

Townsville and District Beekeepers Association (Inc)



PO Box 1115, Aitkenvale QLD 4814

www.beesnorth.com.au

Newsletter No 1, February 2024

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- Shop prices at : <http://www.beesnorth.com.au>

Next Meeting:
Sunday 18 February 2024 @10 am
Michael Hooper Park,
Isaac St, 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.
 The Club Shop will usually open 1st Saturday of the month.
 Please check the website for details
 Sausage sizzle is planned

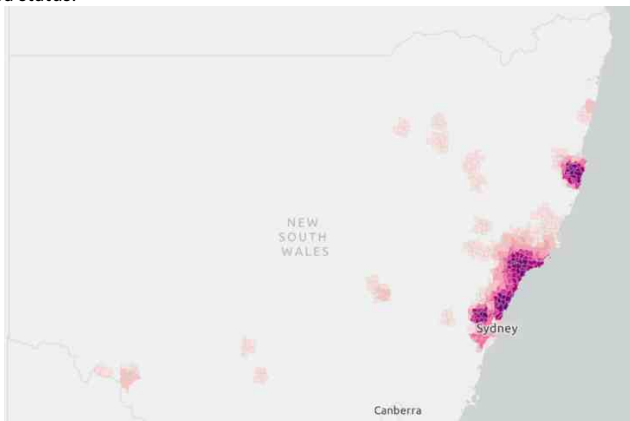
Latest in Varroa

Queensland continues to be Varroa destructor free and long may it continue. BUT we must stay vigilant. New South Wales is unfortunate to be the State with Varroa destructor and current status details can be found <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/emergencies/biosecurity/current-situation/varroa-mite-emergency-response>. We are now presented with a “heat” map indicating the intensity of the Varroa status.

Varroa mite heat map

This interactive map (online) shows where Varroa mite detections have been reported. The legend has different colours to represent the number of detections in each area.

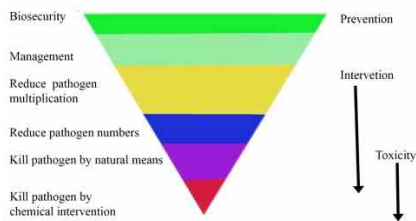
Number of detections



From a Queensland point of view, questions, comments and answers varroa@daf.qld.gov.au

What is IPM – Integrated Pest Management?

Integrated pest management (IPM) are pest prevention strategies (SOP's) that utilizes multiple techniques tailored to the ecological context of each situation in order to reduce pest populations to a manageable level. This is going to be 'taught' from a varroa point of view and it's going to be a revelation to us. But.... We already do IPM we have small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*) and we now have had to learn how Varroa biology is different.



The rest of the world has Varroa and the bees and local bee keepers have had to learn to deal. But we do not want to end up like bee keepers in Vermont (see bees on the internet) where they are becoming be-replacers rather than beekeepers.

IPM encourages beekeepers to keep a measured view on the health of the bees. Note in Northern Queensland we are going to have to write our own book on Varroa control as many of the approaches used in the Northern Hemisphere will provide limited control because we do not have a natural brood break caused by winter. The typical IPM approach is like a pyramid.

Keep your eyes peeled and your hives checked for these blighters!

Contact Roger Winton or Rob Stephens immediately if you see any.

Rob Stephens Plant Biosecurity & Product Integrity
 M 0407 374 232 E robert.stephens@daf.qld.gov.au



Deformed wing virus – Varroa on steroids!

There are worse things than Varroa. Varroa on its own is a major problem but the bees will cope as they have with the small hive beetle. But the major impact Varroa has on the bee is to act as a needle and syringe. As they feed by sticking their mouthparts into the fat organ they can also 'inject' other pathogens into the bee. Once such pathogen is a virus – the deformed wing virus. This pathogen is not apparent in Australia. But we need to be on the lookout for this condition too as the combination creates Varroa on steroids.

Note not all deformed wings are associated with the virus there are genetic reasons. But it would be best to discuss any abnormal wing or clinical sign with the DPI.

A major advantage of being in the Townsville Club is if you do see anything unusual, photograph and ask around the club. The picture is from the UK!



Townsville will be hosting the QBA and AHBIC conferences in July 2024

– get involved and attend this vital meeting and help our Committee set up and welcome the attendees. Obviously Varroa will unfortunately be a feature. Learn the latest in IPM systems.

You will learn heaps from the beekeepers coming to town.

Find out from commercial beekeepers how they keep their hives humming.

Learn how to deal monitor for Varroa.

Chat to some fellow beeks.

See the latest in hive technology.

Get some freebies from the stalls?? – maybe.

Offer some hospitality to our visitors.

Get involved – chat to a Committee member to see how you can help out, even for just a few hours.

