



Beekeepers Association of the ACT

PO Box 1482, Woden, ACT, 2606

Newsletter of the Beekeepers Association of the ACT Incorporated

Newsletter Web address: www.bindaree.com.au/newsletter.htm

Meetings of the Beekeepers Association of the ACT Inc are held on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30 pm at the CIT, Heysen Street, Weston in Building A
Contact No: Association President – Bob Shaw Ph: 62540018

October 2004

Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday 14th October at 7.30pm, at CIT Weston. Our guest speaker is Peter Ormay who will speak about eucalypts and how to identify them. Bring along a sample of your local trees for possible identification. A sample of mature leaves, flowers, fruits and bark gives the best chance for Peter to identify them accurately.

The business section of the meeting is from 7.30pm and Peter will speak from 8.00pm. There will be time for a cup of tea and chat after the meeting.

At the November meeting Doug Somerville will speak about bee nutrition and feeding.

Previous Meeting

In September Paul Hooper spoke about swarming, its causes and prevention and swarm collecting.

Paul made the point that swarming is a natural process for bees to reproduce colonies and ensure the survival of the species. To minimise swarming you need to work with the bees' natural instincts rather than against them.

Swarming weakens the parent hive and will reduce the amount of honey you get from the hive and may also create problems with your neighbours.

The main methods of preventing or minimising swarming are maintaining young vigorous queens and providing space for brood raising and storage of nectar and pollen. Removing queen cells may help but will not stop swarming without the other interventions.

Paul described two methods to artificially swarm a hive. One involves making the brood box up as a new hive a metre or more away from its old location, but leaving the old queen on one frame of brood in a new brood box of empty comb on the old site. The second method uses a horizontal division board and creates two hives sitting on the one site. In both cases the bees may either be used to increase the number of colonies or may be amalgamated later in the season when the danger of swarming is past.

President's Note:

Hi everyone! I hope this finds you and your bees well. Bee 1 and Bee 2 have completed another event-free trip to the golden canola fields of the central-west. It is heartening to see so much colour returning to our landscape following the recent rain and warmer weather.

Red Box is flowering in many parts of Canberra and bees seem to be actively working it. Capeweed has also begun to appear on the nature strips around town.

It is essential that spring management procedures and disease inspections are carried out as soon as possible as out bees are multiplying fast and swarms are not popular with the neighbours. If you aren't sure what to do or think that your bees may be sick but can't identify a specific problem please seek help from more experienced members of the Association. We have a wealth of knowledge and experience to call upon to assist each other.

Our October meeting is on Thursday 14th. Following the business portion of the meeting there will be a talk on local eucalypts presented by Peter Ormay. See you there!

Bob Shaw



Thanks to Brigitte for this lovely picture taken by Lucy at Floriade. It's the last chance to see Floriade this week as it closes on Sunday 17th October. Well worth a visit.

New Members

Welcome to Lisa Clements of Holt and Angela O'Neill of Downer. Also a belated welcome to Fiona, Tito and Clyde Wheatland of Kambah.

Swarm Collecting

Phone Environment ACT on 6207 9777 to put your name on the swarm collection list if you are able to collect swarms this year. Dick also maintains a swarm list on Bindaree website. Please take your name off the lists if you are no longer able to collect swarms.

Mini Field Day

A small group of members and guests spent a pleasant couple of hours examining the hives at CIT Weston. It was the first spring inspection and some hives needed an extra box, some brood manipulation or a bit of help with an extra frame of brood from a stronger hive. No hives showed any sign of disease which is always a concern after the long break in inspections.

Thank you to Dick for organising and leading the field day. New or inexperienced beekeepers especially gained from the experience and the old hands had a good time as well.



Bait Box Update

The first swarm of the season arrived in our rooftop bait box last week. The usual procedure was followed. On day one there were a few bees investigating the box, running in and out and flying circles around the box. On day two the numbers of scout bees increased and about mid-morning on day three the swarm arrived and took up residence in the box.

Early the next day we removed the box from the roof and settled them into the garden. If you do this they seem to accept that their home has moved overnight and reorient themselves to the new site. Very few went looking on the roof and they seemed to get the message and find the new site during the day. Once they are settled you can put a new bait box on the roof ready for a future swarm.

Lyn Shiels



Diseased Hive Material

American Foul Brood is a reportable disease under the Animal Diseases Act. Reports should go to Environment ACT on Ph 62079777. Diseased hive material may then be taken to the Totalcare ACT Government Incinerator, Sandford Street, Mitchell for disposal. Please tell Environment ACT before you take the material. Label the beeproof packages clearly "Diseased Bee Material". Infected boxes can be sent to Sydney for irradiation rather than destroyed but frames with dead brood and dead bees should be incinerated.

Beekeeping and Fire Danger

Working bees in hotter months has potential for fire problems with smokers if bees are on farm or bush land.

During total fire bans it is illegal to light a smoker in the open although it is possible to use one under certain strict controls. High fire danger periods occur on days with high temperatures and strong winds. Such days are not good for working with bees and if possible, the work should be left until better conditions occur.

If it is really essential to work your bees during a period of high fire danger some precautions need to be taken to ensure you don't start a bushfire.

The area around the hives should be as free from flammable debris as possible. The smoker should stand in a fireproof container (eg metal) while lighting, between uses and when refilling. Have a large can of water on hand in the apiary if it's in a bush or farmland area. Empty the smoker into a water-filled hole in the ground and cover with earth when you are sure it is out. Make sure the smoker is cool before storing away for transport.

In periods of total fire ban it may help to have a spray bottle of light sugar syrup on hand and lightly spray the frames and front of the hive. This helps to keep the bees occupied while you are working.

Lyn Shiels

How I Began in Bees

Stories are sought from members telling how they came to take up beekeeping so please take the time to put pen to paper and send your story in for the newsletter.

Irradiation of Beehives

We will send a load of hives to Steritech for irradiation early in November. Anyone who has hives to send please contact Lyn or Pat Shiels on Ph 62862421. Transport cost depends on the number of hives sent and the last load was \$5.00 per hive. The current cost of irradiation is \$22 for a triple and \$15.40 for a double. The total weight of each unit must be less than 25 kilograms and they must be double wrapped and double emlocked. NSW Agriculture has an Agnote detailing the wrapping required. If unsure about packaging contact Lyn and Pat, or Dick at Bindaree for detailed instructions or access the Agnote at www.agric.nsw.gov.au.

In Bloom around Canberra

Some of the ironbarks are blooming in Canberra at the moment. Capeweed is flowering and Paterson's Curse is beginning on roadsides. Many other eucalypts are heavy with buds. In town the Calistemons and other garden flowers are contributing to the well being of town hives. The canola is in full spate around Boorowa and some beekeepers are taking advantage of it to build up hives and get an early honey crop.

Information is sought from members about floral sources in town and surrounding areas. If you notice particular plants in bloom please let me know on Ph. 6286 2421.

Lyn Shiels



16 James St Curtin ACT 2605

Richard Johnston

Phone: 02 6281 2111

Email: bindaree.bee@bigpond.com

Website: www.bindaree.com.au

Shop open: Wed, Thur, Fri 4 pm to 6 pm, Sat 9.30 am to 4pm
Closed: Sun, Mon, Tue.