
BUZZWORD



Beekeepers' Society of South Australia Inc.

www.bees.org.au

NEWSLETTER

Edition 111

October 2021



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Many thanks to those who provide articles for the newsletter.

Contributors:

Bob Beer
 Susan Speck

BUZZWORD

(The Beekeepers' Society Newsletter)
 Articles are always being sought by the editor for inclusion in the newsletter. Please feel free to email or write in and provide any interesting experiences about the management of your hives.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of the newsletter please contact:

Barbara Horwood, editor, on 8296 8478
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WEBSITE:

www.bees.org.au



See us on FACEBOOK. Go to www.facebook.com/beekeeperssa/

You can view a host of interesting material, photos and comments - you can "like" us and leave a comment of your own.

Equipment/Extractor Officers:

Eugene McEwen	(North)	8261 0514
Susan Lonie	(South)	0417 811 067
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2021-2022 Office Bearers:

President:	Susan Lonie
Vice-President	Adrian Makarowsky
Treasurer:	John Thomas
Assistant Treasurer	Noel McPharlin
Membership Manager	Grant Gotley

Secretary: Trisha Blanks 0437 713 790
office@bees.org.au

Committee Members:

Sandra Ullrich	Josh D'Ambrosio
Trevor Greenfield	Aphrodite Noikou
Phil de Courcey	

Co-ordinators:

Website:	James Field
Social Media:	Sandra Ullrich

Education: Trevor Greenfield, Aphrodite Noikou

Swarm Collection Co-ordinator:

Sandra Ullrich

Minute Secretary: Xar Waskowski-Jones

Librarian: Sue Speck

Committee Meetings

Third Monday of each month, 7 pm, at Kensington.

General Meetings

General meetings are held at Burnside Civic Centre Hall, 401 Greenhill Road, Tasmore on the **SECOND MONDAY** of each month at **7.30 pm**

Supper is available (gold coin donation).

General meetings have resumed in person at the Burnside Civic Centre following some relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions.

Livestream meetings from past months can still be viewed via the BSSA website or Facebook.

**BEGINNERS' AND INTERMEDIATES
EDUCATION
STARTS AT 6.30 PM
(BEFORE THE START OF MONTHLY
GENERAL MEETING)**

Teaching sessions commence at 6.30 pm for beginner beekeepers to participate in an hour of question-and-information exchange prior to the start of the main monthly general meeting. Participants need to register in advance.

BSSA Apiary Site

The BSSA hives are located at:
Selgar Avenue, Clovelly Park - about 200 metres west off South Road and behind the Tonsley Hotel.

The BSSA hive situated at the SA Museum on North Terrace is currently not available for viewing by the public due to COVID restrictions.

Department of Primary Industries (PIRSA)
Project Coordinator, Apiaries:
Michael Stedman - 8429 0872

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due as from 1st July each year. The membership fee for the financial year commencing 1 July 2021 is:

\$65 single
\$35 junior
\$100 family (2 adults + 2 children or 1 adult + 3 children). Any additional child/member \$20.

Membership application and renewal forms can be downloaded from the link found on the Beekeepers' Society of SA website (www.bees.org.au)

Queen colours

Last digit of the year
0 or 5: Blue
1 or 6: white
2 or 7: yellow
3 or 8: red
4 or 9: green

Field Days

Practical aspects of beekeeping will be demonstrated on a number of occasions during the year. Please refer to Buzzword Field Days page and the BSSA website for details.

The field days are a must for all new beekeepers.

MENTOR LIST

A mentoring service is available to our new beekeepers who would like assistance at home. Please contact the BSSA secretary for more information.

BSSA SWARM LIST

If any BSSA member is interested in having their name as a swarm collector listed on the BSSA website please contact either Trisha Blanks (BSSA Secretary) or Sandra Ullrich at sullrich@aapt.net.au

**EXTRACTORS AVAILABLE FOR USE
BY MEMBERS**

A reminder that three extractors, uncapping trays and wiring gigs are available for use on loan to financial members.

