


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)



It's SWARM Season! See page 7

DATE SAVERS

COVID regulations have eased, but our planned events may still need to change if restrictions are reinstated. If so, you will be notified via our Facebook pages & email. The Gold Coast Amateur Beekeeper's Society inc. welcomes new members, existing members and visitors to attend and volunteer at all events. Non-members attending member meetings will be asked to make a gold coin donation.

- **Fri-Sat 13th/14th August. Beginning in Beekeeping Course.** Fully booked
- **Sun 15th August 10am- noon GCABS' Annual General Meeting.** Come along to farewell the outgoing committee & vote in the 2021-22 committee. See the list of nominees on page 5. There will be a Lucky Door Raffle. Bring: Chair. Topics:
 1. AGM / Committee changeover
 2. A short FTA Presentation for QLD Beekeeping Cert III (Kevin Tracy – Trainer)
 3. A short Biosecurity presentation about New Reporting Portal (Rebecca Laws - QLD Biosecurity Officer)

You must register to attend: [Click HERE](#)

- **Fri 27-Sun 29 Aug 2021- Gold Coast Show & Honey Competition** Southport Broadwater Parklands. 1. Entry forms for the competition are due 6th Aug. See pg 6 for details. We need VOLUNTEERS to help man our stall over the 3 days. If you are available to help for any amount of time, please contact our VP Rachael Kubinski – 0415192662 or gcabs.vp@beekeepers.asn.au

- **Sat/Sun 11th/12th September. Beginning in Beekeeping Course.** Register via GCABS' website: <https://www.gcabs.net.au/events/introtobeekeepingsept2021/>
- **Sun 19th Sept. 10am-noon General Meeting.** Location: Nerang Country Paradise Parklands Bring: chair. Topics: 1 - Beekeeping First Aid Presentation/ Speaker: Elise Turner - GCABS member, 2 - Beekeeping Fire Safety Presentation / Speaker: Noah Rush – GCABS member. You MUST register to attend: <https://www.gcabs.net.au/events/member-meeting-880-657-333-653/>

From GCABS President



For our president's report this month, we present Ross' fine speech made at our clubhouse ground breaking ceremony, which took place in late June:

This day, marks a very important day in the history of The Gold Coast Amateur Beekeeper's Society inc. For the first time since the founding of the association in 1979, 42 years, the Gold Coast Amateur Beekeeper's Society inc will have a permanent location, in such a beautiful setting, Country Paradise Parklands.

It has taken a long time to get to this point, and the future is exciting. With membership growing to 439 this year, the largest in our history, the possibilities this project brings to the beekeeping community on the Gold Coast will be enormous. We have successfully gone from zero to one.

There is an old Chinese proverb "Those who drink the water must remember those who dug the well" . Like many things in life, there is one individual, who should be acknowledged for digging 'this' well, and that is Rachael Kubinski; without her hard work, persistence and determination this accomplishment would not have occurred. "A roast chicken, does not fly into one's mouth". We also acknowledge Kathy Knox for her successful submission to obtain the grant funding.

With the winter solstice behind us, it is time to break ground, time to build! Soon there will be a hive of activity on this site. A site blessed by the bees. It was on this very spot, in 2020 when Rachael, Martin (NCPA) and myself were viewing this potential clubhouse site, that a bee landed on this very post, as if saying "Yes", this is the place.

The bees have taught me much. How to be more patient and move much more slowly and with care. Through working with them, I have learned to plan each step before entering the hive so I do not make any more work for them than I have too. There is a great calmness, just in breathing the scent of the hive, listening to the sound of their hum and watching them dance from flower to flower and grace the sky with their golden light. It is now time, to come together as a community. A hive is not a single bee, rather a superorganism. Working together to achieve what a solitary bee cannot.

With gratitude for the sweetness of life, and in celebration of the sweetness of honey. I thank you Rachael, and I thank the bees. Much like the bees themselves, honey is the conduit of divine blessing, inspiration and truth.

