

BEE NEWS

April 2026

Issue 166

**Monthly newsletter of the Sunshine Coast
BeeKeepers Inc.**

www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au



Photo of bee on callistemon flower, by Linda Blackwell

NEXT MEETING

**Saturday, 30 May 2026 at the Club
House, 43 Farrell Street Yandina.**

**Greatest Honey in the World
Competition**

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

Meeting to start at 10.00am.

President's Report

The reason I got into beekeeping was because of something our Principal had said to us at work. She had challenged us to all become lifelong learners, so I started looking for something that I could learn about. Something new. Something that could be a commitment - not a short task I was learning, but a skill I could develop. So I chose Beekeeping.

I often hear Beekeepers say you'll never know everything about beekeeping, and that is proving more and more true every day. Beekeeping is, likely, something that will be

a lifelong learning venture for me. With the introduction of the varroa mite I am hearing of more people thinking about leaving beekeeping because of this new challenge. I implore you to think of it as a new challenge, something we are all learning about, not something we find too much of a challenge. It's just another element of beekeeping that we are all learning about. We are all lifelong learners and this is another part of beekeeping that we are learning together.

Don't forget that our next meeting is in May and it's the Greatest Honey in the World* competition! Stop by any Saturday to grab your container and make sure you fill it to at least half full.

Are you also prepping for the Sunshine Coast Show?? It's almost time to show off all the things you do to support the Sunshine Coast through beekeeping. David will talk more about this at our meeting in May.

Until I see you at our next meeting, keep checking and responding to what is happening in your hive and have a beautiful week!

Katie

Katie Livock

President

Dates to Remember

Saturday 30 May - Greatest Honey in the World Competition, at the Club House 43 Farrell Street Yandina

31 May - Membership Renewal for Year 1 June 2026-31 May 2027. If paying over the internet please ensure your name is on the bank transfer form

11 and 12 June - Queensland Beekeepers Conference, Bundaberg Queensland

12 to 14 June - Nambour Agricultural Show. Honey, creamed honey, wax and mead competition. A glass jar can be obtained from the Club House, 1st is free. Make sure you read the information on the website so that your entry meets all required standards.

25 July - AGM

Workshops for New Beekeepers

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

- **9 May - 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

Biosecurity Notes

Resistance to Treatment

Last month we reported the finding of varroa resistance to Bayvarol in hives localised in apiaries south of Brisbane and outlined how this will affect the management of infested hives. Since then, resistance to Amitraz (Apivar, Apitraz) has been confirmed as an emerging issue in isolated areas in Qld and NSW. A mutation linked to Amitraz has been identified following a secondary treatment failure. To understand more about the origin and distribution of Amitraz resistance, Biosecurity Qld is undertaking further surveillance and testing. It is expected susceptible and resistance mite populations will mix over time.

Rotation of different modes of treatment

Consistent with Integrated Pest Management (IPM) chemical treatments of different modes of action must be rotated. This is now critically important as it will help reduce the development of resistance in unaffected mites and the spread of resistance. Importantly, exotic bee viruses such as Deformed Wing Virus, have not been detected in the resistant mites. Specific testing for resistant mites will be undertaken with samples from collapsing colonies (high mite loads/treatment failure) and relatively healthy colonies. This will help map where resistance is and how widespread it is.

At present resistance is not widespread and for most beekeepers, current treatments will work when used correctly. Beekeepers must be aware of potential resistance to chemical treatment and be proactive in managing their hives when mite loads reach treatment threshold.

Re-infestation

I note re-infestations of hives is now occurring on the Sunshine Coast. This is another reason it is now critically important to keep up to date with hive inspections for alcohol washes. With early identification appropriate treatment can start.

The message:

- Monitor regularly at least every 4 weeks
- Rotate treatment modes of action
- Avoid repeated use of the same treatment
- Test prior to, halfway through and after treating.
- Report any suspicion of treatment failure to Qld Biosecurity

Are you looking to improve your biosecurity knowledge? The BOLT (Biosecurity Online Training) course, is a great resource to strengthen biosecurity knowledge and support best practice.

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.

- 2 May
- 16 May
- 30 May

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

Borrowing the Clubs spinners to extract honey at home:

- No bookings are taken for the 3 portable spinners that the Club loans out.
- This is first come first served basis - be at the Club at 9:00am to secure a spinner.
- All spinners can only be borrowed for a week and MUST be returned clean and on the following Saturday by 9:00am ready for other members to borrow.

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.

