BEE NEWS

November 2025
Issue 163

Monthly newsletter of the Sunshine Coast BeeKeepers Inc.

www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au



Photo of bees on dragonfruit flower, by Aymeric Beaulavon

NEXT MEETING

Saturday, 29 November 2025 at the Club House, 43 Farrell Street Yandina.

Christmas party and break-up – raffle and lunch to be provided.

We have 80 members who have booked to attend so if you want to come contact Lynne pronto.

Morning tea and catch up starts 9.30am, BYO plate of food to share.

Meeting to start at 10.00am.

Guest Speaker – Tony Minto – VSA Queen Bees.

President's Report

We made it to the end of another year of beekeeping! In one of our most challenging years as a community, I am beyond proud of our collective efforts in supporting one another through the challenges faced. Thank you to the leadership team for facilitating supportive measures for everyone, and for continuing to educate us and share knowledge. As they say, knowledge is power, and with all that we have learned this year, we must be the most powerful group of beekeepers around!

Our Introduction to Beekeeping Course this month was again successfully attended by an excellent group of new beekeepers. We love all of the opportunities that the course provides, but this month we were not happy to find

Know someone interested in bees? Why not forward this newsletter to them!

varroa in one of our own hives. Interestingly it did not show in the initial alcohol wash, but was found in the uncapping of some drone cells. It just goes to show that having a multi-level approach in your Integrated Pest Management Plan is imperative. We did not reach the threshold for intervention, but I feel like we have all of the tools and expertise in our team to manage this disruption in our hive. No-one is immune, and having processes in place is so very important.

As always our message remains, test and report. I would add to that test, report, and reach out for support.

As things heat up, I encourage everyone to keep an eye on their hives, look out for any signs of support needed from you. We have detailed in this newsletter the dates our club will be closed and the dates we have our Introduction to Beekeeping Courses. Please be mindful of this when planning your needs for your hive.

Thank you all, and thank you to the leadership team and committee for a brilliant 2025. I can't wait to celebrate with you on Saturday at our November meeting/Christmas party!

Happ-bee Christmas everyone! Have a safe and fun break!

Katie

Katie Livock

President

Biosecurity Notes

The need for ongoing surveillance of your hives is as important as ever as the Varroa infestation continues to spread. In addition, the results of all alcohol washes and drone uncappings must be reported to Bee123.

It is causing some concern tht some beekeepers are greating hives that are below threshold. At present you should only treat a hive once 5 or more mites are detected in a wash of half a cup of bees. The threshold will change to 9 or more on 1st December for summer. Treating below threshold increases the risk of inducing resistance to treatment chemicals which is universal overseas. We must delapy this happening in Australia for as long as possible.

With our minds on Varroa, it is important not to forget about other bee pests and diseases. These include chalkbrood, American foulbrood. European foulbrood, parasitic mite syndrome and colony loss syndrome. The presentation of these needs to be distinguished from the effects of a Varroa infestation. Also note how to distinguish Tropilaelaps mites (not yet in Australia) from Varroa. More information on these will be sent over the holiday period. You should read the

Workshops for New Beekeepers

Our upcoming Beekeeper's Courses for 2025 will be held on:

- **10 January 2026 - closed**
- **14 February 2026 - now open**
- **7 March 2026 - now open**

Booking is essential.

Book online at: www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au/workshops.



* Freepik

The Club Online

To save our members time searching online, the Club's website has links to the best beekeeping information and websites we can find.

www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au

Also, check out our Facebook page for more Club news.

www.facebook.com/pg/sunshinecoastbeekeepersaustralia/posts/?ref=page_internal

new editions of the "Bee Biosecurity for Beekeepers" and the "Biosecurity Code of Practice". Both are available on the AHBIC website https://honeybee.org.au.

With the conclusion of the VDO's next month, the Champions Network is being expanded to fill the gap in association with the Bee Biosecurity Officer and the Engagement Officer, Sarah Hickman. The Champions will undergo further training. As a result of this change, Linda Blackwell has been selected by the committee to be our second Biosecurity Champion.

John Baker

Remember, **you are not alone; we are all in this together.**

Saturday Rosters 2025/26

We would like to thank all the members who volunteered to work at the Club over the preceding months.

