

# Townsville and District Beekeepers Association (Inc)



PO Box 1115, Aitkenvale QLD 4814

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

## Newsletter No 1, February 2023

### In this Issue

- Easy swarm, women beekeepers, hornet nest bird
- AI poem and article about bees - creepy
- New (but some very familiar) Club officials
- Bees on the Internet, bee trivia,
- Shop prices : <http://www.beesnorth.com.au>

**Next Meeting:**  
**Sunday, 19 February @ 10 am**  
**Michael Hooper Park, Deeragun**

Bring a chair and something to share at morning tea.  
Tea, coffee, milk, sugar, cups, hot water will be available.  
Free chats with experienced and novice beekeepers are available after the meeting  
The Club Shop will usually open 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month.  
Please check the website for details

## Easy catch swarm from Melton Hill

From The Ed

Late December is swarming season. Many requests to remove swarms were received after the hot and humid build up in Townsville. As responsible beekeepers, we have a duty of care to remove our swarms from public and private property. Unattended swarms can lead to unfriendly neighbourly relationships, and feral hives can harbour pests and disease that affect all of our hives. Check the swarm to confirm that it's European honey bee and take some samples for submitting to Roger Winton at DPI / Biosecurity Queensland.

The Ed received notice of a swarm on Melton Hill and struck out to intercept. As can be seen from the photos, swarming bees can be docile, but be careful, you may find some cranky ones. Fortunately the bees were at reachable level and just needed dislodging from the vegetation. One issue was the original sticky frames in the hive box contained a recovered frame from a slime out hive, and the bees objected by staying outside the box all night. Once the offending frame was replaced with a fresh foundation, the girls marched in, just as the sign at the front was telling them which way to go.

The TDBAI Club has a swarm list (see Newsletter) with contact phone numbers to Club Members who can offer to remove swarms. If you wish to be nominated on the list, send me your details, suburb etc. If you wish to be removed from the list, please contact me ASAP.



Do you have any stories and photos of your swarm catching adventures, or honey harvesting successes or failures, or bee bloopers, or any material for our Newsletter???

I want to keep this monthly publication full of local events and personal stories from, and about our members. You can have your FaceTube and Youbook connections for all the world to see, but I would like to keep this a bit more personal and local – please help me out and send me a story. Ray Berkelmans from the Gold Coast has sent in some interesting bee articles written entirely by his computer – can you spot the lack of human input? Look in the Newsletter for this interesting development.

## Women in beekeeping photo comp

The official world record attempt for "The Most Photos of Women+ Beekeeping Uploaded in 24 Hours" is happening online in January! [#beekeepingworldrecord](https://www.beekeepingworldrecord.com)

Proudly supporting RizeUp Australia, a charity helping women and children experiencing domestic violence. If you are over 18, identify as a woman and interested in beekeeping at any level - please register for free at [www.beekeepingworldrecord.com](https://www.beekeepingworldrecord.com) and join us to make history!

Together, we can make a huge difference and help us to make MILLIONS of impacts on the world with our efforts!

The Ed will be submitting these photos of his daughter Alana in her lightweight painting overalls.



## Tiny birds set up house next to wasp nest for protection. No wasps?, no problem - just use the bees for cover

Photo and story from Historian and keen birder Russell McGregor.  
Words from **The Ed**

A White-throated Gerygone established a nest next to a bee swarm/hive at Baroon Pocket Dam near Maleny, in November 2022. Bees on the right, bird nest on left with opening at upper left. Apparently, a related species, the Fairy Warbler or Gerygone is called the hornet- nest bird or wasp bird. The association of small birds with protective stinging insects has been observed for some time. Alec Chisholm wrote about the association of birds with wasps in the early 1900's and observed that:

"Five species of the genus Gerygone are known to associate with wasps, more or less consistently, in tropical areas, and another species is reported as associating with wasps in the tropics and ants in temperate areas. Such birds deliberately seek the society of the insects, by which they are recognized and tolerated.

If protection is the motive, it would seem to be aimed against reptiles rather than against other birds or mammals. Other possible reasons for the practice are suggested."



