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AUSTRALIAN BEE JOURNAL

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Cover photo: Jamie Trimby
Lid of a 6 frame poly nucleus hive filled with honey

Deadline for copy for the May 2026 journal is
10pm on Friday 1st of May 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.

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The VAA Board meets a minimum of six times a year.
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Melbourne Show
Richard Collins
Constitution & Legal
Lindsay Callaway
Conference
Lindsay Callaway
Clubs & Affiliates
Tony Wilsmore
Aust. Bee Journal/Website
Andrew Wootton
Resources
Andrew McCallum & Keely McDonald
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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How to join
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President's Report

The acute phase of varroa continues its spread across all of Victoria this autumn. Yes, unfortunately, next season's varroa reinfestations are looming large. Varroa doesn't care what type of hive you use or truck you drive, it is relentless and permanently changing how we manage our hives.

The news of synthetic pyrethroid and synthetic formamidine resistance in Queensland is also of serious concern for our industry. This is something that I will be asking our VAA-Ag. Vic Ag. Chem working group to report back to us on.

Of course, the geopolitical developments overseas continue to compound these pressures by driving up cost-of-living expenses and contributing to fuel shortages, particularly in regional Victoria.

We are also hearing consistent signals of fatigue from across the industry, with multi-generational and first-generation operators alike reassessing their positions as they try to navigate this mounting uncertainty and maintain sustainable businesses.

Beekeepers are part of a tight-knit community that is supportive, collaborative and passionate. Please continue to **"give your fellow beekeeping mates a buzz"** to either ask for support or offer support. This is something we already do well. I think it's times like these we do it that little bit more often.

I want to assure you that the VAA board, and numerous other volunteers are working hard to advocate for our sector and to bring programs and services to beekeepers to help you navigate these uncertain times.

Federal varroa investigation — ongoing concerns.

VAA recently issued a press release regarding the lack of findings from the federal investigation into the 2022 varroa incursion. There are significant concerns about the transparency and outcomes of this process, and we believe the Victorian apiculture sector deserves clear answers about how the incursion occurred and what systemic changes are being made to prevent future biosecurity failures.

Following our press release, representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) met with VAA to discuss our concerns directly. It was disappointing to hear that while they described how in-depth the investigation was with 19 warrants to investigate our fellow beekeepers, they had nothing to offer in terms of a prosecution. They also had little to offer in terms of improvements to protect our country from exotic pests. We firmly advocated on behalf of Victoria's beekeepers that this is a major let down for our industry and for national food security. It shows there are short comings in our national biosecurity measures. It also shows more work needs to be done to move from a pop-gun defence to a more robust defence of food security and our apiculture industry.

Agriculture Industry Reference Group - Fuel crisis.

I am now attending the Agriculture Industry Reference Group (AIRG) Zoom call, chaired by Agriculture Victoria each week. This group brings together primary producer associations to discuss current challenges and provide a coordinated industry voice on pressing issues. At present, the Group's focus is on the fuel crisis and its impacts across all agricultural sectors.

I have been providing regular updates to the Group on the specific impacts and concerns within the apiary sector. These include the effect of fuel costs on migratory beekeeping operations, the broader viability pressures facing commercial operators in regional areas, and the importance of getting our bees healthy and delivered to pollination jobs on time - pollination jobs that underpin billions of agriculture. During a recent industry roundtable on this topic, every association present shared their unique and shared challenges in dealing with this crisis. We welcome all members to contact the VAA to share their concerns and experiences, and we will raise your concerns at this state-level group.

Other projects and initiatives.

VAA key areas of focus include:

Strengthening education and decision-making capability. The Swanpool Commercial Advanced Varroa Workshop on 9 March provided a series of practical guidance for commercial operators, where all beekeepers where welcome. Many of the recorded presentations are now on our VAA *YouTube* channel for viewing.

Relaunching the Farm Business Resilience Program under the new banner of the Apiary Business Navigator Series, specifically designed for commercial beekeepers, commencing May 2026.

Improving communication and access to practical information. VAA continues to engage our members across multiple channels including the VAA Australian Bee Journal, our website, bulletins, socials, HiveMeet, conferences, and workshops. All to ensure timely and accurate information reaches all corners of our community.

Building workable bridges with the VAA-Ag.Vic Ag.Chem working group for an industry that needs to stay viable, and where functional treatment options are king. Engaging with our regulatory body to ensure safe practices and food products that fit within its regulatory role. It's important work, particularly in the face of treatment resistance.

Pushing strongly on resources, biosecurity, and industry recognition at government level. Building clear benchmarking and evidence-based decision-making is critical. Without this foundation, meaningful traction with government on support and intervention remains difficult.

Meeting with DEECA - our newly formed resource committee has met with DEECA to set up our first meeting aptly called *Apiary Matters Workshop*.

The work Sam Henty is leading in this space is invaluable, and we encourage all commercial beekeepers to engage with it.

(Continued on page 6)

President's Report, cont'd

(Continued from page 5)

2026 Annual Conference and AGM — registrations now open.

Registrations are now open for the VAA 2026 Annual Conference and AGM, to be held Thursday 4 June to Saturday 6 June 2026. I encourage all members to secure their place early. Now is the time to lean into new ideas, new directions and new beekeeping friendships.

This year's Conference features four major themes: Resources, Biosecurity, Industry Outlook, and Quality Assurance. We are delighted to welcome an outstanding lineup of international and Australian experts.

Dr. Peter Neumann, Vinetum Professor at the Institute of Bee Health and President of the COLOSS Association, will bring his expertise in bee health and the behavioural and molecular ecology of honey bees and their pathogens.

Professor Stephen Martin, whose four decades of research on *Varroa destructor* and bee viruses has shaped scientific and beekeeping practice worldwide, will also present in person.

Rounding out this impressive program is Dr. Cooper Schouten, Senior Research Fellow and Director of the Southern Cross University Bee Research and Extension Lab, recognised internationally for his leadership in honeybee biosecurity, invasive mite preparedness, and sustainable agribusiness systems.

For recreational, hobby, and sideliner beekeepers who are unable to attend on Friday, there is a Saturday program to run concurrently with a commercial quality-assurance program.

Varroa Specialist Advanced Workshop.

Registration is also now open for the Varroa Specialist Advanced Workshop, tailored for all beekeepers. This workshop is also highly suitable for anyone performing the role of biosecurity officer for local and regional bee clubs. I encourage members in these roles to take advantage of this opportunity to build their skills and confidence.

Board nominations — your industry needs you!

By the time you read this, the VAA Returning Officer will have called for nominations for places on the VAA Board for the 2026–2027 association year. If you want to make a real impact on our industry, I encourage you to consider putting your name forward. VAA has represented Victoria's beekeepers since 1892. Our industry needs leaders that avoid the blame game, who can take responsibility with a focus on problem solving.

If a full board role is not possible right now, VAA has a number of subcommittees, projects, and initiatives that can only move forward with people from our community willing to contribute time, expertise, and commitment. If you would like to get involved in any capacity, please don't hesitate to reach out.

These are challenging times, no doubt about it. I often draw on advice from a good friend of mine who taught me a belief that no matter how hard things get, "we always win". I remain confident in the resilience and resourcefulness of our beekeeping community. I can be contacted on 0429 857 835 should you wish to talk. Beekeepers first.

Lindsay Callaway
President, Victorian Apiarists' Association

Bendigo Branch Report

Central Victoria has seen sporadic flowering of grey box mid to late March, with some red bottlebrush (*Callistemon)* observed flowering in late March, unusual for this time of year. I suspect the weather has the local flora second guessing itself. Thankfully the earlier rains have so far promoted continued growth on quite a few tree species thus far.

The 2026 Bendigo Sustainability Festival invited the branch to staff a marquee promoting the club. There was no doubt the two biggest draw-cards were the honey tasting, drawing in all ages like robber bees, while others showed amazing focus and patience searching for the queen in Stafford's observation hive (right).

Photo: Kris Barker

It was entertaining seeing family members hone in on which honey variety was their favourite and selling it's virtues to other family members in order to influence the decision maker to purchase their favourite.

