



# THE AMATEUR BEEKEEPER

Bimonthly newsletter for  
THE AMATEUR BEEKEEPER'S ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

*Better Apiculture Through Knowledge*

Volume 47 Issue 6

[www.beekeepers.asn.au](http://www.beekeepers.asn.au)

December/January 2011

## Membership Fees and Insurance Premiums for 2011

At the Total ABA Meeting held recently it was decided that the fees for 2011 will remain as they were for 2010. Despite some premium rise there have been no significant increase in either membership fees or insurance charges over the past four years.

Compulsory ABA membership fee	to which can be added	Optional personal insurance policy for beekeeping activities		
		Number of hives	2011 fee	"early bird special"
The 2011 fee of \$40 covering ABA news sheet, ABA events and insurance for ABA activities. <i>\$35 only with the "early bird special"</i> .		1 to 20	\$40	<b>\$35</b>
		21 to 50	\$55	<b>\$50</b>
		51 to 100	\$75	<b>\$70</b>

Current insurance cover ceases on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. There is no automatic cover extended into 2011 while members or clubs arrange to pay.

Please pay your fees promptly to your club since the "early bird" special is strictly limited to clubs who remit their fees and insurance premium to the ABA before 25-Dec-10

Since the receipt that is written by your membership officer/treasurer is the prime proof of membership and insurance payment it is important that the receipt specifies the amount paid for ABA fees with an expression like "ABA membership for 2011" and the amount paid for insurance with an expression like "personal beekeeping insurance 1- 20 hives". The club receipts must be maintained since in the event of an insurance claim they would be the critical evidence of insurance payment. Likewise members must keep their receipt to prove that they have insurance.

### A complaint about the web based swarm system

I had a phone call from a member of the public who had used the web based swarm notification system to call an ABA member to her house to collect a swarm. As it was told to me the swarm was easy to collect, hanging from the branch of tree at shoulder height. She was irate that the ABA swarm collector had told her that the bees "were feral and had to be killed". She, quite rightly, believed that amateur beekeepers came to collect swarms and to preserve the bees, not to kill them as part of a sideline pest extermination business.

The swarm web system was developed to facilitate amateur beekeepers collecting swarms. Ideally the swarms would be collected for free as a way of a community service. I recognise that some beekeepers are also licensed pest exterminators but under no circumstances should the swarm web system be used to promote or gain work for a pest extermination business. If a swarm can be collected it should be collected and hived into a bee box!

A reminder about the rule that states that the message that you put up on the web based swarm system must include your base suburb. Mobile phone numbers give no clue as to the likely travel distance to the swarm from your home. An expression such as "Dave from Beecroft will collect your swarms for free and house them in beehives – phone ...." is fine. There is nothing to prevent you living in Sydney and covering all the post codes in Newcastle but you must give members of the public some information about the likely travel distance. It would also be sensible if you are covering post codes well outside your home territory to check if ABA members who live in that area are not already covering those post codes.

ABA members are well distributed across Sydney, Central Coast, Hunter and Macarthur regions. If every member covered his/her own post code and two or three other adjacent post codes then most suburbs would be covered and the need for some to cover a wide range of post codes would be lessened.

*Dave Wilson ABA Secretary*

**The Association's Annual 2011 Field Day will be hosted by the Macarthur branch at CAMDEN SHOWGROUND, Exeter Street on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

## NOTES FROM THE COMBINED FIELD DAY at Tocal Agricultural College

A clear sunny day with two large E. Tericornis blossoming and about 110 people present. After a welcome by DPI Officer Doug Somerville and a health and safety warning concerning allergies (3% of the population is allergic) there was the usual hands-on look inside the two waiting hives with Doug and Nick Annand delving into each. As usual this feature was most informative and aimed at the new beekeepers.

This was followed with a demonstration of selecting comb suitable and the extraction of honey. Alan Weldon and Patricia Heenan did a great job and not too much mess.

Doug Somerville talked about courses available on beekeeping for profit and hobby.

Ron Irving very well known to the ABA, gave his informed and humorous talk on the making of mead – something Ron has been doing for a very long time. Ron emphasised the importance of sterile equipment and the danger of vinegar moth!

Proportion of honey used will determine sweetness. Times suggested in recipe are not necessarily critical in obtaining an acceptable mead.

Sydney water is very low in salts and can be used directly from tap but not necessarily so in other areas.

Can take two days before yeast starts to work.

Failure to start fermenting could indicate too much starter used.

There is no secondary fermentation.

Mead is almost always less than 12% alcohol and keeps 5-7 years before decline starts.

Finished mead will be cloudy and will need decanting to clarify.

Moisture in air contacting honey can cause fermentation and therefore change the flavour!

If intending to reuse bottles it is important to rinse them before storage to reduce residues.

The gas pellets produce sodium metasilphide  
RON'S RECIPE WILL BE REPRINTED IN THIS  
NEWSLETTER SOON

Doug Somerville gave a talk on AFB: Visual signs:  
Quick breakdown 2-3 months to advanced state.

Ropes out with smooth consistency.

Diagnosis visual then laboratory test.

