

BEEBIZ JUNE 2021

The Newsletter of the Northern Rivers Amateur Beekeeping Association Inc.

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Postal Address 54 Donnans Road, Lismore Heights, NSW 2480

June Activity Sunday 27th June

The next field day will be on 27th June at the home of Josephine and Brian Window, 54 Donnans Road, Lismore Heights.

The main activities will be demonstrations and discussions about bee hive hardware, such as boxes, lids, bases and frames. The embedding of wax foundation in wired frames will be demonstrated using an electrical embedder and a spur wheel embedder. There will be a demonstration of rolling molten wax on to plastic foundation.

The day will commence at 9.30 am with a welcome by the President, and the beekeeping activities will start at 10.30 am. Lunch of sausages and salad will be served at about 12.30 pm, and the raffle will be held before the end of the day at 1.30pm.

All attendees are asked to bring either a morning tea item or a salad for lunch. As a guide, bring enough for twice the size of your group. Lunch will cost \$5.

In the past, the club has always relied on lunch payments and the raffle to provide funds for the operation of the club. So raffle items are always appreciated. Raffle tickets will cost \$2.

So, remember to bring

- Salads/morning tea
- Raffle items
- Chairs
- Nametags

Directions

From Lismore, take the Bangalow Road past the Catholic church. Just past the Council workshops on the left, Donnans Road goes up the hill on the right. The property is the first entrance on the left after passing Pendara Crescent on the left.

Those who know their way can come down from the Lismore Heights Bowling club.

Park in the street or in the grounds.

Please be considerate when you park.

Look for the bee signs.

President Report

Hi! Folks,

The club was represented at Primex by some of our members and there was strong interest in the exhibit by the public. The Flow hive donated to the club was of particular interest to many people and the children enjoyed finding the Queen in the inspection hive. Thanks to those members who attended to man /women the stand,

The free bus trip to the Q.B.A. field day was participated in by a few of our members and we perused all the latest equipment available for apiarists. At the time of writing, I'm not sure if we have a venue for June but we definitely need a kind person to put their hand up for July. That's all for this month. Like the bees it's time to bunker down for Winter.

Cheers Kevin.

The Last Bee

rian ilston

After the last bee

had buzzed its last buzz,

the birds and the butterflies

did what they could.

but soon the fields lay bare,

few flowers were left,

nature was broken,

and the planet bereft.

Secretary Report

The bus trip to Beenleigh went well, except for there being too few members opting to go. The exhibition was quite good, with exhibits ranging from trucks, bobcats, hive loaders, to miscellaneous bee keepers tools. Some spur wheel embedders were purchased from Hornsby Beekeeping Supplies, and may be in the raffle and demonstrated at the next field day.

Members will have received an email from the ABA web administrator about renewing your membership. Information about the types of membership available for our club is included at the end of this newsletter.

Brian

For those who miss Kevin's poetry-- from rian

From The Hives

Nothing is happening at the hives. The broad leafed tea tree seems to have finished its flowering bursts for the year, and a move up to Rous is being contemplated. There have been reports from two independent sources that some macadamias are flowering (very early). Brian

Report on Primex

Thank you to all who participated in manning the exhibition at Primex. Our club thanks the Primex organisation, and the North Coast Branch of the NSW Apiarists who set up and dismantled the stand. Geoff Manning, and Barry and Darren Watts did all this work before and after going to the NSW Apiarists annual meeting at Tamworth. The manning was done by John Gooley, Tom Maloney and Barry McLaine of the Apiarists, and Kevin Virgen, John Bull, Ray Smith, Col McMaster, Meg Winterford (with partner William Brenner) and myself from the NRABA.

Highlights of our display were the hive with marked queen in a glass case, and a flowhive. Because it was a little chilly, the hive spent most of the last two days clustered on the single frame, with the queen in the

middle under the cluster; occasionally, the white dot would be sighted. Our flow hive exhibit worked really well, in that we were able to demonstrate to many visitors the clever principles behind the flow frames. We distributed lots of brochures advertising the NRABA. Brian

Flowering Report

Much the same as last time. *Melaleuca quinquenervia* is probably on its last burst. Red Gum and Grey Ironbark are daily showing more blossom. Grey Ironbark tends to flower earlier on the lower country and then later on the higher forested country. Sometimes these differences may only be a few kilometres apart and little difference in elevation.

You have probably noticed some wattle flowering. Nice to see, but of no value to bees. Some of the ones that are native to country over the main range have excellent pollen, but not so the coastal species.

