

AUSTRALIAN BEE JOURNAL

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AUSTRALIAN BEE JOURNAL

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President's Report	5
Beekeeping Safely During Fire Danger Periods	8
Bendigo Branch	10
VAA Library	12
Advice Wanted	13
Storm Clouds Gather	14
Bee Bits	16/19
Antibody-Driven Defence	17
Melbourne Section Meeting	18
A Look Into The Past	20
Season Report	21
VAA Conference	24
Research: Honey Bees And Heat	25
Miticide Resistance And How To Avoid It	26
Research: Flowers And Virus Spread	27
Contacts	28/29
Classifieds / Members / Index of Advertisers	30
Varroa Workshops For Commercial Beekeepers	31

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10pm on Sunday 1st of March 2026.**

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 2025 - 2026 Board

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Olivia Ducommun-Dit-Verron

Finance & Insurance

Tony Wilsmore & Lindsay Callaway

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Andrew Wootton

Melbourne Show

Richard Collins

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Tony Wilsmore

Aust. Bee Journal/Website

Andrew Wootton

Resources

Millie Enbom-Goad & Lachlan Goode

Commercial beekeeping

Lindsay Callaway

Recreational beekeeping

Tony Wilsmore

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 www.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
101- 500 hives (2 votes): \$249
501-1000 hives (3 votes): \$400
1000+ hives (4 votes): \$550
Partner membership is \$20 less in each category and includes all rights except receipt of journal

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

Stronger Than Fire, Stronger Together

On behalf of the Victorian Apiarists' Association, I acknowledge the Victorians impacted by recent bushfires. Bushfires are an ongoing stress each summer and part of our beekeeping climate more than ever these days. To our fellow beekeepers, if you have been impacted by fires this summer, please reach out to us for assistance.

In my region near Bendigo, the Harcourt fire has hit close to home. Harcourt is more than bushland; it's orchards, local businesses, families, and a core part of our horticultural landscape. It is also where the Bendigo Branch hosts its annual beekeepers field day, which thankfully managed to escape the fires unscathed and is now the central community hub for the 2026 bushfire recovery.

However, projects have been lost. Partnerships disrupted. Landscapes changed. Food security is a chain and when one link is stressed, we all feel it. Beekeepers understand resilience. We rebuild, adapt, and keep showing up for our bees, our fellow beekeepers, our communities, and the future of pollination and food production.

VAA Annual Conference and AGM 2026

We are stepping up.

The 2026 Conference will be held at the **Novotel Melbourne Airport**. It's a larger centrally located venue for an anticipated high-interest event.

Varroa has shifted the landscape, and demand for knowledge is rising. We're responding with scale, access, and serious expertise.

Why this venue?

- Capacity for our growing industry.
- Modern conference facilities.
- Easy central access for regional and metro beekeepers.
- Walkable from Terminal 4.
- Strong public transport links.
- Plenty of parking.

Despite higher city venue costs, **registration fees will remain unchanged**.

Our Conference Keynote Speakers Announced!

Peter Neumann

President of COLOSS and global authority on bee health, parasite ecology, and colony loss. His work connects cutting-edge science with real-world biosecurity and pest management strategy.

Stephen Martin

A leading researcher in honeybee and Varroa interactions, Martin's work underpins global understanding of Varroa resistance and selective breeding for mite toler-

ance. Critical science for sustainable mite management.

Cooper Schouten

An Australian bee health research leader specialising in invasive mite threats including *Tropilaelaps*, working at the interface of science, preparedness, and industry resilience.

Beechworth set records in 2025. Melbourne sets the direction for what comes next.

Industry Action Plan, Agricultural Chemicals

The VAA is actively working with Agriculture Victoria on developing an **Industry Action Plan for chemical use in beekeeping**. This is a major piece of work, led by fellow VAA board member Matt Petersen, focused on **good agricultural practice, residue management, and long-term sustainability**.

The key issue is balance. Current treatment settings allow broad, repeated use of high-residue synthetic products like pyrethroids, which drive Varroa resistance and leave long-lasting wax contamination. At the same time, lower-risk organic treatments like oxalic acid, thymol and formic acid all face heavy permit restrictions that limit efficacy and flexibility.

This imbalance can:

- accelerate Varroa resistance
- reduce colony health and fertility
- undermine consumer confidence
- reduce long-term industry sustainability.

The VAA is advocating for:

- greater flexibility and appropriate label settings for organic miticides
- advanced beekeeper education and chemical handling pathways
- stronger record-keeping and disposal practices

The goal is clear: **effective Varroa control, zero residues target, high consumer confidence, and long-term market protection**.

VAA Elections 2026–27

This is your industry. Now it's your turn.

The VAA board has seen major renewal, brought fresh energy, but we need more members to step forward.

We're seeing highly capable beekeepers emerging, including a strong generation in their 40's and under, bringing business skill, science and modern thinking into the sector.

If you care about:

- biosecurity
- industry representation
- education

(Continued on page 6)

President's Report, cont'd

(Continued from page 5)

- commercial viability
 - the future of bees in Victoria.
- Please consider nominating this year.

Our Victorian Apiarists Association Returning Officer independently manages the election process and will call for nominations by 5 April ahead of the 5 June AGM. Details and timelines will be shared in upcoming VAA bulletins.

For election questions, contact the Returning Officer at returning_officer@vicbeekeepers.com.au.

Please keep an eye on VAA emails and make sure your membership profile email is up to date. If you need help, contact the VAA Secretary at vaa@vicbeekeepers.com.au.

Commercial Varroa & Biosecurity Workshop – Swanpool

Where: Swanpool. Date: Monday 9 March.

Time: 9am–5pm. Catering: Fully catered for and free, you just need to get online and register.

An **advanced-level workshop for commercial beekeepers** as Varroa becomes business-as-usual. Experts will deliver practical operational knowledge for commercial businesses adapting to the new normal. Hosted in the historic Swanpool Cinema in partnership with the local community, NEAA and finishing with a NEAA hosted BBQ.

Funded through the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action livestock biosecurity education grant.

Varroa Specialists Workshop – May 2

Another **Varroa Specialists Workshop** is coming in

May, building on the October program. More details soon as we continue strengthening industry capability.

Apiary Business Resilience Program – Phase 2

Working with Agriculture Victoria, Phase 2 will deliver:

- larger group sessions
- peer learning and networking
- practical resilience tools
- flexible pathways for those wanting to build on Phase 1.

Because the only certainty ahead is change and adaptability is now essential business practice.

Final Word

Bushfires. Varroa. Market pressure. Regulation. The challenges are real, but so is the capability in this industry.

We're seeing smart, capable beekeepers stepping up, stronger collaboration and a new generation ready to lead.

Beekeepers first!

Kind regards

Lindsay Callaway

President

Victorian Apiarists' Association Inc



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Beekeeping Safely During Fire Danger Periods

Every summer, beekeepers ask the same question:

Can I use a smoker during a Fire Danger Period—and what do I need to do to stay legal and safe?