NOVEMBER

29/11/25	General Meeting	Christmas Party

DECEMBER

06/12/25	Open	Tom Symons	Evan Sanders
13/12/25	Open	Griffin Pengally	John Baker
20/12/25	Last day for 2025	Ron and Lynne Hulme	

CLUB CLOSED - 21/12/2025 to 02/01/2026

JANUARY 2026

02/01/26	Open	Evan, Ron and Lynne Hulme	
10/01/26	Course	Alby, Tom, Graham, Evan Catering - Mary Spencer	Katie Livock
17/01/26	Open	Bill McBryde	Tom Cowburn
24/01/26	Harvest	Jason and Kathleen Marsh	David Lee
31/01/26	General Meeting	Gillian and Ian Meyers	

If the rostered dates don't suit OR you are unable to attend please email Lynne Hulm – secretaryscbees@gmail.com

Honey Extraction Dates

NOTE – all members wanting to use the Club facility for extraction of honey must first book with Lynne Hulm the Secretary to make sure we are not overbooked. You must let Lynne know how many frames that you want to extract honey from.

- **20 December**
- **24 January 2026**

Please ensure that you assist with the cleaning up following extraction of honey.

Borrowing the Clubs spinners to extract honey at home:

- The book for the loan of extractors has been updated and a hire sheet will enable the committee member on duty to ensure that the new system is followed.
- The Spinner must be returned to the club by 9:00am the following Saturday cleaned and ready for the next member to borrow.
- If for some unforeseen reason the spinner cannot be returned to the club by 9:00am the following Saturday please contact the Secretary to inform her that they are unable to return the spinner at the agreed time.

Swarms

In South East Queensland it is estimated that there could be over 150 feral bee hives per square kilometer. In the first 18 months the majority of these hives will die out due to varroa mite infestation but these bees will also reinfect managed hives.

Prevention of Swarms

Management of our hives is more essential than ever with the spread of the varroa mite.

Part of our management strategy should include strategies to minimise swarms which in themselves spread the varroa mite.

Ensuring equipment is clean, the ground around your apiary is tidy, the Queen has space in the brood box, the workers have space for honey, splitting your hive to form a nuc and that common pests such as hive beetle and wax months are controlled.

Swarm Removal

The catching of swarms is an **important community service** and will continue.

An attempt must always be made to clearly explain the behaviour of bees to the public. Bees when swarming may stay in one place for a few hours or days before they eventually move.

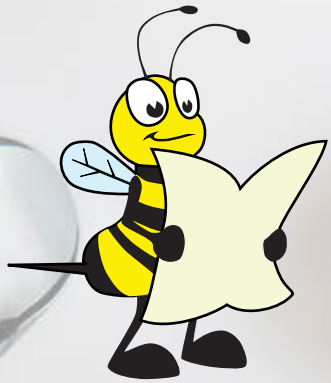
The member of the public must understand that they recontact the swarm catcher if the bees have moved on.

We still have members available to catch swarms but bees caught will be tested for varroa and treated if varroa is present and then quarantined before joining an apiary.

We have fewer members available to catch swarms so would encourage members reconsider assisting by gaining advice on swarm catching or be trained by one of our experienced members.

Swarm Catchers

Southern Areas	Ian Meyers - 0412 694 058 Terry Ind - 0424 165 840
North Coast and Sippy Downs	Grant Eisenmenger - 0401 720 004
North and Central Areas	Tony Minto - 0419 661 843
Nambour and Maroochy	Alby Taylor - 0418 882 282
Buderim	Tom Cowburn - 0494 302 366
Blackall Range and Maleny	John Baker - 0418 791 149



BEES IN THE NEWS

Bidens pilosa (Cobblers Pegs) – The secret life of plants, Irit Dulman

I have always been told that Honey Bees can always be found on weeds such as Cobblers Pegs. It is important for Bees to frequent herbs including weeds to gain important nurtients for their diet.

This species of common weed has an American origin, but is widely invasive in Eurasia, Africa and Pacific Islands as well as Australia.

Bidens pilosa is primarily considered a weed, however in many parts of the world it is also a source of food and medicine. The leaves have a resinous flavor, and are eaten raw, in stews, or dried for storage. It is especially important in eastern Africa, where it is known as michicha. In Vietnam, during the Vietnam War, soldiers adopted the herb as a vegetable, which led to it being known as the "soldier vegetable". In traditional Chinese Medicine the plant is considered a medicinal herb.

