



**Amateur  
Beekeepers  
Association**  
NSW MID NORTH COAST

# The Bee Line

**Newsletter of the Mid North Coast Amateur  
Beekeeping Association**

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## August 2020 Newsletter

### MNC ABA President's Report

Hello everyone.

Many thanks to Sharif and Yvette for hosting our last meeting. Everyone respected the COVID rules, which we will need to keep up for the foreseeable future at our meetings. Andrea, our editor, will add the rules again elsewhere in this newsletter.

Some timely hive management was carried out on our host's hives. It will be interesting to have some feedback down the track on the newly acquired polystyrene boxes, into which the bees were transferred.

You will find a summary of the talk I did on understanding bee nutrition attached. I hope it is of some help to you.

I have been gathering suggestions for 'themes' for future meetings. If you have a particular topic that you would like us to address, please pass it on and we shall see what we can do.

I think we are all aware of the health benefits of honey, all honey, but Manuka in particular. But how about the information coming out about beekeepers having resistance to SARS type viruses due to bee venom. Could this be true? Guess time will tell.

Regards,  
Allan

#### Next Meeting -

**Date:** 13 September 2020

**Time:** 10 for 10.30am

**Address:** 142 East Bonville Rd –  
Bonville

**Contact:** Matt Connell – Ph: 6653 4375

Al Thomas - Ph: 0428 712 587

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Glenn Locke  
Carina Kerr  
Elsbeth Haenggi



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## **REGISTERING A BEE HIVE**

If you want to keep one or more hives of honey bees in NSW, you will need to be registered as a beekeeper with the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI). You can apply & pay for this registration online.

You must comply with the *Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)* and other legislation, **plus** meet 4 key conditions of registration:

1. Hives
  - bees must be kept in a hive frame
  - each hive must be identified with your registration number, & must comply with any conditions of your registration
2. Written records of the following information must be kept for 5 years:
  - if hives are moved from one location to another, you must record the date moved, details of each location, number of hives moved, & name of person who moved them
  - if a hive has been lost, stolen or destroyed, the date of occurrence & the number of hives involved
3. The DPI must be notified of the disposal or sale of any bee hives, within 28 days
4. Hive location: the hives must be managed to minimise the risk of nuisance or threat to the amenity or health of any other person or property, with revised location requirements including primary address

In addition, you should examine your hives regularly for signs of any notifiable bee disease or pest.

For more information on the obligations of beekeepers, please refer to the Department of Primary Industries website.



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## REPORT FROM JULY 2020 MEETING

Thanks again to our hosts Sharif Batieh & Yvette James for a great day out in Nana Glen. Allan Thomas shared his expertise re bee nutrition and gave a very informative presentation (the notes of which you will find below). Glenn Locke demonstrated the new Flow-Hive 2. Some improvements include windows on both sides, a refined bottom base, stainless steel beetle tray, an inbuilt spirit level (fancy!) and adjustable feet to facilitate the required backward-sloping position. Glenn was keen to emphasise that the Flow-Hive is a harvesting system design, meaning that bees within still need to be managed carefully. John Carroll, our Biosecurity Officer, presented a new Small Hive Beetle trap, then the group split in two to inspect the on-site hives. Thanks to Allan & Glenn for sharing your knowledge in this way. A self-catering lunch was welcomed, followed by the moment everyone was anticipating – the lucky door draw, where a number of fortunate attendees left for home with some useful beekeeping tools and equipment. Thanks to all those involved in making the day such a success.



## MNCABA LIBRARY BUZZ



*“More than Honey”*

DVD Narrated by John Hurt. “Spectacularly beautiful” according to The New York Times. A story that roams from California, to the Swiss Alps, Berlin, China and Australia in the quest to understand why our honeybee colonies are dying and why it is so important that they are saved.

Borrow it now!



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## **FRANK'S HIVE HINTS No 8**

Now that the cold weather is [almost] over, you may do a bit more manipulation with the hive, but take the precaution of not leaving the brood out too long.

Bees may not be progressing in some hives. Check the population & brood pattern. Make sure the queen is present. If you can't find her, look for eggs or young brood. Check if bees have stores of honey and pollen. Examine all brood combs for signs of disease. Make sure strong hives don't become overcrowded or start queen cells. Sometimes bees are determined to swarm but much can be done to prevent it. Enlarge the entrance if it has been restricted. Give foundation as this is the time bees like to build rather than store honey.

This time of the year, strong hives can be split but don't be too ambitious, causing your strong hive to become weak. Consider the prospects for honey & pollen, and the weather for the next few weeks. If nothing is coming in, the hives won't prosper, bees won't build new comb, and foundation will be chewed & warped. Be a good observer.

LOVE THOSE BEES.

