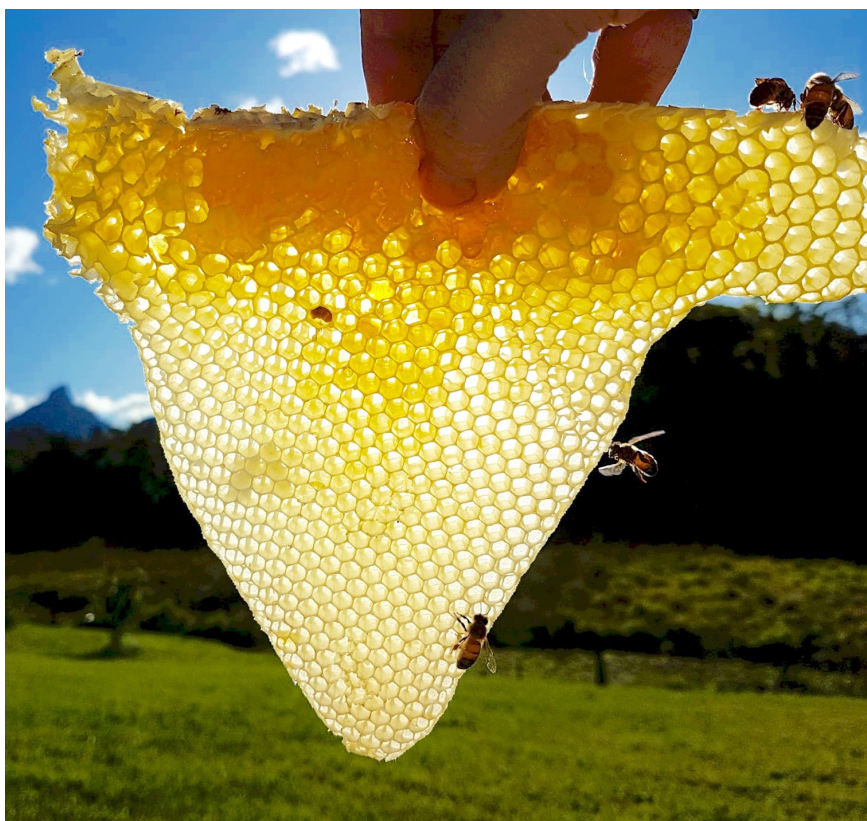


THE BUZZ



The official newsletter of the Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers Society Inc. Est. 1979

Website: gcabs.net.au  [Gold Coast Amateur Beekeeping Society](https://www.facebook.com/GoldCoastAmateurBeekeepingSociety)



DATE SAVERS

The Gold Coast Amateur Beekeeper's Society inc. welcomes new members, existing members and visitors to attend our meetings. Non-members attending will be asked to make a gold coin donation.

MEMBER MEETINGS

- **Sun 19th March 10am-noon**
GCABS Headquarters. Guest Speaker Kevin Tracy (BeeZone Apiaries). Topics: Mystery Queen-lessness/Brood-lessness, Requeening- How/When/Why
- **Sun 16th April 10am-noon**
GCABS Headquarters. Topic: Mead tasting. Please BYO Mead plus a plate to share. Guests: Bayside Beekeepers Association
- **Sun 21st May** Topic & details to be advised

OTHER EVENTS

- **Sat 11th March 10-11am Bee Venom Collector workshop** FREE for GCABS members) at the GCABS Headquarters. Register here : <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/545000710797>
- **Sat 18th – Sun 19th March Beginners in Beekeeping Course** [Click here to enrol](#)
- TAFE QLD at Robina offer a bundle of beekeeping classes with the next round beginning May 20th and running 6 weeks on Saturdays. Classes can be taken individually or as a package. Info here: <https://tafeqld.edu.au/course/19/19122/complete-beekeeping-bundle>
- TAFE QLD Stand alone course on Native bees: <https://tafeqld.edu.au/course/19/19125/introduction-to-australian-native-bees>
- **Sat/Sun 27th & 28th May Australian Bush Food Conference.** Location 4808-4822 Mount Lindsay Highway North Maclean Qld. For more information email: bushfoods@atac.qld.edu.au
- **June 18th 9am – 3 pm. Gold Coast Native Plants Market** @ Nerang Country Parklands
- **Committee Meetings:** All welcome to attend our online Committee meetings. Email the secretary and ask for the link. Gcabs.secretary@beekeepers.asn.au



A warm welcome to all our newest members:

Oxana A, Robert B, Jason C, Selena D, Theo D, Keira H, Simone J, Joy Mc, Elissa P, Bernard P, Brian R.