Well done Angelique, Graeme, Jess, Kris, Peta and Stafford on answering a plethora of questions, thanks to Gareth Maunder and Richard Collins for your continued support of the branch, greatly appreciated. Shout out to Jo Griffiths for representing the branch and providing a number of talks to community groups on supporting bees and suburban pollination interests.

Sandy from the Bendigo Native plant group presented at the April meeting showing a variety of attractive native plants that grow well in the area, attract bees and provided examples that flower across all seasons.

The next Bendigo branch event is our annual Autumn Pack-down at 1pm on Sunday the 26th April at 2 Griggi Road, Huntly. Ange will post details on Facebook, please RSVP Peta bbvaasecretary@gmail.com for numbers and catering. Activities include: brood inspection; mite wash; honey removal; pack-down; uncapping; honey extraction; bee talk; cuppas; and some mite discussion thrown in. Bring the family for a great social day and channel sunny warm weather for the day, especially the hive work. At our meeting on Wednesday 6th of May the AgVic chemical team will be presenting, and there's some exciting club news.

Keep testing, monitoring, learning, sharing and communicating,

Jamie Trimby

Varroa Specialist | Advanced Workshop

Recreational | Hobbyist | Sideliner | Bee Club Biosecurity Officers

VICTORIAN APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION INC
EDUCATIONAL

Photo Credit:
Victorian Croquet Centre

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, 02 May, 2026 | 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Mark your calendars for this exciting free beekeeper education event in Melbourne's north west. If you attended the Varroa Specialist training in October 2025, this workshop will build on the learning and include more hand-on experience with monitoring and treatment. If you'd like to take your varroa expertise to the next level, join us in May to learn from experts and network with beekeepers from across Victoria.

Questions? Email vaa@vicbeekeepers.com.au

Victorian Croquet Centre
65 Nobel Banks Drive
Cairnlea, Victoria, 3023

Registration Opens:
01 March 2026

This event is made possible through generous funding from the following:

DEECA Biosecurity Education Grant HBCIDF 25.02

VICTORIA State Government | Energy, Environment and Climate Action

The deadline for the May 2026 Bee Journal is 10pm on Friday 1st of May

Swanpool Varroa Workshop

By John Kennedy

ADVANCED VARROA MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP FOR COMMERCIAL BEEKEEPERS JUDGED A GREAT SUCCESS

The VAA and NEAA co-sponsored the Advanced Varroa Management Workshop held at Swanpool on Monday March 9.

It was judged a great success with over 80, mostly commercial beekeepers attending. VAA Chairman Lindsay Callaway who opened and chaired the workshop said the varroa mite was quickly on the move across Victoria as confirmed by heat maps and beekeeper's experiences.

The workshop bore the title of 'From the Smoke to the Strategy' and confirmed that the VAA would be working with all levels of beekeeping to develop and address all management solutions.

There were 13 presentations from industry leaders and VAA directors and many audience questions. These were recorded, and after editing I suspect they will be made available on the VAA website.

Photo left top: Rod Burke NSW DPI Senior Apiary Officer, who drove down from Maitland to give a NSW perspective on the varroa mite, where it is two seasons ahead of Victoria.

He said he had conducted a survey of all local beekeepers in NSW to find that the numbers of large beekeepers had little change, suggesting that they have adapted to the new treatment regime.

But he found some anomalous results, including one beekeeper who was registered with one hive but actually kept 720, and another who was not registered but kept 8,000 hives!

Photo left bottom: Amongst the Workshop presenters were VAA Board Member Matt Petersen, VDO Officer Junie Rey Bag-ayan, VAA Board Member Richard Collins and Rod Burke, NSW DPI Senior Apiary Officer

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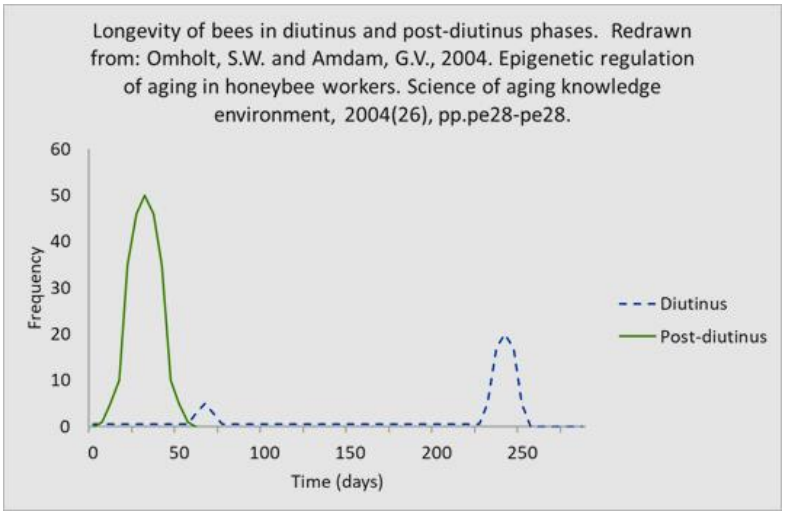
Winter Bees

By Andrew Wootton



As we approach our first Victorian winter with varroa mites, we must be even more careful to consider colony health. Bees in winter are different from those of the rest of the year. Instead of a work-weary demise after about 6 weeks, winter bees are longer lived. Indeed in climates much colder than ours, they may survive for as long as 6 months.

Last month Kris Fricke discussed the role of vitellogenin in honey bee biology.[1] To recap, it has various immune and protective functions as well as being responsible for suppressing Juvenile Hormone which itself leads to aging and maturation from nurse to forager roles.

In temperate climates, long-lived workers develop in autumn as the production of brood ceases before winter. Winter bees or *diutinus* bees closely resemble those of young summer hive bees, with well-developed hypopharyngeal glands, high titres of vitellogenin and low titres of juvenile hormone,[2] which is a releaser of foraging behaviour at high concentrations.[3] The transition from in-nest behaviour to foraging is delayed by several months in winter bees.

Impact of varroa on winter bees

When bees are infested with varroa during the pupal stage, vitellogenin levels are approximately halved compared to noninfested controls.[4] This results in a lower storage capacity for protein in infested bees indicating a physiological basis for the severe impact of *V. destructor* on honey bees in temperate zones. Failure to develop as long-lived winter bees makes them less likely to survive until spring. Colonies treated earlier in the season had reduced varroa infestation during the development of winter bees, resulting in longer bee lifespan and higher colony survival after winter.[5]

Now we come to a key consideration, what is the relevance to us, of studies performed in more severe winters? This is harder to ascertain and the National Varroa Mite Management program has consistently maintained that our environmental conditions are sufficiently different to mean overseas experience may not apply.[6] Studies of "tropical" bees seem unhelpful, as they largely relate to "Africanised" bees which have extreme variations in their grooming and absconding behaviours outweighing any wintering effects. One study from Argentina[7] where climate conditions do not result in a broodless period, confirmed that early treatment and low initial mite loads both improved lowering of mite loads. We know that it is the length of time over which brood cells are available and not the total number, that exerts the greatest effect on mite population growth.[8] Thus damage from varroa is more severe in long brood rearing seasons than in short ones.

Treatment Timing

Despite any uncertainty due to our local environment, we should assume that delaying mite treatments to late autumn will impair the physiology of the winter bees and may result in colony losses. The message is clear; act early and don't wait until winter pack down before making final treatment decisions. And speaking personally, I plan to treat as soon as I detect varroa in my hives, not waiting for any threshold to be exceeded. I want my bees in the best possible condition during winter.

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.

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(Continued on page 11)

Winter Bees, cont'd

(Continued from page 10)

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New Scientist
Ancient pots found near Pompeii contain 2500-year-old honey
The contents of an ancient Greek pot found in a shrine near Pompeii are testament to the longevity of a jar of honey. In 1954, a Greek burial shrine dating to around 520 BC was discovered in Paestum, Italy, about 70 kilometres south of Pompeii. There were eight pots in the shrine containing a sticky residue, whose identity has been a mystery ever since their discovery… Further analysis by Elisabete Pires, at the University of Oxford, revealed the presence of proteins called major royal jelly proteins, which are secreted by honeybees, as well as some peptides whose closest match was from *Tropilaelaps mercedesae*, a parasitic mite that feeds on the larvae of honeybees.
Read the full article here

Getting More Value From Your Varroa Monitoring

From Agriculture Victoria

With an increased frequency of hive inspections due to Varroa, beekeepers now have a valuable opportunity to identify American Foulbrood (AFB) earlier – and avoid significant and preventable costs.

