



# *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

**Next Meeting**

**President's Report**

**Training update**

**Biosecurity Update**

**Busy for Bees working bee**

**Hive Management updates**

**Theft notice**

**Snowy bees**

**Why bees butt in**

**Links to our websites**

**Classifieds**

Contact: President – Cormac Farrell (0422) 441 358

Email: [enquiries@actbeekeepers.asn.au](mailto:enquiries@actbeekeepers.asn.au)  
[www.actbeekeepers.asn.au](http://www.actbeekeepers.asn.au)

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

**September 2016**

**Monthly meeting: 15 September 2016, Yarralumla Primary School at 7:30pm**

## **AGENDA**

1930 Introduction & Welcome: President (Cormac Farrell)

1935 Beginners Corner

1955 African beekeeping: Micah Wood will talk about his experience as a Peace Corps volunteer in The Gambia working with Kiang West National Park and surrounding rural communities to promote beekeeping.

2030 Networking (light supper)

2100 Meeting close

**Steve O'Hearn Secretary (0408) 657 871**



## **President's Report**

Dear Members,

As I was about to start writing my President's report for this month, our Treasurer contacted me with some news that our little association had cracked the 300 member mark. At the time of writing we have 310 members, with 100 of those joining us this year. This is a fantastic result, and a lot of this has to do with both increasing awareness of the importance of bees, as well as the social media buzz (sorry, couldn't resist) of new inventions like the Flow Hive. I have heard really nice feedback from the new members attending their first meetings, thanks for everyone making them feel welcome.

With the influx of new beekeepers comes a need to properly train for the care of our colonies. Arguably the most important part of the Associations work is about to begin, and we have increased the range of courses that we offer. Both the Introduction to Beekeeping courses and the natural beekeeping courses have been heavily booked out. We are also increasingly shifting our focus to the Jerabomberra Wetlands Apiary as our main training base. City Farms are also refocusing their efforts on this site, and it is rapidly turning into premier training hub for urban sustainability. I have written to the ACT Government this week seeking approval to increase the number of hives that we can keep on the site. In addition to helping the training team, this will allow us to keep a wider selection of hives, including innovative approaches to beekeeping such as the double queen system that Alan Wade is setting up for us.

We have chosen a date for our field day - it will be on 4 March 2017, and our events coordinator Stephanie Wong has already been contacting vendors and planning for the biggest event on our calendar. Please block this out in your diaries - it is going to be a great day and a chance for us to showcase urban beekeeping.

Spring is definitely here - the best chance to score a new colony from resilient local stock or bolster and strengthen your existing colonies with an extra workforce. Get to know the associations swarm collectors at the upcoming meeting, for a small fee they can populate a hive for you or even coach you in catching your own colony.

See you at the meeting!

Regards,

**Cormac Farrell, President**

## **TRAINING REPORT**

### **Jerrabomberra Wetlands (JW) Courses.**

A fourth 'Introduction to Beekeeping' course was conducted at JW on Saturday 10 September; 16 students attended. My thanks to Jon Justin for assisting with the conduct of the course.

#### **Learn Natural Beekeeping**

Due the enormous interest for this course which will be conducted at Jerrabomberra Apiary on 24/25th September, Adrian has kindly agreed to present the course again on 22/23rd October. The September course filled up very quickly, so get in early and go to our online booking system at <https://bookwhen.com/actbka> to reserve your spot.

#### **What you will Learn**

You will learn about the intimate life of a Honey Bee colony, how to catch and relocate a swarm and the fundamentals to start up and manage a colony of your own. We will look at a number of different hives and discuss the pros and cons of them all. We will look at types of equipment you will need to catch swarms and to manage your hives. You will learn about Bee developmental stages, Queen development. The importance of natural comb, where to position a hive, harvesting natural raw honey and tools needed for harvesting, swarm management, and beekeeping using moon charts. Weather permitting, we will open one of the Kenyan Top Bar hives at the apiary and see how the bees are getting along up close and personal.

These subjects are by no means exhaustive!!

#### **CIT Courses on Backyard Beekeeping.**

The Association will be conducting three courses on bee keeping in conjunction with CIT Solutions. Courses 1 (to be held at the Bruce CIT campus) and 2 are now fully booked and Course 3 will be held on two consecutive Saturday's 26 November and 3 December. Tutors and attendees please note that Courses 2 and 3 will be conducted at Jerrabomberra Wetlands Training Centre.

John Grubb  
Association Training Manager

## Biosecurity update - Hayley's comment

Hayley Pragert, NSW Bee Biosecurity Officer  
Hayley.pragert@dpi.nsw.gov.au  
Phone: 0438677195



The role of the Bee Biosecurity Officer (BBO) in NSW has been very busy since I started in April 2016. My role so far has been focused on education but as the role develops, I will be actively involved in assisting the beekeepers implement the "Bee Biosecurity Code of Practice".

