

AUSTRALIAN

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BEE JOURNAL



Plastic Pollution Harms Bees ... page 18



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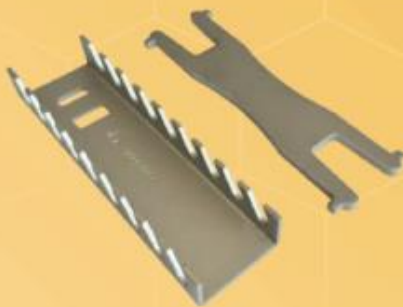


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AUSTRALIAN BEE JOURNAL

Published since 1918 by the VAA - founded in 1892 -

NOVEMBER 2024 - Volume 105 - No 11

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Cover photo: Jamie Trimby Swarm on shrub

**Deadline for copy for the December journal is
10pm on Sunday 1st of December 2024.**

The Australian Bee Journal seeks to publish contributions dealing with all aspects of beekeeping.
Statements expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the VAA Inc or the editor.
Editor: Annette Engstrom

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The Victorian Apiarists' Association Inc. (VAA)



The VAA was founded in 1892 and is the peak body for beekeeping in Victoria.

The Association advocates to federal, state, and local governments to protect and improve Victoria's honey resources and to ensure beekeepers' interests are safeguarded and promoted. We work to secure effective legislation and encourage scientific investigation and research in all aspects of beekeeping.

Our achievements include:

- Introducing the Victorian Apiary Code of Practice allowing bees to be kept in urban areas
- Contributing to the new Apiculture on Public Lands Policy through our involvement with the Buzz Committee
- Working with Plant Health Australia which contributed to the development of the Australian Biosecurity Code of Practice.

The VAA advocates for the beekeeping industry on behalf of all beekeepers in Victoria.

Management

The VAA Board meets a minimum of six times a year. Members of the 2024 - 2025 Board

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All beekeepers and interested groups are welcome to join the VAA.

Membership benefits include:

- The VAA's monthly magazine *Australian Bee Journal* (ABJ) including one free classified ad per year
- Access to the members' only section of the VAA website vicbeekeepers.com.au
- Discounts for beekeeping services and products, including insurance
- Borrowing rights to the extensive VAA library
- Voting rights at VAA regional group meetings and the annual VAA state conference
- Opportunity to participate in and contribute to VAA sub-committees
- Opportunity to meet and share ideas with other beekeepers at local group meetings, field days, shows and conferences
- Opportunity to contribute to advocacy to government and development of policy on beekeeping

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Up to 100 hives (1 vote): \$93

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How to join

Join online at

www.vicbeekeepers.com.au

or email

vaa@vicbeekeepers.com.au

to request a membership form.



www.vicbeekeepers.com.au

President's Report

This morning, I received a call that varroa was found in the caller's hives at Hattah. VDO's are providing advice to the beekeeper on the management of varroa. The message in this is that varroa is on the move and we all need to make testing a regular part of managing the bees. We know that varroa takes full advantage of a free ride when hives are shifted, resulting in mites spreading rapidly. This will result in the possibility of varroa making an appearance anywhere and at any time. A big thank you to the beekeeper at Hattah that found and reported the detection of varroa in his hives. Due to the honesty of this beekeeper others in the area will have time to better prepare.

A reminder that Varroa Workshops are still happening across the state. Location and dates for more workshops are announced on a regular basis. By searching online for Humanitix/varroa workshop you can see all the upcoming workshops and book for the workshop of your preference.

Over recent years the association has planned and implemented new events. The first Recreational Conference was held in March. This was supported by beekeepers from across Victoria and it was sold out. Planning for the 2025 Recreational Conference is well on the way, with all speakers booked. It will be held at a fantastic venue on March 29th in Sunbury, at the Hume Global Learning Center. Announcements regarding the program and bookings will be made soon.

Education is another new initiative for the Association. In a joint venture the VAA and the Melbourne Section made available several courses:

An **Introduction to Beekeeping Course** was held by zoom and a practical session at the Collinwood Children's farm. Great feedback was received from the participants.

A **Queen Rearing Course** will be held on 16 & 17 November at the Collinwood Children's farm. The demand for this course was very strong and was booked very quickly.

The third educational initiative is the **Video Library Project**. This project is now underway after a successful application for a grant. Equipment has been purchased and an online meeting was held, to be followed by a practical workshop. Many of the local beekeeping groups are participating in this project. The outcome will result in educational videos being made available for the benefit of all beekeepers.

Thanks to the commitment and dedication of Andrew Wootton and his wonderful team, they have achieved some fantastic results.

In early October Rob Kerr, Tino Corsetti and members of the Woodend Bee-Friendly Society represented the Association at the National Insect Expo at Woodend. Bees, possibly the best-known insect, attracted great attention as an observation hive was on display for the three-day event. Hive products were on display and some funds were raised by selling VAA labelled honey. Great effort, thank you to all those that participated.

John van Weeghel
President



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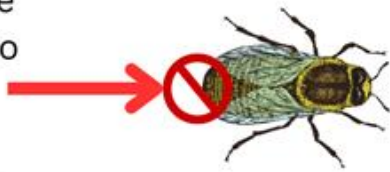
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Drones 101

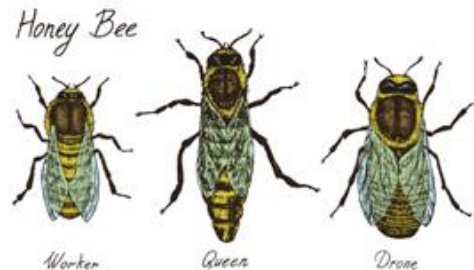
Honey bee drones: chubby freeloaders or crucial hive citizens? Let's take a closer look at the male honey bee.



Drones have no stinger so they can't defend themselves.



Drones have double the mass of a worker bee but about the same as a queen. They are longer than a worker bee and slightly shorter than the queen.



Workers weigh about **0.11 grams** and are about **15mm** long.

Queens weigh about **0.18 - 0.2 grams** and are **20-25mm** long.

Drones weigh about **0.2 grams** and are about **20 mm** long.



Drones typically do not mate with a virgin queen from the same colony to ensure genetic diversity. Inbreeding has been shown to result in smaller, shorter-lived offspring that show less pollen and nectar hoarding behaviour and neglectful brood-rearing tendencies. Worker bees have been known to eat in-bred brood. This prevents them from hatching and recycles the protein in the hive.



For the first few days of their lives, drones are fed by worker bees. After they are about a week old, they can feed themselves from honey stores.

A drone can fly for about 20 minutes on a mating flight before having to return to the hive to refuel on honey. It takes a drone about 15 minutes to fill up on honey before doing another flight.



A drone's eyes are more than twice the size of those of a worker bee. The large eyes allow the drone to spot a virgin queen flying through a mating congregation zone.



Drones mate with a queen in mid-air. The force of the mating causes the drone to instantly pass out. The drone then falls to the ground and dies.

Drones that do not mate stay in the hive. It is thought that drones, due to their large body mass, assist with hive thermoregulation while in the hive. In late autumn, however, they are starved and ejected from the hive by worker bees. It is estimated that fewer than 5% of drones actually mate with a queen.



Drone

Worker

VAA Emails To Members

1st November 2024

Dear VAA members,

We reach out following news of the second varroa mite detection in our state, this time in hives in Hattah, Victoria. This detection suggests the mite may be taking hold in the northwest region, a reality that weighs on us all. Now, more than ever, we must draw on our community's strength. We commend the beekeeper who reported this detection to AgVic's biosecurity team and encourage all beekeepers to stay vigilant and conduct regular mite testing. Please refer to [AHBIC's latest update](#) (see page 31) for more details. Below you'll find links to industry resources, training and information about varroa.

Our collective resilience and adaptability define us as Victorian beekeepers. Just as our bees work together for their hive, we will continue to support each other, share knowledge, and face this challenge head-on.

Australia remains the last country to experience varroa. Though it's a tough adversary, beekeepers worldwide manage healthy, thriving hives despite its presence. We will learn from their experience, adapt strategies to suit our needs, and lead the way in combating varroa with Australian ingenuity.

Take heart in our shared commitment to safeguard our bees. Together, we will overcome this challenge and emerge even stronger.

With unwavering support,

The VAA Board

Industry Resources

[Approved Varroa Treatments Table](#)

[T2M Webinar Recordings](#)

[Beekeeping Biosecurity Codes](#)

[Varroa Management Workshop Schedule - Victoria](#)

Personal Wellbeing & Mental Health

The varroa mite response may impact your mental and emotional wellbeing and those around you. There are things you can do to take care of your mental health and support others. For more information about the [personal wellbeing supports and resources available](#), visit the Agriculture Victoria website.