Increased inspections create new opportunities

Increased hive inspection frequency by beekeepers due to Varroa mite provides more regular contact with their hives and a positive opportunity for the early detection of other well established widespread bee diseases like American Foulbrood.

Unlike Varroa mite, management of AFB is severely limited with no approved controls other than to destroy the affected hive and sterilise associated equipment and hiveware. AFB is highly contagious and can easily be spread by beekeepers if undetected.

Identifying AFB early saves you time and money

As profit margins are squeezed with the establishment of Varroa mite across Victoria it is increasingly important for beekeepers to be assessing where sensible cost savings can be made. Taking advantage of more hive inspections associated with mite level monitoring and removing affected AFB hives from your apiary before carrying out varroa treatments is one way of reducing costs.

Barrier systems reduce disease spread and costs

Routine apiary management such as moving hives and the interchange of hive components can unintentionally spread AFB to healthy bee colonies within your apiary. For larger business operations, with more than one load of hives that are managed as a single unit, the use of a barrier system can be an effective tool to reduce the risk of AFB spread. Once a barrier system is established, any AFB outbreaks can be contained to the load/loads that make up that unit, minimising impacts on the broader business.

Recognising AFB symptoms in the field

Identifying AFB involves looking for an irregular "shotgun" brood pattern, sunken or greasy-looking dark cappings, and a foul, fishy odour. A key diagnostic check is the "rope test," where a matchstick inserted into a dead larva drags out a sticky, brown thread of 2–5 cm.

AFB roping
Photo: Agriculture Victoria

Don't waste money treating hives already lost to AFB

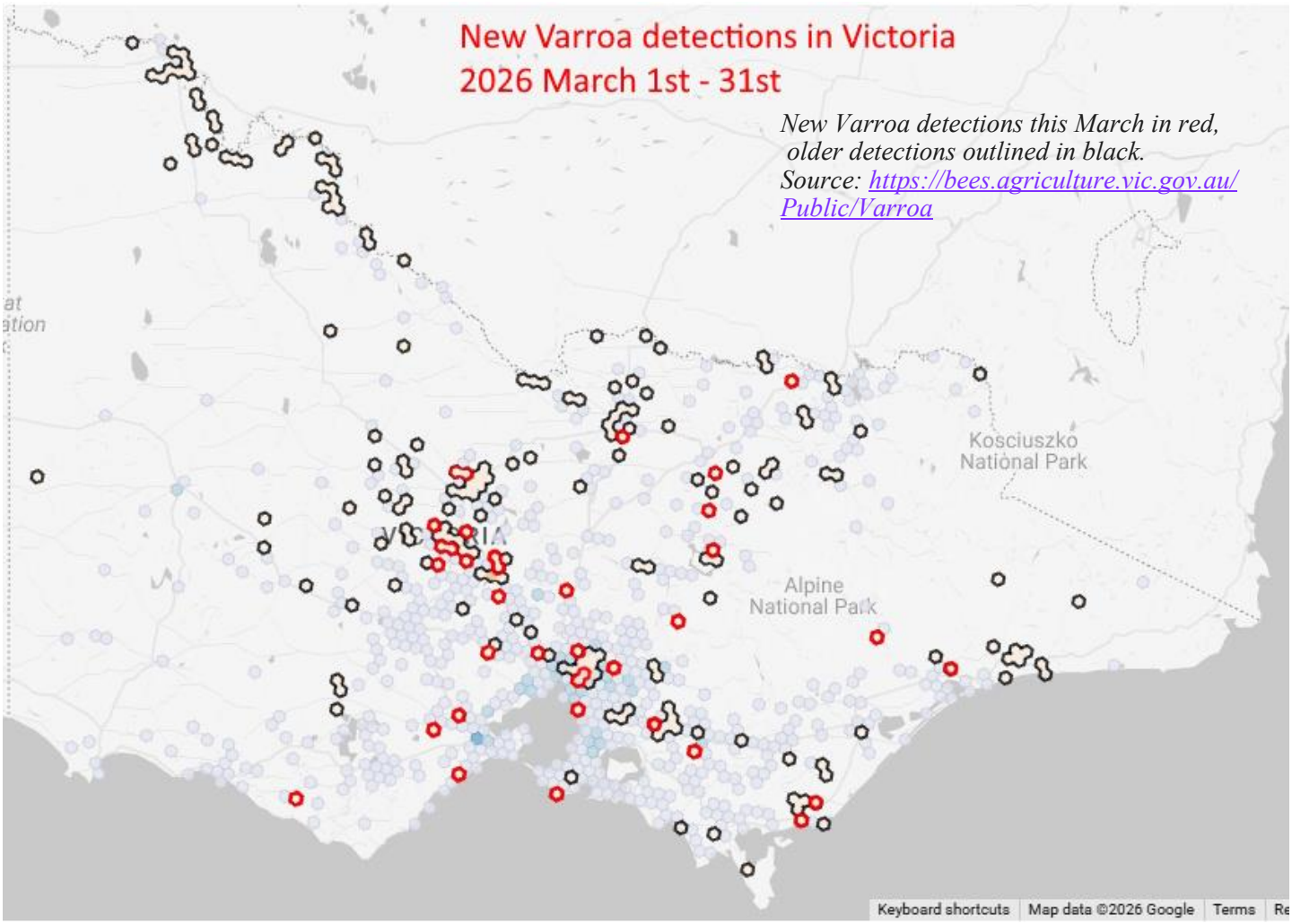
The cost of managing Varroa will have a direct impact on your business' profitability - and treating hives already infected with AFB is an avoidable expense. Make the most of your increased hive inspections and don't just look for Varroa – use this time to check for all bee pests and diseases. Implement a barrier system to ensure AFB, and other pests and diseases, do not impact your entire apiary.

If you are unsure how to identify bee pest and disease in your apiary you can visit a number of web sites including Agriculture Victoria and BeeAware or undertake the Biosecurity On Line Training Course which has been updated to reflect the requirements of the new Australian Honey Bee Biosecurity Code of Practice.

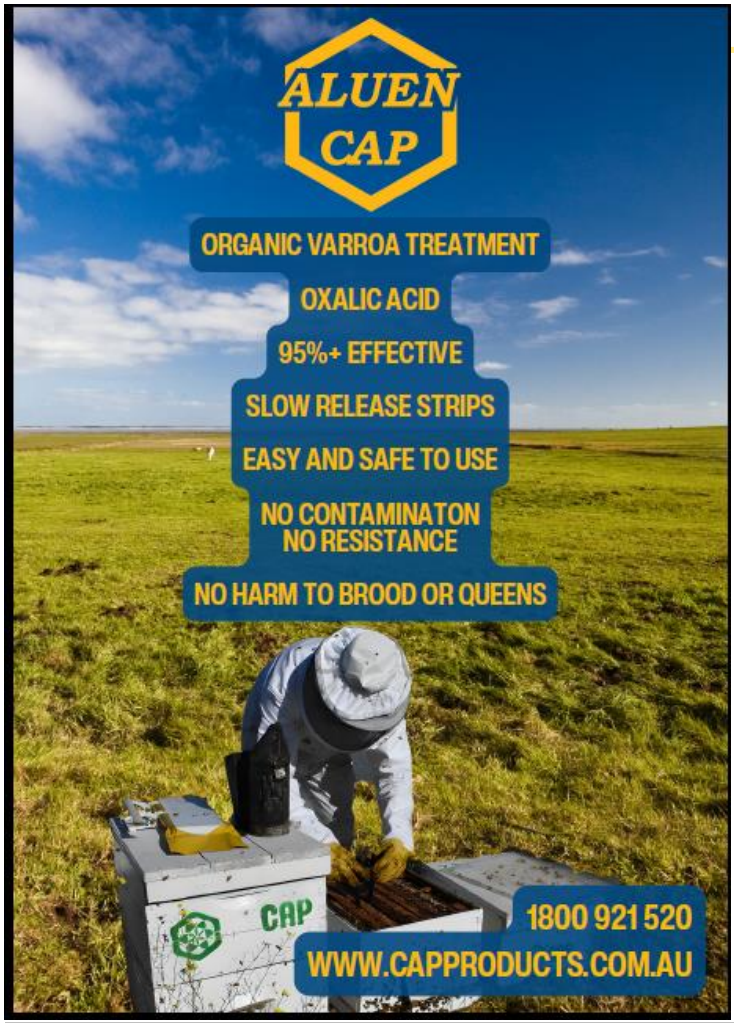
For more information on honey bee biosecurity please contact your states Bee Biosecurity Officer.