AHBIC Queensland Conference and AGM 2024

<mailto:https://honeybee.org.au/event/queensland-conference-and-agm/>

July 11, 2024 - July 12, 2024

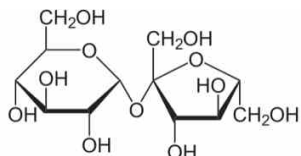
Rydges, South Townsville



QBA Conference

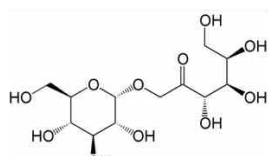
<mailto:https://qbabees.org.au>

Stingless bee honey high in trehalulose low in tooth decay!



Sucrose

vs



Trehalulose

There are more than 600 stingless bee species known across tropical and subtropical regions of the world. The indigenous peoples of these regions have often considered stingless bee honey to have therapeutic properties. Although stingless bees are typically less productive than honeybees, their honey is an established food in many regions. Despite being a close chemical cousin to table sugar (sucrose), trehalulose has very different health effects. Stingless bee honey is uniquely rich in a rare sugar, called trehalulose which can vary from 13-44% of the content.

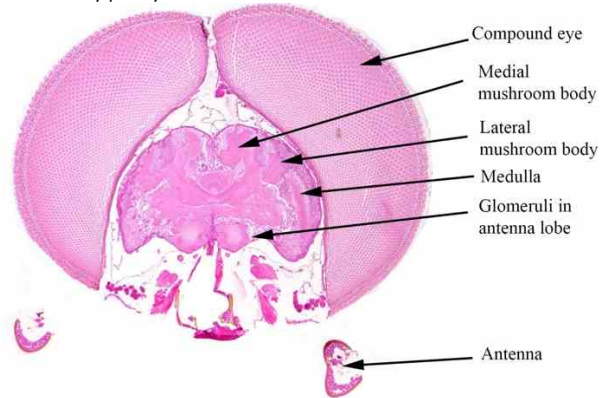
Trehalulose has benefits ranging from ranking low on the glycaemic index to displaying excellent antioxidant properties, researchers from the University of Queensland in Australia have shown. One important realisation is that trehalulose is not associated with human tooth decay. Sucrose is particularly dangerous as a risk factor for tooth decay because a bacteria, *Streptococcus mutans* convert it into a sticky, extracellular, dextran sugar that allows them to cohere to teeth, forming plaque. Where the bacteria and then other bacteria can hide. Sucrose is the only sugar that these bacteria can use to form this sticky hiding polysaccharide. Honey from *Apis mellifera* is generally also low in sucrose, depending on the honey source it can vary from 0.8 to 5% so *Apis mellifera* honey has its own great benefits.

How bee's see the world

Of course what interests us and bees are not necessarily the same and the flowers we consider mealy pretty are vital for survival to our bees!



It is no surprise that the flowers jump out at our bees and they hardly notice us! Until we get too close! And many flowers even had landing lights we cannot see!



The head of the drone – note those eyes – but this is not for flower this is to spot the queen in flight! This is a stained cross-section of the head. Typical big eyes and small brain of the male!

Flower of the month

Beehive Ginger are flowering



Bees on the Internet

Amazon Research International <https://www.amazonresearch.org>



Safeguarding stingless bees

Fighting deforestation in the Amazon using the native stingless bees. Efforts of beekeepers in Peru teaching management of the native stingless bees to help reduce the impacts on deforestation. Stingless bees regenerate degraded ecosystems.

One major concern is there may be species of bee in the Amazon which have not even be recognized by science. On a similar note, the club is assisting beekeepers in the Philippines with Nick and John starting to provide training and advice on health and management as well as learning from the 1000's of years of bee keeping in the Philippines. These are *Tetragonula biroi* bees Nick is working with. Note the familiar brood shape.



Flowers are evolving to have less sex!!

The New York Times report that there is some evidence that Field Pansies are evolving to fertilizing their own seeds because of the number of bees and other pollinators falls.



A study in France of field pansies found that the flowers were more often selfing, or using their own pollen to fertilize their seeds, over the last few decades. Credit...Samson Acoca-Pidolle.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/04/science/flower-sex-evolution-bees.html>.

The article ascribes the cause of the change to toxic pesticides and herbicides. They have found changes in the plants within 20 generations as the plants try and adopt to a new reality.

The advent of Varroa can drive some of this evolutionary trend.