30th October 2024

AHBIC has circulated an important update regarding discussions with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA) regarding varroa mite treatments.

Best regards,

VAA

The AHBIC executive had a productive meeting with APVMA recently, to discuss varroa treatments, [APVMA Discussion Correspondence](#) (page 30).

Additional information regarding chemical treatments:

Latest [AHBIC Varroa Chemical treatment Table](#)

Regards,

The team at AHBIC



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NEAA Swanpool Spring Field Day

ANOTHER GREAT EVENT

By John Kennedy

Having attended the North Eastern Apiarists' Association (founded in 1955) Spring Field Day for a number of years I always regard it as one of the best learning and tutorial events on offer anywhere in the state.

The latest, held on Sunday October 6, further solidified the reputation of the event.

For the uninitiated it is staged at the original Swanpool movie theatre on the Midland Highway, located midway between Mansfield and Benalla, and it utilizes the adjoining tennis courts area for the display of hives and the working demonstrations provided by beekeeping experts.

The day is also always fully catered for, with Redpath's Beekeeping Supplies also on site to provide a full selection of beekeeping gear.

This year's presentation was fully booked out by 80 beekeepers of all levels of activity.

The agenda opened with a joint presentation from Karla Williams, leader of the AgVic Apiary Team, supported by Joe Riordan, the now retired State Apiary Officer, now a Varroa Development Officer.

Karla outlined all the various exotic disease threats to honeybees, including a number of the very serious type, that are already present and very destructive to bee hives in Africa, Asia and elsewhere. with several already detected in Papua New Guinea.

Karla stressed the importance of registering any or everything unusual detected in your hive via the Plant Health Pest Hotline on number 1800 084 881 which is always monitored.

Joe Riordan's contribution on the varroa mite was powerful and he indicated that learning about the mite and its impacts now, will make us all better beekeepers, and ready, prepared for its onset in our hives.

At a cost of \$95 for the day where else can you get exposure to the crème de la crème of experienced and personable professional and sideline beekeepers like

Chris Scott, David Briggs, Don Whitehead, Luke McMonigle, Peter Lewis, Joe Riordan, Phil McPherson and others who provide the tutorials for the day.

(Collectively my guess is that as professional beekeepers they successfully operate and manage well over 10,000 or more hives!).



Wangaratta commercial beekeeper Luke McMonigle was one of the line-up of instructors at Swanpool, working on the hives provided and brought to the site for the day by Mick Leahy, also a commercial beekeeper from across the River Murray.



Craig Scott, also a commercial beekeeper from Echuca-Moama, was another of the experts providing hands on guidance to hive inspections.

They worked, informed and demonstrated over eight palletted packs. each of four double hives. of temperate bees which are brought to the site for the day to form the practical working sessions by Mick Leahy, who works over three eastern states (and has roughly 5000 hives in total as a major commercial beekeeper, a pollination contractor and honey producer) who also contributes his wisdom, knowledge and experience to the day.

It's a recommended suit-up event for attendees, but there were no reports of anyone being stung on the day.

The event is broken up into eight groups of 10 who alternate during the day from one hive package to the next, to discuss and be informed about relevant topics as current and important as: an introduction to beekeeping, pests and disease inspections, monitoring and managing the varroa mite, hive inspections for small hive beetle and wax moth, queen assessment of condition and/or replacement, spring management and supplementary feeding, advanced management for honey production. etc.

If you as a beekeeper, or as a Club official or representative have never travelled to Swanpool for the

NEAA Spring Beekeeping Field Day (held always on or about the first Sunday in October each year) or other NEAA beekeeping information events then you are missing out on a lot of practical, informative and relevant knowledge about your bees.

So, look for and be ready to book for the same approximate date for 2025 and join, or register your interest in receiving information from the NEAA at www.neaa.com.au

Bendigo Branch Report

On the 13th October VAA Bendigo Branch ran their 43rd Annual Beekeeping Field Day.

Thankfully the weather was outstanding at the Harcourt Reserve. The large contingent of volunteers started at 7am with many putting in a long day, thank you very much on a wonderful effort.

Thank you to the traders: AgVic (VDO's) Air CTI; Bec's Beehive; Bobs Beekeeping Supplies; Bendigo Bee Boxes; BuzzBee; Delish Donuts; Edmonds Honey; Habitat Gallery; JBee Equipment; Kelvin Trading; Kevin Smith; Redpaths Beekeeping Supplies; Superlift Hive Lifter; The Basin Backyard; VAA; Whirrakee Woodware and Wrights Honey Farm.

The VAA representatives John, Tino, Andrew and Varroa Development Officers fielded a constant flow of questions, all the VDO's ran Varroa presentations and demonstrated various Varroa tests.

Lindsay Callaway presented Varroa, the Good the Bad and the Ugly.

Beginner Demonstrations were well attended with a plethora of questions on hive equipment, flow hives, embedding wax foundation, waxing plastic foundation, wax products and extracting.

Chris and Wendy conducted a local flora walk providing guidance on characteristics to help identify trees and shrubs for nectar and pollen resources.

Gareth and team conducted open hive sessions with many attentive onlookers.

Thank you to everyone that attended the Field Day,

we hope you had an enjoyable day, caught up with long term friends and possibly some new ones.

Bendigo Branch's final meeting for 2024 is on 6th November where Varroa Development Officers Junie and Ashton are the guest speakers presenting Commercial Beekeeping in the Philippines.

The Bendigo Branch Christmas break up and final practical session for 2024 is on Sunday 24th of November at Margie and Wayne's at Huntly.

The National Varroa Mite Management Program and Bendigo Branch VAA is hosting a Recreational Beekeepers Varroa training workshop from 9am to 3pm on Saturday 23rd November at the Bendigo District RSL.

In Bendigo suburbia a wide variety of Bottle Brush (Callistemon) have been prolific from mid-October onwards, strongly aligned with increased swarm calls off the VAA Swarm Collection map listing.

Locally some mid-October showers stimulated some growth for a few days, however any areas not under irrigation have continued to significantly dry off.

On the 16th October whilst in Canberra I attended the ACT Beekeepers monthly meeting, where there was a report of Varroa at Royalla NSW, just south of Canberra, please be vigilant and test.

Wishing everyone the best for Spring beekeeping,

Jamie Trimby



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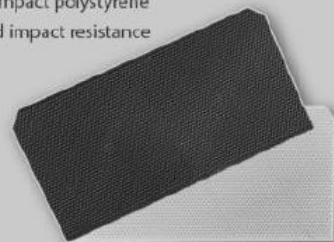
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Gippsland Apiarist Association

Upcoming Events

Christmas Luncheon Sunday 1st December

Legends Sporting Club, Princess Highway

- 11:30 Meet & 12:00 Sit-Down for Luncheon
- Please RSVP to Stan at 0413 136 878 before 22nd November

Varroa Mite Training Day Gippsland Apiarists' Association Field Day Saturday 23rd November 2024 (10am-3pm)

*Bengworden Mechanics Institute Hall, Bengworden Road
(Just past the CFA Station coming from Sale)*

- Presentation by VDO Peter Gatehouse on monitoring for Varroa mite.
- Open hive demonstrations, alcohol wash, soapy water wash, sugar shake and drone uncapping.
- Q&A with Peter Gatehouse and Stan Glowacki.
- Lunch available. \$5.00 Entry Fee
- RSVP to Stan at 0413 136 878 by Friday, 15th November for catering. Please pass along invitation to all beekeepers in the area.





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Superlift Saves Your Back

MAKING HIVE TRANSFERS EASIER

By John Kennedy

We all know that many commercial and sideline keepers are getting older and facing disincentives to beekeeping. Hence the transfer of brood and honey boxes around an apiary, pollination or other seasonal production site is becoming more and more difficult.

Lifting weighty boxes, and their transfer or placement puts incredible strain on beekeeper backs and a number of other important muscles. In short, the physical practicalities of beekeeping can quickly bring individual careers to an end.

I was interested at the Harcourt Field day, to have quite a long conversation with a well-known beekeeper (now retired) Chris Dawson, who now acts as the marketing and supply agent for the Superlift Trolley, subtitled Smarter Hive Handling Device, which he sells and supplies to beekeepers almost anywhere in Australia.

Simply, the Superlift is a moveable chargeable battery powered elevating device, that grips a hive box lifting it for removal, transfer or placement onto the body of a truck or trailer as conditions or needs demand.

Its frame is constructed in lightweight yet durable aluminium. Each unit is relatively lightweight, and easy to operate by hand grip controls.

