Townsville & District
BEEKEEPERS
ASSOCIATION
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Newsletter No. 11: December 2025

In this issue: Xmas lunch at Bohle Barn

Xmas Lunch at Bohle Barn

Sunday 14 December, 11:30 am

Liquid refreshment courtesy of Club

First detection of Varroa in a Club Member's hive

It's time to wake up Townsville beekeepers!!

We report here the first detection of Varroa in a Club member's hive. Fortunately for us in Townsville, the hive is on the Gold Coast in one of Ray Berkelman's hives, but it's a heads up warning that the pest is spreading.

The photo is from a drone uncapping from one of Ray's hives. Ray says some beekeepers consider it's better to do drone uncapping for Varroa checking in the early detection days, as its more sensitive to low numbers of Varroa. Ray is considering getting oxalic acid strips to put in the brood box while he is away for 2 weeks, and he will do more checking on his return.

Ray cleared these two hives back in August. Now there are lots of mites! Highest count was 5 on the alcohol wash. Ray had a hands-on alcohol wash tuition from Frana earlier this year, and it is certainly coming in handy! He has installed oxalic acid strips for now. Fingers crossed!

Ray sells his own designed and built hive scales to commercial beekeepers who all tell him that you'll find mites in the drone uncapping way before the alcohol wash, so it is a good presence/absence thing. However, you need the wash for estimating the mite load and determining if treatment is necessary.

Did alcohol wash this morning. Got a count of 5 on one and 4 on the other. None for the hives at my nearby river site. Installed 4 oxalic acid strips in each hive, see photo at right.

Ray has heard the bee clubs in the SE of Queensland are getting OA vapourisers and PPE for sharing among their members, and asks "Are you guys planning this too?"

From: Ray Berkelmans on the Gold Coast

Free Varroa Information

Who went to the Free Varroa Information Workshop on 26 November run by Carla Kersnovske???

That was the last one available for some time, until more funding is dedicated to that component of the **National Varroa Mite Management Program (NVMMP)**. This workshop was designed for both recreational and commercial beekeepers and focused on ***Varroa destructor***, one of the most significant pests of honeybees. With varroa mite now in Queensland, it's vital to stay informed and prepared. We need the knowledge and confidence to manage this invasive pest effectively.

Topics: Varroa mite biology, How to monitor your hives, Reporting hive health checks using Bee 123, Best-practice management strategies, the importance of record keeping.

Varroa Mite in Queensland – November Update

Varroa mite is now **established in Queensland** and spreading rapidly. Parts of Queensland are in the **build-up phase** with reinfestation taking place, while other areas remain **varroa mite free for now**.

Current Situation

Since the first detection in **March**, we've had:

- **411 positive detections** across **19 local government areas**
- Each month shows a slow increase, but:
  - **September** saw a large jump
  - **October**: 130 detections (81 new sites)
  - **November so far**: 131 detections (83 new sites, 48 reinfestations)

Where is Varroa?

Want to see where Varroa has been detected?

- **QLD Varroa Heat Map:** Varroa mite surveillance map | Business Queensland

Updating Your Beekeeper Details

If you've stopped keeping bees or need to update your registration, you can do that here:

👉 Update Your Details: https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/biosecurity/entity-registration

Chemical Treatment Table

AHBIC has a living document that outlines chemical treatments and their registration status.

👉 Varroa Treatment Table: https://honeybee.org.au/ahbic-varroa-treatment-table/

Note: This gets updated regularly, so check back often.

Webinars & Case Studies

Rainy day? Catch up on some great content:

- **Biosecurity QLD YouTube Channel**: https://www.youtube.com/@BiosecurityQld
- **NSW Case Studies:** Case Studies — National Varroa Mite Management Program
- **AHBIC Webinars:** https://www.varroa.org.au/webinars

Monthly Monitoring – Don't Forget to Report!

If you're doing alcohol washes or other Varroa monitoring, please report it via Bee123:

👉 Report Here: https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/e7fb92e833744be7b2b32d25981779bf?portalUrl=https://qportal.information.qld.gov.au/arcgis

Need help with monitoring? Reach out to me or another QLD Varroa Development Officer – we're happy to help.