There have been many letters sent to NSW Apiarist and Amateur Beekeeping Associations, inviting them to make time to discuss components of the code and any issues they may have. I have also spent time with officers from Plant Health Australia, Bee

Biosecurity Officers in other states and also, officers within NSW including Mick Rankmore, Liz Frost, Doug Somerville and Nick Annand.

I have spent time with beekeepers from the Southern Tablelands, the Northern Tablelands, Tamworth, Riverina and the Central Tablelands branch. Issues highlighted at these meetings include the recent incursion of *Varroa jacobsoni* in Far North Queensland, security of sites for beekeeping on public land, rising rates of American Foulbrood (AFB) and also, inappropriate use of oxytetracycline to treat AFB. Total attendance of commercial beekeepers at these meetings was 125.

There has also been considerable interest from the Amateur Beekeeping Associations (ABA) to learn more on the Bee Biosecurity Code of Practice and bee disorders. Amateurs managing a smaller number of hives, have the luxury of being able to inspect for pests and diseases more frequently. Because of this, amateurs are better placed to find new disorders much sooner than those with many hives to inspect. I have been to some of these meetings in Gosford, Sydney, Bega and Canberra. Total attendance of amateur beekeepers at these meetings was 225

In May I attended the state conference and more recently, the Crop Pollination conference in Griffith. Emerging issues include concerns about pesticide use and particularly, systemic seed treatments that are applied to crops such as canola. Another concern is the increased demands on the bee industry for pollination, current remuneration per hive for pollination services, and the prevalence of pests and disease at large scale pollination events. I was fortunate to observe apiary officers from Victoria in action during these pollination events, where I visited almond orchards in Robinvale. From what I saw, the level of pests and disease in hives being transported from across Australia was dismaying. Not to mention, the large number of hives which were complete dead outs from AFB. This is something that needs to be addressed, in working with the industry to implement the code, I hope the overall level of pest and disease will be reduced in the future.

My role is primarily to promote the adoption of the Bee Biosecurity Code of Practice. There are up to 19 regulatory staff in NSW DPI engaged for some of their time on regulatory matters. So while I have the powers of an inspector to inspect hives and similar activities, the enforcement of the current or future legislation will not be my role. If the code is embraced by both the commercial and amateur beekeepers, there will be a declining need for regulatory enforcement. We are also likely to see better containment of some disorders such as American foul brood. Under the new legislation, disorder or disease "free" zones could be possible and allow easier access to interstate movement of bees or bee products.

But for the moment, as I continue to travel around NSW and meet a diverse group of apiarists in a challenging range of environments, I will continue to promote the benefits of the code to NSW apiarists. I look forward to meeting many more apiarists in the coming months.

---

# ACT FOR BEES



**'Busy for Bees' working Bee this  
Sunday 18th September 10.30 -3.30 at  
the Weston Community Orchard.**

ACT for Bees has partnered with 'Cool Australia' curriculum writers to create a series of units 'Love Food? Love Bees!' which focuses on the importance of bees for our world.

The Australian Curriculum aligned "Love Food? Love Bees!" Year 5 & 6 integrated unit explores the importance of bees and enables students to take real and bee-friendly action in their community.

Each lesson contains hands-on activities, tips, content information, assessment ideas, engaging videos and a range of other tools that support teachers to navigate this unit. There is also a digital library that has a load of fun and entertaining bee information.

This unit supports students to inquire into the role of bees in the ecosystem and how they can flourish in their role as pollinators. Students develop an understanding of bees, their role as pollinators, the threats they face and the steps they can take to be bee-friendly. By practising critical and creative thinking, students will be equipped to consider the impact of bees based on social, environmental and economic criteria and will be encouraged to take action around this important issue.

Please have a good look and share it with your local school, beekeeping group, Scouts and other Youth groups.

Cool Australia's resources are ALL FREE for teachers to use.

We are so excited to release this incredible unit just in time for Spring!

<http://www.coolaustralia.org/unit/love-food-love-bees-integrated-unit-year-5-6/>

---

## **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](mailto:peterabbott@iinet.net.au) or on 0421 227 315.

**Peter Abbott**

**Native Bee SIG Coordinator**

---

## **Hive Management updates**

### **National Bee Pest Surveillance Program**

To sign up, simply contact either the ACT NBPSP co-ordinators: Jeff Matsen or Frank Derwent or one of the six National Bee Pest Surveillance Program team leaders below:



- \* Sentinel Team 1: Cormac Farrell [jagungal1@gmail.com](mailto:jagungal1@gmail.com)
- \* Sentinel Team 2: John Grubb [the.grubbs@gmail.com](mailto:the.grubbs@gmail.com)
- \* Sentinel Team 3: Dick Johnson [bindaree@netspeed.com.au](mailto:bindaree@netspeed.com.au)
- \* Sentinel Team 4: Alan Wade [alanlynnnewade@me.com](mailto:alanlynnnewade@me.com)  
and Steve O'Hearn [gooster777@gmail.com](mailto:gooster777@gmail.com)
- \* Sentinel Team 5: Frank Derwent [fderwent@home.netspeed.com.au](mailto:fderwent@home.netspeed.com.au)
- \* Sentinel Team 6: Jeff Matsen [snow.gum@hotmail.com](mailto:snow.gum@hotmail.com)

## Special interest groups: Top bar and Warre beekeeping

The Hive Management team are seeking nominations for the formation of special interest groups (SIGs) for top bar and Warre beekeeping. If there is enough interest, the top bar SIG would be given one or more top bar hives at Jerrabomberra Wetlands to look after for the year, with the same applying for a Warre SIG. These hives would need to be managed in accordance with ACT and National beekeeping laws and codes of practice, as well as the Association's own hive management requirements.

For more details contact Hive Manager, [Jeff Matsen](#), or Assistant Hive Manager, [Frank Derwent](#).

## Become a BAACTI hive buddy

Simply e-mail [Jeff Matsen](#) or [Frank Derwent](#) and ask to be placed on the e-mail distribution list for hive management activities. There's no specific time commitment, just come when you can and help out. No need to have any beekeeping experience. If there is enough interest, we may even be able to allocate a beehive for the year to a small group to look after under guidance - a great way to get hands on beekeeping experience if you do not have a hive at home.

Good beekeeping!

**Jeff Matsen**  
**Hive Manager**  
[snow.gum@hotmail.com](mailto:snow.gum@hotmail.com)

## THEFT NOTICE



Long standing Association member of 40+ years Herb Waldie had two wooden double 8 frame hives stolen from Hillside Station on Narrabundah Lane near Symonston in the past few weeks. Herb's boxes are marked with his registration number **W114**. Please keep your eyes out. It is a sad reminder that there are some miserable people out there and we need to be as vigilant as we can be. Mark your hives and if you are the victim of a theft don't hesitate to inform the police and post a notice on the Forum so that your fellow beekeepers can keep an eye out for them.

## Snowy Bees



*The Association recently received this fascinating story from Graham Dalglish, who lives at 1400 M ASL, near Lake Eucumbene:*

I found a deserted beehive in the snow, yep, covered in snow, and found a lot of bees inside. As no one owned up to own the bees, I have been trying to look after them and have done a lot of research to study up on bees. As a biologist (amongst other majors) I was not great on entomology, but now in retirement on a "farm" (more RF and communications) with lots of eucalypts and wattle about and sheep and cattle farms about (and the NPWS park nearby also), I am enjoying this challenge and have been given lots of used beehives. I have been feeding the bees with

castor sugar and this seems to be working. However, the rapid change lately from Winter snow, to Spring Sunshine and back to Winter snow seems to have take a bit of a toll.

The used beehive boxes (Langford 8 frame type), appear to clean up OK, the boxes are good, but many frames show signs of wax moth infestation of old (lots of holes, hollows and old white silk sheds). All have been in the freezing weather for years and are probably clear but needed much cleaning and re-wiring (which I have been busy doing). I have purchased the basic beekeeping gear and have transferred the bees to a new clean box in which they seem to be doing OK despite reduced numbers. My 110 hectare property often hosts professional bee keepers during Spring and Summer and one told me of the castor sugar trick.

So, enough of the pre-amble, I was wondering if you had any members who utilize the high country, who could assist with my challenge. I have set up a SBH beetle trap just in case. I have noted the presence of the European Wasp and would like to control for this also. I doubt if I have any mites but I will test when the weather warms up.

My property is mostly bush with only about 10 hectares of pasture. Any assistance and tips on starting this venture will be greatly appreciated.

*Graham wrote back with an update:*

I regret to report that most of my bees have died of cold exposure (due to my incompetence), however, the remaining bees just won't say "die". I may have lost my queen also so I am not very optimistic. There is plenty of Wattle bloom out at present and some Eucalypts are also blossoming (or trying to) as the weather quickly switches from Winter to Spring to Winter and back to Spring and it looks like more snow is coming.

I have spoken to the previous owner of my beehive boxes and he (Mark) states he has never used the hives before nor has he had any AFB problems despite having hives near where I collected these hives. I have cleaned up 3 triplet hives and painted the outsides. One I have set up a SBH beetle trap in the floor just in case. What I have identified is that most of the old hives were once infested with the Wax Beetle Larvae as their damage and left overs are quite visible. Some mould is also evident and I was wondering if bleach or "wet and forget" (benzalkonium chloride) would be the go to finish cleaning the insides. Perhaps you or your members could comment.