See Russell's book on Alec Chisholm "Idling in Green Spaces: A life of Alec Chisholm at <https://scholarly.info/book/idling-in-green-places/>  
Also: <https://www.environmentandsociety.org/arcadia/mateship-birds-australian-plea-conservation>

From my observation of the photo, it appears to be a very small swarm/hive (the bird is only 12 cm long), and is fairly recent as the wax is still clean and white. Maybe there is no queen and these bees have been left to fend for themselves after a failed swarm? Russell says the bees were there before the nest was constructed, so it does appear that these little birds are using the presence of the bees for possible protection...or maybe for food – the bird is an insect eater!!!!!! Russell tells me the birds NEVER upset their stinging neighbours. Sounds like a good arrangement to maintain.

Cheers  
**The Ed**

## Who wrote that? or more precisely - What wrote that?

Ray B on the Gold Coast has discovered a new way to fill the Newsletter Editor's in tray. Maybe I should just hang up my typewriter and put away my pencil right now. Excuse the US version of spelling, that's one clue as to what wrote this.

Ray wrote "Do you know a web site/tool called "ChatAI"? <https://chat.openai.com/chat>

It's amazing what it can do. I asked it to "write a poem about Ray's bees and how he lost his hives to the small hive beetle and then overcame the problem by building a concrete pad for his hives". This is what it wrote:"

Ray's bees, a labor of love  
Buzzing, busy as can bee  
But then, a deadly threat did arrive  
Hive beetles, a plague to see

They crept and crawled, an infestation  
Destroying all in their path  
Ray's hives, once a thriving population  
Now lay empty, an aftermath

But Ray, he didn't give up  
He fought with all his might  
He built a pad, made of concrete  
To protect his bees, a fight

The hive beetles, they couldn't penetrate  
This barrier of solid stone  
Ray's bees, they once again did proliferate  
The hive beetles, finally overthrown

For even in defeat, he persevered  
A lesson for us all  
To never give up, to never be deterred  
To stand tall, through any fall

So here's to Ray and his bees  
A tale of love and loss  
May their memory always be  
A sweet reminder, at any cost



Images of adult and larval SHB and a slime out.

Source:

<https://bee-health.extension.org/managing-small-hive-beetles/>



Using the same ChatAI - Ray asked it to "write me a newsletter story about bee pheromones"

...and it came back with :

In the world of bees, communication is key. And one important way that bees communicate with each other is through the use of pheromones.

Pheromones are chemical substances that are produced and released by an organism, and which affect the behavior or physiology of other members of the same species. In bees, pheromones serve a variety of functions, from marking trails to food sources, to attracting a mate, to signaling danger.

One type of pheromone produced by bees is the alarm pheromone. This pheromone is released by guard bees when they sense a threat, and it alerts the rest of the hive to the danger. The alarm pheromone has a strong, unpleasant smell, which helps to deter predators and keep the hive safe.

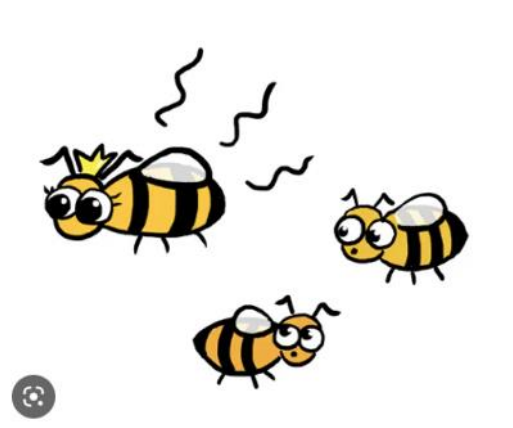
Another type of pheromone produced by bees is the queen pheromone. This pheromone is produced by the queen bee, and it helps to regulate the behavior of the other bees in the hive. The queen pheromone helps to keep the hive cohesive and organized, and it also helps to suppress the development of new queens.

Bees also produce pheromones to mark trails to food sources. When a foraging bee finds a good source of nectar or pollen, it will return to the hive and perform a "waggle dance" to communicate the location of the food to the other bees. The foraging bee will also release a pheromone trail as it dances, which helps to guide the other bees to the food source.

Pheromones play a vital role in the world of bees, helping them to communicate and coordinate their activities. Without pheromones, the complex social structure of the hive would break down, and the bees would be unable to survive. So the next time you see a hive of bees hard at work, take a moment to appreciate the intricate communication system that pheromones help to facilitate.

Ridiculously good - no?  
Cheers, Ray Berkemans

<https://sarahplusbees.com/honey-bee-sex-part-2/queen-pheromone/>



## Protection from SHB

Ray B has a treatment for SHB that he buys from a Brisbane bee supplies shop called Topbait Plus. It's much cheaper than Apithor traps and the square traps can be emptied of beetles and reloaded with the syringe loaded with attractant and Fipronil poison – same stuff as in Apithor traps. It has been developed and produced in Australia.

