



Beekeepers Association of the ACT

Newsletter of the Beekeepers Association of the
Australian Capital Territory Incorporated

Meetings of our Association are conducted on the third Thursday of every month (except December) at the Yarralumla Primary School Hall, 24 Loftus Street, YARRALUMLA, ACT 2600

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<https://www.facebook.com/BeekeepersAssociationoftheACT>

April 2017

Monthly meeting: 18 May 2017, Yarralumla Primary School at 7:30pm

AGENDA

- 1930 Introduction & Welcome: President (Cormac Farrell)
- 1935 Beeginners Corner
- 1945 Presentation: Top Bar Hive primer (Jon Justin)
- 2030 Networking (light supper)
- 2100 Meeting close

Steve O'Hearn Secretary (0408) 657 871

President's Report

**Biosecurity update-
Third Australian Bee
Congress**

**Introducing your
committee - David
Segal**

Training Report

**SIG-native bees
contacts**

Bee rescue

**Can mushrooms save
bees?**

Links to our websites

Classifieds

President's Report

Dear Members,

With the traditional end to the beekeeping season fast approaching, it is time to have our **Annual General Meeting**, selecting a new committee for the next year. I have really enjoyed working with the current committee, and while we didn't always agree, we did achieve great things for the Association. Finishing our demonstration apiary and migrating our training to a purpose-built area, a successful Field Day, and lots of interesting meetings are significant achievements that members saw 'front of house'.

However there were also a lot of things 'back of house' that are no less significant. Moving to an electronic banking and membership system was well overdue, as was the prep work that the hive management and training teams put into keeping things running seamlessly. Stephanie Wong also did an amazing job professionalising our approach to events management, often out of far-flung hotel rooms overseas.

Last month has also seen me realise a personal achievement, something that I have been working towards for three years. **In the last week of March three beehives were delivered to the grounds of our national Parliament**, capping off years of painstaking negotiations.

Thanks to **ANU Apiculture Society** and my employer, **Aurecon**, for supporting this initiative. The hives were only in for a few days when they had their first 'official' function, used as the backdrop to the launch of a committee report on bee biosecurity. The apiary includes a standard Langstroth (our original Aurecon office hive supplied by Eric), a Top Bar Hive produced by the Open Source Beehives project and a Flow Hive.

It was interesting to see this focus on bee biosecurity from our Parliamentarians, given our continued (and expanding) role in the Sentinel Hive program. While Jeff Matsen is handing over the reins as Apiary manager, he is talking up a role of national significance as head of the Sentinel Hive Special Interest Group. The Association has signed a multi-year contract with **Plant Health Australia** to provide the ongoing monitoring around Canberra Airport. As many of you would be aware, Jeff has extensive experience in using this training as part of the response to the Townsville incursion of Asian Honeybees and Varroa mites. This longer term association is both a protection for our hives, as well as an opportunity to upgrade the skills of local beekeepers.

Please join me in thanking the outgoing committee members for the work that they have put into the association. We simply could not have functioned without their efforts, and most people never saw how much work they put in. Well I saw the work they put in, and I really appreciate it. Looking forward to the year ahead, building on what we have set up this year.

Regards,

Cormac Farrell, President



Biosecurity update

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc. (AHBIC) has approved the **Third Australian Bee Congress** to be held at Royal Pines on the Gold Coast Queensland from **27 June to 30 June 2018**. The theme for the Congress will be "Pollination and Beekeeping for the Future". Previous congresses have been held on the Gold Coast in 1972 and 1988; it's undeniable that this congress is well over due. A National Conference Committee has been established, chaired by Ben Hooper.

"My Committee is working towards providing a program that is both educational and empowering, especially in the field of providing pollination services." Ben Hooper said. "So at this time we would ask you to put the date in your diary for 2018 and spread the word to all beekeepers, both here in Australia and overseas."

Just a reminder: Any unusual plant pest should be reported immediately to the relevant state or territory agriculture agency through the **Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881)**.

Early reporting increases the chance of effective control and eradication.

Taken from the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council website

Introducing your committee

David Segal

I'm a new beekeeper living in Flynn who got involved with ACTBKA in 2017. I'm amazed at the size of the membership and keen just to help out in whatever way I can, which is why I volunteered.

I currently have one Langstroth hive which is the result of a merger to get them through winter. In Spring I plan to split them into 4 nucs.

I work in a non-secular pastoral care role as Head of Ursula Hall at the Australian National University. I also have a mental health training business - mhist.com where I run Mental Health First Aid and Suicide Intervention Skills.



Training Report

Reflections on Training Year 2016/17

While there has been no specific training courses undertaken since mid December 2016, overall I feel that the training undertaken for 2016/17 has, on the basis of member and public interest shown, been very well accepted.

Our Jerrabomberra Wetlands Training Centre (JWTC) offers the Association so much potential and, hopefully, the 2017/18 Beekeeping year will see even more courses offered to our membership. Apart from Introduction to Beekeeping, Backyard Beekeeping and Natural Beekeeping courses, the Association has the opportunity, subject to member involvement, to offer a wider range of courses.

I will not be putting my name forward to serve on the Committee at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting. However, I will retain my keen interest on training and hopefully will be in a position to continue a degree of support towards achieving positive training outcomes for our membership. The scope and variety of training courses for the 2017/18 beekeeping year will be for the new training manager and the new committee, following the AGM, to address.