Contacts:

Eugene McEwen (North) 8261 0514
Susan Lonie (South) 0417 811 067
Trisha Blanks (Central) 0437 713 790

They must be returned in a clean and undamaged state. Please report any concerns/damage

CHRISTMAS FUNCTION



**MONDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2021
AT 6.30 PM**

Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, details are yet to be finalised in relation to this fun night. Notifications will be sent out closer to the date advising of dinner arrangements and will also be posted on the BSSA website.



MEMBERS' LUNCH

All members are welcome to join the regular lunch group which will meet at the Rising Sun Hotel, Bridge Street, Kensington on the 2nd Thursday of each new season, ie Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring. The next lunch is scheduled for **Thursday, 9 December**.

It is imperative that intending participants contact Bob Beer in advance (0413 208 835)



FIELD DAYS
(Practical Beekeeping)

**HIVE INSPECTIONS
PROGRAM OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE
BSSA HIVES**

Honey extraction as required

The BSSA hives are located at **Selgar Avenue, Clovelly Park** – about 200 metres west off South Road and behind the Tonsley Hotel

Saturday	13 November Time: 1 pm
Wednesday	1 December Time: 1 pm
Saturday	11 December Time: 1 pm
Saturday	15 January 2022 Time: 1 pm

All participants must have at least long sleeves, long-leg trousers and a head veil. Attendance is limited to 15 persons.

Bookings can be made only through the BSSA secretary or Bob Beer at beersbees@bigpond.com or mobile 0413 208 835. Cost - \$10.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED to assist new beekeepers on field days. Contact BSSA secretary if you are interested.

Useful links:

https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/bees

https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/bees/beekeeper_registration

<https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/Livestock%20Act%201997.aspx>

<https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/lz/c/a/food%20act%202001.aspx>

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/about+us/legislation/food+legislation/food+legislation>

President's Report



Hello BSSA Members and others who may read this.

Spring is certainly here with hints of summer. Swarming has been occurring for some months and honey production varied across locations.

Much is flowering with rainfall being sporadically quite high, keeping bees busy collecting pollen and nectar. Honey has begun to be extracted in many areas. Do be aware of the requirements of the *Food Act* whilst

extracting, and further requirements such as labelling laws if selling honey or other products.

The weather has also meant that the start of the fire danger season has been somewhat delayed, with the Adelaide metropolitan season commencing on 1 December 2021. Do be familiar with CFS notifications and fire safety if tending to hives where they may be a risk, including best practice when handling smokers.

We held our AGM in August followed by a subsequent Special Meeting to make a few changes to the BSSA Constitution. Thank you all those who attended and participated in the various discussions. Thank you to all those who have assisted in any way in the past year and going forward.

As the year draws towards the end our meetings continue, with December having a Christmas feel and a break in January, before resumption in the new year in February.

Our Beginners and Intermediate classes will end with week 5 in November, before recommencing with Week 1 in February. The Society's Education Committee continues to explore what further education opportunities may be developed. Please send through any thoughts, comments and ideas as we are keen to expand what can be offered and taught.

As we know the Royal Adelaide Show was sadly cancelled again this year. However many country shows, with honey classes, have continued. Further, the BSSA has had a stall at our patron Sophie Thomson's open gardens as well as some other day long events around Adelaide.

PIRSA's work continues with some beekeepers to better assist with the management of swarms. All beekeepers should try to manage their hives in an attempt to control swarming. The PIRSA site has further information on beekeeping, some of which is mandated by legislation. https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/bees

Finally, PIRSA's new Bee Biosecurity Officer should commence soon.

Hopefully I will continue to see many of you at BSSA meetings as we finish off an interesting, at times eventful, year during which bees have continued as always to be our focus. I certainly hope to see many of you in the new year.