About \$60 a tube with 4 reusable traps.

<https://pestcontroldirect.com.au/shop/product/topbait-plus-small-hive-beetle/>

Take care with any poison, as you are dealing with a powerful insecticide here. Dispose of any waste wrapped up in newspaper in the bin.



## Bees on The Internet

### 1. Two tablespoons of honey per day can make your heart healthier.

<https://scitechdaily.com/surprising-researchers-have-found-that-honey-improves-key-measures-of-cardiometabolic-health/>

According to a new study from researchers at the University of Toronto, consuming raw honey from a single floral source may have significant benefits for cardiometabolic health.

In a systematic review and meta-analysis of clinical trials, the researchers found that honey consumption was associated with lower fasting blood glucose, total and LDL ('bad') cholesterol, triglycerides, and a marker of fatty liver disease. Additionally, honey consumption was linked to higher levels of HDL ('good') cholesterol and some markers of inflammation.

"These results are surprising because honey is about 80 percent sugar," said Tauseef Khan, a senior researcher on the study and a research associate in nutritional sciences at U of T's Temerty Faculty of Medicine. "But honey is also a complex composition of common and rare sugars, proteins, organic acids, and other bioactive compounds that very likely have health benefits."

Previous research has shown that honey can improve cardiometabolic health, especially in vitro and animal studies. The current study is the most comprehensive review to date of clinical trials, and it includes the most detailed data on processing and floral source.

### 2. Drug smugglers turn to bee hive pesticides for profit

#### *Varroa mite pesticide smuggling ringleader sentenced to 8 Months in prison*

<https://www.beeeculture.com/amitraz-smuggling/>

SAN DIEGO – Sofia Mancera Morales, the ringleader of a pesticide smuggling organization, was sentenced to eight months in custody in federal court yesterday, having previously entered a guilty plea in which she acknowledged obtaining illegal pesticides in Mexico and delivering them to others to smuggle into the United States.

According to sentencing documents, Morales recruited individuals on Facebook, offering to pay \$40-\$150 for each box of six 1-liter bottles delivered to the United States. Morales directed her recruits to deliver the pesticides to a self-storage facility near the border in Calexico, after which they were required to send her photographs of the pesticides in the storage unit as proof of delivery prior to payment. Morales paid recruits to lease self-storage units in their own names and instructed them to provide her with the keys. Recruits caught at the border with pesticides reported that they had seen items delivered by others in their self-storage units, including pesticides, veterinary medications and alcohol. One recruit delivered almost 1000 bottles of pesticides in a one-month period, while others advised that they had delivered pesticides 2-5 times per week.

The pesticides involved were primarily Bovitraz and Taktic, which contain the active ingredient amitraz in a concentrated form (12.5%) that renders it a cancelled and unregistered pesticide. Amitraz is an acaricide that is registered in the United States to control varroa mites in honeybee colonies at a much lower concentration (3.33%) than the smuggled product. At a permissible concentration it is also registered for use in dog flea collars. In addition to posing risks to the bee population, misuse of amitraz-containing products in beehives can result in exposures that could cause neurological effects and reproductive effects in humans from consumption of contaminated honey. Animal toxicity studies indicate that amitraz is slightly toxic by the oral and inhalation routes and moderately toxic through the skin. Reproductive effects seen in animal studies include a decline in male fertility and a reduction in live births. Moreover, signs of neurotoxicity from exposure to amitraz were seen in multiple animal species, including central nervous system depression, decrease in pulse rate, and hypothermia, and based on human studies, humans appear to be more sensitive to amitraz than animals.

Amitraz is also classified as a Group C possible human carcinogen based on rodent studies suggesting that long-term exposure could result in cancer.

### 3. Bees and beeswax production increasing globally say FAO <https://www.beeeculture.com/global-managed-honey-bee-stats/>

During the period 1961 to 2017:

- managed honey bee colonies increased 85.0%,
- honey production increased 181.0%
- beeswax production increased 116.0%.
- The amount of honey produced per colony increased by 45.0%, signifying improvements in the efficiency for producing honey.

## Q+A

Who wants a Q+A section in the Newsletter?. If you do, just send me your Q's and I will get a whole lot of A's for you.

I have one for you, and I have even included the Answer., but I would like to hear of some tips from TDBAI Members, and especially some Flow Hive owners.