NATIONAL BEE BIOSECURITY PROGRAM

The National Bee Biosecurity Program is funded by the honey bee industry through a component of the agricultural honey levy, with state governments contributing In-kind resources. Plant Health Australia manages the program on behalf of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council



New Varroa detections this March in red, older detections outlined in black.
Source: https://bees.agriculture.vic.gov.au/Public/Varroa



Varroosis

By Kris Fricke

What do you think when you hear the term PMS?

What if your friend tells you, as you catch him getting out of his bee truck looking harried, "ah, mate, the girls have PMS"?

"Parasitic Mite Syndrome" was coined in the United States in 1994 when both tracheal and varroa mites were causing similar symptoms, and the USDA Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland, was unsure which mite was causing the damage:

Beekeepers in the United States have been forced to adjust their bee disease management systems ever since the parasitic mites Acarapis woodi *and* Varroa [destructor] *were discovered there in 1984 and 1987, respectively. The impact of both of these mites has been devastating [...] In addition to reports of field observations, the Bee Research Laboratory (BRL) has seen an increase in the number of bee disease samples that we in the Laboratory have chosen to call the "parasitic mite syndrome." It is quite likely that this syndrome is similar to that reported by Ball (1988) in which she refers to the condition as a "secondary infection" in colonies infested with* V. [destructor]. *The purpose of this report is to heighten the awareness of beekeepers, regulators, and research scientists to this syndrome. It is our desire that this report will encourage others who have made similar observations to share their knowledge so that together we can identify the possible causes.*[1]

However, for varroa-specific damage, the more precise term **varroosis** (pronounced like varroa with "sis" on the end) was officially adopted by the World Organization for Animal Health in 1989.[2,3] This term is immediately and intuitively clear – even if you've never heard of "varroosis," if someone says their hive has varroosis you'd know immediately what they're talking about. Compare that to if someone not up on their varroa reading hears someone say their hive has PMS.

While Parasitic Mite Syndrome has come to mostly be used in the context of varroa mite damage, if we were to have tracheal or *Tropilaelaps* mites arrive on our shores, and we wanted to discuss symptoms specific to them, we would now find that we have unfortunately gotten used to using a term that already generically refers to all types of mite damage ambiguously.

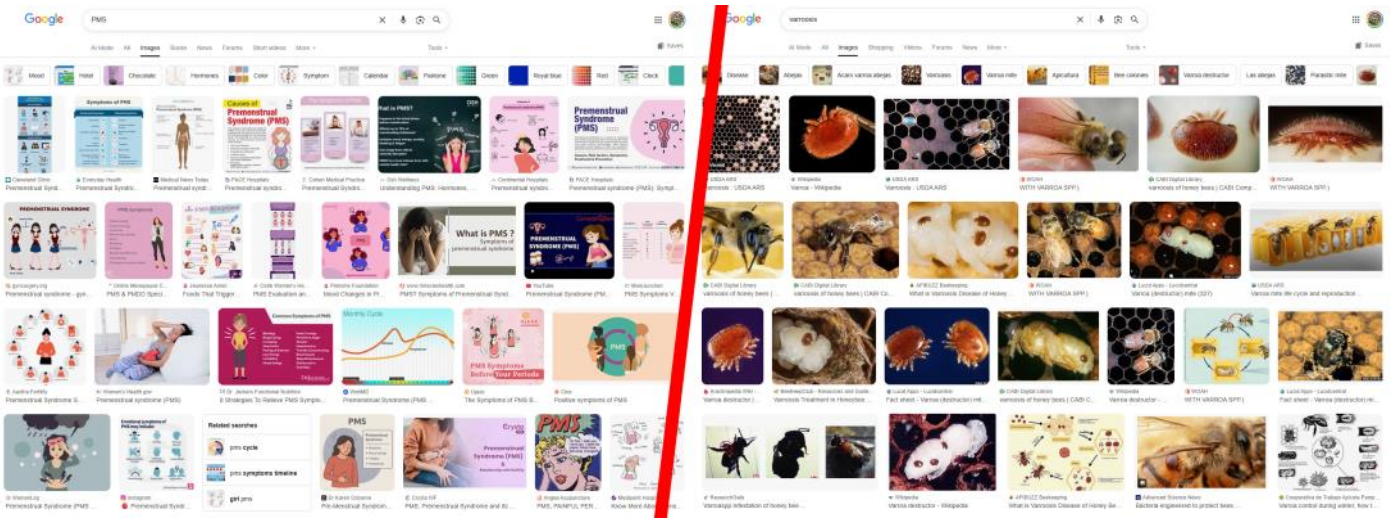
In addition to varroosis being more official and precise, PMS, as you will be aware, is already the universally recognized acronym for a condition affecting nearly half of all adult humans.[4] Acronyms should be unique, that's the idea: you say GST, someone knows what you're talking about; you say HIV, someone knows what you mean. You say PMS, well, that requires context to get to *this* meaning rather than the more conventional meaning. Yes, the context is *usually* clear, but it's an unnecessary distraction. One would probably avoid saying the example sentence I gave at the top of this editorial for exactly the reason that it could be misunderstood, and a word that has to be carefully framed is certainly less ideal than one that doesn't.

Notably the original article introducing "Parasitic Mite Syndrome" never shortened the three words to the acronym "PMS." A year later in a follow up paper they used "BPMS,"[5] no doubt realizing exactly the acronym problems I am now writing about. But even this solution isn't great, as verbally that just sounds like "bee PMS," implying the bees are suffering from the reproductive syndrome, which, needless to say, they do not experience.[6]

And there's a practical consequence to this: can you or I google "PMS" and expect varroa management advice? No, we certainly cannot. Instead, standing in the field we can type all 23 characters of the full phrase into our phone, or, more likely, we're typing in "varroa" anyway and if we adopted "varroosis" it would autocomplete by the fourth letter.

Here in Australia with the varroa journey just beginning for most beekeepers, we have a chance to break with the inaccurate folksy term coined as a research shorthand for an unknown syndrome in America in 1994, a term that is imprecise, unofficial, and already loaded with an overwhelmingly more recognized mean-

(Continued on page 15)



A simple google search for "PMS" (left) vs "Varroosis" (right)

Varroosis, cont'd

(Continued from page 14)

ing, to cleanly adopt the precise and official term **Varroosis** when talking about the effects of *Varroa* on a hive.

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Scientists uncovered the nutrients bees were missing — Colonies surged 15-fold
University of Oxford

A lab-made diet supercharged bee colonies and could help save our food supply.
Scientists have developed a breakthrough "superfood" for honeybees by engineering yeast to produce the essential nutrients normally found in pollen. In controlled trials, colonies fed this specially designed diet produced up to 15 times more young, showing a dramatic boost in reproduction and overall health. As climate change and modern agriculture reduce the availability of natural pollen, this innovation could offer a practical way to support struggling bee populations.

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Season Report

By John Edmonds

Beekeeping is a fascinating science. Sure, you can be just a "honey grubber" or you can apply some scientific thinking to achieve a better outcome. You soon realize that you are always learning and trying to predict what is happening in the bee hive. There are so many factors to alter the outcome.

The weather plays a huge part in the flowering of plants and the bees ability to harvest nectar and pollen.