Free Training

There are some excellent free training options available:

- **NVMMP Workshop Videos:** National Varroa Mite Management Program - YouTube
- **Varroa Basics Online Course:** Start Here
  https://www.varroa.org.au/online-training *(15 short topics + quiz, ~30 mins total)*
- **BOLT Course (also free!):** Register Here: https://honeybee.canopihr.com.au/auth/login/?returnUrl=%2F

Brood Break Book

Interested in brood interruption strategies? Check out this book:

👉 Summer Brood Interruption

Also available from Lyson Beekeeping Supplies.

Treatment Decision Tools

Use the **Varroa Management Tool** to help decide on treatment strategies:

👉 Explore Tool: Varroa Management Tool

Grant Program

Check out the **Community Bee Innovation Fund** for potential support:

👉 Learn More: https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/biosecurity/plant/community-bee-innovation-fund

Stay Up to Date

Subscribe to get quarterly bee e-alerts from Biosecurity QLD and updates from the National Varroa Mite Management Program:

- Biosecurity QLD Alerts: Subscribe

Please don't forget that I am available for one-on-one engagements as well as workshops. I will only be available up until the end of January.

Carla Kersnovske

Victorian gardens produce a floral explosion that attracts pollinators

The Ed visited the Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne, Victoria recently, and was hugely impressed by the amount of floral and pollinator activity. Below is a hover fly on some everlasting daisys and a honey bee on the brightest pink Leptospermum (a hybrid called "Fire") I have ever clapped eyes on. https://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/cranbourne-gardens/

President's Report (from AGM)

It's been another full month with club activities and a lot of behind-the-scenes work. A visit to St Paul's Lutheran Early Learning Centre (ELC) was well received by the children. The November shop day was busy, and the general meeting was very well attended with a guest speaker topic on making mead.

Several native bee hives were set up ready for their new homes as part of our RRSF grant funding and we're still delivering books to ELCs under the Gas Pipeline Community Fund (GPCF funding). We've applied for grants for other projects and have also applied for a lease over another site to replace the MHP site. Hopefully, these will come to fruition.

The Christmas lunch and awards presentation is coming up on 14 December, this is instead of a December meeting. There isn't meeting in January either, the next being on Sunday 8 February. Wishing all of you a safe and peaceful Christmas

Frana McKinstry
President TDBAI

Club Activities

Pic of display from St Paul's Lutheran visit and Greg Young at the November meeting showing how to make mead.

Xmas break-up lunch

Sunday 14 December 11:30 am
Bohle Barn Hotel

Liquid refreshments courtesy of your club

Club Hives on the move

The club hives have been moved from Michael Hooper Park to a new location at Cowboys House. Earlier this month we checked them out, harvesting full frames, adding supers where necessary and generally cleaning everything up. During this process Sharon and Frana took the time to clean up the Kenyan Top Bar Hive, there was a lot of cross-comb structure which made for a very messy operation. We harvested a lot of honey and replaced the bars between straight comb, here's hoping the bees get the message! Pictured, Sharon holding a well-shaped comb, that's how we want them all to look.

Frana McKinstry

Grafting Queen Cells

I was recently given the opportunity to be shown the process for raising queen bees by our local expert, Dylan, from G&A Apiaries. Firstly, a frame with eggs/larvae of the right age is selected from the Breeder Queen hive – these are Queens selected for various traits and are the mothers of all the queens raised for sale. The larvae are removed from their cells and placed into new cells which are then placed into a nursery hive. After the cells are capped they are placed into nuc boxes to await emerging and mating. After confirmed mating (obvious by a good laying pattern) they are caught and placed into cages ready for their new homes. It was really interesting, thanks Dylan.

Frana McKinstry

Bee Club has a new webmaster

We welcome Club Member Toni McMahon to the committee, as Website manager

Hives for sale ASAP

One of our past members is relocating to Brisbane. He has four nucleus hives ready to go - each has 5 frames in a corflute box.
Also available are three sets of hives (doubles/triples in plastic hiveware) which can stay in their current locations:
Two in Railway Estate
Four in Oak Valley
Six at the Crematorium (Nome area)
All are easily accessible, the clients are only needing pollination so the buyer can manage the hives on site & retain any honey.
If interested in any of these, give Steve a call on 0468 319 451 to discuss prices etc.