The short answer is **yes**, but only if you follow some very specific safety rules. These rules come from the *Country Fire Authority (CFA) Act*, not just from guidance notes or fact sheets.

Understanding the basics helps protect you, your bees, nearby property, and your insurance cover.

Why the Law Matters

During a declared Fire Danger Period, lighting or using fire outdoors is usually not allowed. However, the CFA Act makes an exception for certain activities, including beekeeping, if strict safety controls are followed.

In simple terms, the law treats a bee smoker as a small, controlled fire. Because of that, it must be managed very carefully.

When Can a Smoker Be Used?

The CFA Act specifically allows fire to be used for:

- extracting honey
- relocating bees

The Act doesn't list every beekeeping activity (like routine hive inspections), but it does clearly state the

safety rules that apply when fire or heat is used.

This means the same rules apply whenever a smoker is used, no matter the reason. If you use a smoker to inspect hives, the same safety requirements still apply.

The Safety Rules You Must Follow

These are **legal requirements**, not optional advice.

1. No Sparks or Hot Embers

Your smoker must not release sparks or hot embers that could start a fire.

Many modern smokers already do this when they are:

- in good condition
- used properly
- not overfilled or poorly lit

A separate fire-resistant guard is not required if the smoker already prevents sparks. What matters is the result, not the design.

If sparks escape and cause a fire, an offence has occurred—even if it was accidental.

2. Clear the Area Around You

You must clear or wet down the ground at least 1.5

(Continued on page 9)



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Lindsay Callaway
Warral Maldon Honey

TESTIMONIAL



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Beekeeping Safely During Fire Danger Periods, cont'd

(Continued from page 8)

metres around where you are using the smoker.

This means:

- remove dry grass, leaves, bark, and other flammable material, **or**
- wet the area thoroughly so fire can't spread

This step is easy to miss but very important.

3. Have Water Ready

You must have water ready to use immediately, either:

- a mains (reticulated) water supply, or
- a knapsack or spray pump holding at least 9 litres of water, fully filled

Water in a nearby vehicle is not enough. It must be right there and ready to go.

4. Never Leave a Smoker Unattended

Someone must always be present while the smoker is alight.

This means:

- don't leave it on the ground while you walk away
- don't leave it smouldering "just for a minute"
- make sure whoever is present can put out a fire if needed

What Does "Well-Maintained and Correctly Functioning" Mean?

This phrase is often used but rarely explained.

In plain terms, it means:

- the smoker doesn't throw sparks
- it can be controlled safely
- it's used with cleared ground and water nearby

If a smoker can't do these things, it doesn't meet the legal requirements—no matter how new or expensive it is.

Why This Is Important

The CFA Act focuses on what happens, not what you intended.

If a fire starts and the safety rules were not followed, a beekeeper may face:

- legal action
- liability for damage
- insurance problems

Although the safety requirements under the CFA Act are intended to mitigate risk, you still must always be vigilant when using fire in the open air. Even if all safety rules are followed, if a fire starts for whatever reason, you are still liable under the CFA Act for any damage sustained by another person because of that fire.

Knowing and following the rules and remaining vig-

ilant when using a smoker is about **protecting yourself as much as protecting the environment**.

Important Note: Total Fire Ban Days

On a Total Fire Ban (TFB) day, using a smoker is not allowed at all unless you have a permit.

If the work is essential, a Section 40 permit must be applied for in advance through: www.firepermits.vic.gov.au

What is the difference between a Fire Danger Period and Total Fire Ban? 🐝

A Fire Danger Period (FDP) is a time of year when the risk of bushfire is higher and extra fire safety rules apply. It is declared by the Country Fire Authority (CFA) for each local area, usually from spring through to autumn.

During a Fire Danger Period:

- Lighting fires in the open air is generally prohibited
- Some activities (including using a bee smoker) are only allowed if strict safety conditions are met as described previously

A bee smoker must not emit sparks or hot embers. You must have cleared ground, water on hand, and constant supervision when using fire.

A Fire Danger Period is not the same as a Total Fire Ban which can be declared during a Fire Danger Period or any time of year.

On a Total Fire Ban day, bee smokers cannot be used without a permit.

Always check the Warnings & Restrictions on the CFA Website if a Fire Danger Period or Total Fire Ban is in place for your location before working bees: www.cfa.vic.gov.au

Simple Take-Home Message

- ✓ You can use a smoker during a Fire Danger Period if all safety rules are followed
- ✓ The same rules apply for inspections, honey harvesting, or moving bees
- ✓ Prevent sparks, clear the ground, have water ready, and stay with the smoker
- ✗ Never use a smoker on a Total Fire Ban day without a permit

Good beekeeping and good fire safety go hand in hand.

When the rules are understood and followed, beekeepers can work safely, confidently, and legally—even in summer.

This article was prepared by Tony Wilsmore in partnership with the Country Fire Authority.

Bendigo Branch

Reported positive Varroa mite tests represented by the yellow “present” hexagons on the BeeMAX Varroa map <https://bees.agriculture.vic.gov.au/Public/Varroa> are now joining up across Bendigo showing that Varroa is fairly widespread throughout Bendigo, surrounding districts in late January 2026 and, in my apiary.

Either you have Varroa and have found it, have Varroa and don't know it, or will have it in a hive near you, unfortunately.

Education and resources are available thanks to the VAA and the Victorian Varroa Development Officers (VDO's).

Bendigo Branch will continue to discuss Varroa testing, location updates, members' experiences, treatment plans and ongoing discussions at the monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of the month at the Quality Lakeside Hotel.

Following on from the VDO education workshops, members of Victorian Apiarist clubs attended a Specialist Varroa training day to gain further knowledge and resources to assist colleagues at clubs around the state. The Specialist training was well organised, with a great collection of knowledgeable speakers from NSW and Victoria. The organisers provided participants with: Record keeping template – for treatment of bees for Varroa <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/chemicals/keeping-records-of-chemical-use/record-keeping-format-and-templates/Record-keeping-template>

[-Treatment-of-bees-or-beekeeping-equipment-with-agricultural-and-veterinary-chemicals.pdf](#); Varroa Mite booklet; Surveillance and Monitoring Techniques handout; and a calendar printout highlighting weekly averages for minimum/maximum temperatures, Brood population, Drones, Swarming and Natural Brood breaks to assist identifying treatment options.

Varroa management, A practical guide on how to manage Varroa mites in honey bee colonies by Dr Kirsty Stainton (entomologist and Varroa research specialist) published by Northern Bee Books 2022, is an excellent resource covering Varroa biology, virus effects and it compares UK approved treatments, that align with a majority of local approved options.

Kirsty Stainton and a NSW Beekeeping group recorded an online session on 11 Oct 2025, available on YouTube with some great content, I recommend skipping to 7:45 minutes into the recording. Ask your office bearers to advise who attended from your group for local resources to discuss your Varroa queries.