The State of Vermont Bee industry. - <https://www.beeulture.com/vermont-beekeepers-refute-claims/>

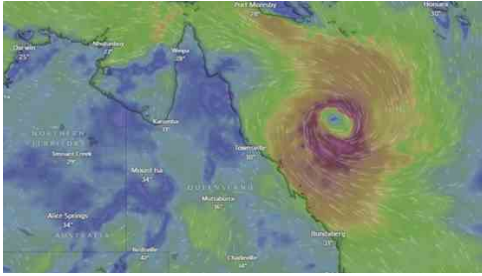
Is this the future of our industry. annual colony losses are too high and unsustainable. All Vermont beekeepers, including migratory beekeepers, struggle with a high degree of annual colony losses due to pests, pathogens, environmental impacts, and pesticide use. Vermont beekeepers have lost at least 25% of their bees during the winter months for the last three years and the losses to individual multihive beekeepers has been as high as 85% of all the hives lost in the last 4 years. Vermont beekeepers have maintained colony numbers by becoming bee-replacers instead of beekeepers. This is why we have to keep Varroa under check, if we can (ed).

Blooper of the Month? Send me your blooper for totally anonymous recognition- honestly!

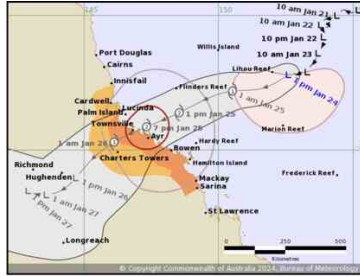
Not a Blooper but the bees survived Cyclone Kirrily

Cyclones!!!

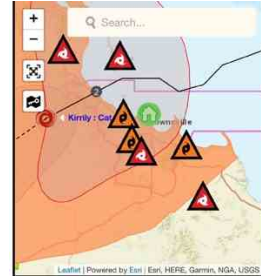
The absolute centre of the category 3 cyclone went 100m from these bees. They took it in their stride!



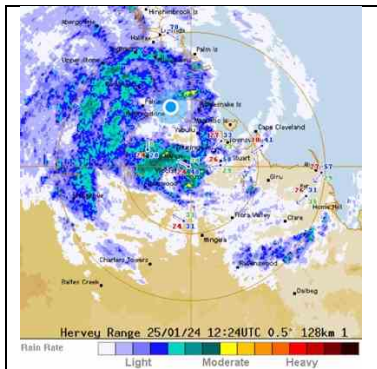
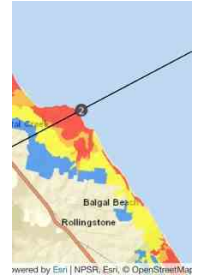
The cyclone develops off shore



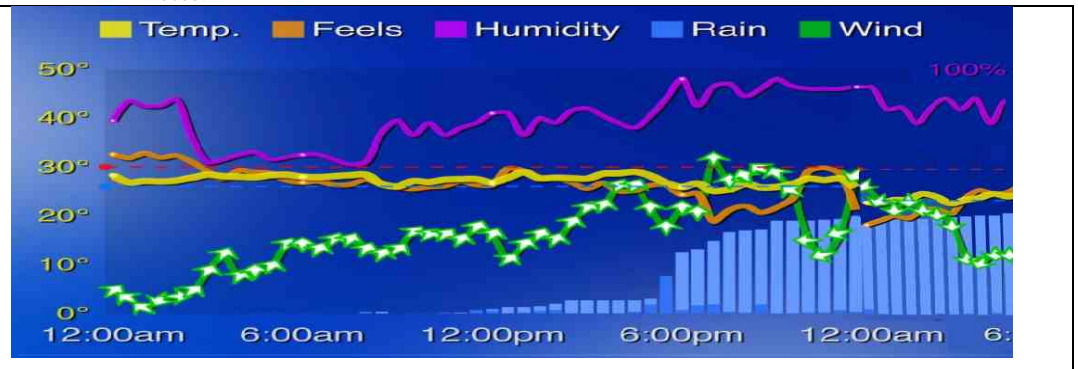
The proposed path straight at the bee club house!



But as it entered Halifax Bay it headed north!



The cyclone centred over Rollingsstone



The wind (green) as the cyclone approaches and leaves, the centre passed around midnight.



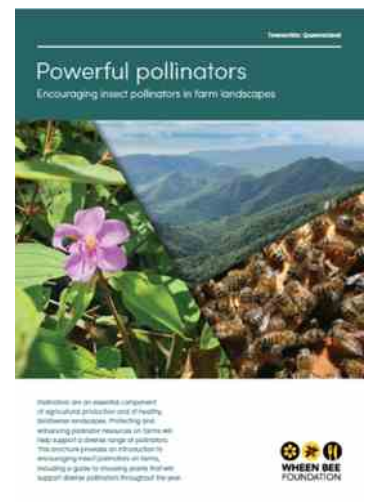
Had to explain to the Apis bees what happened during the night and they just looked bemused at some broken trees with their flowers.
The stingless guys just shrugged their wing buds! It's only a cyclone boss we live in Northern Queensland!

Download your free copy - how to promote insect pollination in our Townsville region.

