

# THE WAGGLE

Newsletter of the Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc.

*'Furthering knowledge in Beekeeping by assisted learning and practical experience'*

[www.gcrb.org.au](http://www.gcrb.org.au)

Edition: October 2021

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## From the Editor

Welcome to the October edition of your newsletter. The year continues to disappear at a great rate and it will be Christmas before we know it. Maybe now is a good time to start making gift packs of honey products up for your loved ones.

With the longer, sunnier days now upon us those with solar wax melters are probably looking forward to melting all of their stored up cappings and any old frames. And I dare say some will suffer accidents when operating their melters from burns or spillage. There is a timely article of tips and tricks for operating solar wax melters in this edition.

As we have our AGM this weekend, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the outgoing Committee for their support since I took over as editor of your newsletter. I will also take the opportunity to welcome the new Committee and look forward to working with them for future editions. I will endeavour to do an article on our new Committee so you know who's who in the zoo.

Time for my monthly reminder that I am always after articles for your newsletter.

See you at the next meeting

Yours Aye

Windy

The Waggle is the journal of the Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc. It is distributed to members monthly. The editor will consider adverts from businesses relevant to beekeepers to run free of charge where they contain a discount or special offer to GCRB members. Please email [gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au)

## President's Chat

As I type this chat, I'm three quarters of the way through a fourteen-day quarantine with my wife and three of my children, all going well due to be "released" on Wednesday the thirteenth. Interesting world we find ourselves in currently, for me it wasn't until I had to quarantine that the real seriousness and effect of COVID 19 was felt. Fortunately, my loved ones and I are safe. I now have a much better understanding of the emotional, psychological and financial effects this disease poses. As a member of our club, I would hope that if you too are experiencing the effects of quarantine and require assistance in some way that you would reach out to the club if needed, as that's what we are all about right?

Needless to say, my bees have been getting a lot of pampering over the last week, the timing was perfect in that regard as I had a number of outstanding "bee tasks" that I've been able to cross off my list. I hope your slate is currently clean as well, as we approach this great but busy time of being a beekeeper.



The committee have been doing a great job in trying to get the message across about the importance of registering your hives. If you have already registered them, please update your member details on the ABA NSW members portal to include your hive identification number (HIN). Registering your hives is not a choice but a necessity, it's free and easy to do. If you require assistance email Julie, Drew or me (email addresses at the end of the Waggle). I will also have my laptop with me at the next club day to process any members requiring assistance, too easy!

Well, that's probably enough from me for now, hope to see you putting your hand up at our AGM on the sixteenth and getting involved around the hives, we need your help, you are just the right person!

Greg

"The Appy Apiarist"

## Hive Report

The hives are now starting to produce a good flow of honey which means the extraction is taking a little longer each meeting.

Unfortunately, a couple of the hives needed a bit of work during the meeting but this also provided a great training opportunity for everyone.

The Queen excluder in Hive 3 was covered with brace comb and the workers would have found it difficult to reach the honey super. During the inspection, no brood was found in the brood box so a new queen was introduced to the hive. To give the new queen a bit of room to lay, two brood frames were replaced with new frames.

Due to the wax moth found in Hive 5 the brood box and hive floor needed a good clean.

Additionally, a new queen was introduced, while 3 brood frames were recycled.



See you at the next inspection



## New Members

The Club's membership base continues to grow and the President, Committee and Members would like to welcome our newbees

Ken Deane  
Brian Challis, and  
Michael Anderson

Please make the new members welcome!

## August Meeting Report

We achieved quite a lot at Saturday's club meeting. We extracted around 20 kg of honey, and then Fiona, Mike and willing helpers replaced the brood box on hive 5, which was the hive that has had been infected with wax moth during the year. They also put in several new frames with foundation in the brood box on this and hive 3.



Once the hive had been sorted out the Queens in hives 3 and 5 were replaced. All this work took much

longer than anticipated, so we ran out of time to talk about swarms so we held a brief open question time about swarms where everyone had the opportunity to participate and contribute.

The raffle prizes were a \$50 voucher to Bunnings (thanks Sarah), a sugar shake test kit and a \$20 Voucher to Vs Bees.