Concerns for pollination industry and beekeepers as varroa mite worsens across NSW

Nicola Ceccato and Emily Doak ABC Riverina Beekeeping Nov 2025

In short:

Varroa mite continues to worsen for beekeepers across NSW, prompting concerns what the future looks like within various horticulture industries.

The cost of treating hives for varroa mite has affected beekeepers and flowed onto other industries as the wild honey bee population declines due to the pest.

What's next?

The NSW Apiarists Association is calling for the NSW government to provide grants to help cover the mounting costs of treating hives.

Worker honey bees can sense infections in their queen, leading to revolt

by Alison McAfee, The Conversation Nov 2025

When the results of Canada's national honey bee colony loss survey were published in July 2025, they came as no surprise. According to the Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists, an estimated 36% of Canada's 830,000 honey bee colonies had perished over the winter.

Now, we might be having a light-bulb moment. My colleague Abigail Chapman and I recently found that queen honey bees are infected with viruses that compromise their fertility and may get them ousted from their colonies. And that's meaningful, because "poor queens" is the top-ranked cause of colony losses reported by Canadian beekeepers.

Queen 'autopsies' point to viruses

Our surveys of queens from members of the British Columbia Bee Breeders' Association showed that "failing" (poor quality, unproductive) queens had a higher viral burden than their healthy counterparts. That is, they were either infected with more viruses, had more intense infections, or both. The failing queens also had smaller ovaries, a sign they could be less fertile.

The workers' dilemma

Superseding colonies are over three times more likely to perish when compared with healthy colonies, in part because there is no guarantee that the new queen will successfully mate. But from the workers' perspective, supersedure is a necessary risk. If the old queen is compromised, producing a new one is the colony's best chance at survival.

From beekeeper to queenkeeper

This validates beekeepers' reports of having "queen issues" when infection levels are high and supports murmurs of queens not lasting as long as they used to. There are many other reasons why a queen may sputter, including pesticide exposure, extreme temperatures, poor mating and more. But viruses are a universal problem, and we did not previously understand the extent to which they could compromise queens.

But until an antiviral is developed and brought to market, stepping up varroa control is likely the best defense for keeping queens healthy and bringing down colony losses. Pollination of our fruits, nuts and seeds will depend on it.

Wild honeybees now officially listed as endangered in the EU

Published: October 12, 2025 The Conversation

Not all honeybees live in hives. Across Europe, colonies still live in the wild, nesting in tree cavities and other natural spaces, just as their ancestors did for millions of years.

Now, for the first time, these wild honeybee populations have been officially categorised as endangered within the European Union.

The western honeybee has a long history with humans. People have kept honeybee colonies for thousands of years, dating back to the ancient Egyptians who kept them in rudimentary hives to harvest honey. But it's modern beekeeping, with its mobile hives and commercial pollination, that has had the widest impact on the species.

Because of that, today the western honeybee exists in two forms: the managed colonies kept in hives, and the wild ones that live independently of people. Both belong to the same species, Apis mellifera.

The new endangered assessment is a formal recognition that wild honeybees are native wildlife in need of conservation. We can no longer afford to leave them understudied and unprotected.

2025 Executive and Committee

President	Katie Livock	presidentscbees@gmail.com	0414 843 342
Vice President	Grant Eisenmenger	vicepresidentscbees@gmail.com	0401 720 004
Secretary	Lynne Hulm	secretaryscbees@gmail.com	0421 720 628
Treasurer	Paul Bonner	treasurerscbees@gmail.com	0403 432 952
Newsletter Editor	Linda Blackwell	lindaeb6081@gmail.com	0409 848 466
Facebook/website			
Biosecurity	John Baker	mail@johnbaker.com.au	0418 791 149
Committee	Tom Cowburn	tjcowburn@bigpond.com	0418 143 206
Committee	David Lee	leesbees@lisco.com.au	0414 757 220
Commitee	Evan Sanders	katiemary70@yahoo.com.au	0419 764 421
Committee	Tony Minto	tonyminto@hotmail.com	0419 661 843

Club Patron: Alby Taylor

Life members: Merv Wruck, Chris Johnson, Bill Spencer, Ken Evans

www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au

* Images and artworks are designed by Freepik www.freepik.com

Disclaimer
The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the offical policy or position of the Sunshine Coast Beekeepers Inc. The Sunshine Coast Beekeepers Inc accepts no liability for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided in this newsletter.