The management of the hive: Do you shift the bees to a better honey flow? Do you requeen the bee hive? How much honey do you extract? Do you split the bee hive to prevent swarming?

Now we have to learn what varroa treatments are best and the timing of use.

When you observe the bee hive you are seeing a reflection of what occurred 2 to 3 months ago. The quality of the nectar and pollen flow, the weather at the time, resulting in the strength of the bee hive.

The mystery of the bee hive always amazes me. Recently I went away for holidays and before leaving I placed queen cells in queenless hives that I had been using for making queen cells. I usually am very particular where I mate the queens as I seek areas where I predict the virgin queens will mate with hopefully my drones. Much to my surprise half of the resulting queens have mated with very good genetics. I find it a puzzle where the virgin queens mate. I think they are opportunistic and mate where ever they find drones, possibly from their own apiary. I think they seek sheltered areas in valleys or surrounded by tree lines. I guess the bees don't read the books about what we think they should do.

7/3/2026 to 30/3/2026

Since the recent rainfall the hive scales have been negative readings, or very little gain. When looking at the frames it is hard to see if the bees are gaining or losing weight. Fresh nectar is in the frames and the bees have commenced laying drones, so I guess the brood making is consuming the nectar and pollen.

Drones all disappeared due to the hot days over 42 degrees a fortnight apart. As a result, queen rearing stopped and is just recommencing with hopefully new queens ready for winter. Queens mated over the January / February months may be poorly mated with limited drones available.

So far, no varroa visible in my hives in the Geelong region but it is getting closer. After seeing an email that one varroa mite has been detected at Inverleigh, and a report of varroa detection at Bannockburn, I will have a close look at my bees in that area. My friends with bees in the Stawell and Ararat areas have found varroa and now at Lismore. They did a trial of Bayvarol and Oxalic acid cardboard strips and found that after 3 days no varroa was in the washes from the Bayvarol hives, and only one mite was found from the oxalic acid strip hives.

The beekeeper lives in Melbourne and has to load and unload his boxes of honey and stickies after dark as the bees from the surrounding suburb attack the boxes wanting to rob. The large concentration of bee hives in the Melbourne suburbs will result in the transfer of varroa very quickly.

9/3/2026

Grey box trees have started to yield heavily at Heathcote with weight gains of over three kilograms per day. Another example of the trees flowering later than usual. At Bendigo the ironbark yielded some of the best honey for many years and now a light budding of grey box is giving the bees pollen to breed.

Sugar gum so far is yielding slowly and budding is sporadic. Consensus of beekeepers is it is not a honey flow this season. Hives are presently losing weight.

Manna gum is making a lot of growth and a large budding for next year. Rain seems to have stopped the flow.

Yellow gum is very varied in the budding, but in some areas it has started to flower. Unfortunately, at Ocean Grove it is not yielding at present.

I did not place hives on moonah as the flowering looked patchy and the bushes very dry, but a customer at Point Lonsdale was very pleased with the amount of honey in his hives.

Winter flowering ironbark trees can be seen starting to flower. In central Victoria beekeepers are getting honey.

Beekeepers in the north east of Victoria are enjoying a very good mountain ash honey flow.

The heavy rainfall throughout the northern areas of Victoria has seen weeds flowering and provide breeding conditions for hives. Skeleton weed and heliotrope flowers quickly after rainfall.

19/3/2026

The hive scales are constantly reporting negative readings with only occasional days with increase weight. The weather has been too cool. It was interesting to compare the variation in nucleus hives located 10 kilometers apart. The northern site had received a lot more rain and the weeds had filled the nucs, whereas at the southern site the bees were struggling and will not survive winter without feeding. I will have to shift them.

Around Geelong in some areas the hives are becoming aggressive. Unfortunately, these hives produce drones that mate with the virgin queens and the resulting bees are more defensive. After the hot weather I found two hives at Ocean Grove had requeened themselves and the new bees are yellow and nasty. I have also found Waurn Ponds valley harbors nasty bees.

I was amused when a beekeeper said they had bees on a "Sunshine" honey flow. Sunshine being a brand of sugar.

Bald brood is appearing in hives in NSW, beekeepers are wondering if this is a result of the varroa. Although I often see bald brood that has formed eyes. I did a brood uncapping of it and found it is varroa free. It is thought that if we can breed bees that have this bald brood feature that it will reduce varroa reproduction.

Almond farms are disappointed as the current seasons crops has been damaged by the heavy rains. The shell of the almonds has become mouldy and unable to

(Continued on page 17)

Season Report, cont'd

(Continued from page 16)

be sold to China and India. The companies make more profit from selling almonds in the shell to those countries.

Pollination prices being offered at present for Almond pollination are $210 for single hives. Beekeepers are not happy with this price especially with increased diesel fuel prices. Many beekeepers are opting for canola crops as it is closer and it appears farmers will be able to sell the canola seed for bio fuel.

The northern coast of NSW and the Gold Coast have the best budding on the trees for next season. I am told that a beekeeper that normally takes 40 truck loads of bees to the almond pollination will only take 6 loads this spring as the honey prospects look so good.

In NSW supply of diesel fuel presently is a problem. I am told by the service station manager that the high sulphur diesel will damage the motors of vehicles purchased after 2009.

Capilano have increased honey prices to $5 per kilogram and premium honey is $5.50.

The source of the varroa resistant to Bayvarol has been found and it appears the beekeeper had been using back-to–back Bayvarol treatments. Unfortunately, recent reports are that a second incursion of varroa may have occurred and these varroa are resistant to Bayvarol and Apivar. I just hope that this is not the case as we need everything to get through the initial stages of infection.

26/3/2026

Five millimetres of rain today and more forecast, it will freshen up the growth of trees and weeds. After the past very dry autumns it will be good to see canola this spring. Overnight a further three millimetres with very strong winds.

A dairy farmer was telling me that 30 dairy farms near Nathalia have been purchased by a Canadian superannuation fund and planted to almonds. This will be the first year they need bees and further expansion is expected.

Beekeepers visiting from Sydney have said the varroa has killed their bees and they cannot see any bees in their gardens.

The hive scales are consistently reporting that the bees are only maintaining themselves at present. Only on very warm days will be a slight increase, otherwise negative readings. Hive scales are now available for $1000 plus GST. It is interesting to see that in many remote areas they can send a message where your mobile phone is unable to work.

The present wintery cold snap is not unusual at this time of the year. I expect warm weather will return and possibly into May.

