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## From the President

Hello to everyone.

It was another beautiful day on the Northern Rivers, made even better sharing it with the wonderful people of our club. To Merv and Shirley, thank you for welcoming us all to your home. There was so much going on; quite a few new members and visitors. Great to see so many Flow Hive enthusiasts wanting to learn more and supporting each other. That's what it is all about!

The demo on natives was fantastic, with a huge crowd drawn in to see the re-hiving. It was very informative and a delight to see everybody so captivated.

We can't leave out the honey bee, though. Checking through a few of Merv's hives found them to be booming and starting to make a few drones. Spring is here! There were lots of questions for him, which were answered with great gusto and pride.

Every beekeeper, from the novice to the knowledgeable, had something to take home from the day.

I would like to thank you all for bringing along delicious salads and raffle prizes, also the ladies who helped in the kitchen with the dishes. We all appreciate it very much (maybe we can organise the fellas to do them some time?).

Hope to see you all at the next meeting. Happy beekeeping.

Robert

## Last Meeting

In the absence of the Editor, Nick Souter kindly put together the following report.

Our meeting on 27 August was held in Dalwood. It was great to see about 60 members in attendance. As well as demonstrations, the day included a general meeting.



*Native Bees being transferred from a Log to a Box Hive*

Those interested in Flow Hives got off to an early start. Then we were shown how to split a native beehive in a log and transfer it to a box hive. It was an informative demonstration by Simon Morrison, and very much enjoyed by all.

A big thank you to hosts Merv MacDonald and Shirley Ashman for their hospitality, and to all those who helped out on the day. As always, there was a fine spread of food for everyone to enjoy after the hive inspections.

### **From The Hives – September**

The apiary is currently on a custard apple farm at Rous, but with macadamias flowering all around. This year the flowering seems to have concentrated in September. Some hives have made excellent progress since being moved here, and have nearly filled two boxes. Most are now four boxes high, but harvest will have to wait until the return of the clearing boards from Steritech in Narangba (at the time of writing, the pallets of gear have been at Steritech for six weeks, such is the backlog of irradiation).

Since the last report, brood inspections of all hives have been carried out. As a result, one hive with American foul brood (AFB) was detected and closed down, despite being very strong. Some more cases of the disease were expected as there were two diseased hives robbed out in the apiary in autumn – only one is quite a good result. More brood inspections will be carried out regularly. Some hives without laying queens had a frame of brood from a neighbouring hive added, and have since made queens.

The hives are prone to swarm under the good conditions on the red soil. So far, five swarms have been successfully hived, and three have been missed or have absconded. More would have been missed when the apiary was unattended. Seven nuclei have been made up from strong hives, with three frames of brood, two foundations and a locally sourced queen cell. These have been added to the home apiary. So the migratory apiary is made up of hives of widely varying strengths.

Three of the hives that were lost prior to spring have been replaced with hives from the home apiary, and the total stands at 26 out of 32. More will be added when the equipment comes back from Steritech.

Brian

### **September Flowering**

Similar to last newsletter, there is nothing to look forward to until white mahogany, or yellow stringybark, which will probably start in October. Good pollen, but iffy for nectar.

Things are moving around the traps, in that swarming has taken off with a vengeance. At times like this it is hard to tell just what is yielding, particularly on the red soil (once known as ‘scrub country’), as there are so many things that could be helping.

In the days before kikuyu, the red soil grew large amounts of clover. It could be so lush that cows would often bloat. In those days the honey we now know as coming from guioa was assumed to be from the clover. The strong aromatic flavour was thought to be a result of the red soil chemistry. The honey was known as ‘Lismore Clover’.

Bottle brush is putting on a good show at the moment. It can be useful but, so far, I have not seen bees working it. Also flowering are some of the grevilleas. They can produce large amounts of nectar but bees ignore it for some reason. It is often so copious that it is possible to shake the nectar onto your hand. It tastes sweet to us and this is usually regarded as being attractive to bees. I have seen bees working them for pollen at times, including silky oak.

Some of you may have noticed the mugga ironbark flowering at the TV station on Ballina Road. It is a western tree, with a wide distribution and can yield heavily – but not pollen.

Geoff

### **New Equipment**

Stephen and Janet Fowler carry stocks of most common beekeeping equipment, as well as pots and jars for honey sales. Please place your order via the contact details at the start of the newsletter.

The Fowlers will buy clean wax from NRABA members. This is taken to Kingaroy for processing into foundation.

The Fowlers' Hive and Frame Building Workshop for Beginners, held on 2 September, went well, with participants taking home their well-made equipment. Another workshop will be run for six participants once places are filled. Reserve your spot by contacting the Fowlers directly.

### **Steritech Trip**

The last consignment of equipment for irradiation took seven weeks to be returned because of the workload at Steritech. Accordingly, it is prudent to get the next load in as soon as possible.