From GCABS President and Feb Member Meeting Review



Thanks to the approx 20 members who made the trip to Bayside Beekeepers for our Feb meeting. What a lovely day and terrific location. Cheers Jac N. for taking some photos.

We learned about the varied and nomadic history (sound familiar?) of the Bayside group since establishing in 1987, we met some wonderfully welcoming and hospitable beekeepers, participated in the splitting of a stingless bee colony, had a guided tour of the extracting plant and storage areas, and enjoyed a morning tea fit for kings in very comfortable surrounds.



February has traditionally been the month for our field trips and long standing members will recall visiting commercial apiaries in the past, from the smaller end of the scale to the larger rural locations within cooe of us here in SE QLD. Last months' trip was both highly informative and entertaining and we can learn much about how to best set up a community apiary and honey production operation from the experience of our neighbours.

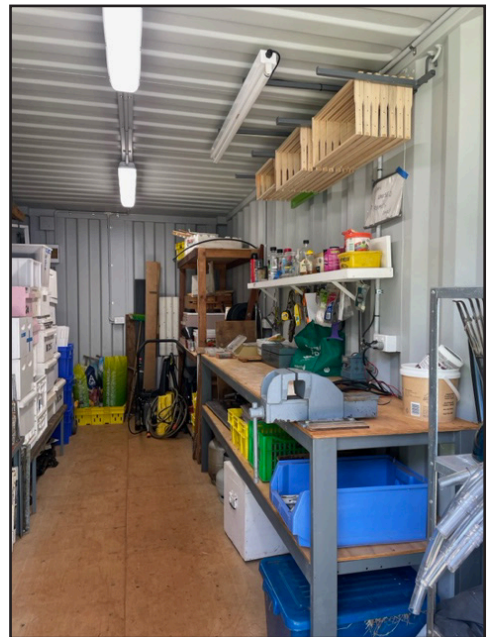


Looking forward to seeing the Bayside mob at one of our meetings and later in the year at an Open day event (to be scheduled).

This month there are no shortage of events to keep you up to date, engaged and well informed. Learn about bee venom collection March 11. Begin your beekeeping journey March 18-19. Answer those curious questions about queens and re-queening March 19. Settle in for a complete beekeeping education over 6 weeks starting May 20th. Listen to the latest podcast episode Varroa Mite Update available on your favourite podcast platform now.