Please continue to send any comments, advice, concerns or questions you may have, including anything you may wish us to do.

Stay safe and 'cool', contact us if you have any questions, and enjoy the Christmas-New Year period.

Susan Lonie

President BSSA



**BEGINNERS, INTERMEDIATE,
JUNIORS AND MASTERS EDUCATION
PROGRAM**

**6.30 PM TO 7.30 PM
(BEFORE THE START OF MONTHLY
GENERAL MEETING)**

Planned structured Week 1 – 5 classes which started in February 2021 will be repeated from July. Participants need to register for each session. Please contact the BSSA Secretary.

Members may attend five sessions. Non-members will be permitted to attend two sessions.

Masterclasses are anticipated to be held during weekends in 2021. Further information will be available on the BSSA website.

COMING EVENTS



Open Garden

November 6, 7 and 8 2021

Open gardens at Sophie's Patch are more than just demonstrating sustainable gardening practices. They are more like a fair or community event focused on community education. Every open garden is different at Sophie's Patch. As the garden grows, different speakers and groups join, amazing sculptures are built and the garden evolves.

BSSA is a supporting organisation and our marquee provides information to the public, honey tastings and sales of local honey products. See the Sophie's Patch website for more details of this fun outing.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST



THE HONEY FLOW IS ON!

The bees are great at telling you there is a honey flow on if you've managed to miss all the other signs given off by the plants, the weather, and growing degree days. One of the very first things they do when they have

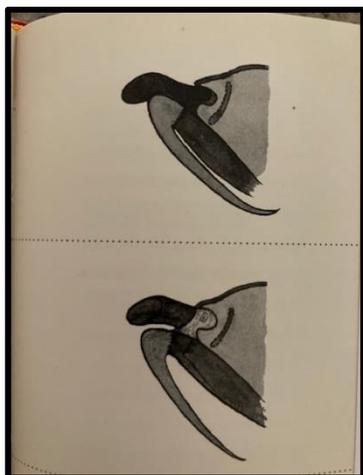
incoming carbohydrate is begin making wax. If there's undrawn foundation, they'll begin to draw it out so they have places to store nectar and honey. If the foundation is already drawn but has been previously uncapped and the edges are uneven and rough, they will smooth them out and even them up.

If even this has been done, those wax-producing house bees will place a thick film of brand-new beeswax on the top and sides of top bars. Anywhere they can, bees will begin to put new wax.

This new wax is beautifully white and will contrast nicely with older comb or with propolis-covered top bars, and it will certainly be noticeable as it is added to foundation to make new cells. Look for the obvious sign of a brand-new honey flow: brand-new beeswax on almost anything and everything inside.

(from The Backyard Beekeeper's Honey Handbook by Kim Flottum, 2012, Crestline, New York)

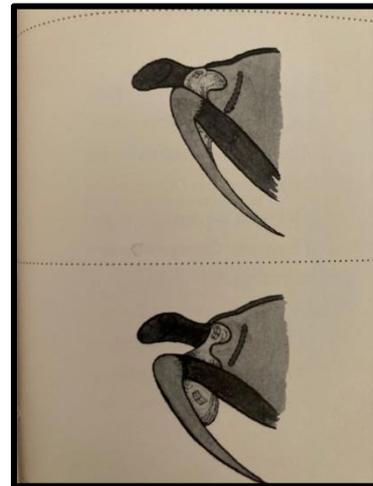
EVAPORATING NECTAR



(1) and (2)

(1)..The mouthparts of our honey bee at rest with her proboscis folded down.

(2) When she begins to make her nectar bubble, she extends her proboscis and ...



(3) and (4)

(3) ... expels a small drop of nectar.

(4) To increase the rate of evaporation, she rolls the drop and increases the amount of nectar until ...



(5) and (6)

(5) ... the drop becomes quite large. A larger surface area enhances evaporation even more.