Each Superlift is designed to elevate your hive boxes for easy transfer to a truck body or trailer. It is also fitted with twin motorcycle type inflatable pneu-

matic tired wheels enabling it to be easily moved either with or without boxes around your hive site.

The chargeable battery pack gives enough charge for a working day in the apiary, and it has some unique fixtures enabling it to be carried on the tow bar of your ute or vehicle, or just as simply carried on a vehicle tray or trailer when moving between bee sites.

Superlift is professionally built locally in Bendigo, and it is highly reliable and durable.

I understand from Chris that he has now sold over 40 units to beekeepers in almost every state, so it's a credit to being locally built and not imported.

I was at Harcourt with a well-known sideline beekeeper who was there to collect his own Superlift.

He has a seasonal pollination job in a cherry orchard in Victoria's north east where some 50 hives are required. It is a rewarding and satisfying job to assist the grower in producing high quality early in the season cherries that command a top price.

It's just that the placement and removal of the hives to and from the cherry orchard is a task causing many hours of physical working and lifting and the personal activ-

ity is catching up with the beekeeper.

The Superlift is seen as the ideal solution for this task plus many other hive movement tasks at or around the home apiary.

For more information contact Chris Dawson on 0428 109 164 or email christhebeeman@gmail.com



On show at Harcourt were a number of the locally built in Bendigo Superlift Smarter Hive Handling trolleys for transfer, lifting and hive positioning.

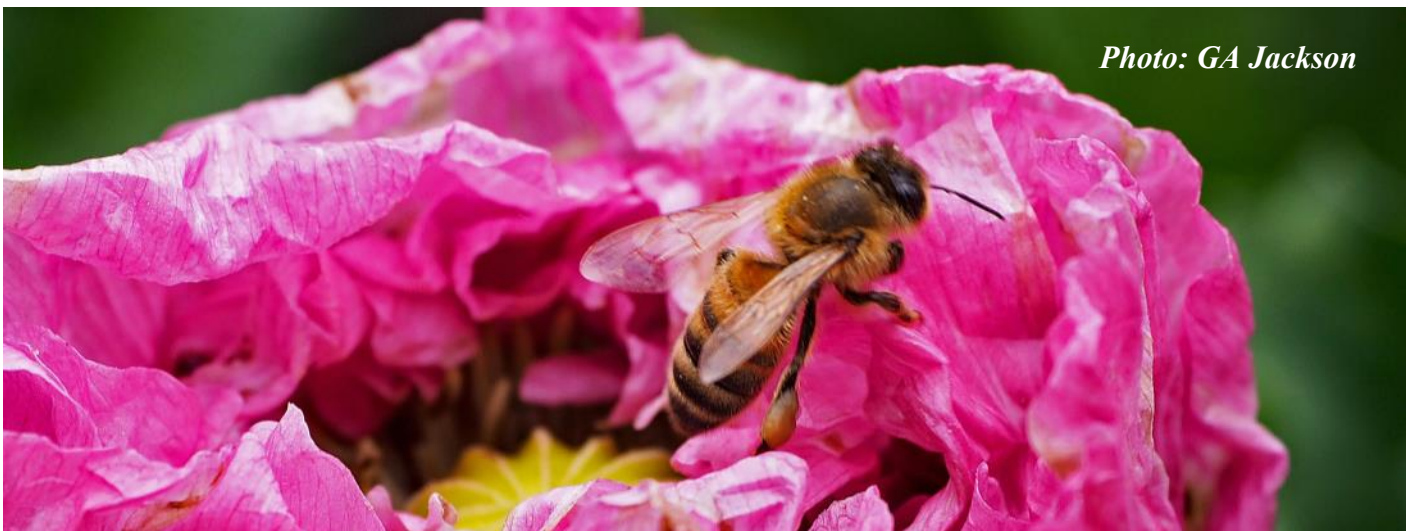


Photo: GA Jackson

VAA Melbourne Section Report

In this issue: Halloween beedevils the monthly meeting. It seems to be a slow season for many. We need to learn faster. Yes, we have a library. Recent events: RMS, Insect Expo, training courses

October Meeting

Halloween was the opportunity for fun and games at the October Meeting. (Which makes me ask - Did groups having their meeting in the first week of the month have Bee Races to mark the Cup? Which leads to so many other questions...). The activities reinforced some of our bee knowledge without getting a numb bum from sitting down all night. I like the term "think like a bee" when managing my hives, and we did just that as we imitated Drones drifting to other hives and delivering mites away from our hive: competitiveness was not far below the surface of the usually lounging attendees! Many thanks to Isles and crew who prepared all sorts of items for the night, including the shortbreads to be decorated for supper. Yum!

Library

Thanks to the Librarian, Bruce Diggles, for presenting the books and videos each month at the meeting. We are on the path to an online catalogue. New items are

always welcome as suggestions or donations so chase Bruce to see if your favourite book is in the library or not (until the catalogue is on the website). Books are not going away because there is always new knowledge that needs this extended format (not that there is anything wrong with the internet).

Season so far

Members have generally reported a slow start to the season. The bees seem to be finding enough to keep going and build a strong colony, but the excess honey is less common. After a warm end of August, the weather in September and first half of October was generally

very windy in Melbourne and not very warm, although probably not cold enough to cause brood problems. Remember the Swarm Collection service on the VAA website for any swarms you don't want or can't handle or if you want to supplement your bees with some new genetics ... or possibly diseases, so quarantine the blighters first.

Learning faster

Two questions: What and How?

For beekeepers who are newish or less broadly experienced, time

(Continued on page 16)



Bees drinking



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Lindsay Callaway
Warral Maldon Honey

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VAA Melbourne Section Report, cont'd

(Continued from page 15)

has been available to sort out a hive that might not be progressing as desired. However, the arrival of varroa in a hive significantly complicates the timing and the activity that we might pursue. Being better at the basics, especially in situations that you have not faced, can be achieved with having a beekeeper buddy, or getting to meetings at clubs or, best of all, getting to a community / teaching apiary where more hives and more experiences are available. I also think that just as the footballers spend five days a week training and 3 hours actually playing, spend time practicing routines and visualising situations before you get into the apiary. Have you heard about the experiment: when one group of basketball players practiced for ten minutes, and the other group visualised putting ball after ball into the hoop for ten minutes, the second group vastly outperformed the first group.

For beekeepers who are old hands, much of what is done is almost subconsciously directed. These habits can be strong and hard to break. Some of these practic-



Young beekeeper's hand built frame is in the brood box and being built out

es may not be as successful in the presence of varroa, but if the automatic actions are unquestioned, it may take a disaster before the beekeeper's complicity is realised. At the Bendigo and Wonthaggi Conferences, the experience of overseas beekeepers is that they had to "reinvent themselves" to cope with varroa. So some self examination and an openness to, even seeking out of, external opinions on our individual practices is sensible.

Recent events

The **Melbourne Royal Show** was successful through its presentation of bees and hive products. Many thanks to Judy Leggett for her leadership of the Show Committee and all the assistance provided by the regular and the new members to this experience. Remember that this is an important source of funds for the association's work and a superb opportunity to share. You will feel really good after the experience. I mean good because you will have connected with so many young and old enquiring minds: They come to talk to you so it's a positive experience.

(Continued on page 17)



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VAA Melbourne Section Report, cont'd

(Continued from page 16)

The **National Insect Expo** was attended by the VAA MS combined with the Woodend Bee Friendly Society (WBFS) to complement the spiders, moths, scorpions, stick insects, beetles, and millions of ants. It was fun to "forget" the beekeeping and focus on how amazing the honeybees are. This was the third year of the insect expo in Woodend and it's great to see the kids clutching their new ant farm or stick insect. We also sold lots of honey to help the coffers of both groups. Many thanks to Tino, Carolyn, Renee and Samantha from the WBFS.

The **Beginner Beekeeping Course** was successfully held over three Thursday evening video conferences and one practical day. Mike Love, Angelique Drew and Rob Kerr assisted Andrew Wootton in demonstrating and discussing practices for working the hives. Andrew W has heaps of experience in teach-



Above: At the Woodend National Insect Expo - the joint stand for the Woodend Bee Friendly Society and the VAA Melbourne Section

Below: Beekeeper trainees at the practical day for the Beginning Beekeeping Course



ing as well as beekeeping, so keep a look out for more courses on the VAA website. The trainees were very happy with the format and the quality!

And onwards

If you have concerns about any aspect of your beekeeping, please get in touch with a member of the VAA Melbourne Section Committee or another VAA member.

Stories and situations and beekeeping puzzles are always welcome for discussion at the monthly meetings.