In closing, I attribute the success of the training undertaken for this past training year to our team of dedicated members in our tutor group. I am most grateful for their support and it has been my pleasure to work closely with each and every one of them. In particular, I wish to thank **Jon Justin** and **Dermot Asis Sha'Non** for their time and commitment in sharing the training management workload. I also recognise and acknowledge the important role the **Hive Management team** has fulfilled in establishing and maintaining the two apiaries at Jerrabomberra Wetlands, **thanks guys.**

John Grubb
Outgoing Association Training Manager



Special interest group on native bees

If you would like to participate in this group or make a suggestion, contact me at peterabbott@iinet.net.au or on 0421 227 315.

Peter Abbott
Native Bee SIG Coordinator

Bee rescue

by Juli Poole

What can be done about a swarm that got away and is now well established in your front yard plum tree?

Jim Calokerinos, Dick Johnston and **Stuart Robertson** mounted a bee rescue operation before the tree lost its leaves and made the hive visible to the neighbours.

Given the lateness of the season, it was decided to fit the whole hive into a bottom box and super, without any frames.

No attempt was made to break the comb or distribute it across frames.

With a bit of trimming, the hive fitted nicely into the box. The bees quickly adjusted to the new arrangement, using the 'front door' opening to access the hive almost as soon as the lid had been placed on top.



The boxed hive was collected at dusk, with all the bees safely inside.

As the number of bees had shrunk considerably compared to the number in the hive over summer, it will be combined with an existing hive.

I have to put in my vote for the swarm queen to get the top job, as these bees were very gentle!



Thanks to Jim and Dick for showing how this might be tackled, and Stuart taking such great photos.



Can mushrooms save bees?

by Juli Poole

Mycologist Paul Stamets (Fungi Perfecti) and entymologist Steve Sheppard (Washington State University) certainly think so.

They started working on a mushroom solution to be fed to bees under attack from the varroa mite (see [YouTube April 2017](#)). The aim was to kill the viruses that the mite spreads or boost the bees' immunity. Click on the picture to see more about their research.



One particular mushroom was selected for its spores resistance to high temperatures and virulence against the viruses spread by the varroa mite.

A mushroom extract solution added to sugar syrup fed to bees is currently being tested in what is claimed to be the biggest bee hive experiment in the world, with 532 hives involved.

The premise Paul Stamets puts forward that answers to many of our environmental problems lie in the humble fungi, is just another reason, if one is really needed, for protecting our old growth forests. These are the places where diversity of fungi are found. We still know so very little about them, but we are losing so many species as these places are destroyed.

Closer to home, has anyone had experience of their bees or beehives' proximity to fungi enhancing bee health?

Some good news at last in the battle against varroa mite

References:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_lqIUION1s

<http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/beehives-made-of-mushrooms-could-save-colonies-from-collapse/>

Newsletter content and feedback

Have your say about what you'd like to see reported, contribute pictures and articles, or just give feedback!

Go to our website below, select 'Forums' on the left-hand side of the menu, and then 'Members forum'. Respond to the topic: Newsletter articles.

We'd love to hear from you!

Your editors: Juli and Stuart



online

Our website: www.actbeekeepers.asn.au

It's all there in one handy location: information, news, forums and links. Register to take part in the forum discussions, ask a question or provide advice.

Have you taken a look?

More photos and information from our [forum](#) at the [website](#) or [Facebook](#)

Classifieds

HOST A HIVE

The developers of the popular swarmpatrol.com web site, which now has over 2000 beekeepers subscribing from all over the world, recognised the need to assist beekeepers to go online with their products. After some 18 months of research and development, finally the hostahive.com web site was launched.

Hostahive is a specialised online marketplace for beekeepers. Each member can sign up in one of 3 different categories and set up their own very simple e-store. The categories provide a convenient method of catering to the different needs of beekeepers. Such an e-store can contain just products for sale or both products and services. A unique feature of the services part, which is very specific to beekeepers, is that service pricing can be based on the distance required to travel to the clients. The typical services that beekeepers provide are regular hive inspections, hive rental or leasing, pollination, mentoring, training or setting up and assisting with maintaining the popular Flow Hives.

Hostahive provides the latest fully secure e-commerce gateways, which means the beekeeper does not have to have credit card merchant facilities and the proceeds of any sale go into the beekeeper's account the same or next day depending on the time the purchase was made. The credit card and gateway fees, which can be quite substantial, are picked up by Hostahive and are included in the commission charged for the sales. Hostahive charges 15% for product sales and 10% for services. If postage is charged, no commission is charged on the postage fees.

Once a regional coverage of beekeepers is available with products, major promotion will be done in the region to make the consumer market aware of Hostahive and other affiliate sites which will be connected, so as to stimulate the sales.

Encouraged with the response to the system, Hostahive will be working closely with local beekeeping clubs and associations to help them market their member products. Customers on the other hand, can search out a beekeeper selling just the product they want within a certain distance from their place. They can search by a specific category such as honey or wax products and so on. Finding a local beekeeper to buy from, guarantees they will get raw untreated honey directly from the hive from their regional flora. This apparently has major health benefits for people with springtime allergies. By eating local honey, you become exposed and desensitised to local pollen and so decrease the allergic reaction.

The first 100 founding members of Hostahive will enjoy 6 months of free membership. Hostahive is happy to discuss close working relationships with bee clubs.

Sign up now to <https://hostahive.com>, set up your products in your e-store and start selling.

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