**Q:** When can I harvest honey from the hive?

**A:** [https://www.honeybeesuite.com/when-can-i-harvest-honey-from-a-new-hive/?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=news\\_from\\_the\\_hive&utm\\_term=2023-01-11](https://www.honeybeesuite.com/when-can-i-harvest-honey-from-a-new-hive/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=news_from_the_hive&utm_term=2023-01-11)

## From the Club Shop volunteers

Hi Bee Club members

**Update** - our website is up again, you can place your orders via [beesnorth.com.au](https://beesnorth.com.au)

**Next shop opening** is first Saturday of the month.

**Location:** 3/38 Rendle St, Aitkenvale

**Time:** 9am - 10:30am

Collection at other time by arrangement and when volunteers are available.

If you experience difficulty accessing the web site for orders, please use the following email address to contact the club for shop purchases and other queries - [tsvbeeclub@gmail.com](mailto:tsvbeeclub@gmail.com)

## Remember the Shop etiquette – politeness and patience are key components to success

To all visitors to our Club Shop – please be respectful, patient and polite to our Volunteer shopkeepers. Please arrive with a smile, a dose of patience, and remember your manners.

Email orders will be given priority and serviced – but walk in orders may not be completed.

Pre-order by email before midnight on the Thursday before shop opening

to [shop@beesnorth.com.au](mailto:shop@beesnorth.com.au); please do not send your order to [info@beesnorth.com.au](mailto:info@beesnorth.com.au)



## Golden Rules for the Club Shop:

Please follow this guide:

1. Order **AND Pay** by Thursday midnight **before** the opening day, by email: [shop@beesnorth.com.au](mailto:shop@beesnorth.com.au)
2. Bring you order number and print out of the request with you
3. Arrive at the Shop **after** 9:00 am, pay for your order, **don't hang around inside the Shop to chat** – too many people inside.
4. Non-emailed or late orders may not get any attention if the Shop is too busy.
5. Please take your purchases and make room for the next shoppers, thanks

## Native bee Newsletter – join the group and check out some great info and photos

The CROSS-POLLINATOR - Newsletter of the Australian Native Bee Association

Original articles, new information and news from the world of native bees. The Association has branches in Sydney, Brisbane, Wide Bay and Gladstone, but no Townsville branch?? Are there enough interested native beekeepers to get one “flying”?

Check out these sites: <https://australiannativebee.org.au/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/Australian.Native.Bee.Association/>  
<https://www.instagram.com/australiannativebeeassociation/>

## AGM and Meeting Minutes for November 2022 General Meeting

## New TDBAI Office holders and Committee for 2023

Position	Name	Nominated	Seconded
President	Nick Smith	Alan	Mick
Vice president	Mark Finn	Mick	Beryl
Secretary	Liz Henning	Naomi	Mark
Treasurer	Derek	Mick	Nick
Assistant Treasurer	Frana McKinstry	Ron	Derek
Newsletter Editor	Lindsay Trott	Mick	Nick
Assistant Editor	John Carr	Nick	Ron
Membership Officer	Frana McKinstry	Nick	Mick
Shop Manager	Mick Olsen	Maria	Doris
Shop Assistant	Alan Z	Paul	Liz
Native bees	Nick Smith	BS	MO
Librarian	Beryl Smart	Mark	Naomi

Website/Social Media	Mick Olsen/Nick Smith	Beryl/Liz	Mick/Naomi
Native Bees	Nick Smith	Mick	Naomi
Committee	Miles F	Liz	Doris
Committee	Danny K	Nick	Mick
Committee	Maria F	Naomi	Ron
Committee	Naomi O	Mick	Nick
Committee	Doris N	Derek	Beryl
Committee	Ron N	Nick	Naomi
Committee	Paul P	Mick	Mark

## Welcome to our New Members

Existing Club Members are encouraged to assist/mentor our Newbees. They have joined the club to learn about bees, so even if you only have limited experience, give them a hand if you can. Invite a Newbee to your hive opening and discuss what's inside the box, let newbies experience hive openings to become more confident, and you will learn more yourself by trying to explain what's going on in there.

## Subscribe to the Bee Aware e-newsletter and stay up to date

The BeeAware newsletter is an e-newsletter for beekeepers and growers of pollinator-reliant crops, or anyone else simply interested in beekeeping or the pollination of crops. Each newsletter contains the latest in news, research and development, as well as upcoming events relating to honey bee biosecurity and the pollination of horticultural and agricultural crops. Townsville features in Issue 52 due to the latest AHB and Varroa incursion.