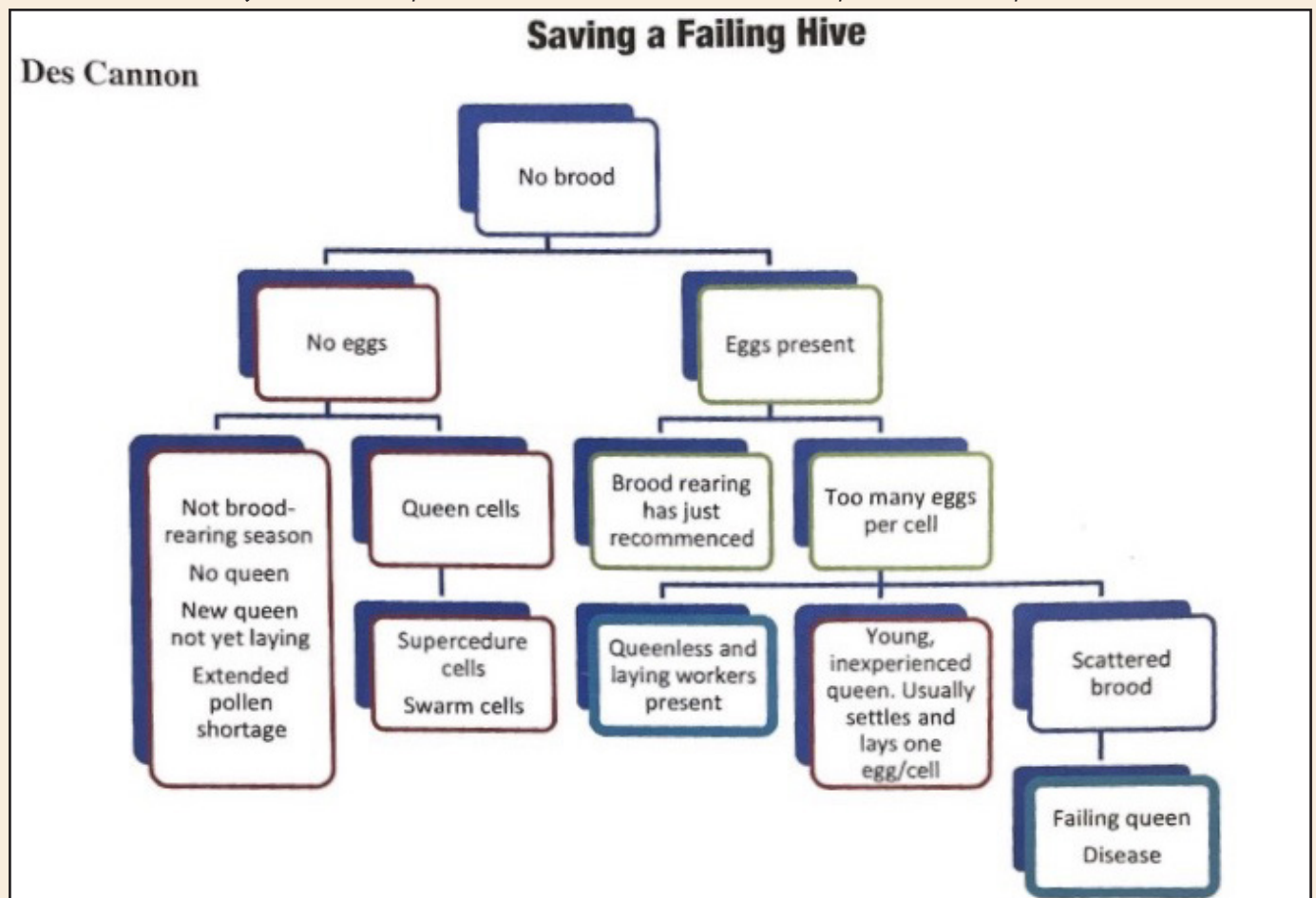
That's quite enough for now.

*Become informed, be proactive, make a plan and stay ahead of the bees. See you all soon.
Kathy*



Saving a Failing Hive

based on an article by Des Cannon published in the Australasian Beekeeper Journal, Sept 2014



Often people are driven to purchase a queen because of a discovery of a lack of brood in a hive & realise that is queenless. To requeen a hive that has been queenless for some time can be complex.

Stepping back, a few things firstly need to be established:

1. Why is there no brood? Consider ALL the options in the flowchart above.
2. Is the hive in fact queenless? (Add a frame with eggs to see if they build queen cells)
3. What is needed in the hive to make the bees more likely to accept a new queen?
4. Is requeening the wisest option?

Having considered the options in the flowchart & having decided that the hive is actually queenless (or in drastic need of requeening due to poor performance, bad temperament, poor disease resistance or just plain failing), you now need to enhance the chances of a new queen being accepted.

Before adding a new queen consider this

A queen will only be stimulated to lay eggs when:

- Both fresh pollen & nectar are readily available
- When neither is available but the weather is warmer, stored supplies may induce some egg laying but not a lot. Usually when fresh pollen supplies cease, the queen will stop laying drone larvae & soon after stop laying worker larvae if the pollen dearth continues.

The presence of young worker bees is essential to provide the service of nurse bees. The nurses consume the fresh pollen in order to produce the royal jelly needed to feed the queen & developing larvae. After a couple of weeks as these bees age, the gland which makes the royal jelly atrophies. So a hive that was queenless for a few weeks no longer has young bees capable of the essential royal jelly feeding role.

Preparing to add a new queen

To maximise the likelihood of a new queen being accepted, here are two options:

Option 1: Add a frame or two of mostly sealed brood AND the bees on those frames to the queenless hive. These frames & bees can be added from another queen-right hive (ensuring you haven't taken the queen inadvertently). Also feed 1:1 syrup to stimulate the bees to gather pollen. Don't wait more than 2 days to add the new queen.