Smell not reliable.

Look for perforated caps.

*Three different colours of pollen denotes a varied diet and is very good sign of bees doing well.*

Concludes with a look at infected hives.

Significant risks are: Interchange of equipment – boxes frames etc.

Bees robbing honey are a real risk of infection.

Swarm (as against nest) – low risk when onto new foundation.

Do not old feed honey back to bees.

Slides for testing should be sent to:

NSW VETERINARY LABORATORY, PMB 8, CAMDEN,  
NSW 2570

The subject of Small Hive Beetle was talked about by Col Wilson and Colin Fitzsimons.

The beetle will lay eggs anywhere inside the hive. Once the larvae hatches it exits and pupates in the ground. Permethrin on ground around hive may help destroy larvae.

Recommended is a trap toward front entrance on bottom and trap under lid near top.

A new chemical trap APITHOR should be available in 3 months – cost \$5 each.

### SUPPORT YOUR COMMITTEE WITH YOUR PRESENCE AT CASINO FOR THE AGM & COMP

Honey and Pollen Flora was addressed by Doug Somerville. 80% of honey production comes from eucalypts.

Flowering is specific to each species.

200 of eucalypts species have some significance to beekeepers. Flowering is not regular but often needs a rainfall trigger.

Patersons Curse (*echium plantagineum*) is the single most reliable forage source. Non-indigenous weeds and shrubs are also important.

Wet year often results in more pollen collected.

Bees in good conditions may forage an area of 50sq km around hive.

It takes three days to ripen nectar.

Eucalypt characteristics – bark type, leaf shape, buds, gumnuts, shape and size of tree, location – natural or planted, ridge or side of hill or gully.

Box and Ironbark are premium trees.

The coming reprint of Honey and Pollen Flora by Alan Clemson is due 2011.

It was good to see so many members supporting this day and traveling so far to attend. Always nice to see so many familiar faces again this year.

**Photographs from this event are available for viewing on the website: under recent events**

A short meeting of your ABA Council was held immediately after this Field Day. You branch secretary should have received the minutes from this meeting.

## Australia's Honeybee News

The Journal of the NSW Apiarists' Association Inc.

*“The Voice of the Beekeeper”*

Published bi-monthly

Annual Subscription - \$33

Visa, MasterCard welcome

For more information contact:

**The Editor**

**PO Box 352**

**Leichhardt NSW 2040**

Email: [honeybee@accsoft.com.au](mailto:honeybee@accsoft.com.au)

Dear Beekeeper,

RIRDC has engaged me to write a manual titled "Planting for Pollen and Nectar Supply" that is to assist bee-friendly planting decisions across the landscape.

I am seeking beekeepers involvement in the project by way of a survey of appropriate plants.

The project will provide design and description of artificial plantings as a resource for use by honey bees and other nectivorous and pollenivorous species in various Australian settings.

The project will consider,

- Five physical settings, namely, domestic gardens, streetscapes, urban open spaces, on-farm plantings and "bee-farm" plantings
- Each physical setting will be considered in relation to four climatic settings, warm humid, hot arid, temperate and cold climate regions.
- Four species each of useful trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants will be described for each combination of physical x climatic setting.
- It is anticipated that in total some 150 plant species will be described in a standard format that will include text and

pictorial details such as physical characteristics and requirements, flowering times and durations, productivity with respect to pollen and nectar and other useful attributes.

The project output will be in the form of a high quality spiral bound volume of 150-200 pages. The book will have broad appeal to beekeepers, gardeners, landscape designers, urban planners, local government, farm and land managers.

There has been a recent global increase in interest and practice of urban beekeeping. Much of the focus of the book is urban areas, this opens the plant list up to pollen and nectar producing non-natives.

Farm planting, revegetation, carbon planting and other natural resource management with a bee-focus will likely advocate planting native species.

The "bee-farm" concept, perhaps a revisit of pre-migratory beekeeping will likely have a full complement of native and non-native plants to provide a continual flowering, foraging, pollen and nectar variety and drought tolerance. Any comments on this concept will be greatly appreciated and any known examples will be visited where possible.

**Location: City or region. State..... Description of your region.....**

<b>Honey/Nectar/Pollen Priority</b>			Gardens	Street Scapes	Urban Open Space	On Farm Rural landscape	Bee Farm Stationary Beekeeping	Honey Description & crystallization rate
1 Common name								
Scientific name								
Frequency years	Flowering Start mnth	Duration weeks						
Pollen value 1-5	Honey Yield Kg/hive							
2 Common name								
Scientific name								
Frequency years	Flowering Start mnth	Duration weeks						
Pollen value 1-5	Honey Yield Kg/hive							
3 Common name								
Scientific name								
Frequency years	Flowering Start mnth	Duration weeks						
Pollen value 1-5	Honey Yield Kg/hive							
4 Common name								
Scientific name								
Frequency years	Flowering Start mnth	Duration weeks						
Pollen value 1-5	Honey Yield Kg/hive							
5 Common name								
Scientific name								
Frequency years	Flowering Start mnth	Duration weeks						
Pollen value 1-5	Honey Yield Kg/hive							

Your contact details: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Tele \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your help**  
**Mark Leech, 14 Belhaven Cr, Launceston 7250, TAS Reply by email is preferred [mleech@iinet.net.au](mailto:mleech@iinet.net.au)**

## Next deadline for material to be included in this newsletter: Thursday, 20th January

### FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Northern Rivers Branch

Our meetings/field days are held on the last Sunday of the month. 10.00am start.