Stafford Kelly has presented to Bendigo and Melbourne Branches providing a thought provoking overview of treatment plans, providing supporting information to assist beekeepers to formulate their own plan to suit their situation and conditions. Stafford has conducted follow up sessions in Bendigo helping unpick the myriad of treatment options, emphasising the con-

(Continued on page 11)

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Bendigo Branch, cont'd

(Continued from page 10)

siderations required when making reinfestation treatment plans, understanding local conditions with treatment deficiencies for longer term planning options.

As Varroa spreads throughout your region it is incredibly valuable to learn from the likes of Stafford,

Andrew Wootton, Matt Peterson, VDO's and others willing to share their experiences, and knowledge to break down reinfestation phase treatment planning into logical steps.

All the best in your Beekeeping,
Jamie Trimby



These photos are of my first varroa detection using a stand to hold the mite test container I copied from Randy Oliver.

The stand has a concave mirror below the mite test container magnifying the view of the bottom of the container, avoiding the need to hold the cup above eye line to view the contents in the bottom of the container.

Second photo (bottom left) is a bit closer and the last photo (bottom right) is more like what you actually see with your eye using the stand and mirror.

Jamie Trimby





VICTORIAN APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION INC
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EXPLORE & BORROW From the VAA Library

Library open during the
VAA Melbourne Section Meeting
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1 The Avenue, Surrey Hills - From 7.00pm

*"You cannot open a book without
learning something."
Confucius*

Letter To The Editor

Advice/consensus request (question to readers of the Journal)

I am looking for advice and ultimately a consensus (dangerous beekeeping territory) on transferring or selling nucleus colonies with consideration of Varroa having spread to many areas of Victoria.

Firstly a brood inspection with no sign of disease.
A fair level of gentleness in bee behaviour/character.
Performing a Varroa mite (Alcohol/Metho/Fairy-dishwashing) test and getting a result of 3 or less mites per 300 bees, would that be sufficient?
Would a mite treatment be a standard expectation regardless of the mite count?
If so, would an oxalic treatment (not affecting adult mites in capped cells) be acceptable?

Please provide your thoughts on what would be a reasonable standard, noting the person obtaining the Nuc would likely be a beginner beekeeper.

Thanks in advance,

Jamie Trimby

Jamie would love to get feedback from as many beekeepers as possible.

Please send any responses to
abjeditors@yahoo.com



Photo: Doug Heckathon

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Storm Clouds Gather

By Andrew Wootton

With several varroa detections in metropolitan Melbourne and the Victorian varroa heat map looking like a Christmas pudding, we can safely assume that you either already have mites in your hive or will have this season.

So it was encouraging to attend the Melbourne Section club meeting on the 29th January and see it packed to the rafters. Kris Fricke, one of our Varroa Development Officers (VDOs) was presenting “Varroa Management”. As I listened, two main thoughts struck me that I’d like to share.

Little did I or the ABJ editor realise when I wrote an article on mites for the ABJ last August that this would turn into a “column” and that I would become self-elected commentator on all things varroa. But here we are and I’ve churned out articles every month. I assume they are read, although given the feedback rate of one comment every 2 articles, it sometimes feels like casting into a black hole.

My first and foremost thought was, what a great job the VDOs have done. This meeting was Kris’ final act as VDO; the emergency response funding has come to its long-heralded finish. What a wonderful program the transition to management has delivered. Australia surely has the best-prepared beekeepers in the world.



Jennifer Ryan, Extension and Engagement Coordinator
Photo: Agriculture Victoria

My second thought, there is still a great deal of magical thinking amongst our beekeeping audience. People are still asking questions about whether rhubarb leaves work and whether resistant bees are available. No and no. If you don’t monitor and treat appropriately, your bees will die. Many overseas beekeepers have commented that their principal function nowadays is mite management rather than bee wrangling. We need to get used to this idea.

There were questions about the accuracy of the mite heatmap. This has served its purpose, to warn when mites have turned up in your locale. They are here now, so it doesn’t really matter what’s going on around you anymore; what matters is what you find in your own hives. This may not be strictly true for the few regions that are still mite-detection-free, but for the vast majority of Victoria, this holds. And it’s probably not worth obsessing whether a swarm you catch or a queen you bring in is varroa free – mites will be coming in through the front door of your hives, you need regular monitoring and management.

The meeting was also a chance to reflect on my own plans here in Melbourne (not forgetting “no plan survives first contact with the enemy”). We are half way through the season and my hives are still recording negative counts. I expect this to change in the next 2-3 months and low mite numbers will show. As soon as this happens, I’ll use slow release oxalic acid strips in all hives in the affected apiary. Assuming I catch early at low mite numbers, and given that the strips are effective over 6 weeks, this should get me to the end of the season in good shape. If the numbers don’t remain low, I can resort to a hard chemical to ensure my bees go into winter in the best possible shape. Next season, in September, I will add a drone frame to each hive and remove and freeze it 3 weeks later. This should ensure a good start with relatively low numbers. Meanwhile, what will be the situation in feral colonies? Throughout the remainder of this season, their mite numbers will be building, but they are likely to survive into win-



Photo: John van Weeghel

Congratulations to all the team, led by Jennifer Ryan and including Ashton Edgley, Kris Fricke, Ally Driessen, Scott Denno, Tony Wilshire, Don McArthur, Krista Mogensen, Peter Gatehouse, Joe Riordan, Buffie Harris, Lachie Wakefield and Junie Rey Bag-ayan.

Our heartfelt thanks for your efforts, goodwill and good humour. You will be sorely missed (see later for what is to come*).



The VDO team (missing from photo Scott Denno, Don McArthur, Lachie Wakefield). Photo: Agriculture Victoria

(Continued on page 15)

Storm Clouds Gather, cont'd

(Continued from page 14)

ter. Then, a partial brood break should slow mite reproduction and the numbers will only really take off around Christmas.

The storm will have broken, mite bombs will be exploding and management of my hives will be hardest due to mite immigration (look at its effect in Fig 1). Priority one will be to keep my bees alive, sticking to organic treatments as long as possible, but always being ready to call on the heavy artillery of hard chemicals (not forgetting to rotate). Fortunately for me, honey production is not really a consideration and I need only focus on maintaining hive health. Ready to adapt, remembering, "everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth"!

*Future Resources.

Happily, the State Government has stepped up and provided additional funding for 2 biosecurity officers. Fantastic, welcome, we look forward to continuing working closely with you. Furthermore, VAA has been fortunate to secure a grant from the Honey Bee Industry Compensation Fund. This centres on biosecurity, communicating and educating Victoria's beekeepers, whether they are VAA members or not. We are tackling this challenge with great enthusiasm.

Andrew Wootton is Vice President of the VAA and a certified master beekeeper with the Eastern Apicultural Society of N America. He first started beekeeping in the 1960s.