As we come to the hot season, stay safe and keep the smoker in the steel bucket.

Enjoy your bees

Rob Kerr,
Secretary 0421 078 387
For the
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Plastic Pollution Harms Bees

Nano- and microplastic particles (NMP) are increasingly polluting urban and rural landscapes, where bees and other beneficial insects come into contact with them. If insects ingest plastic particles from food or the air, it can damage their organs and cause changes in their behaviour, preventing them from properly performing ecosystem services such as pollination and pest control. Plastic pollution thus poses considerable risks to biodiversity, agricultural production, and global food security. These are the main findings of a new review in the journal *Nature Communications*, which was conducted by an international team including researchers from the University of Freiburg.

Plastic from films, fertilizers, water, and the air ends up on farmland

Microplastic particles are between one micrometre and five millimetres in size; still smaller particles are referred to as nanoplastics. Whereas the harmful effects of NMP in water and for individual species are well documented, there have as yet been no systematic reviews on how the particles affect agricultural ecosystems. To fill this gap, the authors of the review summarized 21 already published individual studies for the first time. They were interested particularly in the question of how pollinator insects and other beneficial insects come into contact with NMP and what consequences the ingestion of the particles has for them, as well as for the ecosystems that are dependent on them and for agricultural production.

In this way, the researchers first succeeded in identifying different sources from which NMP end up on agricultural land, including plastic films, fertilizers, polluted water, and atmospheric depositions. The plastic particles accumulate in the soil, and pollinators and beneficial insects that are important for pest control ingest them from the air and food or use them to build nests.

Damage to bees could lead to a decline in agricultural production

The authors of the study establish that the bees' ingestion of NMP leads, for example, to damage to their digestive system, to a weakening of their immune system, and to changes in their behaviour. This makes the bees more susceptible to diseases, possibly causing them to pollinate plants less effectively. 'We find microplastic in the gut of bees and see how wild bees use plastic to build nests. We therefore urgently need to investigate what interaction this has with other stress-

ors, such as climate change, for the bees and their pollination services', says Prof. Dr. **Alexandra-Maria Klein**, co-author of the study and professor for nature conservation and landscape ecology at the University of Freiburg. A decline in pollination services has a negative effect on crop yield. Thus, plastic pollution could further aggravate existing uncertainties in the global food supply, the researchers warn.

Interactions with other environmental stressors exacerbate the problem

In addition, NMP also exacerbate the threats posed by other environmental stressors, such as pesticides, chemical pollution, fungi, and pathogens. For example, some areas become 'hotspots', where plastic particles interact with harmful viruses. As a result of such interactions, NMP could have serious effects on pollinators and thus on the stability of the food system.

However, the researchers also emphasize the limitations of their review. For example, only little data is available on important pollinators and beneficial insects like bumblebees and ladybirds. In addition, the current data does not allow for a differentiated account of the effects of different sizes and amounts of NMP. Researchers urgently need to conduct further studies to better understand the growing problem of plastic pollution and find solutions to it. 'It is already clear today, however, that there is a pressing need for political control of plastic pollution', says Klein.

The study included researchers from Westlake University (Hangzhou, China), Zhejiang University (Hangzhou, China), Fudan University (Shanghai, China), and the Universities of Freiburg and Tübingen.

Factsheet:

Original publication: Dong Sheng, Siyuan Jing, Xueqing He, Alexandra-Maria Klein, Heinz-R. Köhler & Thomas C. Wanger (2024). Plastic pollution in agricultural landscapes: an overlooked threat to pollination, biocontrol and food security. In: *Nature Communications* 15, 8413. DOI: 10.1038/s41467-024-52734-3
Link to original publication: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-024-52734-3>

Alexandra-Maria Klein has served since 2013 as professor for nature conservation and landscape ecology at the University of Freiburg's Faculty of Environment and Natural Resources. Her research focuses on questions of the interplay between ecosystems and biodiversity, such as the role of bee diversity for pollination in changing ecosystems.

BOOST FOR NOVA SCOTIA BEEKEEPERS

By John Kennedy

Beekeepers in Nova Scotia (where there are less than a thousand registered and recorded) are being offered grants of up to \$C50,000, or \$C200 for each additional hive used for pollination. The state has demand for more hives for crops like blueberries, apples and other fruit. The grant is paid towards the new purchase of packaged bees, queen bees or queen cells, and nucleus colonies to start a new bee colony in a new hive, and are made under the Apiculture Sustainable Growth and Health Program which is a component of an expansive commercial crop pollination program that also supports hive health and the adoption of efficient technologies to improve and enhance beekeeping. This program falls under a five year (2023-8) \$C3.5 Billion investment by the Canadian and territorial governments on a 60/40 partnership to strengthen the resilience of Canada's agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products.

Just Thinking

Advancing Victorian Apiarists ... interests, value proposition, positive feedback loop.

Or as the Victorian Apiarists Association Constitution says in Section A.2. "The purposes of the Association are to advance the interests of apiculture and Victorian apiarists".

The short version: Advancing apiarist interests means acting to increase the likelihood of favourable (to us) outcomes that are beyond our direct control. We need skills and resources to organise and execute these interventions in each particular situation. We acquire the skills and resources using the funds which we raise. Our funding sources include membership, charging for events, charging for products and services, and seeking grants and donations.

In other words, we are a lobby group, we need money and we have to develop our income streams.

The constitution has the phrase "advance the interests" instead of actually listing interests or objectives or specific commitments which are what you should read in the Board member election blurbs. The phrase is also broad because we run the risk of preventing a reasonable action because it is "not included in the constitution" if we make specific lists. Even if this sits uneasily, it's worth sticking with it.

Interests are essentially things beyond our control, so we rely on influence rather than direct action to "fix" a problem or develop an opportunity.

Our interests are often benefits or advantages that we have and do not want to lose. These situations are more

easily identified because, I think, we are more attuned to threats than opportunities.

But it is also in our interests to develop elements of social or political or regulatory environments that do not yet exist, but if they did, would be "so much better for beekeepers". This is a much harder task, but produces the higher value outcomes.

So the VAA is not like a golf club which is about providing a specific facility (golf course) and service (golfer access) to its members. The VAA is a self-appointed minder of anything beekeeping in Victoria. Apiculture is the system and apiarists are key players in that system.

Golf club membership fees are in the thousands because there is an easily defined benefit that can be compared with the offerings of other golf clubs. The benefits of the VAA as a lobby group are really hard to define, are not part of a competitive market and are rarely provided "direct to the beekeeper" so membership cannot be high.

We cannot make money primarily from membership, because there is not a sufficient direct benefit (value proposition). So where is the money going to come from?

The basic solution is that we run a business that makes a decent profit and then we use the profits for the purpose as stated in Section A.2. of the VAA constitution.

(Continued on page 20)

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Just Thinking, cont'd

(Continued from page 19)

In the VAA, members are likely to be altruistic but not crazy with their money (but if you know anyone ...). So although we get some money from membership, this may be best viewed as the altruistic element of beekeepers. I am sure that members want and know that their membership money is used to advocate for apiculture and Victorian beekeepers, and this is sufficient for some members. At the same time, membership money is not enough to cover basic operational costs and provide for our advocacy work. And most beekeepers would like something direct in return.

For want of a better term, external services include general public facing opportunities like the Melbourne Royal Show or attending the Woodend Insect Expos or running a honey selling website service. These increase our presence and also generate funds from selling honey, for example.

It's the internal services to the different types of beekeeper that are probably the most valuable in building long-term funding sources. We identify needs for knowledge or experience or information and design a service to provide this for beekeepers while making a profit in the process. With the knowledge and participation of our members, we will coordinate or build services that provide them with benefit and the VAA with a profit.

So what's in it for a member that pays membership!

Feel good: They feel good because they know that they are funding a vital role to monitor our social, political and regulatory framework and then fight for beekeeper interests.

Growth fund: This is the seed money for both the advocacy work and the development of services for beekeepers.

Direct benefit: They get first choice for valuable learning and development services offered through the VAA. Many of these services would not be viable without the contact list of members as a primary client list.

Intangible benefit: The VAA is a more attractive organisation, retains and increases members, can employ the CEO and necessary staff, can create and improve services for beekeepers and can develop more sophisticated and effective advocacy.

A strong voice for beekeepers: There are two positive reinforcing loops 1.) members joining and using services because they are valuable and attractive to beekeepers, and 2.) the VAA having the money to effectively monitor and fight for the interests of apiarists and create a higher status membership, and of member services and quality advocacy that make beekeepers want to join.

Back at the golf club, no one says it's easy to run a golf club. But at the bar, the beekeepers know they are part of advancing Victorian apiarists.