See the plans, drawings etc and follow progress of the Clubhouse at: <https://www.gcabs.net.au/clubhouse/>



A warm welcome to all our newest members:

Sharon B, Vali L, Carly P, Grant S, Claire A, Ann A, Steven B, Carla H, Callum K, Andrew P, Hendrik V, Benjamin W and Richard W. Danie A, John C, Douglas C, Sharon G, Linda H, Vince K, Toni L, Mark Mc, Sharon N, Peter N, Roger P, Jason R, Linda T, Richard T, Hannah T, Deslyn Mc.

July 18th Meeting Review - Honey Processing & Labelling Laws



The Roebig family, Jason, Natasha & daughter Miranda, owners of Bee All Natural were our special guests. Jason gave some background on their company's evolution & product range. He then explained the laws governing honey processing and labelling. These topics are relevant & applicable to each & every one of us. As honey is food, its processing, handling & labelling, needs to comply with food safety & labelling laws. Jason has kindly provided the main points of his presentation. In his own words...

Introduction

While there are a lot of intricacies regarding labelling and licensing, I thought I would highlight the main details of when a food handling license and approved packing facility is required and when it is not.

Licensing requirements for processing / packing / distributing honey

In 2016 the state government published (referred to as a Circular) a document that outlines the requirements of producing/packing and distributing honey for sale within Queensland. In this document it clearly defines that when you extract, process (filter) and sell honey from the place in which it was harvested (farmgate sales) you are not required to possess a food license or approved packing facility. It must also be noted that if you purchase honey from another supplier and they provide it in bulk, then (the seller) is not required to have either food licensing or packing facility qualifications, however the buyer would require these qualifications.

A lot of honey producers get caught out where they produce honey from a satellite site and bring it back to their processing room to extract and filter. When this occurs, it triggers the requirement to have food handling licenses and an approved packing facility, regardless whether it is sold at the farmgate or at markets/retailer.

While these requirements are a State Law it is up to the respective local council to enforce these requirements. From my experience, I have seen this enforced in the Moreton Regional Council, Brisbane City Council & Logan City Council. Through discussions with other beekeepers, it is evident that there is growing impetus from other Councils to also start enforcing these requirements. If a Council environmental officer challenges you for your licensing and you are unable to provide one, you may be asked to cease trading at a market or retailer and potentially also receive a fine.

These requirements can and have created discussions within other beekeeping associations and clubs. These discussions are mostly constructive with many wanting to ensure that they provide a quality product that meets legal requirements. With this being said, (and I am not an expert in these fields and can only offer advice based on our experiences) I strongly suggest you reach out to your local council to discuss what is and is not required to attain your food handling license and getting your packing (usually your domestic kitchen) approved as a packing facility; you will be surprised how accommodating the council can be as they want you to succeed, which is contrary to what is generally believed by many.

Australian Standard for Food Labelling

We see so many honey labels that look beautiful but technically do not meet the Australian Standard. So what is the Standard? Firstly the Australian Standard requirements must be met or exceeded (this is a legal requirement with the emphasis on "must"). Our labelling journey started back in 2016 where we had a very simple label that, on reflection, most certainly did not meet the standard at all. We employed the

services of 3 graphic designers at great expense who simply did not deliver on what we required.

It was not until we met Nathan from Blueskies Packaging in 2019 that we got an end product that we loved and met the legal requirements. Nathan, Natasha and myself developed a simple one page cheat sheet that we wanted to share with the beekeeping community. We researched what is required, what is good to have and what is optional with the end result being a great reference point for all beekeepers to use. We proudly share this cheat sheet with anyone who wants to use it absolutely free of charge because at the end of the day we really just want to share with others our knowledge and experiences so as others do not fall into the same traps that we did, which will literally save you \$1000s of dollars.



For anyone who was unable to make it to the GCABS monthly meeting and would like to learn more about Licensing, Approved Packing Facility or Labelling, please reach out to GCABS or you are welcome to contact us directly. As mentioned we are more than happy to share with everyone our experiences and knowledge. Thanks again for inviting us to talk at your meeting, it was great to have so much interest from the members both new and existing. We hope to be able to attend more of the meetings in the future.