(6) When the nectar has evaporated to about half or so, our bee adds more nectar and continues the process. She will continue until she has reduced most of the nectar in her crop, or she is summoned to unload foragers returning with more nectar.

(from The Backyard Beekeeper's Honey Handbook by Kim Flottum, 2012, Crestline, New York)



FLYING DOCTOR BEES TO PREVENT CHERRY DISEASE

(from Natural Awakening Magazine, March 2015)

University of Adelaide researchers are introducing a method to use bees to deliver disease control to cherry blossom, preventing brown rot in cherries.

This is a new technique for Australia and a world first for cherry orchards with potential application in many horticultural industries. It will be demonstrated publicly for the first time at a field day today hosted by Cherry Growers of South Australia and the researchers at Lennane Orchards, Montacute.

"Brown rot is caused by a fungus which significantly impacts the \$150 million Australian cherry industry through costs of applying fungicide, yield loss and fruit spoilage," says project leader and bee researcher Dr Katja Hogendoorn postdoctoral research associate with the University's School of Agriculture, Food and Wine.

"All commercial cherry growers spray during flowering to control the later development of cherry brown rot. Instead of spraying fungicide, we're using bees to deliver a biological control agent right to the flowers where it is needed. This uses

an innovative delivery method called entomovectoring." The biological control agent contains spores of a parasitic fungus that prevents another fungus that causes the brown rot from colonising the flower. Every morning, the cherry grower sprinkles the spores into a specially designed dispenser that has been fitted in front of the hive. The bees pick up the spores between their body hairs and bring them to the flowers.

"The 'flying doctors' technology is used successfully in Europe to control strawberry grey mould, but it's the first time for Australia and the first time in cherry orchards anywhere,"

Dr Hogendoorn says.

Dr Hogendoorn says the use of bees has many environmental and economic benefits compared to spraying fungicide. "The bees deliver control on target, every day," she says. "There is no spray drift or run-off into the environment, less use of heavy equipment, water, labour and fuel."

Dr Hogendoorn says adoption of the technique will have the additional benefit of building up the honey bee industry and the number of managed hives. This will help prepare Australia for the expected incursion of the Varroa mite which is causing great damage and cost to bee and horticultural industries around the world.

With increasing availability of suitable biological control agents, future application of the 'flying doctors' technology is expected to become available for disease control in almonds, grapes, strawberry, raspberry, apple, pear and stone fruit.

The 'flying doctors' project is funded by the Australian Government through a

Department of Agriculture Innovation Grant.

(Katja was a speaker at one of our BSSA monthly meetings and demonstrated an adapted hive to use her technique)

‘Sniffer bees’ are being trained to detect land mines

(Article first appeared in the New Daily on June 15, 2018)

“Sniffer bees are able to seek out **drugs, explosives, pesticides and radioactive metals**, according to a British academic who is training them to locate landmines. ... The bees can then detect explosives from distances of up to a couple of kilometres.”
(The Australian, 31 August 2019)



Specially-trained “sniffer bees” are being put to work finding unexploded mines in the Balkans. The unlikely heroes are being trained by Croatian researchers in a multimillion-euro program to sniff out the deadly landmines that are a legacy of the region’s 1990s war.

Zagreb University professor Nikola Kezic said industrious honeybees, with their perfect sense of smell, offered a surprisingly simple solution to the issue. In an experiment, conducted in association with Scotland’s St Andrew’s University and codenamed Tiramisu, the bees are being trained to associate the smell of sugar syrup with TNT.

“The bees can clearly detect this target, and we are very satisfied,” Professor Kezic told news service [Science X](#).

To train the bees, scientists set up feeding points, some of which contained TNT particles. These feeding points offered “a sugar solution as a reward”, he said. “It is not a problem for a bee to learn the smell of an explosive, which it can then search,” he said. “You can train a bee, but training their colony of thousands becomes a problem.”