*Rob Kerr
Just thinking.*



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Bendigo Branch Annual Field Day Report

13th October 2024

The 43rd Annual Bendigo Branch Field Day produced sunny skies, however the breeze was chilly until the sun had some heat. With a band of merry volunteers Harcourt Recreational Reserve was set up and ready and waiting for our wonderful traders who continually support our event, and we had some new traders that we hope will continue this support.

No rain meant our traders were able to spread out onto the oval and enjoy the sunshine as well as inside. The traders provided everything a beekeeper could want or need to replace. Although numbers were down on last year, we still had an enthusiastic crowd wanting to learn about bee keeping and to ask those important questions on Varroa. Lindsay Callaway presented on his trip to New Zealand in the morning and afternoon. We were blessed to have the Varroa Development Officers (VDO) Ashton Edgley, Joe Riordan, the ever-bubbly Ally Driessen and Junie Rey Bag-ayan who provided one-on-one assistance and guidance at the inside stand, as well as practical presentations at the open hive and presentations inside.

Cooper, Stafford Kelly, Dave Padbury, new member James Gampol and the youngest member of the team Kyle Maunder provided the hives, and their practical demonstration with the assistance of the VDOs was one of the better demonstrations.



*Above: Open Hive
Below: Open Hive VDO*



Our beginner's area was of high interest to our new beekeepers, or those weighing up to be a beekeeper. Our volunteer presenters Stafford Kelly, Jamie Trimby,

(Continued on page 22)



*Above: Ally and Junie manning the VDO stand
Below: Ashton - VDO presentation*



As usual our open hive demonstrations proved to be a huge success. Gareth Maunder and his team of Paul

Bendigo Branch Annual Field Day Report, cont'd

(Continued from page 21)

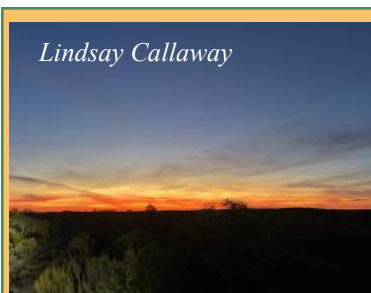
Michael St Clair and Scott Wright explained everything, from all the components of a hive, to how the bees will work the frame, the new bottom boards to fight varroa, orientation of the hive, the different types of foundation, tools to assist in uncapping, different types of extractors, collection of the honey in food grade containers and what to do with the wax.



Above & Below: Beginners Area Demo



We would like to thank the traders who continue to support the Bendigo Branch and the Industry so well and who, on the whole, appeared happy to be there and to spread the word about what each had to offer in the way of beekeeping equipment etc., whilst promoting their businesses to ensure beekeepers now know who they may contact for future pur-



Lindsay Callaway

The Australian Bee Journal would love some of your original photos

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Volunteers BBQ Cooks

chases throughout the following year.

We also express our gratitude to the speakers for their informative presentations throughout the field day, namely Lindsay Callaway, Ashton Edgley, Joe Riordan, Ally Driessen, Junie Rey Bag-ayan and Gareth Maunder and his team.

Finally thank you to our wonderful hard-working volunteers who this day could not happen without your support. Put it in the diary now 44th Annual Field Day 12 October 2025.

By Peta Dawe and Jamie Trimby.

Photos: Dan Cliff and Lorraine Hughes.



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Swarms And How To Treat Them For Varroa Mites

By Rod Bourke,
Bee Biosecurity Officer
NSW Department of Primary Industries
and Regional Development

As spring arrives most areas have been seeing swarming bees. Some of the earliest locations to get swarming were the old red zone areas from Sydney up to Kempsey, which are also highly infested with varroa mites. It's safe to assume that nearly every swarm caught in those areas will already have a lot of mites on them, but don't worry about that affecting their value to you.

No matter where you are within NSW (and probably the rest of Australia as mites steadily move across it), best practice is that once the captured colony has settled (perhaps after 1-4 days in the box), do varroa monitoring (alcohol wash, soapy water wash or sugar shake) to determine what, if any mite loading is on those bees. Please note that high humidity, rain, a nectar flow or newly swarmed bees that are full of honey (which may purge during the extreme stress of a sugar shaking event) can drastically reduce the accuracy of a sugar shake, so an alcohol wash or soapy water wash is generally a more accurate method of determining mites.

Once you have washed your bees you can determine what may need to be done to them with regards to managing any varroa mites they have.

It is always best practice to take young nurse bees from the brood area when doing mite monitoring (not forager bees nor bees from the honey box), so if the colony has not yet started laying eggs when you do check then look for a central frame within the box. Alternatively look for the frame with the queen calmly working on it (unless you had already smoked or driven her off a good frame to an outside frame, which may not be the best one to sample), remove her safely onto another frame and then shake off some of those remaining bees to sample. It should always be ½ cup (approximately 300 bees) for a good sample, as sampling less bees than that is less accurate.

Because newly collected swarms can sometimes be flighty and temperamental it is always good to ensure that they have fully decided to stay before undertaking this somewhat disturbing procedure of shaking bees off a frame, so if you prefer to wait a little bit longer until they are laying eggs nicely then that's fine. But, don't wait too long until they have advanced larvae before doing your mite sampling, as varroa may have already moved off the bees and into these brood cells. That would make it harder to find them when you do sample and therefore give you an incorrect (lower than actual) mite reading.

Outside of the normal swarming season, but also during it there will be colonies that are actually absconding (instead of half the colony swarming) from

their original location. Absconding is a way that bees escape a dire situation and try to reduce the concentration of damaging pests (such as varroa mite or small hive beetle) or diseases (especially American foulbrood) that had caused significant health issues in their previous colony location. These absconding colonies sometimes have quite high mite loads, and the number of bees in it can be quite small in size if their numbers had been dwindling in their previous impacted colony. Absconding colonies are not always as healthy as a swarm may be, so keep a close eye on them as they may fail to expand well and again suffer their previous issues, but in your boxes now.

Brood-less colonies (new swarms, absconding colonies or packages from a supplier) are very easily treated for varroa, as all the mites are fully exposed and vulnerable on the adult bees until the colony has reared its own advanced well-fed larvae that are about to be capped (this often happens from around day 8-9 after the swarm is captured). Unless the swarm looks extremely unhealthy then you should not consider euthanising them. Instead, you can add some synthetic flumethrin (Bayvarol is currently the only flumethrin product legally available in Australia) miticide strips and watch those mites fall off and the bee colony turn into a beautiful hive of bees.

The reasons we suggest using Bayvarol strips in this situation instead of other synthetic strips or organics are:

1. Bayvarol will provide the colony with 6-8 weeks of protection from reinfestation (field bees bringing new mites back into the hive), which is likely high if your swarm and the apiary area already has varroa present. Check the Heatmap for updated information on reported mites in your area – www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa

2. Bayvarol can be used when bees are producing honey, which most strong swarm colonies will quickly produce in that first 8 weeks after their arrival. The other synthetic products cannot be used when honey is being produced, so they would only be used instead of Bayvarol if you captured a small swarm that will take 6+ weeks to expand and fill the brood box.

3. The organics may repel a caught swarm before it is fully established, causing its loss.

The New South Wales (NSW) Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development delivers the NSW component of the National Bee Biosecurity Program (NBBP), and provides significant co-investment and expertise. The NBBP is coordinated by Plant Health Australia and funded by the Australian Honey Bee Levy.

From AHBIC October newsletter

A new study led by investigators at the UCLA Health Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center found that Manuka honey could potentially be an alternative, natural option for breast cancer prevention and treatment - particularly for estrogen receptor (ER)-positive breast cancer, the most common subtype of breast cancer that accounts for about 70–80% of all breast cancer cases. Read the article [here](#)

VAA Emails To Members

24th October 2024

VAA Education Subcommittee | Project VIBBE Video Bee Biosecurity Education

A few months ago we announced that the VAA received a biosecurity education grant from Agrifutures to help us expand our online video resource library. The components of the project include the acquisition of audio-visual equipment and software as well as delivery of biosecurity training. The VAA is looking to shape a standardised curriculum for beekeeping education and to support bee clubs across the state in their ability to create and record training for their clubs. While the Project VIBBE committee has been working for the past several months, we held our first meeting this week with bee clubs who have expressed an interest in participating. The clubs include Bendigo, Ballarat, Moonee Valley, Geelong, J-Beekeepers/Sunbury-Diggers Rest, Yarra Valley and VAA Melbourne.

We're excited about the potential for this project and we will provide updates as the project progresses. If you are interested in getting involved, email us at vaa@vicbeekeepers.com.au.