You can register here, it's free: [Login to BOLT Bee Biosecurity Course](#)

World Bee Day is on 20th May. For information on community events go to When Bee Foundation at: [World Bee Day](#)



New Videos

The video series "Introduction and support for beekeepers from the Bee Biosecurity Officer and the Engagement Officer", has released the second video. This one on miticide resistance and can be viewed here: [Miticide Resistance](#)

If you are struggling with Small Hive Beetle, you will find this from our BBO, Tonia Johnson very informative. [SHB in Qld Storm Season](#)

Two reminders

1. Keep your registration up to date with your hive numbers and follow the correct procedure if you no longer want to have hives. For more information click on [Leaving the industry](#) and [Click here to proceed to DPI](#) for the relevant form.
2. To avoid spreading pests and diseases between your hives or apiaries follow the "Come Clean, Go Clean" principle. [Click here](#) for more information.

Need help?

You can contact our BBO (Tonia Johnson, Tonia.Johnson@dpi.qld.gov.au) or Engagement Officer (Sarah Hickman, Sarah.Hickman@dpi.qld.gov.au) if you need help. They however are responsible for the whole of Qld.

A network of volunteer biosecurity champion beekeepers is available across Queensland to assist beekeepers with biosecurity advice. You can contact Linda or John.

Unless you subscribe to Bee e-alert, you will not receive urgent notices from Biosecurity. You can register with this link [Biosecurity Queensland e-alerts](#)

John Baker

Linda Blackwell

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

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 moths 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.

Saturday Rosters 2026

APRIL

25/04/26	Anzac Day / Open	No Meeting	Tom Cowburn
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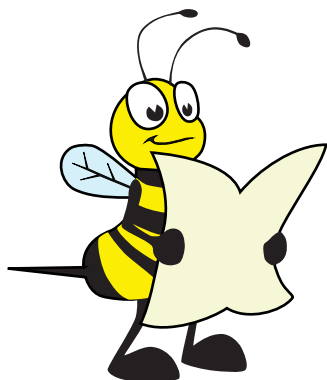
MAY

02/05/26	Honey Harvest	Mel and Colin Stimpson	Tom Cowburn
09/05/26	Course	Alby, Tom, Graham, Evan, Ron	Katie Livock
16/05/26	Honey Harvest	Marion Law	Paul Bonner
23/05/26	Honey Harvest	Bryan O'Neil	John Baker
30/05/26	General Meeting	Arlene Rutherford, Elise Winton	

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

Swarm Catchers

North Coast and Cut Outs (in a house)	Grant Eisenmenger - 0401 720 004
Coolum and Bli Bli	Tony Minto - 0419 661 843
Nambour	Alby Taylor - 0418 882 282
Buderim / Maroochy	Tom Cowburn - 0494 302 366 Ron Hulm - 0432 310 707
Maleny / Montville	John Baker - 0418 791 149
Caloundra / Southern	Ian Meyers - 0412 694 058



BEES IN THE NEWS

Media Release: Honey bee industry disappointed by inconclusive Varroa investigation

17 March 2026, AHBIC CEO Danny Le Feuvre

Honey bee industry disappointed by inconclusive Varroa investigation.,

AHBIC says the federal government's final report into the origin of the Varroa mite incursion fails to deliver

the answers the industry has waited almost four years to receive.

The report into the investigation known as Operation Decker does not identify an entry pathway for the mite, does not determine when Varroa entered Australia and ultimately leaves the key question unanswered – how the incursion occurred.

The report confirms the investigation found no direct evidence of illegal importation and that digital and physical evidence was inconclusive.

Australia has since moved from being Varroa-free to managing the pest permanently.

The lack of clearly identified entry pathway raises broader concerns for Australia's biosecurity system.

If we do not understand how Varroa entered the country, it becomes far more difficult to ensure the same pathway cannot be exploited again.

The matters not just for beekeepers but for every agricultural industry that relies on Australia's biosecurity protections.

Make a bee-line for your hives

Beeaware.org.au 23/4/24

The annual Bee Pest Blitz campaign has commenced and is calling on all Australian beekeepers to inspect their hives for high priority pests such as varroa and tropilaelaps mites this April. If you haven't already,

this is your sign to get bee-sy and inspect your hives before winter pack down.

Consistent and ongoing surveillance activities are critical to ensure honey bees are safeguarded against high priority exotic pests, ensuring healthy bees are available for pollination services. Biosecurity measures ensure the honey bee industry is prepared for, and can respond to, new and emerging pest threats.

It's time to bee aware. If you

see anything suspicious, report it to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881.

Bee Pest Blitz is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, led by PHA and supported by the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council and all state and territory government agriculture agencies.

Forever chemicals may threaten European honey bee colonies in Australia

By Lara Webster and Nat

Little Fri 6 Mar

A University of New England study has found PFOS can affect the weight of juvenile bees, posing an existential threat to hives.

The research also found the forever chemicals were transferred to honey in a lab setting.

What's next?

Researchers now want to examine the uptake of PFOS in plants and its transfer to flower nectar.

2026 Executive and Committee

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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

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