Thanks to all members who attended for their participation and attendance, and special thanks to Fiona, Mike and members who helped, for their hard work on the hives. Thanks to all those members who also helped with the extraction including Windy, Monica, Tim, and Tony.

See you next meeting.

## Joke of the Month



## Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the GCRB will be held this Saturday 16 October, 2021 at the Vietnam Veterans complex. If you would like to be more involved in the club then it is time to think about being on the committee.

There is not a lot of work for committee members and if you are unable to attend our committee meetings then you can do so through Google Meets (Google's answer to Zoom).

If you need more information please give our Secretary, Drew Maywald, a call. You will receive more information about the AGM, closer to the date.

## Diary Dates

### Sat 20 Nov, 2021

8:30am - Club Meeting Hive Inspection and Rob

10:30am - Conducting Brood Inspections by Fiona Fernie & Mike Hynes

## Solar Wax Melter Tips and Tricks

So... you have a new Solar Wax Melter then? If you have given it a test run then you will have probably picked up on a few of the following tips and tricks. The list is not the bee all or end all for operating your solar wax melter but hopefully it will give you confidence that what you are doing is okay.

The first point is that everything inside your operating melter CAN BURN YOU!! The melted wax, any metal pieces including collection containers and even plastic containers have the potential to cause damage.

When you are melting cappings, or old frames, there will be a considerable amount of honey collected along with the wax. This is essentially unavoidable but not a disaster. You will need to keep an eye on your collection container and when almost full set it aside to fully cool. The wax will float to the top and harden. You can then drain the honey off into a disposable container (old 2ltr milk container) and dispose of it into your weekly rubbish.

To help clean your wax, place a piece of fly wire in the melting tray. Either aluminium or nylon fly wire is okay to use. This will trap most contaminants before they get to your collection container. This is particularly relevant when you melt out old brood frames as once the wax melts out you will be left with all of the cell linings.

To further clean your wax, melt it a second time. Once it has hardened from the first melting and you have drained off the honey (see above), wash the block in clean, cold water to remove any remaining honey. Remove the fly wire and replace it with a chux or similar and place the washed block back in the melter. Ensure you use a clean collection container or have a mould to pour the wax into.

Do not place anything in the melter you do not intend to melt. If you use plastic containers you need to ensure they are microwave safe as there is a fair chance anything else will melt. The photo shows what happened to a plastic mould that was placed in the melter to clean it out.



If you place a large amount of wax you will need to keep an eye on the melter. One moment it will seem that the wax is not melting and the next your melter is full of hot liquid wax (and honey).

To clean out melter safe containers just place them upside down in the melter and any excess wax will simply melt out.

Hopefully these pointers help you get the best out of your melter. If anyone else has any tips please send them through and I will include them in future editions.

### For Sale

The club has been given three frame display boxes for competition judging, as in the photo attached. One of the painted ones has only one sheet of glass while the other two are complete and ready to go. The varnished one has not been used.

They are available for members to buy and anyone who is interested can make an offer. I was thinking they would be worth around \$30 each noting they go for well over a \$100 from suppliers.

If you are interested in purchasing any of these units, please contact Drew.





Additionally, the Men's Shed have built two solar wax melters which are for sale. The larger of the two is 855mm long x 595mm wide x 200mm deep so would be suitable for someone with a large number of hives. The cost for this unit is \$250.



The smaller unit is 500mm x 400mm x 200mm and would ideally suit someone with less than half a dozen hives. The cost for this unit is \$125.



Both units can be viewed at the club. If anyone is interested, please contact either Greg, Drew or Peter.

With the current COVID-19 restrictions, a mask is mandatory when indoors and what better way to show the world that you love bees than to wear one of these stylish masks being offered by Drew for a measly \$10. There are two designs to choose from. Double layer

of cotton fabric, wire nose piece and adjustable ear straps. If you are interested, please contact Drew at [drewmaywald@gmail.com](mailto:drewmaywald@gmail.com) or phone on 0400 959 043 to order yours.



## Honey Competition

At the April GCRB Committee Meeting, the committee decided to hold a club honey competition to be held in December 2021. We are planning to make this an annual club event.

**Classes** – classes for the competition will be:

- **Light Honey** – Open to all members
- **Medium Honey** – Open to all members
- **Dark Honey** – Open to all members
- **Novice Beekeeper Honey** - for any member who has only been keeping bees for the last 12 months
- **Beeswax** – Open to all members
- **Baked Goods or slices** – Open to all members.