Dr Ross Gillander of St Andrews University designed the equipment that measures whether the bees are returning to their hives with traces of explosive. He was in Croatia for the latest round of field trials in April 2018. Dr Gillander said the bees were trained in the same way dogs would be. “Basically we teach them by a version of reward, like you do with dogs,” he said.

“The bees fly out of their hive to go about their normal day-to-day job of finding pollen but instead of finding pollen they find explosives. It’s the sugar syrup that draws them out.

The training takes two days and is much faster and more efficient than training a dog.” Drone footage is used to pinpoint the bees’ finds, so mines can be cleared.

Early trial results are promising, offering hope for the Balkans and other regions of the world where mines are a deadly issue. Officials estimate 90,000 landmines were used in Croatia during the four-year Balkans conflict – mostly laid without maps or other location details. Landmines have killed about 2500 people in the area since 1991 – and maimed many thousands more.

Dijana Plestina, the head of the Croatian government’s de-mining bureau, said mines represented a large obstacle to people and industry, including agriculture and tourism. “While this exists, we are living in a kind of terror, at least for the people who are living in areas suspected to have mines,” she

said. "We will not be a country in peace until this problem is solved." Scientists say the bees could prove more effective than sniffer dogs in some circumstances because they can work for longer and are cheaper to use.

But the winged life-savers do come with complications of their own – including a tendency to shirk off after a while. "After three days the bees realise that they aren't getting a reward from the TNT and, as a result, are uninterested in it, and [they] look for other things," Dr Gillander said. "After three days we have to re-train the honeybees to detect the explosives."

On top of that, they won't usually work when it's wet or dark.

Manuka honey long-running Australia-New Zealand stoush continues at tribunal

ABC Rural By Clint Jasper
Posted Wed 6 Oct 2021



Manuka honey sells for lucrative prices in export markets. (ABC News: Melanie Vujkovic)

Australian manuka honey producers will again attempt to block their New Zealand counterparts from trademarking the words "manuka honey" this week.

In a three-day hearing before the Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand (IPONZ),

the Australian Manuka Honey Association will oppose the New Zealand Manuka Honey Appellation Society's application for a

"certification trademark" to prevent any foreign manuka honey from being labelled as such within New Zealand.

This is despite the fact existing laws in New Zealand ban imports of honey from nearly all countries, save for a small handful of Pacific Island nations.

Before IPONZ, the Australian Manuka Honey Association will argue the plant from which manuka honey is derived, *Leptospermum scoparium*, grows natively on both sides of the Tasman Sea.

And the word "manuka" has been used to describe the plant and the honey since the 1930s in Australia.

Key points:

- New Zealand manuka honey producers want to trademark the words "manuka honey".
- NZ's attempts to do this in Australia and USA have failed.
- Australian producers argue the plant that the honey is derived from is native in both countries.

The New Zealand Manuka Honey Appellation Society will argue their manuka honey is distinctly different from the Australian product, and the Maori word "manuka" carries an important cultural significance for New Zealand's First Nations peoples.

Manuka honey sells for hundreds of dollars a kilogram in export markets and has a long list of celebrity endorsements of its health properties.

The honey also has a range of demonstrated therapeutic benefits that make it a valuable product in the pharmaceutical and medical fields.

New Zealand manuka honey producers only want the name to apply to honey produced on the eastern side of the Tasman Sea.

Limited range

Should New Zealand's application be successful, the "certification mark" will only apply in New Zealand, according to Henry Hughes director David Moore.

"Outside of New Zealand, it's a question of going country-by-country and looking at how the term manuka honey is understood in those countries, and whether it's already been registered as a certification mark or a geographic indicator.

"To be honest, the Manuka Honey Appellation Society really has its work cut out for it because it needs to move jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction using whatever methods are available to it to protect the term "manuka honey", " he said

Attempts to do this in Australia, China and the United States have already failed.