The new normal – varroa mite in Queensland

First record of one of our Club members with Varroa who has hive down on the Gold Coast. Stay up to date

For more information about varroa mite in Queensland:

head to www.dpi.qld.gov.au/varroa email varroa@dpi.qld.gov.au subscribe to the bee e-alert.

Novel treatment for Varroa under investigation

https://terravera.com/beekeepers

President Frana is negotiating with the developers of a novel form of non-toxic treatments for bee health and Varroa. We hope to hold either a Zoom meeting or possibly a webinar where we can hear about this development. Stay tuned, there will be some details soon.

Tropilaelaps – the next bad thing – faster breeding than Varroa

https://theconversation.com/deadlier-than-varroa-a-new-honey-bee-parasite-is-spreading-around-the-world-264891

November General Meeting Minutes

GENERAL MEETING 9 NOV 2025, HERMIT PARK STATE SCHOOL.

Meeting chaired by President Frana and at opened 2.00.

Frana welcomed all, including 1 new visitor. 31 members attended. There were 2 apologies.

GENERAL BUSINESS: PRESIDENT

- Website - Still having teething problems but confident issues are being resolved.
- Membership emails - If you receive an email saying membership is outstanding and you know you have paid recently, please ignore email. It will be fixed in due course. Apologies.
- Club Land Lease - Having vacated at MHP, we are working on a proposal to TCC for another parcel of land in the Northern Beaches area.
- Grants - Applications are ongoing. Currently awaiting the outcome of two applications.

GENERAL BUSINESS: FLOOR

- It is the swarming season. Discussion around swarms already collected. Pitfalls and successes.
- Information posters with step-by-step illustrations were on display.
- Asian honeybees detected in the Northern Beaches area. Hopefully all destroyed. Thanks to club member Alex. But please be vigilant. Another pest detected in NZ is the Yellow Leg Asian Hornet, hopefully it doesn't get to Australia.
- Carla reminded us again of reporting on Bee123. We should be inspecting our hives very regularly (four weeks). Varroa has now been detected in Childers. Carla is hosting Varroa workshop at the Bee Shop Wednesday 26 November. Please take this opportunity to attend.

As there was no further business, Frana introduced our guest speaker Greg Young. Greg gave freely of his time to discuss Mead making. At the end of the presentation Greg invited club members to visit his shop. He also offered discounts to Bee members. Mead tasting followed.

We thank Tatiana for arranging this month's guest speaker, here is her comment on Greg's presentation: *He discussed the techniques of making mead of course, but he also dove into the importance of water quality, honey quality, equipment, and timing, or rather patience. There were plenty of questions at the end. It was the largest meeting I've attended so far, and I was surprised and delighted that some generous club members provided their own mead for sampling. I personally tasted the mead by Harry Newitt, and it nearly converted me to cross from the dark side of sparkling wine.*

Greg kindly offered the Townsville Bee Club a 10% rebate for any sales of mead manufacturing equipment. The client only needs to let him know at point of sale that they are members of the club, so I'm asking that this please be communicated in the next newsletter.

His business is -
Homebrewers Warehouse
8 Whitehouse St
Garbutt

General Meeting closed 3.10pm.

Committee members were asked to stay on and have discussion around one of the grants recently applied for. While the offer is very attractive, for various reasons the majority of committee was not in favour of going ahead should we be successful in obtaining this grant. Frana will advise the provider of this. We thanked Frana for the time and effort it takes to prepare the grant applications.

Doris Newitt

Unique honey from a tiny Pacific Ocean Island Nation – good marketing

A friend of **The Ed** paid a premium price for this liquid gold, and by all accounts it was well worth it (although I haven't been offered any yet!). The producers are claiming several unique aspects about the pristine location, the last pure strain of Ligurian bees (what happened to the Kangaroo Island Ligurian bees during the bushfires?), and the organic nature of the honey, all good marketing ploys.

Niue is the smallest nation on Earth at 261km^2 and in the middle of the Pacific Ocean at 2,400 km NE of New Zealand.

Clubbie Louise Clark has a "Bee Pied Piper"

The infamous "Bee Pied Piper" lured this swarm to the side of a brick veneer house, unfortunately these girls could not be retrieved from the hole!