Yours in Nature,  
Graham

Dr.Graham DALGLISH,BSc,BA,DC,DO,RN  
"Digits Enterprises"  
PO Box 70  
ADAMINABY,NSW,2629

Tel.02 6454 1014  
Mob. 0412879785

---

## WHY BEES BUTT IN

Bees have been found to perform a strange ritual when they encounter aggressive rival bees, for example, or predatory spiders hanging out at favoured foraging spots. When they return to the hive, they head butt hive mates performing the famous 'waggle dance' that directs would-be foragers to rich sources of nectar by halting their hive mates mid-dance, the scouting bees save them from perilous excursions.

James Nieh and colleagues of the University of California interrupted honeybees at a feeding station—for instance, by pinching their legs to simulate spiders' bites or smearing the feeding stations with bee alarm pheromones. When the bees returned to their hive, they disrupted waggle dancers that were directing others to the station. "Along with the head butt, the signaler makes a brief 'piping' sound," says Nieh. "This makes the waggle dancer freeze, which we think is a reflex action. This is the first time the meaning of the head butt has been clear. Now we know it conveys the message: 'Don't recruit for that spot, it's dangerous'."

New Scientist— Notts BKA courtesy of eBees

---



**Our website:** [www.actbeekeepers.asn.au](http://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

### Seeking guest speaker

Canberra Girls Grammar School Early Learning Centre are seeking someone to act as a guest speaker for their students later this term. The students have shown a keen interest in learning where honey comes from and how it is made. They are looking for someone who might be able to share their beekeeping knowledge, and perhaps bring in some items for the children to see. The children involved are 4 years old.

Please contact Kate Columbine, Canberra Girls Grammar School Early Learning Centre on 6202 6458 or email [Kathryn.columbine@cggg.act.edu.au](mailto:Kathryn.columbine@cggg.act.edu.au)



## NSW Apiarists' Association – Secretary/Treasurer Position Vacant

The NSWAA is looking for the right candidate to support the work of the Executive Council, and we have a position vacant for the Secretary/Treasurer. The ideal candidate will have excellent secretarial/treasurer skills, the ability to work independently with minimal supervision, experience in organising meetings and events and a passion for the beekeeping industry.

More information can be found here - <http://www.nswaa.com.au/news-and-media/>

NSWAA would like to fill the position as soon as possible to allow for a handover from the current Secretary.

Please feel free to give Shona Blair a call to discuss – 0422 977 510.

### Club caps

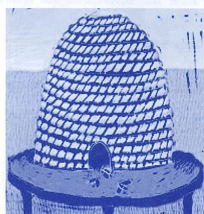
Members are entitled to **one FREE** club cap per subscription. Any member who hasn't received a club cap, and would like one, can pick one up at the Treasurer's table after the monthly meeting. **Additional caps are \$10 each.**



Honey Wine - Hand Crushed Apple Cider  
Craft Brewed Softdrinks  
Light Meals & Coffee

Bookings & Enquiries 6227 5600

### Also Home of Bindaree Bee Supplies



Beekeeping Supplies for the Novice  
to Experienced Beekeeper  
Protective Clothing, Hives,  
Tools & Bees  
6226 8866



Barton Highway Murrumbateman  
(formerly Springers Rest)



**BEES R US**  
Beekeeping Supplies  
Shop 2 Village To  
Lascelles Street  
BRAIDWOOD NSW, 2622

**Scott Williams**  
02 48 42 2360  
0403 324 212  
youammi71@bigpond.com

[www.beesrus.com.au](http://www.beesrus.com.au)



Our hives are not low maintenance but rather  
**NO maintenance, tough, long lasting & bee friendly.**



**Better Bee Hives**

[www.betterbeehives.com.au](http://www.betterbeehives.com.au)

ABN: 66 805 169 201

Please contact: Eric Davies

Tel: 0414 501 578

**We supply Australian beekeepers with a unique twin walled polypropylene hive body that;**

- Never needs to be nailed, wax dipped, painted, sanded or repainted,
- Has the same external and internal dimensions as wooden hives,
- Are 100% compatible with wooded frames and wooden hives,
- Are long lasting as they have their own inbuilt sunscreen,
- Are BPA free to ensure that they are people, bee and food safe,
- Are the most cost effective bee hive products currently available,
- Can be easily washed with warm soapy water,
- Are built to withstand temperature extremes, -40C to 100C.



The  
**Q** Beekeepers  
Quarterly



**see a sample copy at**

<http://beekeepers.peacockmagazines.com>

**all this, and more at...**



**Northern Bee Books**

Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge HX7 5JS (UK)

**Phone: 0044 1422 882751 Fax: 0044 1422 886157**