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From the President

Hello to you all.

It was great to see a good turnout at our last meeting. Thanks to our hosts Sandy and Michael for the warm welcome and a lovely day. Great talk on anaphylaxis, Michael!



Michael's Warré Hives

Michael's Warré hives looked a picture among the citrus and chooks, and took pride of place in the yard. Many members were really enticed by the Warré system.

The Flow Hive meeting also had a good attendance, with new members joining the gathering every month.

So come along if you are just starting out, or have any questions or queries about your hive or your bees. We have many members who are more than happy to help.

Thanks, too, to Pete for the corflute nuc box assembly demo. Last of all, thank you all for your delicious salads, morning tea cakes (yum!), for supporting our wonderful club and the raffle donations. Tickets only cost \$2 and you could win great prizes such as supers, nuc boxes, plants and jams. So stick around – you may get lucky.

The next meeting is at my place. Hope to see you all here.

Happy beekeeping.

Robert

From The Hives – October

The apiary of nominally 32 hives (actual 26) has been moved from Rous to two sites in the Bungawalbyn area. Most of the honey from Rous came in the last few weeks – as the macadamias flowered – and most of this was harvested to lighten the hives before they were moved.

They were moved in two lots of nominally 16 on a utility. Because they were manhandled on and off the utility, the doorways were shut with strips of foam. An early morning move was preferred over a night move, mainly because of the better visibility when unloading in full daylight. The six hives that

will bring the apiary up to strength are in the home apiary, and will be moved soon.

No more AFB has been found during inspections, but they will be continued through October as the ABA wants. It is worth pointing out again that the main cause of hive failure is the failure of the hive to produce a new laying queen, and any inspection should always include checking for the presence of workers' eggs.

Brian

October Flowering

There is nothing on the horizon at this stage. The short-budders – trees that only take a month or so to bud – may, or may not, bud. Indeed, these short-budders are unreliable honey producers even when they do flower: brush box, grey box and bloodwood.

Swamp mahogany (*Lophostemon suaveolens*), not the eucalypt, with a flower similar to brush box, can produce heavily at times. It is unusual in that, like *Melaleuca quinquenervia*, it flowers a number of times. It grows mainly west and southwest of Lismore on low-lying country.

At the time of writing, white mahogany is flowering and there is some grey ironbark as well, although where I have looked it is only a very patchy budding on the ironbark. Again, I remind you that I don't go looking these days, but I do still carry binoculars to check on budding closer to home. Essential beekeeping tools: smoker, hive tool and binoculars. Everything else is personal preference.

Perhaps because of the lack of rain – therefore, short or non-existent grass – there are some places showing 'good' growth of thistles. It produces purplish pollen and has been known to give honey on occasion, light and mild.

So hang in there, next year may be a bumper season, or not.

Geoff

Flow Hive Report

NRABA welcomed new Flow Hive club members. Thank you to second-year Flow Hive beekeepers for sharing your tried and true methods of keeping your Flow Hives happy, productive and disease-free.

We missed Merv, his Flow Hive stories and the demo Flow Hive. Hope you are well now, Merv.

Many thanks to the Flow Hive Support team who have donated a Flow Hive to the NRABA, and are helping with current Flow topics and also offer a discount on Flow items for NRABA club members. More details at the NRABA meeting.

Thanks, Caterina, for this lovely golden honey pic, and these words describing your first Flow harvest. "23 September: First Flow Hive frame. 5.5kg harvested in 45 minutes, with three tablespoons of spillage, probably from the comb in the roof."



Caterina's First Flow Hive Harvest

Most questions at last month's meeting were about harvesting and encouraging bees into the Flow frames. Here are links to Flow Support:

<https://forum.honeyflow.com>

<https://www.honeyflow.com.au/pages/frequently-asked-questions>

It's not uncommon for the frames to leak a small amount of honey inside the hive while harvesting. This is usually not a problem as the bees will mop up the excess honey, even if it reaches the bottom of the hive.

The amount of honey leakage that occurs will depend on the way the bees have capped the cells and also how you set up your hive for harvest.

In most cases, the amount of honey that leaks is minimal, however there have been a few reports of more significant leakage. To ensure that there is no risk of flooding the brood below the Flow Super, we recommend only harvesting 1-2 frames at a time for your first harvest to ascertain whether there is any leakage and, if so, what steps need to be taken to reduce the impact that this has on your hive.

There are many factors that could contribute to this issue, including partially capped frames, inverted capping and incorrect hive set-up for harvesting.

Harvesting set up: ensure that the honey tubes are inserted firmly and correctly, with the tongue in the honey-leak-back gap, and that the hive is sloped towards the outlet.

If you have connected the honey tube to a container, ensure that air can escape from the container. In your efforts to make it bee-proof, don't make it airtight, otherwise the honey will back up in the tube and overspill the edges of the trough inside the hive.