Australian producers are actively opposing a similar application before the UK Intellectual Property Office, and a decision in that matter will be handed down before the end of the year.

"They've been rejected in every jurisdiction so far, but the New Zealand government is funding them, so they keep trying," according to the Australian Manuka Honey Association's Paul Callander.



Leptospermum scoparium, which makes Manuka honey, has been proven to grow natively in both Australia and New Zealand.

Failed forum

Mr Callander said the industry had been seeking support from the federal government for four years.

Trade Minister, Dan Tehan, indicated in April, he wanted to hold a forum to bring both parties together and wrote to his New Zealand counterpart calling for a meeting.

But the workshop did not take place. In a statement to the ABC, Mr Tehan said: "Australian officials are monitoring the IPONZ hearings.

"It is in the interests of both countries to promote our high-quality manuka honey in global markets and prevent inferior or mislabelled honey product from third-country producers taking market share from our producers.

"We continue to work with New Zealand to advance our proposal for both countries to work together on areas such as industry development, research, joint marketing, technology sharing and addressing fraudulent honey products," he said.

BEE-FRIENDLY PLANT TO GROW

Abelia x grandiflora -- Abelia



This medium evergreen shrub produces masses of white/pink bell-shaped flowers that are adored by bees and butterflies. It begins flowering in about December so it provides good nectar and pollen resources after many wildflowers finish flowering in spring. The new growth is bronze/red turning glossy green. Water well in summer, especially if soils are light.

The flowers of the Abelia are also a valuable resource during summer for native bees.

DID YOU KNOW ... ?

HEATED BEESWAX

Beeswax won't be harmed at 140 deg F (60 deg C), even if it is held there for some time. But heating to a very hot temperature – more than 175 deg F (80 deg C) – or holding beeswax at liquid stage for hours will darken the wax and drive off some, if not all, of the aromas for which beeswax is known.



RECIPES

Summer is just around the corner. Try making this easy but tasty blueberry pie – a perfect accompaniment to your summer bbq.

BLUEBERRY PIE



6 cups fresh blueberries
¾ cup honey (medium to light flavoured)
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ cup water
4 tablespoons cornstarch
2 teaspoons butter
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1 prebaked 9-inch (22.5 cm) pie crust (or a homemade baked and cooled pie crust)
whipped cream (optional)

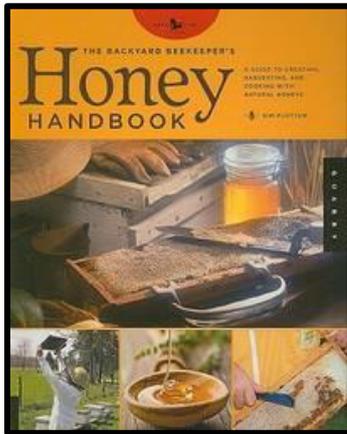
In a large saucepan, combine 5 cups (725 g) of the blueberries with the honey and salt. In a glass, mix the water and cornstarch and add to the blueberries. Cook over medium heat until the mixture bubbles. Then add the butter, lemon juice, and the remaining 1 cup (145 g) of blueberries and stir. Remove from the heat and let cool just a bit, then pour into the pie crust. Chill. When serving, top with shipped cream, if desired. Makes 6 servings.

(recipe from The Backyard Beekeeper's Honey Handbook)



BOOK CORNER

The BSSA website includes a list of recommended books and new additions to the library, including the following:



The Backyard Beekeeper's Honey Handbook: A Guide To Creating, Harvesting, And Cooking With Natural Honeys

By Kim Flottum

Published by Crestline (2012), New York USA

In *The Backyard Beekeeper's Honey Handbook*, seasoned expert, Kim Flottum explains the process of moving honey from beehive to honey house and how to reveal and extract it so none of the finer aromas, tastes, or colours are bruised, burned, or broken. You'll learn which crops produce the best tasting honey and which to avoid. It also provides instructions for careful, considerate storing, and focuses on the best ways to produce, harvest, and use the honey.