GCABS sincerely thank Jason & family for sharing with us and we are delighted to now welcome Jason as a GCABS member.

HONEY LABEL CHEAT SHEET



Barcodes are optional. For those intending to retail your products, stockist will greatly appreciate barcodes on your packaging.

The barcode standard used in retail is "EAN 13".

The optimal size for is 37mm (l) x 26mm (w) but can vary independently.

Nutritional Information Panels (NIP) are required. You can create your own by using the Nutritional Panel Calculator on the FANZ website.



Link to NIP Calculator
bit.ly/3df0rBQ

Manufacturer's details are required. This is to aid in the rare event of recalls and tracing.

1. Business Name
2. Full Address
3. Phone Number

(Website and email is optional but recommended)

The e symbol stands for "estimated". This is especially relevant for hand bottling, allowing for a 10% variance in the net weight.

The safety text is optional. But it is recommended to protect your business and avoid future claims.

Storage instructions is optional.

The Australian Country of Origin Food Label is required. And it is free for anyone to use provided it is not misleading and adheres to the styleguide.



Link to Styleguide
bit.ly/32771pc



3 TIPS TO KNOW

TM The **™ symbol** is used for unregistered trademarks that at some point might be registered.

® The **® symbol** indicates that your trade mark application has been registered and approved.

100% Natural The use of the word "organic" is not recommended unless the claim is certified. **Use "100% Natural" instead.**

Cheat Sheet Version 3.1 | Share this with anyone, no permission is required.

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

A **best before date** is not required for any foods with a shelf life over 2 years.



bit.ly/2yWWzVP

If you're a commercial producer, **B-Qual** or **B-Safe Assurance** are two credentials that indicate your business, process and product meets industry standards.



bit.ly/2YGgLX2

bit.ly/2TH00wD

A **batch system**, is required to aid in recalls and for tracing purposes.

One can simply use the extraction date to generate the batch number (e.g. **yymmdd • 210324**).

A sample of the batch should be saved and stored with the batch number for future reference.

This is general advice only. Please contact your local bee association or city council. | Got questions? Email us at cs@blueskiespackaging.com.au

August Honey Flora - S.E. Queensland

Jim O'Regan



Black Sheoak. Blue Gum. Brisbane Black Wattle. Brisbane Golden Wattle. Broad-leaved Banksia. Caley's Ironbark. Dogwood. Dusky leaved Ironbark. Flat Weed. Forest Boronia. Fuzzy Box. Glycine. Golden Candlesticks. Grey Ironbark. Hairy Bush-pea. Mountain Coolibah. Mugga. Narrow-leaved Ironbark. Orange Tree. Red Bottle-brush. River Sheoak. Scribbly Gum. Spotted Gum. Tallowwood. Tumble-down Ironbark. White Box.

Acacia Fimbriata Bris Black wattle

July Puzzle Page Answer



For those who completed one or more items on the activity page, there were 52 bees in the picture

AGM August 15th 10am

Here's the list of GCABS' members who have nominated for each position.

Position	Name	Nominated	Seconded
President	Ross Krumbholz	Kim de Mezieres	Rachael Kubinski
Vice President	Rachael Kubinski	Ross Krumbholz	Kim de Mezieres
Treasurer	Bradley Murphy	Ross Krumbholz	Rachael Kubinski
Secretary	Kathy Knox	Colin Allen	Ann Allen
Committee	Alex Lang	Ross Krumbholz	Kim de Mezieres
Committee	Leonie Schwarzel	Ann Allen	Colin Allen
Committee	Ann Allen	Colin Allen	Leonie Schwarzel
Committee	John Vallance	Rachael Kubinski	Colin Allen



Prepare Your Entries for the Honey Competition Show Season

Show jars (white lid) are available at V's Bees, Nerang. \$1.25 each or box of 24 for \$27.00