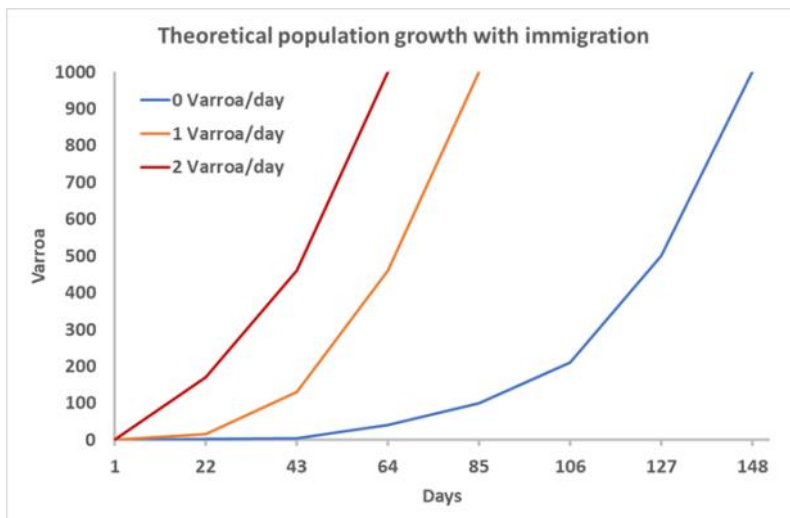


Fig 1. Redrawn from Taylor, M and Goodwin, R M. (2021). *Control of varroa: a guide for New Zealand beekeepers.* New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.



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Melbourne Section 70th Birthday Celebrations



Left: The Melbourne Section birthday cake

Below Left: John van Weeghel and Mike Love presenting on the history of the Melbourne section

Below right: Lindsay and the chairman of the Melbourne section, James Doery, about to "cut the cake" with a hive tool.

Photos courtesy
Lindsay Callaway



Bee Bits

(*Beyond Pesticides*, January 29, 2026) A study of ecotoxicity risk from neonicotinoid insecticides, published in *Environmental Chemistry and Ecotoxicology*, finds that chemicals in this class of pesticides, particularly dinotefuron, increase the body temperature of *Apis mellifera* (European honey bee) and subsequently accelerate the translocation (movement) of contaminants into hives by the honey bees. The research indicates that neonicotinoids affect acetylcholine receptors in the nervous system, leading to an "elevation in octopamine titer [neurotransmitter/hormone] and subsequent increase in the body temperature of honeybees," the authors report. They continue: "Furthermore, we observed a considerable upregulation [of] the expression of a flight gene *flightin* in honeybees. This gene accelerates the homing behavior of honeybees and facilitates the rapid and frequent transport of neonicotinoid pesticide-contaminated nectar to the hive."

(*Beyond Pesticides*, January 28, 2026) A study published last year in *Science of The Total Environment* reports widespread pesticide contamination collected from beehive monitoring across the European Union (EU). "This study has produced the first EU-wide distribution map of terrestrial pesticide contamination and demonstrates widespread pesticide contamination of EU environments," the authors write. The study, led by a cohort of citizen-scientists, documents pesticide drift across the European continent. The results found that 188 of the 429 targeted pesticide compounds were detected in noninvasive, in-hive passive samplers (APIStrips) across 27 EU countries between May and August of 2023. This finding emerges at a time when public health and environmental advocates raise concerns about the European Union's backtracking on commitments to reduce pesticide use by 2030...

Read the full articles at

[Neonicotinoid Insecticides Cause Deadly Overheating Behavior in Honey Bees, Study Finds - Beyond Pesticides Daily News Blog](#)

AOL

Why Do Honey Bees Disappear When the Sun Goes Down?

Honey bees must make it back to their hives before dusk to avoid individual bees becoming lost or exposed to nighttime dangers. Research has proven through polarized-light cues that light can create a navigation hazard after dark. Specialized nocturnal insects require slower visual processing, which is a liability in daylight, which is why bees maintain sight that works best in daytime. Forager bees sleep overnight so that they are ready to work the following day; however, other activities within a hive persist in dark hours.

Read the article [here](#)

AgriFutures Current Project

Antibody-Driven Defence: An Innovative Method for Safeguarding Honey Bees Against Varroa-Induced Viral Diseases *La Trobe University*

Summary: The ectoparasitic mite *Varroa destructor* threatens the health of honey bees, especially *Apis mellifera*. It can cause colony collapse through feeding or pathogen transmission if not properly managed. Various treatments have emerged, including hard and soft acaricides and biocontrol methods. However, a sustainable solution that reduces the mite-transmitted viral load without promoting mite resistance or harming honey bees has yet to be found. Thus, exploring alternative tools that target viral replication and host entry remains an overlooked opportunity.

V. destructor transmits several key viruses such as Kashmir bee virus (KBV), Sacbrood virus (SBV), Acute bee paralysis virus (ABPV), Israeli acute paralysis virus (IAPV), and Deformed wing virus (DWV), which significantly contribute to colony loss in western honey bees. While Australia currently remains DWV-free, it has high levels of IAPV and SBV, and when combined with Varroa parasitism, this could result in significant colony losses.

A recent study demonstrated that orally delivered anti-DWV IgY antibodies can act systemically to

reduce DWV loads in naturally infected honey bees. These antibodies are generated in immunised hens, extracted from egg yolks, and delivered to bees via feeding, where they localise in the hemolymph and fat body of both adults and larvae. However, it remains uncertain whether IgY treatment alone is sufficient to improve overall colony health or if it must be integrated with existing Varroa control strategies, such as acaricides, for optimal effectiveness. Furthermore, the long-term effects of anti-viral IgY on developing bees require careful evaluation to ensure safety. Key challenges to widespread adoption include production costs and the current focus on single-pathogen targeting.

This project aims to develop an environmentally friendly, safe, and economically sustainable solution for managing honey bee viruses transmitted by *V. destructor*. By applying advanced protein engineering, we will design multivalent antigens to produce polyvalent IgY antibodies capable of simultaneously targeting multiple viral pathogens. This innovative approach will support the development of cost-effective, scalable, and practical antibody therapies, ultimately strengthening the resilience and productivity of Australia's beekeeping and pollination industries.

For full details see [here](#)

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February Meeting - Topic: Beekeeping Gadgets

Thursday 26 February, 1 The Avenue Surrey Hills - From 7.00pm

Love beekeeping? Curious about it? Just want to see some clever gear? This February, we're talking beekeeping gadgets, and you're invited!

Bring along your favourite beekeeping gadget (store-bought, homemade, modified, or downright quirky) and share it with the group. Expect plenty of ideas, laughs, tips, and good discussion.

All welcome!

VAA members and non-members alike are warmly invited.

Come along to the Melbourne Section meeting to learn, connect, swap ideas, and meet fellow bee enthusiasts. Whether you're brand new or highly experienced, there's something for everyone. We'd love to see you there!

We're Beekeepers 

Bee Bits From All Over

How 'bee glue' might improve our health RNZ

A collaboration between apicultural scientists and a Māori land trust in Te Urewera is shedding light on the potential health benefits of propolis, or "bee glue"...

Apicultural scientist Michelle Taylor said research on New Zealand propolis is still in its early stages, but propolis has a long history of use as a natural remedy, especially in wound care as an antimicrobial agent.

She is particularly interested in the connection between propolis and improved glycemic control and reduced insulin resistance.