In the meantime, feel free to visit the [VAA's YouTube Channel](#) to see the educational videos we have published to date.

11th October 2024

Apimondia 2025 | Copenhagen, Denmark

The VAA has been approached by Quadrant

Agtours, a company that is organising tours before and after next year's [Apimondia Congress](#) to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark from the 23rd to the 27th of September 2025. The tours include opportunities to meet beekeepers, scientists and apiary industry members from Lithuania, Latvia and Norway.

[Pre-Tour Lithuania & Latvia](#)

16th September - 22 September

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National Honey Show Reports

By John Kennedy

The UK's National Honey Show, held at the Sandown Park Racecourse just outside London, was the 101st edition.

It is without question one of the world's leading technical sessions, trade show, small courses and honey, wax and related products competitions, that runs over four days.

It concluded on Saturday 28 October and by all accounts was another gigantic success in all dimensions.

Early reports indicate that there were almost 3000 entries in the honey and wax competitions alone.

The Show has already released a series of reports including those presented by the UK and international lineup of technical, expert and practical presenters.

A number of the video presentations, generally of about 20 minutes duration, are already up on Facebook or can be downloaded from the website.

Some of the topics I have viewed include an interesting interview with John Chapple, who holds the title of the King's Beekeeper, having managed the Crown's quite significant number of hives on Royal palaces, estates, and other sites around the UK over many years.

Chapple's views on bees and beekeeping (including the UK's 30 odd years' experience with varroa) are

well worth taking in.

He admits to a 40 year career in beekeeping from a start as a beginner encouraged by his wife who liked honey, so of course he acquired his first beehive.

He tells of keeping his own bees successfully in an 'increasingly concreted over London' where he says there are now far too many beekeepers for the available foliage resource.

Another interesting presentation is from Enid Brown, a judge, who walks the viewer through all the honey and wax classes with useful advice on preparing your wax samples and entries in the competition classes to achieve the highest standard of presentation and wax quality.

Other interesting presentations I've viewed include a presentation made by Tanzanian beekeepers and how beekeeping is an approach to enhancing the local economy and creating small businesses.

Another one is a presentation made by the beekeepers of Ireland.

There is much interesting and relevant information provided by accessing the Facebook presentation, or via the show website at www.honeyshow.co.uk.

The Show is obviously releasing multiple videos.

But you will need a good coffee and a few chocolate biscuits to get you through an evening session!

The deadline for the December Bee Journal is 10pm on Sunday 1st of December

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Attendance Down At Harcourt Field Day

By John Kennedy

The car park provided certain evidence that the attendance numbers at this years Harcourt Field Day, on Sunday October 13, were well reduced on previous years.

Staged annually by the Bendigo Branch the event is always well publicised.

The weather, bright and sunny, was ideal.

The venue is ideal and the costs to attend (\$15 or \$10 concession) are not exorbitant.

Perhaps the beekeeping community is suffering from Varroa overload.

It was suggested to me that the program has really not changed for quite a few years, so perhaps there is a view that we've heard and seen it all before.

BBVAA Secretary Peta Dawe, told me the day was regarded as successful though the crowd numbers were down.

Some aspects, like the Beginners section, were well supported she commented, indicating the day drew a solid representation of those getting into or having just gotten into small scale beekeeping.

The agenda of working hive demonstrations in the surrounding bushland is always worthwhile, with a crew of established and commercial beekeepers, together with AgVic staff, both working and demonstrating over reasonably calm hives that are brought to the site.

There was I found, a good and relevant guest speakers' program in a separate part of the hall, which I don't think received enough early publicity. I inadvertently found an excellent presentation prepared by VAA Vice President Lindsay Callaway, on his varroa investiga-

tions in New Zealand. But only eight people were present to hear Lindsay's well prepared and presented story.

There was the usual presence of multiple trade exhibitors both indoors and outdoors. But several commented to me that business had been slow, and sales totals of beekeeping gear sold were disappointing.

It would be a tragedy to lose the support and presence of these traders.

The auction of beekeeping gear (although I missed most of it due to a conflicting presentation in the hall) was poorly supported with only, it seemed, four lots offered for auction sale. They did apparently attract strong bidding and buyer demand.

It would be unfortunate if the Harcourt Field

Day was to decline in support or become less relevant.

The Harcourt Reserve site is a sound, accessible venue, the catering is great, and the timing is ideal in the beekeeping year.

As a regular attendee I am hoping that this years Field day is just an exception, with the Bendigo Branch committee working on how it can be improved next year.

The Organising Committee put in a lot of work, and I am sure can redefine the purpose of the day and come up with a new formula of events, guest presentations and information that appeals to all levels of beekeeping.

The reduction in attendance numbers was also evident at the drawing of the door prizes, (if you submitted your entry ticket), I was fortunate to have my name randomly drawn out and I took home a quite useful prize provided by one of the trade exhibitors!



Always a feature, the Open Hive demonstrations conducted at Harcourt by experienced beekeepers and AgVic VDO officers, were well attended this year.

NASA ACTS ON POLLINATORS

By John Kennedy

In the USA the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has moved to enhance the pollination initiatives at two of its major operating bases the Johnston Space Center and the Marshall Space Flight Centre.

Both are substantial land and operating facility centres with the Johnston base near Houston, Texas with Marshall located near Huntsville, Alabama.

Several community groups are working at each centre to enhance pollinator habitat and to increase the understanding of pollinator species around each site.

The moves include increased plantings of pollinator meadows around each base including a mix of native flowering plants, some of which areas are mowed each year.

Both areas are substantial, and the NASA announcement comments that habitat loss, disease and pesticide use contribute to the loss of pollinator biodiversity worldwide, noting a substantial reduction in native bee species, impacts to honeybees, and a decline in the Monarch butterfly population.

NASA adds they are implementing measures promoting preservation of pollinator habitats through gardens, meadows and other initiatives, including regular outreach and education events to increase knowledge of the importance of pollinators and threats to their survival.

What Is Golden Rod?

By John Kennedy

Like many beekeepers I've watched multiple USA Facebook accounts on beekeeping methods and plants and realised that the weed Golden Rod is universally revered over there for its benefits to bees and beekeeping.

Having watched a current account provided by noted Georgia USA beekeeper, Bob Binnie, on Golden Rod, it motivated me to find out what the heck it is.

And importantly, do we have an Australian plant equivalent as such a highly beneficial weed for bees that grows freely and naturally in farm paddocks, forested areas and especially prolifically along roadsides and fence lines over there.

So, let's begin with some basics. Golden Rod is known as American, Canadian or Common Golden Rod and is *solidago altissima* or *solidago canadensis*.

It is a free growing, flowering herb that can reach up to two metres in bushy height.

I detected a description provided by the Brisbane

City Council under its Pest Management Plan Local Law describing it as "a rhizomatous, spreading, somewhat weedy plant that can rapidly colonise an area by creeping rhizomes and self-seeding".

There is also a useful Facebook piece of about ten minutes in duration provided by a US homesteader who goes under the name Nutty Gnome Homestead.

It is worth a watch because the homesteader describes most of its characteristics and benefits including how to personally benefit from its medicinal qualities as a diuretic or allergy suppressant.

He expands on the right types of leaves and how to select and harvest them as an important constituent for making a green tea (to which he adds some honey and even some juice from a lemon could be added to make it pleasant enough to drink)!

So, while Golden Rod obviously provides an important seasonal boost for bees and beekeeping in many states of the USA it seems it's a common plant that we don't have in Australia.

By measuring the electrical fields near swarming honeybees, researchers have discovered that insects can produce as much atmospheric electric charge as a thunderstorm cloud. This type of electricity helps shape weather events, aids insects in finding food, and lifts spiders up in the air to migrate over large distances. The research, appearing on October 24 in the journal *iScience*, demonstrates that living things can have an impact on atmospheric electricity.

"We always looked at how physics influenced biology, but at some point, we realized that biology might also be influencing physics," says first author Ellard Hunting, a biologist at the University of Bristol.

Read the full article [here](#)

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AHBIC Important Update

29 October 2024

Re: AHBIC meeting with APVMA to discuss varroa treatments.

Dear members:

The AHBIC board recently met with senior personnel of the APVMA regarding the management of Varroa mite in Australia. Key discussion points included:

1 Chemical Registrations:

o There are two main pathways to making products available.

- Full product registration – this is the preferred method for the APVMA as it provides stability and a long-term solution.

- Emergency use or minor use permits – this pathway is a temporary solution for short-term access to chemistry.