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The Buzz On Facebook

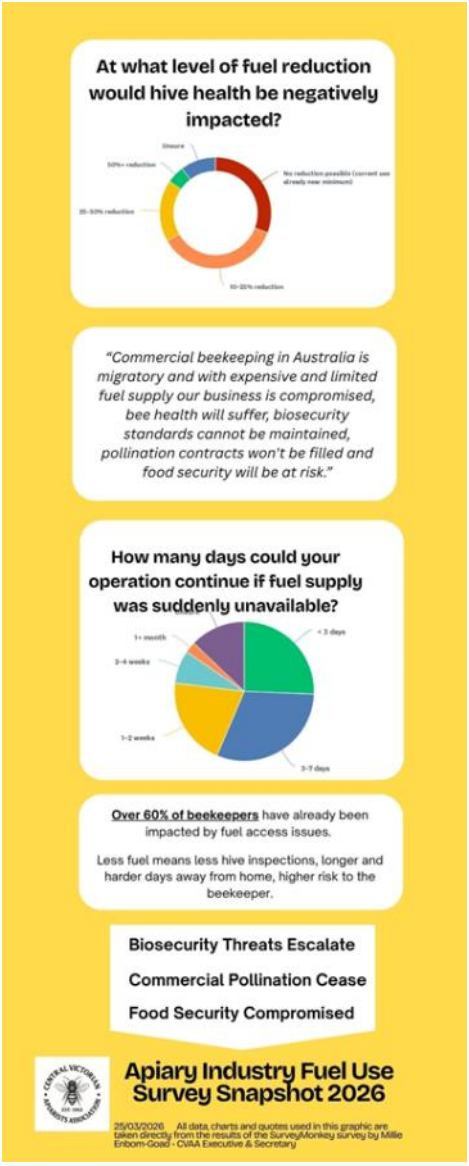
By Kris Fricke

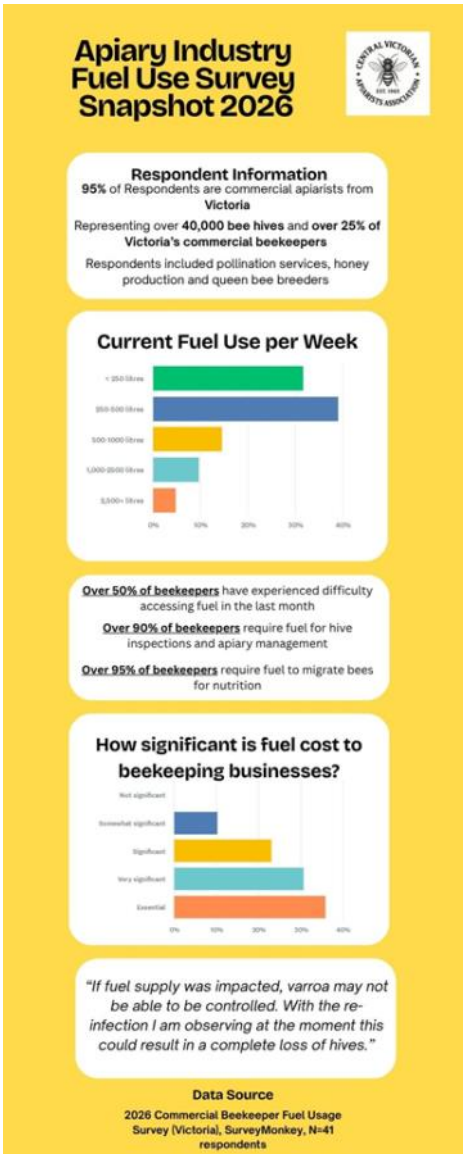
Personally, I am not very active on social media but over the years I've had some younger coworkers who almost daily reported to me what the beekeepers of Australia were talking about on Facebook at the moment. And not just the younger ones, many beekeepers seem to regularly discuss the issues of the moment on Facebook. So I thought for those of you like me who are missing out on those conversations, I would once a month do a quick round of the Australian beekeeping groups and report on what the big topics that month were.

Fuel Concerns Fuel Concerns

Not surprisingly perhaps, rising fuel prices were on people's minds, with the highest commented post I saw this month discussing whether people are adding a fuel levy to their pollination fees. There was general concern on this topic but as to how to actually apply it there was no consensus. Some advocated a percentage surcharge of upwards of 30% like freight companies, while others suggested a flat rate per hive. One commenter showed the math working out that the increased cost to him would be $6.60 per hive on a thousand kilometer round trip. The broad consensus that one should do their math before signing any contracts.

The Central Victorian Apiarist's Association has a survey they would like commercial beekeepers to fill out about their fuel usage. It is still open and can be reached via this QR code (or in the online version on this hyperlink): **Survey: Central Victorian Apiarist's Association Commercial Beekeeper Fuel Usage Survey**





There were also numerous posts expressing exasperation and frustration with the discovery of resistance to pyrethroids and amitraz among mites. This meme was posted in multiple places (we had to censor it here), this particular instance adds the additional frustration of the slow release Aluen-Cap product having been only approved for once a year by the APVMA, leaving beekeepers with limited options if neither of the synthetics work and they find themselves unable to use Aluen-Cap again.

AHBIC Update

Amitraz Resistant Varroa Confirmed in QLD

Amitraz resistance has been confirmed in Queensland. The same populations that previously tested positive for pyrethroid resistance have now also confirmed to have amitraz resistance. There is little information at this stage and departments in both QLD and NSW are expected to communicate with industry next week, we await further details.

This strengthens the case for this being a new population of mites to the June 2022 incursion and further testing will be important to understand the geographical spread. Being a likely new population of mites means beekeepers that do not have confirmed resistance should continue to use all available miticide options to control mites but ensure you ROTATE modes of action and monitor for efficacy of treatments.

We acknowledge that this news, on top of existing pressures on beekeepers, is a lot to cope with.

Taking Care of Yourself and your Mates

We acknowledge that ongoing challenges facing our industry can be incredibly difficult to navigate. If you are having a really hard day, feeling overwhelmed, unsure where to start, are experiencing anxiety, depression or looking for ways to support a friend, we encourage you to reach out to available resources for support. Mental health, counselling and financial support are available from many services: ·
Lifeline, 13 11 14 ·
Rural Aid (Mon to Fri 9am – 5pm), 1300 175 594 ·
Rural Financial Counselling Services ·
Black Dog Institute ·
Beyond Blue, 1300 22 46 36

Did you know?

Beyond Blue have developed "NewAccess", a tailored mental health coaching program for small business owners, available by phone or online from anywhere in Australia. "NewAccess" is a free, confidential mental health coaching program, designed to help small business owners and sole traders manage stress, worry and overwhelm.
Enquire today online or call: 03 9250 8305

Bee Pest Blitz is a national initiative throughout April annually, it is a campaign to increase awareness of the importance of bee biosecurity and encourage beekeepers to inspect their hives for high priority exotic pests. This national month-long call-to-action campaign encourages beekeepers to conduct surveillance during the month of April. But beekeepers can and should check their hives regularly. The Bee Pest Blitz website beepestblitz.com.au is **live** and contains resources to assist beekeepers to conduct alcohol washes on their hives and report their findings. By participating in the Bee Pest Blitz month, Australian beekeepers will fulfil their bee biosecurity obligations and one of the three inspection requirements under the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice.

Preparing Your Hive For Winter

By Tony Wilsmore

Getting Pack Down Right

Autumn is one of the most important times of the beekeeping year. Decisions made in late summer and autumn determine whether colonies simply survive winter or emerge strong and productive in spring.

Good pack down practice ensures bees can maintain a stable nest environment, access adequate food stores, and avoid unnecessary stress from pests and pathogens. This has always been important, but it is **especially critical now that Varroa is present in Australia**. High mite levels weaken winter bees and increase colony susceptibility to disease and pests, putting hives at risk during the colder months.

Preparing colonies properly for winter can be considered under three main areas: **climate control, nutrition, and pathogen and pest management.**

Climate Control: A Dry, Warm Nest

Healthy bees need a **dry, draft-free nest that can be maintained with minimal energy expenditure**. During winter, the colony clusters to generate heat. If the hive has excessive ventilation or too much empty space, bees must work harder to maintain cluster temperature, consuming more stores and weakening the colony.

Several simple actions can help maintain a stable hive environment.

First, review ventilation. While airflow is beneficial in summer, excessive ventilation during winter can create cold drafts and condensation. Closing off ventilated bottom boards or roof vents can help the colony maintain warmth.

Second, reduce the volume of the hive. Surplus honey boxes should be removed before pack down so that the colony occupies a space it can effectively manage. A smaller hive volume helps bees retain heat and defend the colony against pests.

Third, consider insulation. Insulating the hive roof can reduce heat loss and condensation during cold weather.

Finally, reduce the entrance size. Smaller entrances help bees conserve warmth and improve their ability to defend the hive against robbing and pests.

Nutrition: Feeding the Winter Bees

Autumn is often a period of declining forage. Nectar flows slow, and colonies may become defensive as food becomes scarce. At the same time, the colony begins raising **winter bees**, which are physiologically different from summer bees and must live for several months.

For this reason, nutrition in autumn is critical.

Winter bees must develop with adequate nutrition to ensure strong colonies in spring. Colonies also need sufficient food reserves located close to the brood nest so that the cluster can access stores during cold weather when movement within the hive is limited.

Beekeepers should assess colonies carefully and identify weak hives early. Weak colonies may need strengthening, protection, or combining with stronger colonies before winter.

Feeding may also be necessary if honey reserves are insufficient. Moving honey frames closer to the brood nest can help ensure bees have access to food during winter clustering.

For a **single brood box setup in Melbourne**, a useful rule of thumb is to aim for **at least four full frames of honey in the brood box by late April**. Conditions vary across regions, but ensuring adequate stores is essential for winter survival.