"New Zealand has so many cases of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, so we would really like to determine whether the properties and propolis from our native plants could be part of the therapy for these conditions".

Read the article [here](#)

[How 'bee glue' might improve our health | RNZ News](#)

Le Bivic, P., Alaux, C., Domalain, J. et al. *Study of honey bee (Apis mellifera) water preferences: do bees really like dirty water?*. Apidologie 56, 99 (2025).

Summary: Honey bees primarily collect water for thermoregulation and larval nutrition, and their

preferences for water sources are influenced by temperature and mineral content. The study found that bees preferred less mineralized water, such as rainwater and diluted slurry, with their water choices remaining consistent despite temperature changes.

Further information [here](#)

Asheville Honey Fest V - Sunday, June 7th, 2026 – Highland Brewing – Asheville, NC, USA

At the heart of Asheville Honey Fest and the Black Jar Contest is a shared curiosity for flavor, a sense of play, and a deep respect for the bees and pollinators that make it all possible. The Black Jar Contest invites beekeepers to let their honey speak for itself—judged purely on taste, without labels or visual cues—while Honey Fest brings the experience to life with tastings, music, artisans, and community celebration. Together, these events honor the craft of beekeeping, the diversity of honey, and the people who care deeply about bee health. Deadline: Entries must be received or postmarked by March 1, 2025. Black Jar Contest entries are open to beekeepers worldwide.

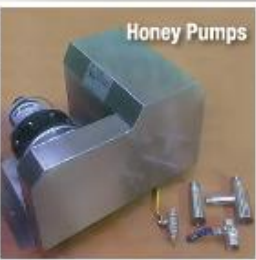
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A Look Into The Past



Photos courtesy of Lindsay Callaway

Above: My dad, Roger Callaway, trialling one of his two "home made" series 1 land rover fork-lifts that he built in the late 60s with his brother Normie. Dad was one of the first to go to pallets in Victoria/Australia after going to Apimondia at Maryland USA in 1967 he came home and converted his operation to fork-lifts. Fellow beekeepers "promised" not to laugh at him and rest as you say is history



Left: My dad, Roger Callaway, Bedford loaded with stickies, likely to be springtime in the Mallee working Hattah tea tree late 60's



*Photo:
Tino Corsetti*

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John Edmond's Season Report February 2026

15/1/2026 - I have been away for a break two very hot days I have noticed scorched leaves on Eucalypt trees in exposed positions. Fortunately, locally the red gum has yielded heavily where it has been well budded, and has lingered on. Most days the scales recorded 1.6 to 3 kgs weight gain, but a 5-kilogram day was a surprise and I wondered if someone was playing a trick by adding a brick on the hive. It has been the best red gum honey flow since the 1980's with over 50 kgs and hives still have more honey to take.

Grampians yellow box has yielded well after a very slow start due to the cool weather prior to Christmas, but was finished by end of January.

Western Australian red flowering gum is planted throughout Geelong and country towns. It is flowering nicely and the bees are eagerly working the flowers. I notice nectar being stored in the combs. It yields very good pollen and is excellent for raising queen cells.

Pyramid tree, Norfolk Island hibiscus, itchy powder tree all are names for this impressive tree which is grown around the streets of Geelong and Barwon Heads. It has flowered through January and can yield heavily a light honey and pollen in abundance. In the Norfolk Island, if you sit under the tree you may get wet from the dripping nectar.

Sweet bursaria is flowering and the bees are working the flowers. More of this plant seems to be growing now as Landcare plantings often include it. So far, I have not seen any of the green honey in the combs.

Over summer lucerne can yield a crop of nice light honey very quickly. Unfortunately, due to the dry conditions the farmers seem to be grazing it off before the bees can gather the nectar from the flowers.

Moonah is starting to flower but I doubt it will yield unless some rainfall occurs.

Sugar gum appears to be very variable in its budding, dependent of the area. I have often observed you don't have to have a heavy budding on sugar gum to make a good honey flow. It is the warm dry weather during flowering that is more important. The buds have swelled up very quickly, most likely due to the dry conditions and the trees need to make seed.

I have noticed that after opening a hive the hive activities must be disrupted and that night's report of the hive weight will be less than previous days, and possible a few days more.

Hives in the Grampians produced better than I expected especially as one bee site had the last years fire burn out the shrubs and singe the trees. Any manuka that survived the fires are very dry and almost dead; it will be very unlikely that any manuka will be produced.

Fortunately, I had not placed hives on a bee site where the Mt Mercer fire burnt. I doubt there will be enough trees left to make a honey flow. I am told that a generator on a wind tower started the fire. Better fire breaks need to be made around the wind towers.

(Continued on page 22)

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John Edmond's Season Report February 2026, cont'd

(Continued from page 21)

If your bees are on bee sites within a mile of the state forests and public land you are required to have a fire extinguisher and fire rake with you. This is an old rule that does not seem to be enforced any more. If you cause a fire then you have a problem. A beekeeper learnt the hard way when, while lighting the smoker the head of the match flew off and under the ute. The dry grass caught fire and he shifted the ute first, but the fire got away and burnt a few acres of grassland. The fire trucks contained the fire but a later court appearance cost him \$5,000.

I find customers ring on hot fire ban days requesting new queens. I guess they are using their smokers. This is not permitted without a permit to allow the shifting of bee hives. It is not good for your bees to open them on very hot windy days.

As I watch the hive scales reports, I conclude the strong winds have a very large impact on the productivity of bees. Especially along the coast. Cool wind off the sea curtails foraging.

As I get ready for varroa, which I have yet to find in my hives, I have been improving the bamboo screen bottom boards by adding a Corflute tray to keep the hives warmer and a way to look for varroa that drop off. The problem is the hives drop so much debris that wax moth and small hive beetles start breeding in the residue. I will now only use the corflute when testing for varroa and let the debris fall out and be taken away by ants.

Reports are the early flowering ironbark at Tarnagulla has started flowering. But the trees are finishing flowering very quickly. Although the amount of honey that can be collected is amazing there is no pollen or breeding, so the hives become weak very quickly.

Grey box is also budding around Bendigo and in northern areas.

Messmate has a patchy budding in the Otways but the bush fires are still a risk. Smoke has a greater effect on the bees than we realize.

Varroa update. Aluen Cap is now approved varroa treatment and I think this is a very good way to control the mites and not contaminate your honey. Stock will be available April 2026. A customer rang wanting to purchase Formic Pro. This treatment cannot be used when the temperature is over 29.5 degrees, so not applicable for our summers.

Beekeepers in central Victoria are finding larger numbers of varroa in their hives especially if they have not been using approved treatments. I have been told of a couple of commercial beekeepers who made their own treatments copying You Tube videos and as a result they have many queenless hives and drone layering queens. Overheating oxalic acid turns it into formic acid and this is very harmful to queens. The varroa treatments may exacerbate the problem but I think it more likely old queens, poor spring weather which hindered the making and mating of quality queens.