*(from archive of Frank's Hive Hints by the late Frank Karabaic)*

## **BEES IN THE NEWS**

As Allan mentioned in his report above, there are some interesting links being made between bee venom and COVID-19. A survey of beekeepers in Hubei province (the epicentre of COVID-19 in China) was conducted by a local beekeepers association. They questioned 5115 beekeepers between February 23 to March 8 2020, including 723 from Wuhan. None of these beekeepers developed symptoms associated with COVID-19, and their health was 'totally normal'.

Subsequent interviews by a team of specialists in Oncology and Animal Science with five apitherapists (who use honey bee venom to treat or prevent certain diseases), and the investigation of 121 of their patients found that: "Without any protective measures, two of the five apitherapists were exposed to suspected COVID-19 cases and others were exposed to confirmed COVID-19 cases, but none of them were infected eventually. Additionally, none of the 121 patients were infected by SARS-CoV-2, and three of them had close contact with immediate family members who were confirmed cases". The report, published July 15 2020 in *Toxicon*, calls for further research to test the theory that stimulation of the immune system by bee venom may reduce susceptibility to COVID-19. To read the full article, go to [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)



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## TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING BEE NUTRITION By Allan Thomas

Bees need Nectar, Pollen and Water for their life purposes. There are reams of information on bee nutrition. Hopefully the following will help you get past the starting line with your understanding.

### **Nectar**

Nectar is a sweet liquid gathered from flowers. It provides energy so the bees can fly, keep warm and breed.

Surplus nectar is stored and capped as honey. They tend not to use these reserves unless they need to. It is important that the beekeeper does not over harvest these reserves, particularly in late Autumn as reserves may be required during Winter and early Spring (or drought).

Bees are preferential feeders & will fly past some types of flowers to get to others. This can be a problem with the pollination of some crops. They may fly 5 kms to visit flowers, well outside your backyard!

Sugar or sugar syrup can be fed to bees in times of shortage, but it is not a balanced diet. It is better to feed before it becomes urgent rather than play "catch up" eg. in the Winter. Commercial apiarists will move hives from one "honey flow" to another throughout the year, sometimes moving the hives large distances.

### **Pollen**

Pollen is the main source of protein for the bees. It is needed to feed brood for growth, making body parts, and hive build up. You will notice this build up particularly in Spring. It is important to monitor the build up as swarming may occur.

Bees will draw on their own body protein when stressed, often in Spring or on a heavy honey flow. Just like a cow uses its food to produce milk for its calf, bees use protein to make royal jelly to feed brood.

Bees require the pollen to contain in the order of 20% to 24% crude protein. Some species of flowers only provide 5%, others in excess of 30% (You can look up tables to see what produces what).

Protein is made up of "building blocks" called amino acids. There are many types, but ten are essential and must be provided to the bees in their diet. They can make a few other important amino acids themselves, if their diet is good.

It is rare to find sufficient quantities of all ten essential amino acids in one type of pollen. However, if the bees bring in a variety of pollens, their amino acid requirements are often met. As a rule of thumb, I look for three colours of pollen, either on the legs as the bees arrive at the entrance to the hive, or stored in the cells.

When choosing or making a pollen substitute, it is important that all the essential amino acids are present (look up tables to find out what they are). An amino acid called iso-leucine is often deficient. It should be present at a rate above 4%.



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## **TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING BEE NUTRITION** (continued)

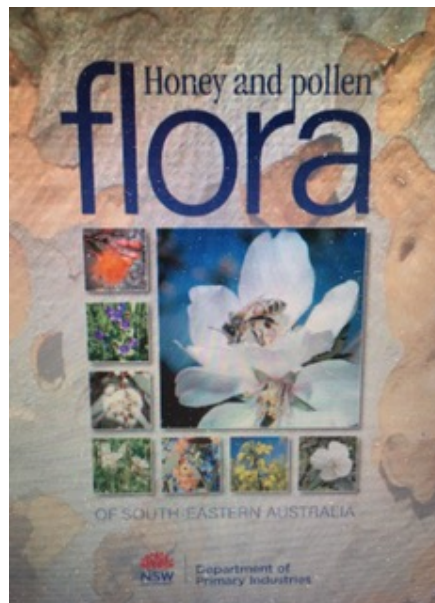
Products based on soy flour are often OK in this respect. Substitutes may be fed as powders or patties/sausage pieces.

Bees feeding solely on honey flows from White Box or Lucerne may become stressed due to the lack of isoleucine in the protein, and the hive may collapse. The nectar flow (honey) is good, however the bees are breeding profusely and making lots of wax.

The following are a few examples of plants that offer a balanced diet for bees: Spotted Gum (*Corymbia maculata*), Broad-Leafed Stringybark (*E calignosa*), Faba/Fava Beans (*Vicia faba*) and Blakely's Red Gum (*E blakelyi*).

## **REFERENCE BOOK AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE**

*'Honey & Pollen Flora of South Eastern Australia'* by Dr Doug Sommerville.