Anyone who took the opportunity to visit the Queensland Beekeepers Association field day on the Gold Coast will have driven past some breaking Red Gum and Grey Ironbark along the way. A mate and myself left early, just as the club bus was pulling in. We got there early as we went to the QBA Conference down the road a bit. We got a good chance to study the flora on the way home as there was an accident in the south lanes causing a lot of stop go. Still a chance to check out the melliferous flora is always welcome to a beekeeper. Geoff

melliferous:- yielding or producing honey.



Grey Ironbark

Beekeeping Course

The committee has decided to hold a beekeeping course in July this year. The format will be similar to what the club has organised in the past.

It will be held in Lismore on 3 consecutive Saturday mornings from 9 am to 12 am commencing on Saturday 17th July. It will comprise lectures and hands-on activity on bee hives. Protective equipment will be available.

The charge will be \$80, and participants will be given a copy of the DPI book on beekeeping "Bee Agskills", value \$25.

The limit on numbers is 12, and those interested should enrol with the secretary to ensure a spot. Preference will be given to members of the NRABA.



Supplied by Geoff

Natural beehive behaviour as winter approaches is for the queen to reduce laying and the size of the brood nest to be reduced accordingly. Later the colony ejects drones and worn out worker bees to reduce the drain on stores. This occurs around the first cold snap in May/June in our area. In cold weather, the bees cluster around the brood nest, keeping it warm by exercising their powerful wing muscles, consuming honey to provide the energy. The size of the brood nest is determined by this need to keep it warm, and by the supply of nutritious pollen to add to the honey and feed the brood as well as the bees. While honey lasts forever, pollen has a limited life in store. In our area there are locations where pollen is in short supply in Winter, and the brood nest can shrink to the middle of a few frames.

As the weather warms up in late winter, the queen increases her laying in response to the supply of stimulating nectar and nourishing pollen, and the brood nest expands. Plenty of stores are required at this stage. When the hive gets to the stage where the brood nest occupies nearly all the brood box and the hive is getting overcrowded, the hive may swarm, removing the queen and many of the bees in the hive. The hive now has the problem of successfully creating a laying queen or dying out.

Minimal Labour

The above description of what the bees do naturally also describes the minimal labour approach to overwintering.

The hive needs to be left with ample honey stores in Autumn; east of Lismore, what is in the brood box should be sufficient, but west of Casino may require an additional half a full depth super. Much of this will probably be unused by Spring; it will have candied, and will need to be extracted then. Any sugar crystals left in the comb will probably be thrown out by the bees.

Maximise Productivity

To get the most bees in Spring for a pollination contract or to maximise the yield of honey or to allow the making up of nuclei, the hive has to have ample stores available all the time, and be stimulated with syrup before the start of the Spring flowering. If most of the honey is removed in Autumn, the hive may need to be fed syrup early in winter, and this feeding may have to be continued until the start of Spring.

Minimal Stores

What happens if too much honey is taken from the hive in Autumn? Would the hive die out? The hive would certainly shrink in numbers and come into Spring in a weakened state.

Over millions of years, the bees have selectively bred up traits that allow them to survive almost everything that can be thrown at them. Some examples are the expulsion in Autumn of drones and weak worker bees,

Apiarist's Meeting June25th

The professional beekeepers have a talk by Kalum Windsor, from Ace Ohlsson, Bangalow, the local Ecrotek supplier, arranged for 8.15pm on 25th June at Casino RSM. Contact David Fairhall on 0444 513 771 for more information and to register.

Over-wintering Bees

Many beginning beekeepers are concerned with how much stores to leave in a hive in Autumn, so that the bees come through winter in a healthy state. The answer is there is not a correct amount, as it depends to some extent on what the beekeeper wishes to do with the hives, and of course, the weather.

Some beekeepers wish to maximise the productivity of the hive in terms of saleable products, such as honey and nuclei. Others may wish to minimise the amount of time that they have to devote to looking after their hive.

and the consumption of very young larvae when starving. Providing they start out as a strong hive, they should survive.

On the North Coast, the weather is not very cold, particularly on the coast, and there are quite a few sources of nectar through winter, such as tea tree and fireweed, and strong hives left with little stores should recover well. Small hives are more prone to die out due to robbing or starvation in wet cold periods.

In summary, the hive should survive, but their weakened state and undernourished bees will set them back a lot in Spring.

Swarming

Swarm control measures will need to be taken in Spring on the North Coast, to decrease the chances of losing a good queen and most of the worker bees. These include providing plenty of room for honey in the supers, and putting drawn combs (preferably) or foundation into the brood box to replace brood frames that have been moved up into the super or used to make up nuclei. There are no guaranteed ways of stopping swarming, as the bees are programmed to make more beehives in Spring.