Unlike the harsh industrial methods used by beekeepers who harvest a season's blend just once a year, *The Backyard Beekeeper's*

Honey Handbook is ideal for those who want to follow a simpler path to create an unforgettable product. You'll be introduced to the amazing varieties of honey and be provided with a detailed illustrated guide to honey plants along with their bloom dates and honey flows.

The full-colour, stunning photographs illustrate and exalt the process. This book will help you create an amazing honey crop. You'll find dozens of delicious, healthy recipes featuring artisan and varietal honey for both sweet and savory dishes. The recipes range from dips and dressings to salads and vegetables to entrees and desserts featuring your own honey.

Whilst this is an American publication, it will be useful – and can be adapted where necessary – for beekeepers in South Australia.

(Review from Amazon)

THE BEEHIVE



The Beehive, officially opened in 1977

The Beehive is the common name for the Executive Wing of New Zealand Parliament Buildings, located at the corner of Molesworth Street and Lambton Quay, Wellington. It was conceived by British architect Sir Basil Spence in 1964 and is so called because its shape is reminiscent of a traditional woven form of beehive known as a "skep".

Beehives choppered in for crucial almond pollination

ABC Rural By Kellie Hollingworth and Hugh Hogan

Posted Sat 7 Aug 2021

Key points:

- Bees are needed to carry pollen from flower to flower on almond trees because almonds are not wind-pollinated like some other crops
- A Tumut beekeeper has rescued 1,200 hives from boggy ground at Trundle using a helicopter
- Pollination coordinators are also battling with COVID-19 border restrictions

Beekeepers are going to great lengths to ensure that the almond pollination season in north-west Victoria is a blooming success this year. More than 277,000 hives are being transported to the region from across Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

It's the largest movement of livestock in Australia.

But Tumut beekeeper John Casey needed help from above to rescue 1,200 hives that were stuck north of Condobolin because the road was too wet to access them. In a rare move, the hives were moved by helicopter at a cost of \$1,600 per hour, before being loaded onto trucks and transported to Boundary Bend. "I've never seen it done," he said. "It would be cheaper than doing a diff or gearbox on a truck. I think anyway.

"We're going to keep getting rain. It's supposed to rain more next month, but we need to get them out for the almond pollination," he said.



Bees go to work

Sourcing enough beehives is one challenge but navigating COVID-19 restrictions adds another level of complexity for people like Trevor Monson. He coordinates almond pollination for a number of the farms between Tooleybuc and Hattah.

COVID-19 challenges

"Beekeepers have been really good with the [border] paperwork," he said. Mr Monson said this year's COVID-19 restrictions had been even more challenging to navigate than last year. "We ask the beekeepers to get tested before they load their bees. "We're only 5 kilometres from the border. They come in they unload and they're back out again," Mr Monson said. The almond orchards in north-west Victoria are expected to be in full bloom within days.

MEMOIRS – LETTER TO BOB BEER FROM DOUG CLARKE

Doug Clarke is a BSSA Past President of the 1990 – 1993 era, and Vice-President 1988 – 1989, now an entrenched resident of Coffin Bay.

*"Hello Bob,
Attached is the letter I wrote to the 'Coffin Bay Sun'. As you will read, it is aimed at*

non-beekeepers. Despite a few hiccups because of some inept handling (I was very rusty after being beeless for 25 years - far, far too long), the bees are now thriving.

When you rang, we had just got back from balmy weather in Darwin to the southern ice-box, and I was feeling quite miserable. So, the sound of your voice and happy laugh quite cheered me up. But it was tempered by the news of Alan's death (see note below).

We are aiming to be in Adelaide in early September, but Annie's knee is giving her a lot of gyp. If we miss out, we will look forward to seeing you before Christmas. You are welcome to stay with us in the caravan (which is now sheltered by a carport).