ED's comment: Looks like that nasty "Krusty the Clown" from The Simpsons to me.

Clubbie Ron Newitt and students refurbished the HPSS native bee hotel

Before – looking very drab and mouldy

After – what a lovely hive to come home to!

Ron was approached by HPSS to help refurbish their old bee hotel. After an e-mail to fellow bee club members for bamboo and other material this is the result.

Ron would like to say a big thank you to all the members who replied and gave freely of the materials. So, armed with bamboo and drilled logs and with some school students the new hotel stands ready for use.
Ron would also like to thank the staff, school management and Principal for their involvement and cooperation in letting us use their facility for our monthly club meetings.
Cheers
Ron

Smoker loader – how to re-use those old coffee cans

The Ed has been wondering what to do with those perfectly good but useless coffee cans he gets from the supermarket. Nice coffee but it's getting a bit expensive lately.

Bingo!!! The diameter of the can fits neatly inside the barrel of my smoker. So now I load the coffee can with pine needles, paper kitty litter, wood shavings or whatever, load up the smoker with ripped up egg cartons, get the cardboard burning well, then just upend and insert the can of flammable smoker material, give it a huff'n'puff and you're ready to go!

This saves your hands from getting burnt while stuffing things in a flaming smoker, and re-uses those lovely steel cans.

I have heaps of these cans available for free if anyone wants to try it out.

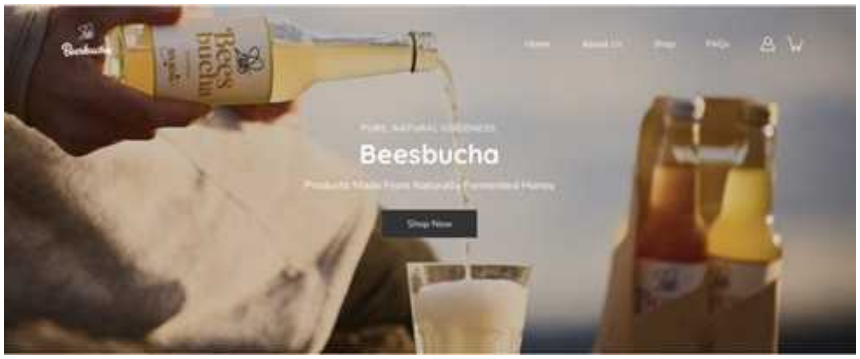
Here's the material: egg carton, smoker and a can full of pine needles.

From the Internet

Beesbucha is the next "cool" drink – I think it's just low -alcohol mead, but given a slick marketing name

https://beesbucha.com/

Experience the ultimate fizzy and delicious refresh.
Beesbucha is a non-alcoholic, naturally fermented drink. The difference, Beesbucha is a "mead", a drink made from fermented honey. Our unique blend is made with 100% local honey.
Unpasteurized
Unfiltered
No preservative, artificial flavour or sweetener



USA honey tariffs retrospectively applied to Vietnamese honey at 121%

https://ahpanet.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/ReviewCriticalCircumstanceAppeal_Oct2025.pdf

On October 15, 2025, the US Federal Court of Appeals (Federal Circuit) affirmed a decision made by the US International Trade Commission (ITC) in June 2022, concluding that several honey importers are liable for duties on raw honey imported from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (Vietnam) into the United States made on or August 25, 2021 with the aim of entering the US market prior to preliminary duties going into effect. Given the enormous volumes of raw honey imported from Vietnam during the critical circumstances period, and the 121 % average dumping margins, Commerce calculated in the first review (currently subject to a separate court appeal), duties assessed on these entries of Vietnamese raw honey ultimately may be tens of millions of dollars.