My friend in Mildura is finding great variability between hives in the numbers of varroa in the washes. Often not finding varroa in the wash, but when a brood

uncapping takes place, he finds some varroa. He concluded in the early stages that it is best to do brood uncapping to find the varroa. Due to many days of hot weather exceeding 40 degrees, it will be interesting what affect it has had on the varroa.

A beekeeper with bees in the northern Grampians discovered varroa in a hive on the 28/12/25. The hives are located in 3 distinct groups due to lack of clearings in the National Park bee site. The upper bee site in shade has a hive with 6 mites in a 300-bee wash and 2 weeks later the count rose to 25 mites in a 300-bee wash. The middle bee site initially had no mites but on the second visit one mite was found in a drone brood uncapping. The lower bee site in full sun so far has no mite detections. He ordered Bayvarol varroa treatment and had to wait 2 weeks for delivery of the order. He has since discovered the supplier now has a 30% discounted price. Not happy!

A New Zealand beekeeper reports that at times Christchurch gets hot north winds and the bees on the Canterbury Plains can reach 40 degrees. It has been observed that this is a natural way to reduce varroa numbers as they cannot stand that temperature.

A Queensland queen breeder said that queens being sold as bred from a "special resistant queen" have been performance tested and are terrible. It will be many years before we see varroa resistant bees.

Varroa is spreading very quickly through Queensland.

22/1/2026 - Took the honey off the bee hives in the lower Grampians. The first site has a lot of yellow box with red gums in the farm paddocks. The honey was lifted over clearer boards a week prior and an Ideal of frames with starter strips of foundation (used for making honeycomb) placed under the clearer boards to give the strong hives somewhere to cluster. The Ideals were mostly 60 to 80% drawn and filled. But the honey flow is slowing down as the trees are finishing flowering. The first flowers are opening on the manuka but the very dry weather and limited number of manuka plants left since last years fires will be unlikely to make a honey flow.

The second bee site is all red gum trees with big trees in farm paddocks and partly scorched trees in the National Park. The flowering is coming to a finish, but the hives have done better and the best hives have almost completely filled the Ideal placed under the clearer board. The best producing hives will be selected for making queens.

As I have been going around the bees, I have found that despite the good honey flow from the red gum the drones seem to have mostly disappeared from the hives. At the home apiary at Mt Duneed very few drones are present.

Presently I have hives with queen excluders on the bottom box and supers above. Due to wanting the bees to make brood for nucleus hives I also have triple decker hives with no queen excluders. It is interesting to note that both ways the bees produced the same amount of honey and it is far easier to harvest the honey off hives with queen excluders. Using Ideal size boxes for

(Continued on page 23)

John Edmond's Season Report February 2026, cont'd

(Continued from page 22)

honey production makes a lot of sense, especially now that hives will need to be managed for varroa control. An 8-frame full depth box has enough room for the queen during the honey production time of the season. During spring removing frames of bees and brood controls swarming and improves the colony with quality new frames.

Hot weather can be a problem to bees. Shade and a water supply are important. Strong hot north winds are a killer and dead bees can often be seen at the hive entrance after such days. Bees located in city areas get shelter from houses and trees etc. Whereas hives located in open paddocks can suffer badly. Locally the extremely hot windy day in the first week of January saw the bees eat the unsealed brood for moisture. Placing a spare lid on top of the hive can break the heat. When very hot the bees may cluster outside, or if using screen bottom boards underneath the hive. Often, they reduce flying to a minimum until the cool change of temperature in the evening. I think they are inside the hive fanning to cool it. Bees are difficult to organize watering spots and prefer to make up their own minds. A damp garden, a bird bath with stones in it, under the shade of a tree, or a dripping tap seem preferred places.

It will be interesting to hear how the bees cope with consecutive days above 40 degrees, especially after 48.9 degrees in the Mildura area.

28/1/2026 - I checked hives that were in an open area at Ocean Grove. Many dead bees were on the ground in front of the hives and the hives had lost strength from doubles to a single box of bees. The queens were laying nice new brood and some new nectar was being stored. I suspect the hot and strong winds of the January 9th day and lack of a honey flow damaged the bees strength. I looked at the flowers of the Western Australian red flowering gum and they were covered in for-

aging bees but they must have been too efficient as I could not see any nectar in the flowers. Some years the nectar is so prolific and thin that dead bees can be seen under the trees as the nectar ferments in the flowers, thus making the bees drunk.

I predict the almond farms will experience a large shortage of bees this coming spring. Poor breeding conditions due to the very dry weather and lack of autumn flowering plants, compounded by the increasing varroa. Less hive numbers will be the most likely outcome. I was told today of a beekeeper with 1200 bee hives and due to not paying enough attention to the varroa suddenly 400 bee hives have died. Hives will need to be fed to be strong enough for pollination. This is a costly exercise and almond pollination fees will need to increase.

The bushfires over the past few years have also had a huge impact on forest bee sites. It will be many years before these areas return to productive flowering. A beekeeper had a look at his banksia bee site at the Little Desert and could not see any desert banksia seedlings. Another beekeeper said many seedlings have germinated at his bee sites. I guess it depends on where the thunderstorms have fallen.

In South Australia queens were purchased from a major Queensland queen supplier that has varroa. The Department of Agriculture became aware of the purchase and told the beekeeper to kill the queens. Unfortunately, the queens had already been placed in the bee hives.

My friend enquired about purchasing a breeder queen from a reputable queen supplier. The current price is now \$800 each. He did not have any available, but offered a queen of very good genetics but missing a back leg at a discounted price. He purchased it but the bees killed her shortly after introduction.

John Edmonds



Photo: Jamie Trimby. Newly marked Queen disappearing down a honey frame, with a young fluffy bee in centre



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Photo: Jamie Trimby

The Australian Bee Journal welcomes contributions and photos from readers and members. Please send any letters, articles or photos to abjeditors@yahoo.com

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Research: Honey Bees And Heat

Extreme heat waves disrupt honey bee thermoregulation and threaten colony survival

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS JOURNALS

Although honey bees have the ability to regulate hive temperatures, new research published in *Ecological and Evolutionary Physiology* shows that extreme summer heat can overwhelm these critical pollinators' cooling systems, leading to significant colony population declines.

The research in "[Negative Effects of Excessive Heat on Colony Thermoregulation and Population Dynamics in Honey Bees](#)," conducted during a hot Arizona summer, monitored nine honey bee colonies through three months of temperatures that frequently exceeded 40°C (104°F). The results indicate that intensifying heat waves worldwide represent a significant threat to honey bees and the pollination services they provide.

"Honey bee colonies have well-documented mechanisms to cope with heat exposure," write authors Jun Chen, Adrian Fisher II, Gloria DeGrandi-Hoffman, Cahit Ozturk, Brian H. Smith, Jennifer H. Fewell, Yun Kang, Kylie Maxwell, Kynadi Overcash, Keerut Chahal, and Jon F. Harrison. "However, there have been no studies to date that have assessed the limits of such thermoregulation or how natural heat waves affect the capacity of honey bees colonies to thermoregulate and grow."