Option 2: Take the queen from a queen-right hive (H2) together with a couple of frames of brood with the bees still on them & insert them into the middle of the queenless hive (H1). That she is an established laying queen & arriving with brood, reduces the chances of the older bees in the queenless hive rejecting her. For further safeguard, you may choose to locate the queen, accompanying bees & new brood frames above the H1 brood box (queen excluder removed) and use the 'newspaper' method to combine the newly introduced and original.

Now requeen H2 with the newly purchased queen.

The addition of frames of bees boosts the weaker hive population & ensures a progression of young bees for royal jelly production during the period the new queen is becoming established
In both cases, feeding sugar syrup for up to a week is helpful.

But consider this: Is requeening the wisest option?

Be practical about saving a failing honey bee colony. If you find a colony that is obviously declining and/or queenless, you have three choices. You can let it collapse (or exterminate it in the case of severe disease like AFB), you can combine it with another (recommended only if it appears disease free), or you can try to revive it (adding brood frames from another hive / requeening). Before you decide, you need to make an educated assessment about why it's collapsing, then proceed accordingly.

Consider also the time of year. The chance of survival through cold weather is greater in established rather than struggling colonies. If you already have one weak colony, you don't want to compromise other colonies by taking brood from them at a time when egg production is declining with the cooler season.

Learn more about queenless & broodless colonies at the March members meeting. Sun March 19th, 10am at GCABS Headquarters.

A new Varroa mite biosecurity zone regulation in Queensland came into effect from February 7th 2023.

Queensland remains free of varroa mite and Biosecurity Queensland continues to minimise the risk of this pest entering our state.

On 7 February 2023, the Movement Control Order (MCO) enacted at the time of discovery of the varroa destructor incursion in NSW expired and was replaced with a more permanent varroa mite biosecurity zone.

Beekeepers located in the NSW General Emergency Zone & this includes the Tweed & Northern River regions up to the Queensland border will need to apply for a permit to move bees, beehives, used beekeeping equipment or bee products (including unprocessed honey) into the Qld biosecurity zone. Applications from other zones within NSW will not be accepted at this time.

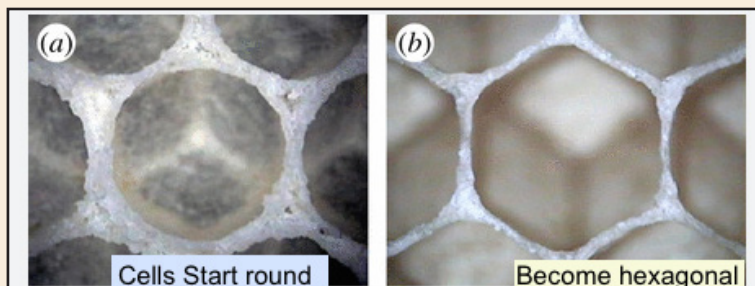
You can support the beekeeping industry by ensuring that you comply with the regulation. Wherever possible, avoid moving of bees & equipment into/out of NSW and obtain a permit if movement is unavoidable.

BEESWAX – Fun Facts

1. Young worker bees (12 - 18 days old) are the main producers of beeswax. They have 8 wax producing glands on their abdomen, which secrete wax in thin sheets called scales. It takes about 1,100 scales to make one gram of wax.
2. The size of the bee's wax glands depends on its age. After many flights, these glands begin to atrophy.
3. To produce 1 kilo of beeswax, bees must consume 6 – 8 kilos of honey. Considering how much work goes into making honey, that means that beeswax is a valuable commodity.
4. For the wax-making bees to secrete wax, the ambient temperature in the hive must be 32 to 36°C. On cooler days bees achieve the right temperature by clustering around the wax producing bees when they are building comb.
5. Beeswax starts off as clear and colourless, but becomes opaque after chewing and the addition of pollen, honey, and propolis.
6. Each wax cell in natural honeycomb (ie without foundation) is built as a circle; the cells transform into the familiar rounded hexagon shape as the cells are pushed tighter as the comb is built. (See Photo a & b.)
7. The cell tubes are angled up about 13° from horizontal to prevent honey from dripping out.
8. The reverse side of the comb is built a half cell offset from the front, a clever construct by the bees which greatly increases its strength.
9. Bees reuse old comb by chewing it off and placing it elsewhere.