If you have equipment that you wish to send for irradiation, email Brian Window or Stephen Fowler (addresses at the start of the newsletter) including an estimate of the number of boxes. You will be contacted by email to let you know when and where the assembly of the pallets will take place (probably on a Saturday morning within a couple of weeks at Andrew Ware's place).

Brian

### **News in Brief**

#### **Manuka's wound healing properties**

Australian research studies have reported promising findings from medicinal research into manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*) honey's effectiveness in healing wounds. Significantly, honey with a higher UMF (unique manuka factor) was shown to have greater antibacterial activity.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/researchers-show-just-how-effective-manuka-honey-is-in-healing-wounds-20170902-gy9gqi.html>

<http://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/health-and-wellbeing/healthy-buzz-as-honey-proves-pot-of-gold-against-superbugs-20170818-gxzaal.html>

#### **Genetic breakthrough in Varroa research**

Researchers have identified four genes that interfere with reproduction in varroa mites, and two others that can kill them. The findings from a Michigan State University study could help protect honey bees by controlling the mites.

<http://www.futurity.org/varroa-mites-weaknesses-1513712/>

#### **Bee diet under the microscope**

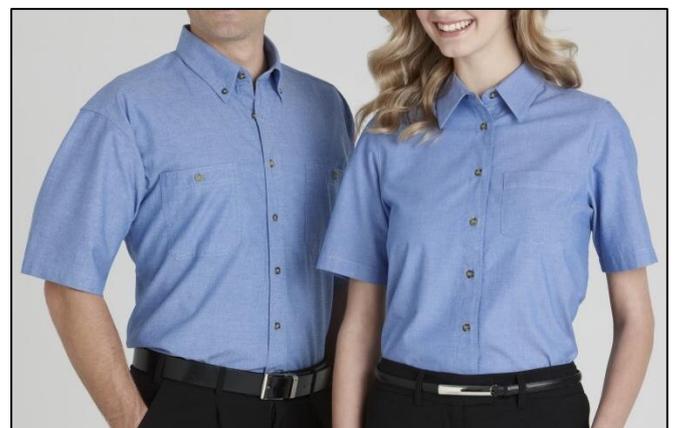
Scientists have identified the molecules in 'beebread' (a pollen and nectar mix) that cause larvae to develop into worker bees. The molecules, called microRNA, play a key role, according to a study published in *PLOS Genetics*. Dr Chen-Yu Zhang, co-author of the study, explained: "Royal jelly and plant microRNA work together to affect caste formation."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/31/science/honeybees-queens.html>

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2146093-bee-larvae-fed-beebread-have-no-chance-of-becoming-queen/>

#### **NRABA Shirts and Hats**

Orders are being taken for NRABA shirts and hats. Shirts are light blue chambray, short sleeve, button-up and wrinkle-free, with a front pocket (pictured below). Hats are bucket style.



NRABA Shirt Styles

Prices are \$50 for a shirt and \$20 for a hat.

Your order can be placed with Sandy ([addbalance14@gmail.com](mailto:addbalance14@gmail.com)) before 30 September so that it is ready for collection at the October meeting. Please indicate size and quantity when placing your order.

## **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 sign into the ABANSW website and check/update their contact details. The ABA website can be found at the following link <http://www.beekeepers.asn.au>. Go to the pull-down menu at the top right of the ABA's homepage.

## **Newsletter Submissions**

Thank you to all members who contributed to the newsletter. Newsletter submissions can be emailed to [northernrivers.editor@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:northernrivers.editor@beekeepers.asn.au) by the 10th of each month.

Photos are always appreciated.

## **Next Meeting – Sunday 24 September**

The next meeting will be held at the home of Michael Koenen and Sandy Jeurwine.

**Location:** 5 Daley Street, Alstonville, NSW 2477.

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

**Transport:** Personal transport.

**Directions:** From Lismore, drive east along the Bruxner Highway and take the Sneaths Road exit. At the roundabout, follow the signs towards Alstonville. This road (Lismore Road) leads to Alstonville's Main Street. At the eastern end of the shops, enter the roundabout and take the third exit, Daley Street. Michael and Sandy's home is about 200 metres on the left.

From Ballina, travel west on the Bruxner Highway, then take the Alstonville exit on the eastern side of Alstonville. Exit onto Ballina Road, which turns into Main Street and, after about 1.5 kilometres, leads to the roundabout at the eastern end of the Alstonville shops (as before). Daley Street is the

second exit off the roundabout when approaching from this side of town.

Daley Street can also be accessed directly off Wardell Road, if travelling from the south. Turn left towards Michael and Sandy's home.

Bee meeting signage will be in place.

Parking is on Daley Street or in the arcade parking area across the road.

## **Activities:**

- Introduction to Warré hive beekeeping
- Hive inspections, weather permitting
- Possibly a hive split and honeycomb pressing

## **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