TDBAI Office holders and Committee for 2025/2026

Position	Name	Contact
President	Frana McKinstry	president@beesnorth.com.au
Vice President	Al Cooney	
Secretary	Doris Newitt	secretary@beesnorth.com.au
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Event Co-Ordinator	vacant	
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Assistant Editor	Lesley Barr	
Membership Officer	Frana McKinstry	membership@beesnorth.com.au
Shop Managers	Ron Newitt & Mark Finn	shop@beesnorth.com.au
Shop Assistant	N/A	
Librarian	Beryl Smart	
Website	Toni McMahon	
Native Bees Representative	Jon McKinstry	
Committee 1	Maria Finn	
Committee 2	Greg Skellern	
Committee 3	Carla Kersnovske	
Committee 4	Blake Steward	
Committee 5	Liz Hennig	
Committee 6	Sharon Durham	
Committee 7	Tatiana Stefanos	

Offshore container ship has a bee swarm and 2 types of mite identified – 3,600 miles offshore

https://ahpanet.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/ReviewCriticalCircumstanceAppeal_Oct2025.pdf

"The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA), in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), helped to successfully mitigate the risk of parasitic honey bee mites arriving at the Port of Newark, New Jersey in a swarm of bees on board a container ship.
The vessel was ordered by Coast Guard to remain offshore until remedial safeguarding measures were performed to remove the swarm. While the container ship was 3,600 miles off the coast of the United States, the swarm of bees were removed and safeguarded in a freezer while onboard the vessel. No brood or comb was present. The container ship provided a report, including pictures, to confirm this. The removal, containment and freezing of the bees prevented new insects from escaping into the environment.
The collected bees were sent to USDA APHIS National Identification Services for official identification. The swarm of bees was confirmed to be *Apis dorsata* Fabricius (Apidae), the giant honey bee. Two types of mites were found on the bees: *Tropilaelaps mercedesae* Delfinado & Baker (Laelapidae) mite and *Kuzinia morsei* (El-Banhawy & Abou-Awad) (Acaridae) mites.
The actions taken by the container ship were in compliance with USDA regulations. The rapid communication and collaboration efforts quickly mitigated the risk to the honey bee industry..."

Bees not needed to pollinate Magnolias

From Facebook
Magnolia flowers are living relics from a very distant past. These elegant blooms evolved in an era when bees didn't yet exist, which is why, even today, they rely largely on beetles, not bees, for pollination. Their ancestry stretches back so far that the insects drawn to their blossoms belonged to a completely different cast of characters.
Unlike most modern flowering plants that use sweet nectar to lure bees, magnolias prefer a rougher strategy. Their woody petals and sturdy structures provide safe havens for beetles. As these beetles grub around for food and shelter inside the open blooms, they pick up pollen grains and carry it to the next flower they visit. This ancient partnership between magnolias and beetles recalls an ecosystem very different from our own: one where early flowering plants and primitive insects evolved side-by-side.

For ThePreHistoric World, the magnolia-beetle alliance offers a powerful reminder of how deep evolutionary history can reach into our present. These flowers are not just beautiful garden plants, they are windows into a time when life on Earth was still experimenting with how to reproduce, how to attract pollinators, and how to survive long-term. Their reliance on beetles, rather than bees, speaks to an evolutionary heritage that predates many of the pollinators we now take for granted.

This story also challenges how we think about plant-insect relationships. Most people assume that bees are the default pollinator, but magnolias show us that other, less celebrated insects played, and continue to play, major roles in shaping the plant world. Their resilience is a testament to millions of years of co-evolution, and their survival highlights how ancient strategies can still work beautifully in modern ecosystems.
Strange but true fact: Because magnolias evolved so early, their flowers don't produce the sweet nectar bees crave, beetles are drawn instead by a faint fruity scent and pollen, making them the unexpected but perfect pollinators.
#ThePreHistoricWorld #paleontology #dinosaurs #jurassicworld #facts #fblifestyle #magnolia #plants #evolution #ancientlife
From Lindsay Trott

Guide to the attributes of various strains of honeybee

https://www.facebook.com/Beehaven2022?

Traits	Carniolan	Italian	Russian	Buckfast	VSH Varroa Sensitive Hygienic
Calmness	High	Average	Average	High	Average
Defensiveness	Low	Low	High	Low	Average
Early Brood Buildup	Average	High	High	High	Average
Early Forage	Average	High	High	Average	Average
Swarm Tendency	Low	High	High	Low	Average
Honey Production	High	High	High	High	High
Varroa Resistance	Average	Average	High	Average	High
Overwintering Ability	Average	High	High	High	Average

*A high varroa resistance does not replace the need for an IPM plan.

