

BEE NEWS

February 2026
Issue 165

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

www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au



Photo of native bee on flower, by David Clode on Unsplash

NEXT MEETING

Saturday, 28 February 2026 at the
Club House, 43 Farrell Street Yandina.

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

Happy February everyone! It was so great to see so many people at our first meeting for the year. It was excellent to hear from Grant as our special guest speaker. Grant outlined for us his experience with varroa and the biggest challenge he was facing at the moment which is the influx of small hive beetle. This was reinforced by John and Linda as our Biosecurity Champions. The message remains to check hives, diagnose early, and respond to what is

happening - be it varroa, small hive beetle, or anything other challenges our hives present to us!

Now seems like a good time to check your Integrated Pest Management plan. At our meetings you will hear all sorts of tips and tricks for managing hives, and now is the time to work out what you will implement and how you will implement it. I would encourage you to check your hives regularly and have a plan for small hive beetle in place now.

I want to congratulate our member Tonia Johnson. Tonia has been appointed Bee Biosecurity Officer for all of Queensland! Congratulations Tonia, you are so deserving of this recognition and we feel very proud and lucky to have you as a member of our club. We realise this means we won't see you at many meetings because you will be travelling all over the state, but we know you are the right person to support Queensland through this challenge.

John will have a lot of information to deliver about all things biosecurity at our next meeting, and I will be away for our March Meeting. I wanted to also make you aware that due to ANZAC Day falling on our regular meeting day, we won't hold our monthly meeting in April. The club will be open for all should you need anything, but we won't hold our April meeting to allow families to attend marches and functions to commemorate the ANZACs. So, I will see you again at our May meeting.

Stay vigilant and stay bee-utiful everyone!

Katie

Katie Livock

President

Biosecurity Notes

As indicated in a recent email, there has been the detection of varroa mites at a single site in northern NSW that are resistant to treatment with a pyrethroid, specifically Bayvarol.

This is not good news.

If this strain with an identified mutation spreads, then this form of treatment will be lost. Biosecurity Qld is working with the NSW authorities and is undertaking tests in S.E. Qld to determine if there is more widespread resistance.

If beekeepers have any incidents of failure of treatment with Bayvarol, or Apistan, please notify the DPI immediately.

How this resistance developed is being investigated. You will be kept informed of the situation.

Workshops for New Beekeepers

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

- **7 March - fully booked**
- **11 April - open**
- **9 May - open**

Booking is essential.

Book online at:

www.sunshinecoastbeekeepers.com.au/workshops.



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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

Several important points were raised at a recent Bio-Champ meeting:

- 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](#).
- Remember to keep your registration up to date with correct hive numbers and other details with the DPI at the [Biosecurity Entity Registration Portal](#).
- The number of positive tests for varroa being notified is increasing rapidly indicating the build-up phase is well established, especially in Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. Again, it is very important to monitor hives at least every 4 weeks and treat when the current threshold of 9 mites is reached. Report your result to [Bee 123](#). In the meantime, use the other components of IPM.
- There is no restriction on moving hives but there is a strict protocol that must be followed that includes testing for varroa beforehand and at the new site. [Click here](#) for more information.
- If you find it difficult and wish to stop keeping bees, there is a process that must be followed. Contact a Bio-Champ if you need assistance.
- If selling or giving away a hive, it is now mandated to complete a "Vendor Declaration Form". It ensures a record of hive health, especially details of any varroa treatment, accompanies the hive. This does not apply to honey sales. The form is available on the [AHBIC website](#).
- Congratulations go to Tonia Johnson who previously was our Varroa Development Officer. In early February she was appointed to the position of Queensland's Bee Biosecurity Officer, a fulltime position with Biosecurity Queensland. Her time for engagement with beekeepers directly will be limited as her responsibility is state-wide.
- The topics above will be raised at the monthly meeting. Remember you are not alone, seek help from the DPI or the Bio-Champ network.

John Baker

Linda Blackwell

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

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.

- **21 March**
- **4 April**
- **18 April**

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.

Saturday Rosters 2026

FEBRUARY

28/02/26	General Meeting	Felice and Keith Eastwood	
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MARCH

07/03/26	Course	Alby, Tom, Graham, Evan, Ron Catering - Mary Spencer	Katie Livock
14/03/26	Open		Evan Sanders
21/03/26	Open	Kylie Albers	Paul Bonner
28/03/26	General Meeting	Chris and Stephen Partleton	

APRIL

04/04/26	Easter	Ashley Frost	David Lee
11/04/26	Course	Alby, Tom, Graham, Evan, Ron	Katie Livock
18/04/26	Honey Harvest		
25/04/26	Anzac Day / Open	No Meeting	Tom Cowburn

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

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.

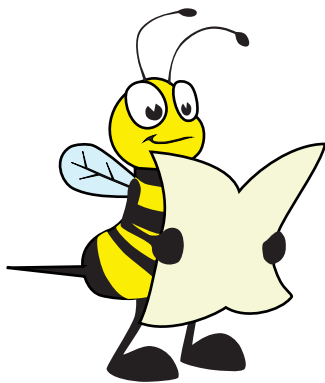
The member of the public must understand that they recontact the swarm catcher if the bees have moved on.

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.

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

How an annual 'wedding flight' of 1000 virgin queens is ensuring the revival of the European dark bee. The Guardian; Phoebe Wexton, Feb 2026

The Belgian ceremony attracts beekeepers from

the Netherlands, France and Germany keen to boost dark bee numbers and stop the spread of the hybrid honeybee.

Every summer 1000 virgin queens descend on the Belgian town of Chimay. During the 'wedding flight' a male attaches to the female then dies his mission accomplished.

Beekeepers come and pick up their fertilised queens in small colourful hives driving them back home sometimes 300km away. They will use the genetic material gathered in south Belgian to build new colonies in the Netherlands, France and Germany.

The point of the annual pilgrimage - which started in 2000 - is to spread the genes of the endangered dark bee (*Apis mellifera mellifera*), the native subspecies of the honeybee (*Apis mellifera*).

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

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