The research team discovered that while colonies maintained average brood temperatures within the optimal 34-36°C range necessary for healthy development, significant daily temperature fluctuations still occurred. Developing bees in the brood center experienced nearly 1.7 hours below optimal temperatures and 1.6 hours above them each day. Conditions were even more extreme at the brood edges, where young bees spent almost 8 hours per day outside the optimal range.

These temperature swings had measurable consequences. Higher maximum air temperatures and greater temperature fluctuations within hives led to population declines. The study found that "excessive heat, with maximal temperatures exceeding 40°C, can reduce colony populations by impairing the thermoregulation of brood or by exposing adults to temperatures that shorten their lifespans."

Colony size emerged as a critical factor in thermal protection. Larger colonies maintained more stable internal temperatures, with the smallest hives experiencing daily temperature swings of up to 11°C at the outer edges compared to 6°C in the largest colonies. This enhanced stability meant that developing bees and adult workers in larger colonies spent far less time exposed to potentially harmful temperature extremes.

Beyond Arizona, "Climate projections indicate that global average temperatures could rise by approximately 2.7°C by the end of the century, with potential increases up to 4°C under higher emission scenarios," the authors note. Such warming would intensify heat wave frequency and severity worldwide. Additionally, high humidity may compound these challenges in many regions. The authors note that "high humidity significant-

ly reduces the effectiveness of evaporative cooling - the primary mechanism honey bees use to regulate hive temperatures - potentially making thermoregulation even more difficult."

The research has practical implications for beekeepers and agricultural systems that depend on honey bee pollination. The authors suggest that implementing effective management strategies, such as supplemental water provision, shading of hives, improved hive structure and materials that provide greater insulation, and ensuring high-quality forage will become increasingly important to mitigate impacts of high temperatures and maintain colony stability in a warming climate.

Ecological and Evolutionary Physiology primarily publishes original research examining fundamental questions about how the ecological environment and/or evolutionary history interact with physiological function, as well as the ways physiology may constrain behavior. For *EEP*, physiology denotes the study of function in the broadest sense, across levels of organization from molecules to morphology to organismal performance and on behavior and life history traits.

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Miticide Resistance And How To Avoid It

Extracts From The AHBIC January newsletter

Do you know what miticide resistance is?

Miticide resistance happens when *some* Varroa mites carry genetic traits that make them less likely to be killed by a specific chemical treatment. Within any mite population, there is natural variation — a few individuals may, by chance, have genetic differences (e.g., in proteins or detoxification pathways) that let them survive a treatment that kills most others. If the *same* chemical is used repeatedly, those surviving mites are more likely to reproduce and pass on those traits. Over time, resistant mites can become a larger proportion of the population, making that chemical less effective or even ineffective.

This process is a well-understood evolutionary response to repeated chemical pressure. It's one reason pest-control programs aim to limit how often the same product is used.

How this changes Varroa Management

Australian beekeepers should be careful in their Varroa mite management choices to be able to ensure we can control Varroa mites for as long as possible with all the miticide options that we have available to us. If mites in Australia develop resistance to one or more miticides, that means losing an important tool in controlling Varroa populations. Fewer effective treatment options can lead to higher mite levels in hives, increasing colony stress and mortality.

To avoid the risk of the development of miticide resistance, beekeepers are advised to:

- Use integrated pest management (IPM) - combining monitoring, cultural/mechanical controls, and chemical treatments only when needed.
- Apply chemical treatments only when thresholds are exceeded, rather than on a fixed schedule.
- Rotate between products with different modes of action, so mites are not repeatedly exposed to the same active ingredient.
- Follow label instructions and dosage, because misuse can accelerate resistance development.

These approaches help preserve the effectiveness of available treatments for as long as possible.

2026 Occupation Shortage List (OSL) Survey – Jobs and Skills Australia

Calling all employers in beekeeping across Australia.

The Occupation Shortage List (OSL), produced by Jobs and Skills Australia, provides a list of occupations in shortage at the national level and in each state and territory. The OSL is released annually and as a point-in-time assessment of occupations. Insights from the OSL can inform advice to government on labour market policies and programs and AHBIC encourages industry employers to complete the survey so that our industry's insights are counted and heard.

Occupation Shortage Definition

Jobs and Skills Australia defines an occupation as being in shortage when employers are unable to fill vacancies, face considerable difficulty filling them, or

cannot meet significant specialised skill needs within the occupation under the following conditions:

- At current levels of remuneration
- At current conditions of employment
- In reasonably accessible locations.



Image 1:

JSA's three stage occupation assessment process

Stage 2: Manual Verification

In this stage of the assessment process, the preliminary occupation ratings are reviewed using both additional labour market indicators and a significant volume of stakeholder evidence that is primarily gathered through the annual OSL stakeholder survey

Take the survey now to have your voice heard;

[Consultations | Jobs and Skills Australia](#)

This survey is an important opportunity to contribute your insights on labour market trends. Your feedback will help strengthen the accuracy and relevance of the 2026 OSL.

The survey will open on **Tuesday 20 January 2026** and close on **Wednesday 18 March 2026**.

We encourage you to share this with your networks. Greater participation means richer insights and stronger reporting.

AHBIC Chair's Report

Thank you to all the state team managers and trainers that have helped beekeepers get up to speed in this difficult time. A thank you to Bianca Giggins who has done an exceptional job managing the VDO program, as the national extension coordinator, and also overseeing the entire T2M program on behalf of the industry. Bianca will continue her work with AHBIC in the future, focusing primarily on industry biosecurity.

Can you imagine being a beekeeper in America in the 80's, "Varroa mite, what's that? Oh and we only have one type of chemical treatment?"

Australia is fortunate to be the last major beekeeping country in the world to receive Varroa, we have a range of modes of action in our toolkit, as well as knowledge from the rest of the world.

The biggest takeaway from the T2M, in my view, is the importance of providing a service to ourselves, our fellow beekeepers, and future generations: **ROTATE YOUR CHEMICAL CLASSES!** Australia has been 'gifted' with a mite that proves to be not resistant to acaracides. Let's learn from the rest of the world and do it better!

John Lockwood
AHBIC Chair

Flowers And Virus Spread

Flowers shape the spread of viruses among wild bees, new study finds

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

A new study shows that viruses in wild bees are closely linked to the flowers they visit and the availability of floral resources across the landscape. Researchers found that certain floral communities increase the likelihood of virus presence, and that flowers can serve as hubs for virus transmission between wild and honey bees. The findings suggest that pollinator conservation efforts must consider disease dynamics alongside habitat restoration.

A new study led by PhD. student Idan Kahnonitch under the guidance of Prof. Yael Mandelik of Hebrew University and Dr. Asaf Sadeh of the Volcani Institute in collaboration with Prof. Nor Chejanovsky of the Volcani Institute, Prof. Michelle Flenniken and Dr. Katie Daughenbaugh of Montana State University, reveals that the spread of viruses among wild bees is closely linked to the composition and availability of flowering plants, from the immediate local habitat to the wider landscape.