2 Who can apply for registrations/permits:

o Full registration – some options include:

- Manufacturer application

- Third party registration i.e. association or agent but they must have access to all the underlying data which is usually held by the manufacturer.

o International data from comparable countries, such as the EU, can help speed up the registration process.

3. Liability for Unregistered Products:

o Beekeepers using unregistered products could face penalties. It is crucial to only use registered treatments or those authorized under a permit.

o Compliance for use of unregistered product is the responsibility of the state or territory jurisdiction.

o It is an offence to import or supply AgVet product that is not registered by the APVMA. The APVMA shares responsibility with other agencies in preventing unregistered chemical products reaching the domestic market.

4. Own-Use Permits:

o In New Zealand, Schedule 2 of the ACVM (Exemptions and Prohibited Substances) Regulations 2011 provides for an exemption from registration under the ACVM Act referred to as the ‘own use’ exemption. The exemption applies to a substance or compound prepared by a person for use on animals or plants that they own, or on any land, place or water that they own or occupy.

The APVMA was clear that these ‘own use exemption’ provisions that exist in New Zealand are not allowed under Australia’s legislation. Therefore, legislative reform (which is a lengthy process that is managed

by the AgVet Policy branch of DAFF) would be required to introduce similar provisions here

o The discussion, which was based on published guidance from ACVM, highlighted some significant limitations that would need to be considered including;¹

- The NZ guidance applies to agricultural chemicals not veterinary medicines. Under the AgVet Code in Australia, varroa treatments are veterinary medicines.

- The exemption only authorises use on their own bees. It does not authorise the sale (including gifting), distribution, or promotion of treatments.

- One clause in the NZ own use exemption is that the treatment must not be toxic to animals that are treated or exposed to the treatment. This statement is ambiguous and would need clear definition and supporting data.

- Under the own use exemption, the beekeeper is responsible for managing the risks associated with compounds they have prepared. If beekeepers do not manage the risks, then they could be subject to compliance action under the ACVM Act and its related legislation.

5. Industry Stewardship and Resistance:

o To protect the available treatments, we must implement strategies to avoid resistance. Overuse or misuse of treatments can lead to long-term issues for the industry.

o Industry should consider developing a resistance management plan to promote chemical rotations to prevent resistance. Examples are Croplife and the Cotton industry.

6. Is there more AHBIC can do as an association:

o In Australia varroa treatments are veterinary medicines which means that Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) is a requirement for registration. AHBIC could approach DAFF to discuss whether the GMP requirement might be relaxed for products that are manufactured under alternative quality assurance programs. This might facilitate access to products registered overseas in jurisdictions where varroacides are regulated as agricultural chemicals, for example Oxalic Acid strips, which are registered in the US.

AHBIC will continue to liaise with the APVMA and DAFF to ensure we are doing all we can to register as many varroa treatment options as possible.

Regards,

Danny Le Feuvre

CEO Australian Honey Bee Industry Council

¹ [Advertising and own use guidance for compounds for management of disease in beehives](#)

If you enjoy a bowl of plain yogurt in the morning, adding a spoonful of honey is a delicious way to sweeten your favorite breakfast food. It also supports the probiotic cultures in the popular fermented dairy product, according to two new studies from the [University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign](#).

Hannah Holscher, is an associate professor in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, part of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at Illinois. She is a co-author of the two studies, which are both published in *The Journal of Nutrition*. ... “The enzymes in our mouth, stomach, and intestines help with digestion and facilitate nutrient absorption, but they also reduce the viability of microbes. That’s great when it’s pathogens but not necessarily when it comes to beneficial bacteria,” Holscher said. “We wanted to see if honey could help probiotic bacteria survive in the gut.”

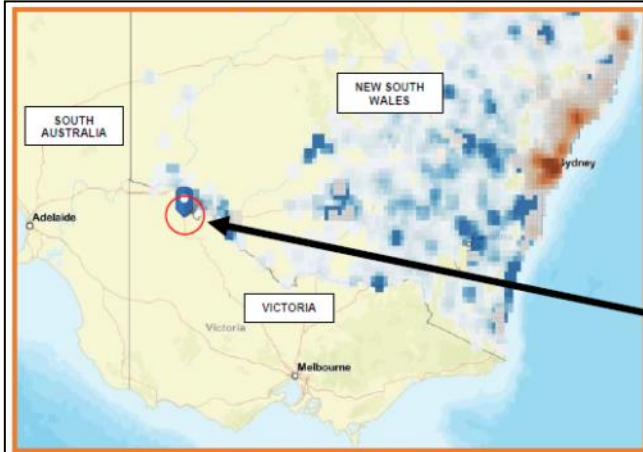
... “Our findings showed that pairing honey with yogurt supported the survival of the yogurt’s probiotic bacteria in the gut, so the lab study results did translate to real-world application in humans,” Holscher stated.

Read the full article [here](#)

AHBIC Industry Update 63 T2M 1st November 2024

2nd Varroa Mite Detection Confirmed in Victoria

Agriculture Victoria has confirmed a second detection of Varroa mite at Hattah, Victoria. The infested hives were reported by a beekeeper. Agriculture Victoria undertook surveillance activities on the hives and confirmed the presence of Varroa mite. Agriculture Victoria remains committed to the National Varroa Mite Transition to Management Plan.



Varroa Development Officers (VDO's), under the National Transition to Management program based in Victoria, have been onsite and continue working with the affected beekeeper to provide guidance on monitoring and managing Varroa mites.

Beekeepers in Victoria are urged to check their hives and to report suspected cases of Varroa mite to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881. All Victorian beekeepers are encouraged to record all hive movements and inspections, and the results of mite testing via BeeMAX.

Varroa information for Victorian Beekeepers

Victorian registered beekeepers will be updated through direct emails from Agriculture Victoria and can seek information by visiting Agriculture Victoria website: Varroa mite of honey bees | Priority pest insects and mites | Pest insects and mites | Biosecurity | Agriculture Victoria

As part of the Transition to Management Program, Varroa Development Officers (VDO) are already em-

ployed and working in Victoria, the main aim of VDO's is to provide hands on beekeeping support directly to the beekeeping industry. Beekeepers in Victoria can reach out for support from VDO's by emailing Victorian.VDO@agriculture.vic.gov.au or by calling: 1800 958 485

Webinar 5 National Transition to Management 17 September 2024

Another successful online Webinar was hosted by AHBIC and the National T2M Program team on 17 September. NSW DPIRD Bee Biosecurity Officer, Rod Bourke presented on the importance of monitoring and surveillance, focusing on technique and finding Varroa early followed by a live Q&A. Jump in and watch the recording if you missed it, there were some great details with some really engaging audience questions.

Click here to watch the webinar: <https://youtu.be/1leRkWrA9Wg>

Transition to Management has a Website

Beekeepers looking for detailed information on the activities of the National Varroa Management Program should jump over to view the new national website. <https://www.varroa.org.au/> Detailed information has been created to support both beekeepers and the wider community on Varroa and its impacts in one easy to reach place.

- Monitoring and Surveillance
- Reporting varroa results – all states & territories
- Getting in contact – Varroa Development Officers
- Finding a Training Workshop near you
- Varroa Management

You can reach out to AHBIC via:
National Varroa Mite Coordinator
Bianca Giggins
0402 467 780
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Agriculture Victoria:

Agriculture Victoria: Apiary team
Website: [Honey bees | Livestock and animals | Agriculture Victoria](http://Honey%20bees%20|%20Livestock%20and%20animals%20|%20Agriculture%20Victoria)
Website:
www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/honey-bees
To report a suspect exotic please call: Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881
For enquiries and endemic disease notification please use:
Ph: 136 186
Email honeybee.biosecurity@agriculture.vic.gov.au
The Varroa project team can also be contacted at the above email.