Wax scales secreting from the bee's abdomen



Cells Start round

Become hexagonal

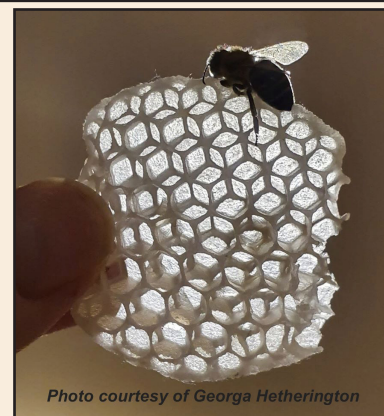
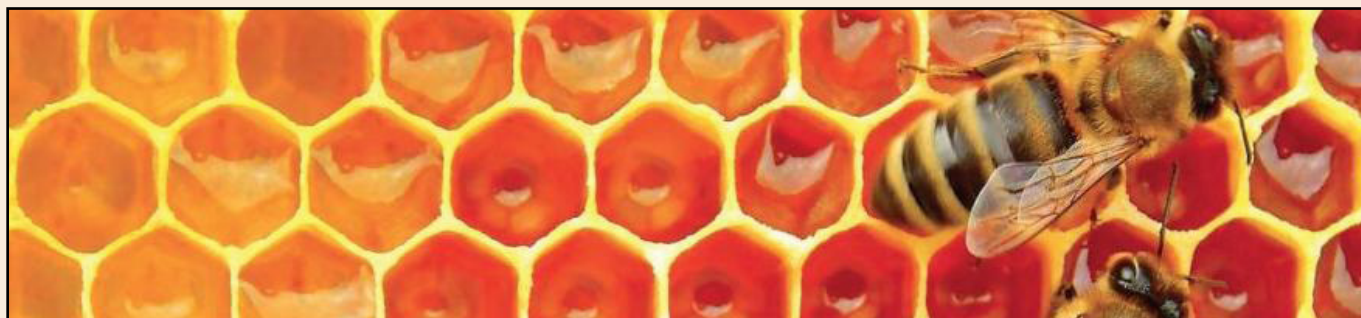


Photo courtesy of Georga Hetherington



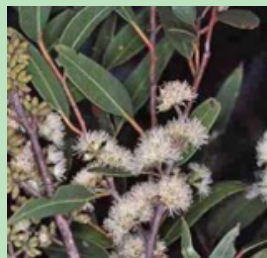
March Honey Flora - S.E. Queensland

Submitted by Jim O'Regan

Blackbutt, Blue Heliotrope (bluetop), Broad-leaved Banksia, Broad-leaved Ironbark, Brown Bloodwood, Flooded Gum, Glycine, Golden Candlesticks, Groundsel Bush, Gum-topped Box, Hickory Wattle, Mallee Box, Manna Gum, Paper-barked Tea-tree, Pink Bloodwood, Rough-barked Ribbon Gum. Small-fruited Grey Gum, White Stringybark.



Paper bark Tea-tree



White Stringybark



Blue Heliotrope



Golden Candlesticks

Flower of the Month for Your Home Garden

Submitted by Esther Bligh

Gaura is a water-wise plant native to North America. It has tall stems that are topped with white or pink flowers. Gaura flowers abundantly from early summer to autumn and needs to be cut back to right above the ground when flowering finishes in autumn. The plants are dormant in winter and will shoot back in spring. Bees absolutely love them. Make sure to contain them though, they spread quite quickly and shouldn't get out into the wild.



JOBS in Your Bee Yard this March

- Complete your varroa mite surveillance as a priority and report all results (whether positive or negative) to the Bee 123 portal. The Bee 123 desktop portal can be accessed by clicking [here](#).
- Spend time observing activity at the hive entrance. Hive populations should be strong at this time of year. Inspect for problems if the population is weak or diminishing.
- Clean & replenish SHB base traps regularly.

Spend a little time online learning about Pest & diseases affecting honey bees with FREE courses. This is essential education for all beekeepers:

- Honey Bee Biosecurity – Enrol by logging on through Plant Health Australia.
- Tocal Ag College Varroa Mite online training



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