Published in *Ecological Applications*, the study shows that viruses commonly associated with honey bees are also present in wild solitary bees, and that their distribution is strongly influenced by floral communities. By surveying wild bee populations across multiple sites in a Mediterranean agroecosystem, the researchers found that both the diversity of flowers at a site and the availability of floral resources in the surrounding landscape play a key role in shaping where and when bee viruses occur.

The team focused on mining bees (*Andrena* species),

an important group of wild pollinators, and screened them for several widespread bee viruses. The results indicate that flowers act as shared meeting points for different pollinator species, creating opportunities for virus transmission. Certain floral communities were associated with higher likelihoods of viral presence, while landscape-level floral resource availability, extending up to one kilometer from a site, emerged as a particularly strong predictor.

"Our findings show that flowers are not just food sources for pollinators," the researchers said. "They also shape disease dynamics within pollinator communities. This means that decisions about habitat management and restoration, often focusing actions on the plant communities can have unintended consequences for pollinator health if disease transmission is not taken into account."

Importantly, the study also found evidence that viruses can be shared between managed honey bees and wild bees, reinforcing concerns about how intensive agriculture and beekeeping may influence the health of native pollinator populations. While virus levels in wild bees were generally low, their presence was consistently linked to ecological conditions, especially floral composition and resource availability.

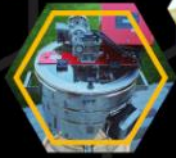
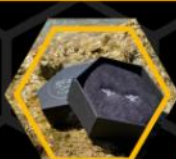
The researchers emphasize that pollinator conservation strategies should move beyond simply increasing flower abundance or diversity. Instead, they argue for a landscape-level approach that considers which plant species are present, how pollinators share floral resources, and how these interactions may affect disease spread.

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Daryl Hobbs
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Agriculture Victoria:

Agriculture Victoria: Apiary team
Website: [Honey bees | Livestock and animals | Agriculture Victoria](http://Honey%20bees%20Livestock%20and%20animals%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

Current Apiary Officers

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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

DEECA Regional contacts for bee sites on Crown land Barwon South West

Geelong, Otway District –
Linda Laurie, Ph: 0408 419 759, E: linda.laurie@deeca.vic.gov.au

Heywood, Far South West –
Troy Jenkin, Ph: 0459 807 401, E: troy.jenkin@deeca.vic.gov.au

Gippsland

Tracey West – Ph:0457 501 299,
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Grampians

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E: publicland.grampians@deeca.vic.gov.au

Horsham – Jess Dickerson, Ph: 0437 913 538,
E: publicland.grampians@deeca.vic.gov.au

Hume

E: landadmin.hume@deeca.vic.gov.au
Wodonga: Lloyd Beaty is contact

Loddon Mallee

Justin Hoy (primary contact) –
Ph:0459 336 836
Daniel Cadmore (secondary contact) –
Ph: 0418 715 831

Port Phillip (Note: enquiries dealt with by Gippsland Region)

Tracey West – Ph:0457 501 299 E: tracey.west@deeca.vic.gov.au,
tralaralgon.propertytservices@deeca.vic.gov.au

Customer Contact Centre (Ballarat based)

Ph: 136 186
E: customer.service@deeca.vic.gov.au

Statewide Transaction Centre (Seymour based)

Ph: (03) 7019 2577
E: transactioncentre@deeca.vic.gov.au

Other contacts

Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC):

CEO: Danny Le Feuvre
Mob: 0402 467 780
ahbic@honeybee.org.au
5 John St.
Ardrossan, SA, 5571
www.honeybee.org.au

Crop Pollination Association Inc

President: Steve Fuller,
president.cpaa.us@gmail.com
Ph 0488 434 498
Secretary: Janet Clyde
jclyde.cpaa@gmail.com
Ph 0417 494 867

Honey Bee Research & Development committee (HBRDC)

Annie Stoddart
Program Coordinator Research
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Annie.stoddart@agrifutures.com.au

VFF State Beekeeping Branch:

Secretary: Gail Rochelmeyer
Mob: 0408 592 091

Collingwood Childrens' Farm Apiary

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collingwoodbees@gmail.com
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Contacts

VAA Inc Regional Groups

Bendigo Branch:

Secretary: Peta Dawe

bbvaasecretary@gmail.com

Chair: Jamie Trimby

bbvaachair@gmail.com

Treasurer: Michael St.Clair

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 Chair: David Basket

Treasurer: Janet Conos

Secretary, Gill Greenstein

Ph: 0422 058 180

[vaamelbournesection](mailto:vaamelbournesection@hotmail.com)

@hotmail.com

[www.vicbeekeepers.com.au/](http://www.vicbeekeepers.com.au/Melbourne-Section)

[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.

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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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Millie Enbom-Goad

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cvaa_inc@outlook.com

Gippsland Apiarists'

Association Inc. (GAA Inc.):

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jeeralangapiary@bigpond.com

0413 136 878

Secretary: Neil Barraclough:

neilbarra2@outlook.com

0429 888 706

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" Beekeepers Club Inc.

Meets on the second Wednesday

of every month (Except January)

at the Goonawarra Community

Centre, 20 Dornoch Drive,

Sunbury, VIC 3429

Phone: 0400 667 125 (Secretary)

Postal Address: PO Box 87., 84

Bulla Rd., Bulla, VIC 3428

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

President: Nathan Whitford

0403 807 224

Vice President: Stephen Fridey

info@geelongbeekeepersclub.org.au

Meetings third Friday of 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: wbfsmrsg.org.au

Meets on the third Sunday of

every month (except December)

at Woodend Neighbourhood

House, 47 Forest Street,

Woodend, VIC 3442

South Gippsland Beekeepers

Inc. Secretary: Anna Jones

Mob: 0411 770 062

secretary@sgbeekeepers.org.au

Web: <http://www.southgippsland>

beekeepers.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@melbourne

beekeepersclub.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 7:30pm on the second

Tuesday of each month (except

January) in the hall at

195 Holmes Rd,

Moonee Ponds, VIC 3039

WerriBeeks Inc.

President: Carmel Gerdson

Secretary: Helen Morland

Treasurer: Debbie Conway

E: werribeeks@gmail.com

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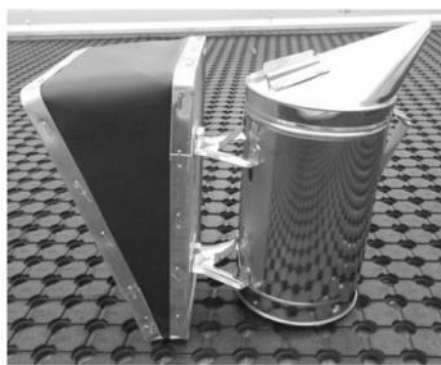
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Aluen Cap	17
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Becs Beehive	25
Beeplas Australia	6
Buzz Bee	7
Dalrymple View	17
Denmar Apiaries	13
JBee Equipment	19
Kelvin Trading	Inside front
Lyson	27
Prestige Stainless	21
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Steritech	15
Whirrakee Honey	30
Whirrakee Woodware	10

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Photo: Tino Corsetti

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