For enquiries related to permits and movement restrictions:
Email honeybee.permits@agriculture.vic.gov.au
For beekeeper registration please log onto BeeMAX
www.bees.agriculture.vic.gov.au
or call the Bee Registration Helpline 1800 356 761

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Karyn Di Florio
Bee Biosecurity Officer
Email: honeybee.biosecurity@agriculture.vic.gov.au

If you can't reach an Officer and need to talk to someone urgently, please call the Customer Service Centre: Ph: 136 186

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Secretary: Janet Clyde
jclyde.cpaa@gmail.com
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02 69236918
Annie.stoddart@agrifutures.com.au

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Secretary: Gail Rochelmeyer
Mob: 0408 592 091

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collingwoodbees@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/collingwoodbees

The Australian Bee Journal welcomes contributions for inclusion in the journal. Please send your original photos, articles, handy hints, anecdotes, club activities etc to abjeditors@yahoo.com

Contacts

VAA Inc Regional Groups

Bendigo Branch:

Secretary: Peta Dawe
bbvaasecretary@gmail.com
 Chair: Jamie Trimby
bbvaachair@gmail.com
 Treasurer: Carol Maunder
bbvaatreasurer@gmail.com
 General Information Q&A
 Meetings - 1st Wed. each month
 (except Jan & Dec)
 Dinner at 6.00pm (optional)
 Meeting at 7.00 pm.
 Lakeside Hotel, Bendigo.
 Executive Committee Meeting:
 3rd Wed month as required.
 Venue: As notified.
 Please register to attend all
 Meetings

Melbourne Section:

Chair: A/Prof James Doery
 Deputy Chairperson: Mike Love
 Secretary, Rob Kerr
 Ph: 0421 078 387
 Treasurer: Janet Conos
vaamelbournesection@hotmail.com
www.vicbeekeepers.com.au/Melbourne-Section
 Information/ Education Meetings:
 from 7:30 pm the last Thursday
 of each month except December
 Location: Church of Christ,
 1 The Avenue, Surry Hills.

Sunraysia Branch:

Naomi Forbes-Wilson
 Ph: 0407 243 313
billabonghoney@yahoo.com

VAA Inc. Library Trust

Secretary: Russell Goodman,
 Ph 03 9735 3836

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 Secretary: Neil Barraclough:
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 Treasurer: Sean Paul Smith:
kaledprime@gmail.com
 0466 041 199

North Eastern Apiarists' Association Inc. (NEAA Inc.):

Secretary: Moss McCallum
secretary.neaa@gmail.com

"J" Beekeeping Club Inc.

35 Duncan's Lane, Diggers Rest
 Meet on the 2nd Wednesday each
 month at 7pm

Southside Beekeepers Club:

Secretary: Ted Cottle
 Ph: 0428 429 547
ted@southsidebeekeepers.com.au
 7.30pm on the 4th Wed each
 month at Monterey Secondary
 College,
 21 Silvertop St, Frankston North

Geelong Beekeepers Club

Pres: Stephen Fridey
 Ph: 0401 897 579
info@geelongbeekeepersclub.org.au
 Meetings third Friday of the
 month at Belmont Masonic
 Centre,
 25 Regent Street, Belmont

Latrobe Valley

Beekeepers Assoc.

President: Sean-Paul Smith
LatrobeValleyBees@gmail.com
 Meets 7-9pm first Tuesday each
 month, Old Moe Netball Courts,
 99 Savages Rd. Moe
 P.O. Box 323 Newborough 3825
 Mob: 0466 041 199

Woodend Bee-Friendly Society

An action group of the Macedon
 Ranges Sustainability Group
 E: wbfbs@mrsq.org.au

South Gippsland Beekeepers

Inc. Secretary: Anna Jones
 Mob: 0411 770 062
secretary@sgbeekeepers.org.au
 Web: <http://www.southgippslandbeekeepers.org.au/>

Meetings: second Thursday of
 the month at St Peters Anglican
 Church Hall, Cnr McCartin St. &
 Bruce St., Leongatha

Melbourne Beekeepers Club Inc:

Web: melbournebeekeepersclub.org.au
 E: secretary@melbournebeekeepersclub.org.au

Northwestern Bee Club Inc.

President: Roger Mitchell
 Mob. 0407 427 431
northwesternbeeclub@gmail.com
 Web: <https://www.nwbee.club/>

Mornington Peninsula Beekeepers Association :

P.O. Box 186, Mornington, 3931
 Ph: 0401 965 558
 E: admin@mpba.org.au
 Monthly MPBA Club Meeting -
 4th Wednesday of every month
 at 7pm Mornington Park Pavilion,
 9 Flinders Drive, Mornington

Moonee Valley Beekeepers Club Inc. (MVBC Inc.)

Secretary: Paul Kucera
mvbeekeepersclub@gmail.com
 Meets at 7pm every 2nd Tuesday
 of the month at Maribyrnong Park
 Bowls Club, 195 Holmes Rd,
 Moonee Ponds, VIC 3039

WerriBeeks Inc.

President: Carmel Gerdson
 Secretary: Helen Morland
 Treasurer: Debbie Conway
 E: werribeeks@gmail.com



John van Weeghel

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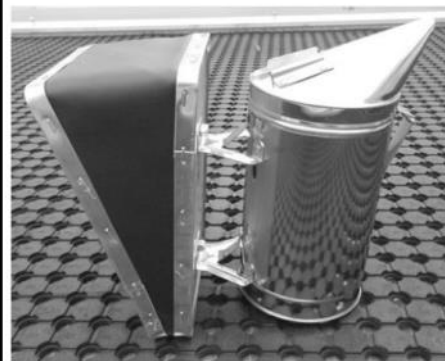
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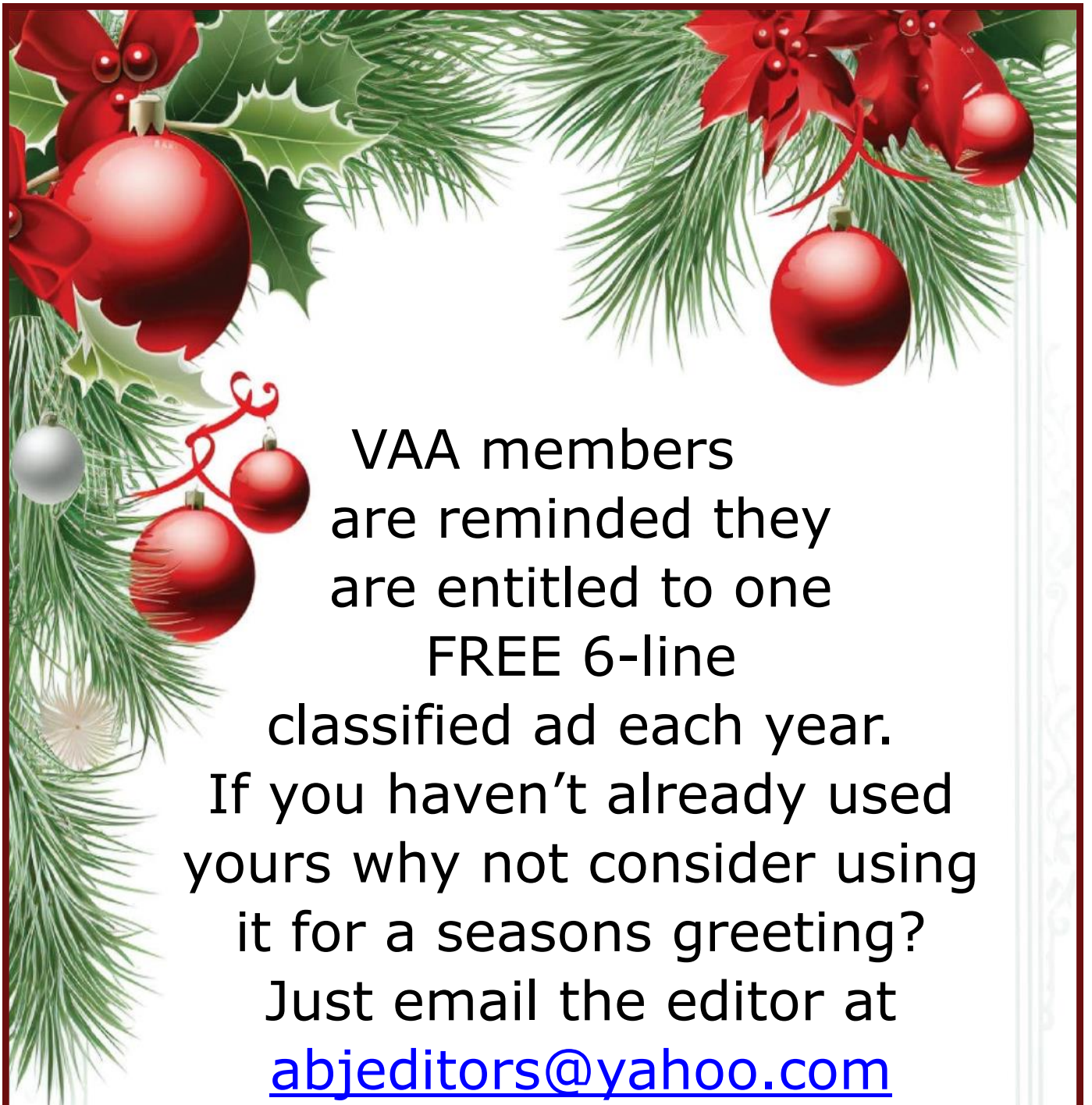
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