BEE RACE	Italian	German	Caucasian	Carniolan	African	Cordovan SUBSET	Buckfast HYBRID	Russian HYBRID	Africanized HYBRID
PROS	• Good beginner bee • Readily builds comb • Unparalleled comb builders • Only moderate tendency to swarm • Relatively easy and calm to work with • Lower range propolis producer	• Well adapted to cold climates; • Overwinter long and cold winters exceptionally well; • Needs very moderate food supplies: • develop fertile workers more readily	• tolerant to a harsh winter environment; • not overly inclined to swarm; • calm behavior when on comb; • less prone to robbing • good resistance to some diseases;	• incredibly docile • explosive spring buildup • rank among the best for overwintering, • very good builders of wax combs, good honey gatherers. • Low tendency to rob other colonies	• Higher rates of colony growth and reproduction compared to European bees. • resistant to Varroa destructor mite and Nosema virus	• they appreciate warm weather; • More docile than their Italians; • Superb comb builders; • can be bred into any race of honeybee.	• Very gentle, productive • excellent housecleaning techniques • Very good overwintering ability • Excellent honey producers • Low swarm instinct • very small amounts of propolis	• highly resistant to parasites • overwinter well. • Adaption of brood in times of dearth • guard their hive vigilantly, • Good housecleaning • tend to have queen cells almost all the time	• Excellent honey producer: • Very defensive against predators; • Resistant to Varroa mites; • Well suited to tropical climates; • reproduce faster
CONS	• Continuous brood rearing continues after honey flow ceases • More likely to starve during long winters • Poor flight orientation, highly prone to drifting • Aggressive foragers, causing tendency to rob	• Less productive in terms of honey than some other races; • They are slow to build up the colony in spring; • nervous and excitable on the comb and aggressive to interference; • Moderate swarming; • Poor housekeepers,	• in spring, they build up the colony quite slowly • excessive propolis production • In some cases, they make makes wet capped comb, which is poor for honey comb sale; • susceptible to Nosema disease	• excessive swarming	• Preference for pollen not focused on honey production • Excessive swarming • Only for tropical areas • Highly aggressive and defensive behavior	• Consume large amounts of food in winter; • May perform poorly under cold wet conditions; • more prone to robbing than Italians.	• similar robbing tendency like Italians; • Moderate spring population buildup • If colonies are left unmanaged for one or two generations, they can become extremely defensive and aggressive.	•Brood rearing is highly dependent on forage availability •Increased swarming •Tend to propolize •Susceptible to infection by Nosema fungus •Aggressive	• Extremely defensive and highly aggressive, • Smaller nests; • Frequent swarming ; • Difficult to keep near to human habitations and livestock; • Overwinters poorly in temperate climates.
FUN FACT	*They are considered to be strong honey producers also because of their tendency to rob other colonies and take away their honey.*	*Despite developing worker bees more quickly than other races, the German bees are less productive.*	*They have a long tongue.*	*Some beekeepers say they neither have to use protective clothing nor smoke when inspecting the hives!*	*In Africa, managed honeybees can abscond from hives to become wild again, and therefore the wild and managed honeybees are all related*	*It is not clear what caused the Cordovan bees to separate themselves from Italian strains and become their own race of bees*	*When crossed with some different races, sometimes the second generation becomes an extremely aggressive colony.*	*They engage in "head butting" rather than stinging potential threats!*	*The media call them "Killer bees": If perceived as a threat, they are able to chase a person up to a quarter of a mile.*

Protect Your Colony from Toppling and Damage during a Severe storm or Cyclone

Advanced preparation for a strong storm or cyclone is prudent hive management to minimise potential damage to your hives. A tall, stacked hive presents a significant surface area to the wind. Strong gusts can easily topple an improperly secured hive.

The fundamental purpose of a tie-down strap or an emlock is to maintain the structural integrity of the hive against external forces. A simple, relatively inexpensive strap is one of the most effective, low-cost tools for ensuring its survival if the hive is displaced. A compromised hive structure almost always leads to the rapid decline and death of the colony,

At its core, a tie-down strap is a simple and inexpensive insurance policy for your beehive. It is used to bind the separate components of the hive—the bottom board, brood boxes, supers, inner cover, and outer cover—into a single, solid unit, preventing it from tipping over or being knocked apart. This simple action protects the hive from catastrophic damage and the colony from exposure to the elements during high winds or physical disturbances.

