
- The bees will not queen just any larva. Instead a couple of days after the egg hatches the nurse bees will provide the chosen larva/e with the special secretions designed for royalty.
- Remember during this exercise the new colony will be left without foragers hence why they need adequate honey and

pollen.

- Check nine to 12 days after setting up the hive to ensure that the queen cell or cells are progressing.
- Days 12 to 30 – do not check the hive during this period as the new queen will emerge and is then away from the hive during her mating flight. A new queen can be extremely skittish. Know your life cycle.
- If all is going well the next check should be made to see that the new queen is laying eggs and that there is larvae. This should be three weeks after your first inspection.

## 2. Split by introducing a new queen cell

A novice would be advised to seek a mentor to go through the procedure as outlined.

- Take the following frames from the original hive and place into the nuc: two frames of nurse bees and brood including the developing queen cell or cells, one of honey, one of pollen and one frame of foundation.
- From pupae to adult the queen takes eight days.
- Maturity and mating flight can take another seven days.
- The new queen should start laying eggs on her return with another 21 days for a worker to hatch
- This method will take between 30 - 40 days before new bees hatch.
- Check the hive at day nine to make sure the cell is intact after setting up the hive and to ensure that the queen cell or cells are progressing. The queen will emerge through the bottom of the peanut.
- If all is going well the next check should be made in 21 days to check that the new queen is laying eggs and there is larvae and capped brood and new lighter coloured baby bees.
- Remember, you may not know the exact stage the queen cell is at when you place it in the new hive. You do not want to check the hive when the new queen is out of the

hive on her mating flight.

## 3. Split introducing a mated queen

- Take the following frames from the original hive and place into the nuc: requires two frames of capped brood with a large number of nurse bees, one frame of pollen, one frame of honey and one frame of foundation.
- This method will take approximately 21 days for new bees to hatch.
- Check the hive after two to three weeks to ensure the new queen has been accepted and is laying brood.

Please note, none of the above methods are guaranteed success.

Splitting is best done with a very strong hive as removing five frames effectively reduces the hive by 50%.

It is best to remove the new hive at least five kms from the apiary to let them settle independently.

You cannot expect to split a strong hive and immediately harvest honey as the hive needs to regenerate to full bee numbers.

Never put a super on a new hive until the bees are absolutely overflowing out of the brood box.

Your queen will live up to three years. If she is managing a normal brood there is no need to replace her. Ensure that she has enough space to lay eggs in the brood box by introducing new frames.

Remember you are effectively manipulating the genetic makeup of your hive.

The queen is the mother of all bees in the colony therefore raising a new queen or selecting a new queen from good stock is important.

In the first two splits described above, you cannot control the selection of drones as the new queens go out on a mating flight

In the third split type, you are dependent on the process of the queen breeder and the only sure way is by artificial insemination.

Remember more hives does not mean that you will harvest more honey. One strong hive will make more honey than many weak hives.

## **References and further reading**

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2. Australian Beekeeping Guide, 2014, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation.
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5. Bee2Bee Beekeeping Supplies, 'The Basics of Splitting a Beehive'
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9. The Australian Beekeeper, 2012, Splitting Hives