*President/Secretary: Merv McDonald 66283687*

*Treasurer: Peter Dickson-Smith 66492009*

#### The Illawarra Beekeepers' Association Inc

Meetings are held at the Bee Garden, Eton Street (south), Sutherland.

DECEMBER/ JANUARY 2011:

5/12/10 – Christmas Party for full details of the branch activities on that day please refer to Ken Simpsons' Illawarra page enclosed with your bulletin

Please note: There are no other activities (meetings) besides the Christmas party, during December/January. February/ March meeting details will be reported in the ABA Bulletin covering this period PLUS you will be advised of program details at later meetings this year.

*President: Graham Jackson 9718 6016*

*Secretary: Geoff Henning 9528 4292*

*Email: [illawarra.beekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:illawarra.beekeepers@gmail.com)*

#### Macarthur Beekeepers Assoc Inc

The Macarthur Branch meets at the Jack Nash Tennis Centre at Jack Nash Place, Currans Hill at Mount Anna on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm

Field days at Campbelltown apiary at 9:00 am

*President: Bruce Wallis 9605 6688*

*Treasurer: Jean Haavasalu 46818540*

*Secretary: Barry Austen 48 851 705*

#### Nepean Branch Inc.

Nepean Branch Meeting at Nepean High School, from 9.30 onward.

BYO Lunch, suit & veil. Please make sure you close the gates behind you, when entering and leaving.

Sunday December 12th. Extracting and or queen marking.

Sunday January 9th. Stocktake and maintenance of hive material.

Sunday February 13th. Possibly extracting or hunting more queens!

Membership due now, no discount after Xmas.

If you require further info, ring Eddie on 4751 3941.

#### Hunter Valley Branch

Meetings held at Hunter Region Botanic Gardens. The usual day is the fourth Sunday of the month.

Meeting dates: NO MEETING IN DECEMBER, January meeting Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10am.

*President: John Humphries (02) 49828715*

*Secretary: Jim Wright (02) 4959 3138*

#### Central Coast Branch

Meetings held on 3rd Wednesday of the month commencing 7.30pm at SOHIER COMMUNITY HALL, entry off Shirley Rd., Ourimbah, on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Starting time 7.30pm.

All things relevant for amateur beekeepers.

New visitors are more than welcome to attend.

*President: Martin Roberts (02) 43721381*

*Secretary: Toni Mitchell (02) 43321597*

#### Parramatta District Branch

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of month. Field Day on following Sunday. Meetings held at James Ruse High School Ag Section, Carlingford

Meetings in Agriculture classroom – field days in club apiary – entrance via Baker St

Wednesday meetings 7:30 pm start

*President: Peter Thorley*

*Secretary Dave Wilson 94842596 Treasurer: Norm Webb*

*Extractors Claudio Natoli 9629 9621*

*Ray Szymanski 9869 2400*

This is the list of five DVD's that Victor Bilokin has available for Parramatta branch –

These videos are available for clubs to borrow, when they are short of speakers for talks on bee subjects.

Victor can be contacted on 027427166 for the loan of the DVDs:

\*The Mysterious Bee - A nature documentary about Bees,

Bee Behaviour and Basic Beekeeping - Made with the assistance of the Australian Film Commission.

The next four DVD's are made by the NSW Department of primary industries.

\*Package Bee production in Aust.

\*Bee Parasites exotic to Aust.

\*Chalkbrood Disease of bees.

\*Endemic Bee Disease

I am interested in partnering with keepers to pick up and process raw beeswax, will consider reasonable offers but considering I am starting out like many of the hobbyists, looking for good deal that can last for regular planned pickup route over time. Will take in rawest form for cheapest price and process here. Appreciate any contacts.

Colman Ridge, Director 0417730457 / 07 5492 8329

PO Box 3481 South Brisbane QLD 4101

[www.greenfest.com.au](http://www.greenfest.com.au)

*The Amateur Beekeeper is the newsletter for The Amateur Beekeepers' Association of New South Wales Incorporated.*

*Contributions to The Amateur Beekeeper are welcome. Material must be submitted, in writing, to the Editor before the 15<sup>th</sup> of month to be considered to inclusion in The Amateur Beekeeper the following issue or subsequent issues at the Editor's discretion. Articles published do not necessarily contain the views of the Editor unless specifically expressed and whilst every care is exercised, the Editor and/or Council of ABA (individually or corporately) do not hold themselves responsible for errors or omissions. Information contained in this publication is provided as general advice only. For application to specific circumstances, professional advice should be sought. All inserted material must be booked with the Editor and may not necessarily contain the views of the Editor and/or Council of ABA.*

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