**Rules** – The following rules apply for the competition:

- Open to all GCRB Members.
- All Honey must be bona fide produce from the exhibitor's own hives.
- Only First in each class will be announced.
- All honey classes judged for the GCRB champion honey.
- Prizes will be suitable trophies.

- One entry per class unless honey is from a different floral source.

- Each entrant must supply one 500g glass jar of honey per class. The jars must have a white lid and are available from Vs Bees.



- Entrants can enter all or as many classes as they are eligible to.

- Entries in the beeswax class must submit two x 30-gram blocks of wax.

- Entries are not to have any identification marks on their jars of honey, or beeswax

- The baked foods or slices must be presented with 6 slices only, on a white plate or white disposable plate no more than 200 mm in diameter, with no labels or identification marks on the plate.

- Entry fee of \$2 per entry.

- Entries to be collected at the end of the meeting or GCRB will donate the jars of honey and wax to a local charity.

- Any baked foods or slices left over will be eaten by all members present as part of the club's Christmas celebrations

- The judge's decision is final with no correspondence entered into.

### Scale of Points for Judging

Liquid Honey	Points
Flavour	25
Density	25
Colour	25
Aroma	10
Clearness	10
Cleanliness	5
<b>Total Points:</b>	<b>100</b>
Beeswax	Points
Colour	35
Clearness	25
General Appearance	30
Aroma	10
<b>Total Points:</b>	<b>100</b>

### Tasks for October/November

During October you should continue to lift your brood and replace your brood comb (by rotating it into your honey super) but not all at once. Do this over the next three months at least.

October is also when you continue to make up your Nuc boxes if you intend to expand your apiary.

Don't forget to inspect your brood and if you didn't do a sugar shake test back in April then October is the month to do it

### What's Flowering in the Region

During October/November many of the flowering plants from the previous month continue to support our bees throughout the region. These include, but not limited to, the following:

**Sheoak** – A number of this species are currently flowering including the Black and River varieties. These trees provide a useful supply of pollen. It is not a nectar source.





**Ironbark** – At least four varieties of Ironbark are flowering during June and include the Caley’s, Dusky-leaved, Grey and Tumble-down varieties. The honey from this tree has a medium density and mild sweet flavour, while useful quantities of pollen can be obtained to assist in maintaining colony strength.



Additionally, the Red Ironbark, more commonly known as Mugga, is also flowering.

**Gums** – At least three varieties of gum are now flowering including the Blue, Scribbly and Spotted gums. Valuable pollen and nectar supplies are obtained regularly from the Blue Gums during late winter and early spring but there is limited pollen and next to no nectar from either the Scribbly or Spotted Gum.



**Flat Weed** – Flatweed is a herb to 400 mm wide with yellow daisy type flowers up to 30 mm diameter borne on simple or branched, leafless stalks at any time of the year with a flush in spring to early summer. The large quality of bright orange pollen and small

amount of nectar obtained simulate brood-rearing



**Mexican Poppy** – A greyish prickly plant up to 1m with prickly toothed leaves, yellow juice and large cream or pale-yellow flowers. While the plant is considered a weed in Qld, the plant is highly sought by beekeepers for the reliable pollen supplies obtained during the lengthy flowering period. Only insignificant quantities of honey are obtained from Mexican Poppy.



**Turnip Weed** – African turnip is a herb up to 60 cm high with rough thin leaves and yellow flowers. It is a weed in crops, pastures and natural environments. The plant is a major source of pollen but only a minor source of honey, which has a strong flavour and aroma.





## **Tips and Tricks**

**Light your smoker BEFORE putting on your veil.** – Ever wondered where the holes in your veil came from after lighting your smoker? You may be surprised to find out that small particles from your smoker might be burning holes in your veil as you pump it up to get it started. The solution? Light your smoker before you put your veil on and hopefully a lot less holes.

**Editor's note:** I am always on the outlook for tips and tricks from people. If you have an idea for how to do something you think others may find interesting, please let me know at [gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au](mailto:gcrb.editor@beekeepers.asn.au)

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The club would like to thank Rachael & Vern for their generous support

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