Honey frame display case: white, clear perspex inlay & lock. V's Bees, Nerang \$125.00

Due dates for show entry forms

- 6 August 2021- Gold Coast Show - Entry form available via the Gold Coast show website. Follow this link: <https://goldcoastshow.com.au/homecrafts/> Each entry is \$2.00. NOTE You will also need to download the schedule. Pages 6 & 7 give the info you need about Apiculture (Honey Comp) classes.
- Beaudesert Show- Online entries close Friday 20th August. Find Apiculture schedule and entry form at <https://www.beaudesertshow.org.au/show-schedules-entries/>
- Mon 13 Sept 2021- Mudgeeraba Show - \$1.50 per entry. Find schedule & entry form here: <https://www.mudgeerabashow.org.au/2021-pavilion-schedule.html>
- 5-6 Nov 2021- Murwillumbah Show – complete online up to a few days before



Show Dates

- Gold Coast Show 27- 29 August.
- Beaudesert Show 3 - 4 Sept.
- Mudgeeraba Show.17 -19 Sept.
- Murwillumbah Show Fri 5 – Sat 6 Nov

JOBs in Your Bee Yard this month

Do your best to manage the swarming process.

- Brood manipulation – See article below
- Provide extra space as needed for the growing population.
- Have spare hives ready to catch a swarm or split a highly populated hive to prevent swarming. Ensure you have ready a spare hive box or two with sufficient frames & foundation, lid & base in preparation
- Monitor for sufficient food stores. As your bee hive population begins to build up towards Spring, ensure your bees have sufficient stored food. Don't harvest a lot of honey too early



SWARM Season has begun – Ready or not!

Compiled by the editor.

From July 19th, GCABS members began to report swarms issuing from their bee colonies. If your hives are healthy, then your bee populations are expanding quickly. Overcrowding doesn't cause swarming but it is recognised as a correlating factor.

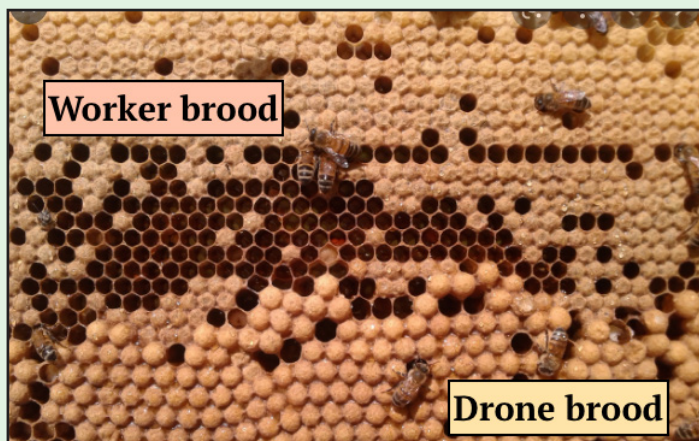
Queen age, space/population and conditions are key factors in swarming. These should actually be considered in Autumn management. However, if not considered, then one needs to manage as early as possible/practical and with Gold Coast conditions, the time is NOW, rather than the calendar commencement of Spring.

Swarming is the bee colony's natural way of reproducing, and is a species-specific behaviour of the honeybee. As the days get longer, the queen increases laying & when pollen and nectar are in good supply, a colony prepares to swarm; it has reached a stage in its development where a division of one into two is possible, and a daughter colony can be established.

No queen naturally stays in residence in the same hive for her entire lifespan. She will likely swarm in her second & each subsequent year of life. With a swarm, the old queen and up to half of the colony's inhabitants leave their home together & scout bees are dispatched to search for new quarters. The hive is left well-provisioned and ready for the emergence of a new virgin queen who, at the point of swarming, will most likely still be developing inside her cell.

The swarm process, whilst a wonderful and awe-inspiring sight to behold when the bees are in the air or clustered tightly on a branch, also represents a loss of resource to the beekeeper & possibly a perceived menace to bee wary neighbours & to native fauna. A swarm, if not caught & hived, may take up residence in a possum box or tree hollow thereby evicting the original native residents of possums or nesting birds.