Making up another hive before it swarms is one way of stopping swarming, and can be done in a number of ways, including an artificial swarm or walk-away splits.

Brian

Biosecurity

Some members would have received a note about expressing an interest in attending a Biosecurity Course arranged by the North Coast Branch of the NSW Apiarists. It will be funded by the DPI if there is enough interest.

The disease AFB which seemed to increase quite a lot in the period 2010 to 2020, seems to be decreasing at present. Perhaps this can be attributed to the increased education effort on biosecurity by AHBIC and the DPI. Certainly there were many beekeepers with poor practices in the past. Hopefully, the improvements will continue. We can all find things that would improve our own beekeeping.

It is important to report any AFB cases to the DPI, so that the record of cases shows truly what is happening.

Volunteers

The club requires more volunteers, not just for the Editor's job, but also to hold field days. The requirements to hold a field day are sufficient parking not requiring a four wheel drive, and some beehives. Most rural residential properties can manage this. We would like to fill the entire program for a year, so come on. Speak to Kevin or Brian.

List of Helpful Members

Kevin Virgen	Federal	6684 9213	Brian Window	Lismore	0466 790 736
Ray Smith	McKees Hill	0427 734 954	Paul Towner	Rous Mill	0418 321 305
Geoff Manning	Bentley	0400 221 602	John Bull	North Casino	0414 842 903
David Fairhall	Richmond Hill	0444 513 771			

Services Directory

Summary of available products and services

NRABA Members

David Fairhall(queen cells, mated queens, nuclei) (Lismore) 0444 513 771

Brian Window (nuclei) (Lismore) 0466 790 736

Geoff Manning (hives) (Bentley) 0400 221 602
Ray Smith (nuclei) (Lismore) 0427 734 954

Not NRABA Members

Stephen Fowler (nuclei, hives, all sorts of bee equipment, buys wax) (Alstonville) 0418 412 621
Merv McDonald (nuclei, hives, hive care)(Alstonville) 0439 166 016
Rob Stone (mated queens, nuclei)(Casino) 0487 598 105
Ross Wood (mated queens, nuclei)(Grafton) 0421 817 710

Correction and additions welcome

Subscriptions are Due

All members will have received an email from the web administrator about renewing membership fees before the 30th June.

To join the NRABA, log on to the NSW Amateur Beekeepers website at beekeepers.asn.au, select the NRABA as your club, and pay the required amount, made up of a payment to the ABA, and a supplement paid to the NRABA.

Beekeepers are to join as full members of both the NRABA and the ABA, as many of the expenses of the NRABA are paid from the payment to the ABA. Associate membership is an honorary membership, intended for non-beekeepers (including family of members), and members of other ABA clubs. It does not carry voting rights in club affairs.

MINUTES NRABA COMMITTEE May 6th 2021

Time 3.00 pm Thursday 6th May 2021

Place 54 Donnans Road, Lismore Heights

- Members present KV, BW, RS, GM
- Apologies PT
- Minutes of Committee meeting April 1st 2021
No corrections; accepted (m BW, s GM passed)
- Matters Arising
- Correspondence
Request for speaker from Lismore Girl Guides. BW to go.
- Reports

-Treasurer

April field day income Meals \$95, raffle \$101

Expenses sausages \$55, groceries \$32.75

Bee boxes, hive tools, glue \$74.55

-Editor

-Membership

Three new members were accepted (Maggie Jones, Philip Rowe, Karen Ashbury) (m BW s RS passed)

Eight new associate members were accepted (Dave Collis, Andy Jans-Brown, Michelle Mahon, Michael McDaniel, Darren McMahon, Kathleen McMahon, Adrian Medcraft, Peter Wilkins) (m BW, s RS passed)

Secretary to welcome all, while pointing out to associates that the membership is for partners or members of other ABA clubs.

- Agenda Business Items

(1) Field Day May 2nd

The good attendance at the (April) field day at Bill Nicholls in Myocum was encouraging. Atmosphere was excellent.

(2) Field day May 30th It was decided to arrange a bus trip to the QBA field day in Beenleigh on June 6th. The club had been invited by the QBA to have a stand at the field day, but declined as too far out of our area. Secretary to put details in newsletter, and book a 12 seater bus.

(3) Year program Field Days

No venue yet for June, AGM in a hall in July, Colin Purkis at Jiggi in August

(4) Primex

Club to join with North Coast Apiarists in a stand. Secretary to line up two helpers for each of the three days it is on. Secretary to get a flowhive for display (not promote)

- General Business

Meeting finished at 4.02 pm

- Next Meeting

Time 3.00pm Thursday 10th June 2021

Place 54 Donnans Road Lismore Heights