“Understanding the biology of flora and its value to honey bees is core knowledge for successful beekeeping”. This reference book is a culmination of over 30 years of research, and provides scientific and practical knowledge to help keep your bee colonies healthy.

Cost: \$180 (includes postage of \$5)

Available from Tocal College: [booksales@tocal.com](mailto:booksales@tocal.com)

Allow 5-15 days for delivery



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Beekeeping Association

## BEE SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

### Foundation and Apithor

Don Woods has our club's supplies of Wax Foundation and Apithor SHB traps. Please contact him on 0418 112 516 or by email: [rabbittrap2873@yahoo.com](mailto:rabbittrap2873@yahoo.com) . The price of foundation is \$2.50 per sheet.

Apithor traps are \$6.50.

### Other Services and supplies

- Michael Worraker - Queen bees for sale: the current breeding stock available is Joe Horner Italian Breeder, Caucasian Breeder, artificially inseminated (AI) Cordovan & AI Italian Breeder queens. Queen cells & Nucs will also be available. A new supply of Agrisea bee feed has also arrived. Ph: 0408 293 031
- Ross Wood - Mated queens and nucs (Grafton). Ph: 0421 817 710
- Steve Fowler - All manner of beekeeping equipment for sale. Steve and Janet usually turn up at meetings with a ute full of gear. To pre-order call 0418 412 621
- Glenn Locke - Mt Coramba Apiculture – One day beekeeping workshops and Flow-hive mentoring: [www.oraravalleyhoney.com.au](http://www.oraravalleyhoney.com.au) Ph: 0459 066 297
- Steve Hayes - Little Star Bees - Nucs and hives plus native bee courses. Ph (02) 6564 8737
- Coffs Beekeeping Supplies – Ph: 0447 308 906  
[www.coffsbeekeepingsupplies.com.au](http://www.coffsbeekeepingsupplies.com.au)
- Di McQueen and Scott Richardson - Queens, nucs, hives and beekeeping equipment – [www.honeybeehives.com.au](http://www.honeybeehives.com.au) Ph: 0411 097 275

## TRAINING COURSES

### Two-day workshops in Beekeeping

**1. 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2020: TAMWORTH**

**2. 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2020: BELLINGEN**

**Tutor:** Allan Thomas

**Venues:** Tamworth: Tamworth Beekeeping Supplies, 397 Armidale Rd, Tamworth.  
Bellingen: 503 Roses Road, Bellingen.

**Workshop Fee:** \$345 per person for 2 days, 9am – 4pm.

These two-day workshops are a series of lectures and practical tasks. The course endeavours to develop sufficient knowledge, skills and confidence for you to begin keeping bees.

**Book/Enquire:** Allan - email; [beekeepingworkshops@gmail.com](mailto:beekeepingworkshops@gmail.com) or phone 0428712587



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### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### 1. Next Meeting – Sunday 13 September 2020

Location: 142 East Bonville Rd, Bonville

**(Specific directions will be emailed to you all a week before the meeting to act as a reminder, and to save you from possible Google Map failures!).**

Contact: Matt Connell Ph: 6653 4375

Time : 10 for 10:30 am

Cost: \$5 contribution

Bring your own food and drinks and chairs (see note below regarding COVID-19 requirements).

2. **October** – 11/10/20 – Monica Rich, Urunga

3. **November** – 08/11/20 – CHCCS – Bonville

4. **December** – Xmas Party – any ideas?

### COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES FOR OUR MEETINGS (current 20/08/20)

While everyone is at risk of acquiring COVID-19, the more mature among our population, and those with underlying health issues, are particularly vulnerable to developing more severe symptoms and complications. For this reason, we all have a responsibility to protect one another when gathering for meetings, which will be outdoors for the time being. The following steps are to be followed as a consequence:

- If you feel unwell, and/or have symptoms, get tested and stay at home.
- If you have visited declared 'hotspots' in Victoria or NSW, or have had visitors from these areas, stay at home.
- Bring everything you need with you. At this time we can not share anything, including cups, plates, utensils or food and drink. There can be no buffet.
- When you arrive, use the hand sanitizer provided – often – and for a period of 20 seconds each time. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. If your hands are visibly soiled you need to wash with soap and water.
- Record your name and contact details in the book provided, using your own pen (just like you do when visiting cafes, restaurants, pubs). This is to allow for contact tracing if needed, and is vitally important to safeguard our friends, family and healthcare workers.
- Practice social distancing: you must stay 1.5m away from others. Feel free to wear a mask – this is particularly important if participating in the hive inspections, as social distancing in that situation is not possible. Single use masks are available for purchase on the day @ \$1 each.
- Unfortunately there can be no handshakes, hugs or kisses as a greeting! Do the elbow-bump, or perform a beautiful *Namaste* (it means "I bow to you": place hands together at the heart, close your eyes, and bow).

**Monitor your emails for changes or cancellations if conditions alter.**