Furthermore, the original hive may cast additional swarms, called secondary and tertiary swarms, with the result that bee numbers dwindle even to the point that the remaining population is so severely weakened that it may not survive. So, attempting to manage the swarm process is part of the beekeepers' role.



Drone comb



Swarm cups



Swarm Queens cells

Early signs:

1. The hive population has increased significantly: bees traffic at the entrance is bountiful, bees covering the inside of the lid when you lift it & covering every frame.
2. Increased number of drones and drone cells.
3. Little to no frame space is left. Virtually all cells in the hive are claimed, either with honey, pollen, eggs, larvae, or capped brood.

With signs 1-3, you may be able to prevent a swarm by increasing space & manipulating frames, both honey & brood.

Later signs to look for:

4. Presence of Queen “cups”, generally along the bottom or sides, with larvae in some or all.
5. Presence of capped queen cell/s indicates that the hive is ready to swarm.

When you see signs 4 & 5, swarming is imminent. Your options are to split the colony into two or try to catch the swarm when it leaves. Ask a GCABS mentor to help if you are not confident with these processes.

Frame/Brood Manipulation

1. Provide the colony with room to expand and work to do in both the brood nest & super/s. Move up honey frames from the outside of the brood box to the honey super. You can also move up 1-2 frames of mostly capped brood and place centrally in the honey super. Meanwhile, place drawn comb frames or starter frames (with or without foundation) into the brood box in positions 3 & 6 (3 & 7 for 10 frame).
2. In a good season (good pollen and nectar availability), you repeat this process when the new frames are built out & filled. You may need to add a second honey super also at the start of a strong nectar flow.

If your bees have already swarmed

To prevent a secondary or tertiary swarm, it is recommended to knock down (or remove to use elsewhere) additional queen cells. Yet there's a bit of a risk of missing cells. If the original queen has laid eggs within a few days of her departure, we need to consider that all female larva are potential queen cells. The Apiarist needs to be vigilant in inspecting & removing as long as he/she is certain a new young queen is definitely present. Be careful, inspecting too often also runs the risk of disrupting the process of the new queen becoming well established. It can be a tricky business!

Conclusion

It is worth knowing that a new young queen is less likely to swarm than a queen two years or older. That is one reason to consider re-queening the hive at least every second year.

Despite one's best efforts, bees will swarm if they decide to. Putting out a swarm lure box may provide the reward of a new colony. For now, be responsible with your management, be prepared to split a colony if necessary or to collect a swarm, possibly yours, if they come your way.

GCABS member Louise O'Neill's story of the swarm that came back!

Five weeks before we hit Spring and my hive swarmed on 25th July! About four hours later, I saw what I thought was a secondary swarm occurring but no! It was actually the original swarm returning! It was like watching the swarm in reverse as the bees clambered to get back into the hive. We opened the hive again and looked for the queen; however she is not marked and we couldn't find her anywhere. Suspecting they would swarm again in a day or two we decided to use the frames we'd removed and one other that had queen cells and to do a split right away. We just need to see how it pans out over the next couple of weeks.

Ed's note Swarms are known to return if bad weather is imminent or the queen is damaged or lost. As Louise was unable to find the queen, this could perhaps be the case.

News: Another club member, Marcia, had the same experience just days later.

Bee Informed – Podcasts

Here are two podcasts that are well worth a regular listen:

Bee Therapy – A podcast to salute the world’s most magical insect. Bee buddies Patrice Newell and Dani Lloyd-Prichard have more than 50 years’ bee-keeping experience between them. When you add their impressive credentials & great friendship, their podcast is fun, educational, varied and up-to-date on all things bees.