Reducing the entrance size can also help protect colonies during this period when robbing pressure may increase.

Pathogens and Pests: Clean Hives and Low Varroa Levels

Strong colonies heading into winter require both **a clean environment and low pest pressure**.

Hygiene plays an important role in reducing pathogen load. Old wax, propolis buildup, and contaminated comb can harbour disease organisms and pests. Cleaning hive components before winter is therefore good practice.

Frame bars and hive boxes should be scraped clean of wax and propolis. Wooden hive boxes can be flame sterilised using a blowtorch or heat gun to destroy pathogens on the surface.

Old frames that have been cleaned can be disinfected before reuse. Rotating out older brood frames is also recommended, as old comb can accumulate residues and disease spores over time.

Polystyrene hive components require a different approach. These can be cleaned using washing soda to remove wax and propolis and then disinfected using bleach or an appropriate disinfectant such as Virkon S.

Pest management is equally important. Empty comb and unused boxes should be removed to reduce the risk of wax moth and small hive beetle infestations.

Most importantly, colonies should be **tested and treated for varroa before winter bees are raised**. Maintaining low mite numbers going into winter is critical for colony survival. Colonies entering winter with high mite loads often produce weakened winter bees and may collapse before spring.

As with other pack down measures, reducing the entrance size can also assist the colony in defending itself against pests.

The Key to Strong Spring Colonies

Preparing colonies for winter is not a single action but a combination of management decisions made throughout autumn.

By focusing on **climate control, nutrition, and pest management**, beekeepers can greatly improve the chances that their colonies will emerge from winter healthy and productive.

Good pack down practices help ensure that when spring arrives, colonies are ready to build rapidly, take advantage of early nectar flows, and continue the cycle of strong beekeeping seasons.

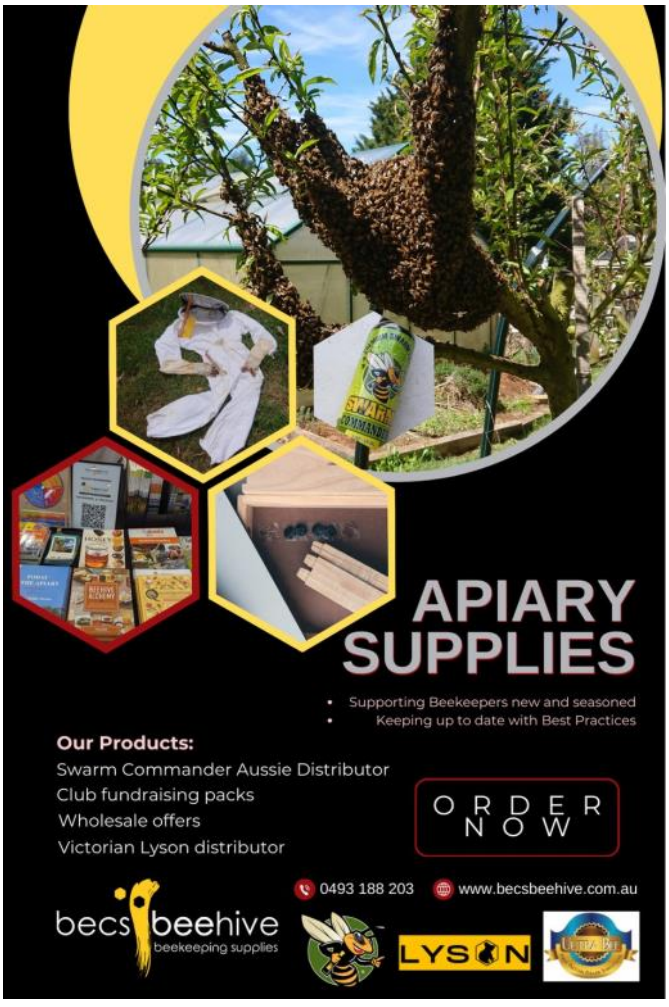
Interesting Podcasts / Webcasts Of The Last Month

By Kris Fricke

VAA HiveMeets:
March 5th – Hyperthermia Treatment for Varroa with Mike Allerton

Videos from the Swanpool Workshop for Commercial Beekeepers, March 9th 2026
Honey Bee Immunity and Varroa Mites with Olivia Ducommun-Dit-Varroa

(Continued on page 22)



Interesting Podcasts / Webcasts Of The Last Month, cont'd

April 2nd – Examining the World History of Varroa with Kris Fricke
Subtitle: everything you think you know about varroa history is wrong

March 16th – **From Smoke to Strategy with Lindsay Callaway**

March 19th – **Integrated Pest Management** with Paul Horne

March 20th - **AgVic/VAA Chemical Working Group Report**, Matt Petersen

Other podcasts and webinars:
February 7th – UK National Honey Show – Understanding Varroa Resistance with Stephen Martin

March 10th – Two Bees in a Podcast – Breeding Mite Biting Bees with Krispn Given
Krispn Given is the mastermind behind the "Indiana Mite Biters" breeding program.

March 18th – Beekeeping Today Podcast – Varroa Mites with Dewey Caron
In this Bee Science Short, Dr. Dewey Caron explains how Varroa destructor reproduces, spreads within colonies, and why understanding the mite's biology is essential for modern beekeeping.

April 4th – National Honey Show – Moving Away from Mite Control with Stephen Martin

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Research Uncovers Colony Health Connection

Research from UVM's Vermont Bee Lab uncovers important colony health connection
University Of Vermont

For the first time, research shows that a key social trait in honey bees is linked to measurable physiological advantages that can improve colony survival.

A new study published in PLOS ONE uncovers how hygienic honey bee colonies mount stronger individual immune defenses against *Nosema ceranae*, a widespread pathogen that threatens honey bee health worldwide.

The study, led by Sydney Miller of the University of Vermont's Department of Agriculture, Landscape, and Environment, demonstrates that bees from hygienic colonies show enhanced innate immune responses and increased survival when infected with *N. ceranae*, despite experiencing similar infection levels as non-hygienic bees.

"*Nosema* is one of the most common adult bee pathogens found in Vermont apiaries and nationally. The pathogen essentially starves the bee by infecting their digestive tract. Even though it causes major problems for beekeepers, there are very few effective treatment options," said Miller. "The hygienic behavior trait has only been known to defend against pathogens infecting the larvae and pupae in the nest, but our findings suggest that hygienic colonies may also be able to resist adult bee pathogens, like *Nosema*, through enhanced innate immune function. This offers a promising avenue for strengthening bee health through selective breeding."

Key Findings

Researchers conducted field and laboratory experiments comparing individual bees from hygienic colonies to bees from non-hygienic colonies. Hygienic colonies carry a heritable genetic trait that allows the worker bees to respond to chemical odorants emitted by diseased or dead brood (developing larvae and/or pupae) by uncapping and removing them from the nest.

Not only do hygienic colonies discard infected brood, but this study identified several innate defense mechanisms exhibited by the adult bees in hygienic colonies as well:

- **Lower consumption of contaminated food:** Hygienic bees consumed less sugar syrup, especially when it contained *Nosema* spores, suggesting possible detection and avoidance of pathogen-contaminated resources.
- **Enhanced immune gene expression:** Hygienic bees maintained or upregulated *Vitellogenin* (Vg) and *Hymenoptaecin* (Hym), two immune-related genes, during infection.
- **Greater infection tolerance:** Even when infected, hygienic bees survived significantly longer than non-hygienic bees, indicating improved tolerance of the pathogen.
- **No infection in brood:** The team found no *N. ceranae* spores in pupae, confirming that hygienic brood removal does not directly reduce *Nosema* in colonies, supporting the conclusion that individual-level defenses are playing a key role.

Implications for Beekeepers and Breeding Programs

The findings provide powerful evidence that hygienic behavior, which has already become a cornerstone trait in disease-resistance breeding programs, may deliver broad-spectrum benefits by bolstering the innate defenses of individual bees.

"This study gives us a clearer picture of why hygienic colonies have lower pest and pathogen loads in the field," said co-author Samantha Alger. "It isn't just about removing sick brood. These bees appear to have a stronger physiological response that allows them to self-manage pathogens affecting adults too."