While most beekeepers use one tiedown to bind their hives in preparation for a severe storm or cyclone, we have adopted two (one at the front and one at the back) so that, if the colony falls, the hardware is less likely to twist around a central strap resulting from the fall.

A tipped or separated hive isn't just an inconvenience; it is an emergency for the colony. The outcome is often fatal if not discovered and corrected immediately. The bees maintain a precise temperature and humidity level inside the hive, especially in the brood nest. When the hive is breached, this carefully controlled environment is destroyed. Exposure to cold, wind, or rain can kill the vulnerable brood and adult bees in a very short time.

What we Believe is Best Practice for Securing a Hive

Simply using a strap or emlock is not enough; using it correctly is what provides real security. The goal is to create a unified block without damaging the equipment.

Ratchet straps or **emlocks** are ideal. They are strong, weather-resistant, and allow you to apply precise tension. Avoid bungee cords, which do not provide consistent or sufficient force. The strap should be **snug and firm**, but not so tight that it crushes the corners of the wooden boxes or warps the covers. The goal is to eliminate any shifting between the boxes, not to apply maximum force. For maximum security in areas with very high winds or large animal threats, the straps can be passed over the hive and secured to the hive stand itself or to Besser blocks placed on the ground. This minimises the likelihood of the entire hive from tipping over. Ultimately, securing your hive is a proactive measure that safeguards the life of your colony and your investment as a beekeeper.

We have cyclone/storm kits that are easily accessed if a threat is identified. These kits are currently in cardboard boxes that we sourced from Officeworks. Each kit contains three ratchet straps, four tiedown augers and a small fishing net with lengths of rope attached. In the event of a severe storm notification, the pre-packaged boxes are easily collected and put in the ute. Once on site, it takes about two minutes to secure each hive. This means that we can secure all of our hives in just a couple of hours.

Jon McKinstry

Boxes ready for use.

Contents of each box

Storm ready

Cyclone ready

Townsville beekeeper provides tips for keeping bees safe during a storm or cyclone

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-10-23/beekeeper-tips-to-secure-hives-storm-season/12796960

Keeping beehives safe in Storms and Cyclones

https://www.facebook.com/ABCnorthqld/videos/bee-hive-storm-and-cyclone-preparation/2831800830475664/

Editor needs your input – why not tell me your story?
Send stories and pictures to :
Lindsay Trott: trottlindsay@gmail.com Or: Lesley Barr <lesleybarr@y7mail.com>

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

Reminders for membership renewal are sent by email – now $35/p.a.

Membership fees can be made electronically to:
Townsville and District Beekeepers
BSB: 633 000
Account: 141 466 078
Please make sure you add your Surname or subscription number so that your membership can be signed off.

Club Shop – now a shop, swap and stop – and sell

We will have a gazebo set up with new items on show and a coffee machine, so call in or stay on after collecting your order. A great opportunity to ask questions about your bees, or just to have a chat. We will also have a Buy Swap Sell table, not limited to beekeeping items. feel free to bring things along.
Shoppers – log onto the website and place your order there: Accounts\Shop
Alternatively you can place your orders via email shop@beesnorth.com.au Shop opening is first Saturday of the month.

There will be no bee shop opening for the month of January 2026.
Please give Ron and Mark a heads up when placing orders for large quantities from the club shop, so we can order extra stock.

Location: 3/38 Rendle St, Aitkenvale
Time: 9am – 10:30am

- Collection at other times by arrangement and when volunteers are available.
- Email orders will be given priority and serviced – but walk in orders may be completed if time allows.
- Pre-order before midnight on the Thursday before shop opening time.

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 Newbees experience hive openings to become more confident, and you will learn more yourself by trying to explain what's going on in there.

Wheen Bee Foundation

Keep up to date with the latest news and research from the Wheen Bee Foundation which is an Australian not-forprofit charity that promotes awareness of the importance of bees for food security and raises funds for research. Their newsletter provides very informative industry updates as well as education on bees. Check out their page and subscribe to their newsletter here

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.

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