Listen to them here: <https://beetherapy.buzzsprout.com>

She Beek – Hosted by GCABS Education Officer Dr Kathy Knox & Jo Derbyshire, each episode brings a speaker on a specific topic, most recently on Bee venom immunotherapy. Visit their FB page for each episode: <https://www.facebook.com/shebeekpodcastaustralia/>



Thank you Travis & Rod

At the AGM this month, Travis & Rod will step down from the committee. We are extremely grateful for their service. Travis has served as President, Vice president, secretary & general committee member & training assistant over several years. Rod has served as treasurer for the past 12 months and both have given generously of their time volunteering at numerous events.



Rod Luke



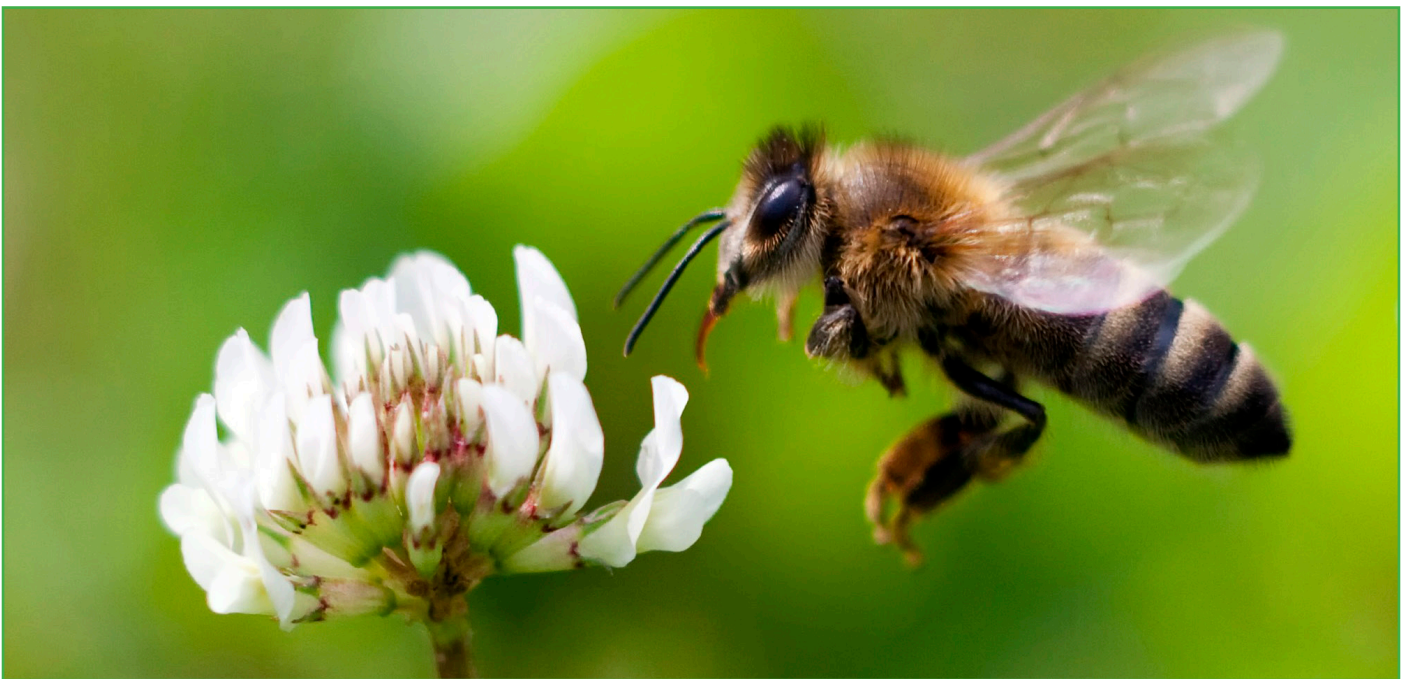
Travis Green

Travis & Rod, GCABS thanks you for all you’ve given to our society and we look forward to sharing more bee-ventures with you both for years to come.



COMMITTEE

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Membership	John Vallance	0409 560 464	gcabs.membership@beekeepers.asn.au
Extractor Hire	Rachael Kubinski	0415 192 662	V's Bees, 3/90 Spencer Rd, Nerang



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Saturday [8.30am - 12pm]

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