<https://beeaware.org.au/subscribe-to-newsletter/>

## Annual Membership Fees are due in July/August each year - currently \$30/p.a.

Membership fees can be made electronically to:

Name:- Townsville and District Beekeepers Association BSB:- 633000

Account:- 141466078

Refer :- Please make sure you add your Surname so that your membership can be signed off.

## Email contacts for the Office Holders 2020/21

You can use these email contacts for the Office Holders, and hopefully they will have figured out how to access them and will respond ASAP.

president@beesnorth.com.au, treasurer@beesnorth.com.au, shop@beesnorth.com.au, editor@beesnorth.com.au

And for all web and membership enquiries : info@beesnorth.com.au

## Swarm Contact List:

Please advise editor@beesnorth.com.au if you wish to be removed from this list. Contact me with your name, phone number and suburb if you want to be added to the list.

**Kelso/Kirwan:** Steve and Carla Kersnovske - 0417 344 419

**Douglas/ Gulliver:** Sonya Verburgt - 04 0853 0991

**Alice River/ Bluewater:** Sharene Dougall – 0415426903 Ronelle Nord – 0417752622 Duane Saltmer - 0400 339 508

Amanda Woodcock – 0405784083

Black River through to Rollingstone: Alex Jenkins - 0459472166

**Aitkenvale:** Pat Dury - mob 0419252829

**Charters Towers:** Mervyn Yule - 0427 124 126

Swarm List People: Please contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 for any swarm or strange bee activity in the Townsville region. For all swarm collections, please collect 300 bees or roughly 10% of brood comb and submit to Biosecurity Queensland for pest and disease monitoring.

## Newsletter Editor needs your input – why not tell me your story?

### Club Member Profiles

From The Ed.

The Newsletter Editor receives some wonderful stories and photos from some of our Members. And it makes our Newsletter a personal and relevant method of communicating our bee adventures with to all our Members, many of whom cannot get to the meetings or events. Some of these stories are amusing – like The Blooper Series (The Ed seems to feature in a lot of these), Product Reviews, stories from the many events, markets and school visits, information from our more learned members, news about workshops and open days, and so on.

I would like to include this section in the monthly Newsletter and for this to be about a different Club member each month, but it can only happen if at least 1 out of the 400+ members puts pen to paper, takes a snapshot and sends in the info to me at the Newsletter desk.

So, how about giving it a go? You don't even have to think about what to say. You just have to write in and embellish a little, tell me funny stories, successes, failures, problems and what beekeeping means to you. Go for it!! We would love to hear what you have been up to.

The TDBAI has over 400 members at last count.

Surely one or two are prepared to fill in a half page questionnaire and take a photo? If you cant write, and cant take a photo, then give me a call and I will come over for a cuppa and a chat and we will be able to extract a story with you for the rest of our Members enjoyment. Lets keep the Club Member Profile articles for the monthly Newsletter rolling.

Here's the questionnaire – fill it out and attach a couple of photos, including one of yourself and send to me <mailto:trottindsay@gmail.com>

# CLUB MEMBER PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name /HIN /Suburb /Native or/and European bees / No of hives/area of hive locations?  
Type of hives? / Type of foundation? /Beetle protection?  
Year commenced beekeeping? /Who was your mentor? /Who is involved in your household? Is anyone allergic/sensitive to stings?  
What has been your biggest success? / failure?/ mistake?/ biggest lesson?  
What would you do differently if you had to start beekeeping again after a disaster like fire/AFB/Varroa/cyclone  
Do you sell/barter/give away honey? How much honey does your average hive produce? Do you make any other products from your hives?  
Do you volunteer for the Club at Open days, markets, school events, public displays? Would you like to participate?  
Any stories you would like to tell?  
Attach photo please?  
That's it!!!! Just fill it out and send it to me, and you will be a rock star in the Monthly Newsletter.  
Please provide more than just a one word answer!!  
The Ed

## TDBA Bee Starter Kit - \$160

*The Perfect Gift for a budding Beekeeper*

*Available in Townsville from the Club*

*Shop:*

*Club Members Price Only! - \$160*

*Hive tool, brush, vented jacket/veil, gloves, and smoker*

Plus: The ABC of Beekeeping book

**Contact:** [shop@beesnorth.com.au](mailto:shop@beesnorth.com.au)



Townsville & District

# BEEKEEPERS



ASSOCIATION