Placing the Corflute Slider (white plastic slider in the baseboard) in the upper position will help to make any honey spillage reachable for the bees to re-use. If you do experience leakage with your initial frame we recommend that you check your remaining frames are all capped and ready to harvest. Flow® Hive – Xanthe (Flow Support)

Please give Sally McMahon your name if you would like to be added to the NRABA club bee sellers and Flow Hive support lists:

Flow Hive support:

- Stephen Fowler 0418 412 621
- Merv McDonald 0439 166 016
- Suzie Deyris 0414 649 115

Nuc suppliers:

- Merv McDonald 0439 166 016
- Robert Stone 0432 277 317
- Brian Window 0466 790 736
- Stephen Fowler 0418 412 621

Suzie

New Equipment

Stephen and Janet Fowler carry stocks of most common beekeeping equipment, as well as pots and jars for honey sales. They are now operating from the Russellton Industrial Estate at 5 Robb Street, Alstonville. Bee gear is available for collection from this address by prior arrangement. Please call Stephen on 0418 412 621 to arrange a convenient time.

The Fowlers buy clean wax at the market rate. It is taken to Burnett Beekeeping Supplies for milling, then made available to members as foundation.

An equipment building workshop will be held in November. Please contact Stephen to register your interest.

Steritech Trip

Another consignment of bee gear to Steritech is being organised for Saturday 4 November. The pallets will be assembled at the home of our carrier, Andrew Ware, at 99 Springrove Road, Caniaba, at 9am. Those who cannot make this date may leave a limited amount of equipment at the homes of Brian or Stephen prior to the day (it must be sealed against any robbing by bees).

The basic unit is a Langstroth box, and it is preferable if these are assembled into three- or four-deck hives, with a lid and a base, strapped with an emlok. The hives should not contain any live bees or unextracted honey. On unwrapping the last consignment, there was quite a lot of honey on some gear and on the plastic. It is suggested that stickies that are not well spun out be bagged, or layers of newspaper be placed between boxes in the stack to absorb any honey.

Loose boxes and nuclei can be accommodated. Unconventional hives and hives from non-members will be accepted with prior notice. All gear should be clearly identified with your registration number.

Brian

News in Brief

Bees and bush fires

Southern Highlands firefighter and apiarist John Scott is warning fellow beekeepers that a bad fire season is predicted, following an unusually warm and dry winter. He offered his tips on how to safeguard your bees during an interview with ABC Rural News. See <http://ab.co/2xsZi7U>

Honey production down in Queensland

Beekeepers in Queensland are struggling following the dry spell, with one Mackay-based commercial beekeeper, Paul Marsh, telling the ABC that he has not extracted any honey for five-and-a-half months. Queensland Beekeepers Association president Bryce Jensen has also noticed a worrying shortage of pollen this spring, particularly in the state's far north. See <http://ab.co/2eV4kyn>

Honey tests reveal harmful pesticides

The October issue of *Science* magazine has a detailed report on a study that found at least one type of neonicotinoid in 75% of honey samples from around the world. The pesticides are thought to impair bees' ability to forage. See <http://bit.ly/2wCtVTS>

AFB Awareness Month

October is AFB Awareness Month and aims to highlight awareness about American foulbrood (AFB) disease and promote good hive management practices. It is a joint initiative between NSW DPI, Amateur Beekeepers Association NSW (ABANSW) and Steritech, among others. For more information, see <http://bit.ly/2xtqIpy>

Hives and Nuclei

Please contact Stephen Fowler if you are able to supply hives and nuclei to other club members.

Keep Your Contact Details Up to Date

NRABA members are reminded to go to the ABA's website <http://www.beekeepers.asn.au> and check their contact details. Click on the drop-down menu at the top right of the homepage to sign in.

Next Meeting – Sunday 29 October

The next meeting will be held at the home of Robert Stone.

Location: 122 Flood Reserve Road, Ruthven, NSW 2480.

Time: 9.30am Flow Hive meeting; 10am for 10.30am group meeting.

Transport: Personal transport.

Directions: From Lismore, proceed south along Wyrallah Road to Wyrallah. About 10km from Lismore, turn right onto Wyrallah Ferry Road towards Coraki. Cross the Wilson River and continue for around 1km to the T-intersection. Turn left onto Coraki Road and proceed south for around 5km, then turn right onto Flood Reserve Road. Continue for 1.5km, then turn right onto Poole Road. The entrance to Robert's property is off Poole Road, first driveway on the right.

Alternatively, Coraki Road can be accessed from the north via the Bruxner Highway and from the south via the Casino-Coraki Road.

Bee meeting signage will be in place.

Activities:

- General meeting
- Lunch
- Hive inspections, weather permitting

What to bring:

- A morning tea item or salad to share
- Raffle items are always appreciated
- \$5 per head for morning tea/lunch
- Beekeeping protective equipment
- Chairs
- Shade/sun protection