<https://www.wheenbeefoundation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/SF001-X-24.1-Pollinator-Guide-Townsville-QLD.pdf>

What a great guide to what, where and when to plant in order to attract all those vital insects, like European bees, butterflies, moths, hoverflies, native bees and flies.

Sponsored by:



If you have a similar guide in your area, send it to us it will interest our beekeepers.

Hive testing is part of every beekeeper's "Biosecurity Entity" obligation

From Robert Stephens at Biosecurity Queensland

The Varroa mite in NSW serves as a timely reminder that beekeepers should be inspecting their hives every 16 weeks and reporting their results via the Bee123 survey form. It is vitally important that beekeepers report all negative test results and not just when they suspect something is wrong. This negative data is essential for showing the effort that your industry is going to and helps us provide evidence that Townsville continues to be free of Varroa and other bee pests and diseases.

It's vital all beekeepers act now and look for varroa by using the alcohol wash and drone uncapping method, then report your surveillance results (including negative data) to the Bee 123 portal.

Rob Stephens Plant Biosecurity & Product Integrity M 0407 374 232 E robert.stephens@daf.qld.gov.au W www.daf.qld.gov.au

From the Club Shop volunteers

Hi Bee Club members

Update - our website is up again, you can place your orders via 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

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. We are doing this for fun. It's not a business.

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 time.

Use this email address: tsvbeeclub@gmail.com

Golden Rules for the Club Shop:

Please follow this guide:

1. Order **AND Pay** by Thursday midnight **before** the opening day, by email: tsvbeeclub@gmail.com
2. Bring your 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.



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 Bee Aware 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/>

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/>

Annual Membership Fees are due in July/August each year - now \$35/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 2023/24

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 : membership@beesnorth.com.au

TDBAI Office holders and Committee for 2023/2024

Positions	Name		
President	Nick Smith		
Vice President	Mark Finn		
Secretary	Liz Hennig		
Treasurer	Derek Walker		
Event Co-ordinator	Amanda Coldwell	Committee 1	Naomi Olsen
QBA Co-ordinator (Temporary Position)	Nick Smith	Committee 2	Danny
Community Liason Officer		Committee 3	Kristine Walker
Biosecurity Awareness Officer	John Carr	Committee 4	Ron Newitt
Newsletter Editor	Lindsay Trott	Committee 5	Doris Newitt
Assistant Editor	John Carr	Committee 6	Maria Finn
Membership Officer	Frana McKinstry	Committee 7	Greg Skellen
Shop Manager	Alex Jenkins	Committee 8	Lesley Barr
Shop Assistant	Derek Walker	QBA Festival 2024 Sub Committee 1	Alex Jenkins
Librarian	Beryl Smart	QBA Festival 2024 Sub Committee 2	Liz Hennig
Website/Social Media Officer	Amanda Coldwell	QBA Festival 2024 Sub Committee 3	Derek Walker
Website/Social Media Officer	Alex Jenkins	QBA Festival 2024 Sub Committee 4	Amanda Coldwell
Native Bees Representative	Nick Smith	QBA Festival 2024 Sub Committee 5	Nick Smith

Swarm Contact List:

Please advise [Lindsay Trott](mailto:trottlindsay@gmail.com) (Editor) trottlindsay@gmail.com 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.

Swarm Collection

Alex Jenkins European Honey Bees **Townsville to Rollingstone** – 0459 472 166
 Ben Taylor **Douglas/ Riverside Gardens** – 4728 4992/ 0428 186000
 Duane Saltmer **Alice River** – 0400 339508
 Nick Smith **Townsville & Surrounds – European Honey Bees & Native Bees** – 0438 033 301
 Steve Kersnovske **Kelso** 0417 344 419
 Sonya Verbrugt **Gulliver** 0408 530 991
 Sharene Dougall **Bluewater** 0415 426 903
 Phillip Plant – European Honey Bees – Townsville, Ayr, Rollingstone 0456 191 000
 Bruce Warren – Native Bees – Townsville Area – 0413 395 928
 Bruce Moginsen – European Honey Bees – Railway Estate/Idalia – 0427 174 705
 Liz Hennig – European Honey Bees – Northern Beaches – 0409 067 367
 Ronelle Nord **Alice River/ Rupertswood** 0417 752 622
 Tito Parigi **Magnetic Island** 0418 796951
 Mervyn Yule **Charters Towers** – 0427 124 126

Nest Removals from houses, Trees and other structures

Alex Jenkins European Honey Bees **Townsville to Rollingstone** – 0459 472 166
 Phillip Plant – European Honey Bees – Townsville, Ayr, Rollingstone 0456 191 000
 Remember that Varroa is down South and we don't want it up here.

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

From The Ed.

Send stories and pictures to : trottlindsay@gmail.com

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 Bloop 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.

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