With *N. ceranae* contributing to weakened colonies, reduced honey production, and increased mortality, identifying heritable honey bee traits that provide protection is critical for a sustainable beekeeping industry.

BEE BITS

Bee allergies are no joke, and those who have them are justifiably concerned about contact with anything related to the insects. Understanding the mechanism of what triggers an allergic reaction is complicated, and when it comes to something like honey it can be difficult to determine just how safe it is. So can you eat honey if you have a bee allergy? It depends on the exact nature of the allergy we're talking about and whether you're just having honey or other bee products.
Read the article here

The New Murder Hornet? Yellow-Legged Hornets Killing Bees In 3 States
Residents of three Southern states are urged watch for aggressive non-native, yellow-legged hornets that prey on defenseless honeybees and decimate colonies in hours.
Alabama, South Carolina and Georgia are trying to contain and eradicate this destructive invasive species.
Read the full article here

A metallic bee that sleeps in giant clusters?
Meet the *Lipotriches* bee.
Lipotriches is a genus of native bee in the family Halictidae and is the Pollinator of the Month for March.
Read all about it at The Wheen Bee Foundation website here

North Eastern Apiarists' Association Annual General Meeting.
Friday, May 1st

To be held at the Delatite Hotel, Mansfield from 9am to 4pm

Program still to be confirmed but anticipate the following;

- Making sound strategic business decisions when weighing up costs, labour and business objectives when planning varroa treatments
- Playing the long game - ideas and strategies for all beekeepers to be part of the solution, not part of the problem when it comes to moving toward varroa resistance.

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

AHBIC Media Release

Honey bee industry disappointed by inconclusive Varroa investigation

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC) says the federal government's final report into the origin of the varroa mite incursion fails to deliver the answers the industry has waited almost four years to receive.

The report into the investigation known as Operation Decker does not identify an entry pathway for the mite, does not determine when varroa entered Australia and ultimately leaves the key question unanswered – how the incursion occurred.

AHBIC CEO Danny Le Feuvre said beekeepers across Australia are understandably frustrated by the outcome.

"Beekeepers have waited nearly four years for answers about how varroa entered Australia. This report unfortunately fails to provide those answers," Mr Le Feuvre said.

"The report confirms the investigation found no direct evidence of illegal importation and that digital and physical evidence was inconclusive. That means the pathway of entry for one of the world's most destructive bee pests remains unknown."

Varroa destructor, the most damaging pest of honey bees globally, was first detected in sentinel hives at the Port of Newcastle in June 2022. A national eradication response was launched before the National Management Group determined in September 2023 that eradication was no longer technically feasible and the response transitioned to long-term management.

Australia has since moved from being varroa-free to managing the pest permanently.

Mr Le Feuvre said the lack of a clearly identified entry pathway raises broader concerns for Australia's biosecurity system.

"If we do not understand how varroa entered the country, it becomes far more difficult to ensure the same pathway cannot be exploited again," he said.

"This matters not just for beekeepers but for every agricultural industry that relies on Australia's biosecurity protections."

The Australian honey bee industry produces around 37,000 tonnes of honey annually, generating approximately $264 million in hive product value, while pollination services directly contribute an estimated $4.6 billion to the national economy each year.

Mr Le Feuvre said beekeepers, queen breeders and pollination providers have carried the consequences of the incursion since 2022.

"For many in the industry this has been a devastating period. Colonies were destroyed, businesses disrupted and confidence in the biosecurity system shaken," he said.

"The industry welcomed the investigation because we believed it would provide clarity. Instead, the final report confirms that the origin of the incursion remains unresolved."

Recent reports of pyrethroid-resistant varroa populations in Queensland and New South Wales highlight the ongoing challenges facing Australian beekeepers as they transition to managing the pest.

AHBIC is calling on the federal government to take further action to ensure the investigation leads to meaningful improvements in Australia's biosecurity system.

The organisation is urging government to:

- Publish a comprehensive lessons-learned review identifying investigative gaps and biosecurity vulnerabilities.
- Update the current pathway analysis incorporating the investigation knowledge.
- Strengthen investigative capability for major biosecurity events.
- Support ongoing scientific investigation, including virus-origin research being undertaken by NSW DPIRD.

AHBIC also encouraged anyone with information about potential breaches of Australia's biosecurity laws to contact the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry REDLINE reporting service on 1800 803 006.

The government report can be found: https://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/reporting/obligations/government-responses/adequacy_australias-biosecurity-measures-response-preparedness-fmd-varroa-mite#varroa-mite-report

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Bee Bits

New Scientist

Bumblebees surprise scientists by showing a sense of rhythm

Recognising rhythmic patterns was thought to require a big brain, but a series of experiments has shown that buff-tailed bumblebees have this ability, too.

Bumblebees have learned to recognise Morse code-like sequences of flashing lights and vibrations, demonstrating a sense of rhythm that has never been seen in such a small-brained animal. Read the full article here

World's expensive honey costs €10,000 per kg

What makes this honey from Turkey scientifically unique?

Found in deep caves, Centauri honey can be found in the Taurus Mountains of Turkey. This honey is harvested at around 2,500 meters above sea level. It is collected only once a year, far from human activity.

The honey forms over time inside rocky crevices, enriched by minerals from the cave walls. This process is rarely seen in conventional beekeeping.

Read the full article here

Independent

Toxic "forever chemicals" can accumulate in honeybee colonies and transfer to their honey, and potentially threaten food security and human health, Australian scientists warn in a new study. These chemicals, called perfluorooctanesulfonate (PFOS), are widely used in stain-resistant fabrics, non-stick cookware, fire-fighting foams, and electronics, and persist in the environment as they do not break down easily.

Studies have shown that PFOS are associated with health risks, including high cholesterol and liver enzyme changes. Read the full article here

Not so pretty but plenty of likes

A bee bandwagon effect may offset color disadvantages in securing flower pollinators

Kyoto University

If you were a bee, how would you choose a flower to land on? You might go to the most beautiful one, as pollination biologists have long suggested that flowers with striking colors attract pollinators more easily. Or perhaps, as other studies indicate, you might go where other bees are feeding, like seeing a long line outside a restaurant and thinking it must be worth the wait.

This raises the overlooked possibility of a floral "bandwagon effect": that even a less striking flower may attract as many pollinators as a brightly colored one, simply by securing early visitors. A team of researchers at Kyoto University was inspired to investigate this prospect and its implications.

Read about the research here

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Website:
www.agricultre.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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Collingwood Childrens' Farm Apiary Open 10.30-3.30
2nd & 4th Sunday of month.
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www.facebook.com/collingwoodbees

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VAA Inc Regional Groups

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Chair: Jamie Trimby
bbvaachair@gmail.com
Treasurer: Michael St.Clair
bbvaatreasurer@outlook.com
General Information Meetings - *1st Wed. each month (except Jan & Dec)*
Dinner at 6.00pm *(optional)*
Meeting at 7.00 pm.
Lakeside Hotel, Bendigo.
Please register with the Secretary to attend Meetings
Executive Committee Meeting: 3rd Wed month as required.
Venue: As notified.

Melbourne Section:
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Deputy Chair: David Basket
Treasurer: Janet Conos
Secretary, Gill Greenstein
Ph: 0422 058 180

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.

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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: wbfs@mrsg.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.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
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Northwestern Bee Club Inc.
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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.
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Secretary: Helen Morland
Treasurer: Debbie Conway
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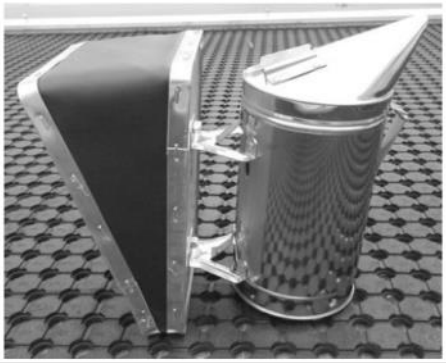

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Do you have photos of bee or honey related subjects?
The Australian Bee Journal would love your photos for use in the journal and/or on the VAA website. Please send to abjeditors@yahoo.com

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