*Happy beekeeping
Doug"*

(Note: Alan Dixon a Past President 1985 to 1989, also a Past Life Member 1993. Alan died on Sunday 25 July 2021.)

EUROPEAN HONEY BEES

This tale, rather wonderful for me, digresses into flying insects rather than birds.



For some years I had been toying with the idea of keeping bees again, and last month, finally started making a hive with timber retrieved from the dump. Old Oregon fascia boards are particularly useful for hive sides and ends. Instead of the normal "Langstroth" hive where boxes are stacked

one on top of the other, I decided on a "top bar" hive.

These hives, as you can see from the photo, go along rather than up. Working them causes considerably less stress to the bees (and the beekeeper!) and a lot less equipment is needed. The down side is that less honey can be taken, but that is only a secondary consideration for me.

Now here's where the magic comes in. We had been in Lincoln for the day and on arriving home, the air was thick with flying insects. On closer inspection, a swarm, the size of a big watermelon, was hanging from a finger-sized branch, head high on the side of the drive! Panic stations! Would I be able to complete the hive – still needing entrance holes, legs, roof and painting – before the swarm flew off? Then followed a mad two-hour scramble to make the home habitable and sited in the backyard; note, the paint job went by the by.



Fortunately, the swarm was still there. Swarm bees are mild mannered, perhaps because they have gorged on honey before departing their old home. Their abdomens are so full they are unable to sting. Food reserves are essential to tide them over until they become established in a new hive. My initial apprehension was unfounded as it was quite easy to snip off the branch above the swarm, gently lower it into a plastic drum, walk it over to the brand-new hive, and pour the new tenants in.

There is always a chance that the bees will not take to their new home and fly off to a

place more to their liking. Eight days later, they are still there and have already drawn out three full frames of comb (see photo) and have started on others.

The queen has begun laying eggs in the central sections of the comb. The remainder is being filled with nectar and pollen from foraging bees as fast as the comb constructing workers can make it. The bees have been particularly placid each time I have inspected the hive.

Bees are able to disengage their wings for flying and use them as fans to evaporate and thicken nectar into honey. On a still evening the air around the hive is redolent with the perfume of honey being made.

In the twenty-five years we have lived here, this is the first time a swarm has settled in the garden – and just at the right time! Was it a coincidence or was it magic beyond our understanding? “There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio/ Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

Doug Clarke, Oct. 2020.

VALE –
ERICH WILHELM REUSCHLE



REUSCHLE,
Erich Wilhelm

17 March 1931 -
10 August 2021
Aged 90 years.

Eric was a member of the BSSA since August 1995. Eric and his wife Elfreda

attended regular meetings and social activities continuously until about 2013. Elfreda suffered a massive stroke and was admitted to Southern Cross Homes. Eric continued to live in his family home which he built until about August 2019, when a second fall finally put him into hospital and then into a residential home until he died on Tuesday 10/08/2021. Prior to Eric joining BSSA he had been a member of the SAAA as a commercial Beekeeper.

The funeral service was live streamed on Friday, 20 August 20 2021 at 10 am (Australia/Adelaide). Please visit the Alfred James (funeral directors) website for details if you wish to view it at a later date.

***SOMETHING TO WATCH ON TV
OR VIA THE INTERNET***

'THE BEE WHISPERER'



Charlie Agar is the man behind bee removal outfit Charlie Bee Company, and the star of a fascinating new reality series.

“We are rescuing pollinators at the end of the day,” Agar tells us. “And I’m a big greenie so I think there’s an underlying message that resonates with people. The two bee removals I did today were two people who could have exterminated their hives and they said, ‘We’d really like to save them’ you know? People are a little more woke about those kinds of things these days.” (Excerpt from review).

8-part series *The Bee Whisperer* premiered at 6.30pm, Saturday 2 October on SBS VICELAND.