



Beekeepers Association of the ACT

PO Box 1482, Woden, ACT, 2606

Newsletter of the Beekeepers Association of the ACT Incorporated

Website: www.actbeekeepers.asn.au

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: Association President – Dave Alden Ph: 62826908

Email: enquiries@actbeekeepers.asn.au

October 2006

Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday 12th October at 7.30pm, at CIT Weston. There will be a talk about swarming and swarms by an Association member, Lyn Shiels.

As usual the meeting will begin with Beginner's Corner, sharing beekeeping news and questions and the speaker will speak from about 7.45pm. There will be supper and time to chat after the meeting.

President's Note:

Members at our September monthly meeting were spell-bound as Dr Denis Anderson, from CSIRO's Entomology Division spoke to us about "Asian honeybees and biosecurity issues for Australian beekeepers". As many members would know, Denis is an expert on beetles that have evolved to live with and bother honeybees. Denis guided us through some of the characteristics of the many races and species of Asian honeybees and their beetles. I was fascinated to see video footage of some of these species, particularly those species that produced single fan-shaped combs. Denis charted the distribution of the bees and beetles and flagged how close the beetles are to Australia. This is a timely reminder for us all to take extra care to examine our hives for such pests and diseases as the season gets under way.

Dave Alden

Beekeeping Course.

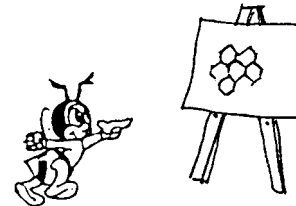
A second Backyard Beekeeping Course at the CIT School of Horticulture, Weston will be held beginning on November 7th if sufficient enrolments are received.

The course consists of four evening theory sessions in the classroom and four Saturday morning practical sessions conducted at beehives located at the CIT, Weston.

Topics will include bee behaviour, handling bees, getting started, equipment, seasonal activities, pests and diseases, and extracting.

The course provides beginning beekeepers with basic knowledge and experience to start them in beekeeping. For enrolments phone CIT Solutions on 6207 4441.

Please promote this course to new or potential beekeepers.



Irradiation of Beehives

We are sending a load of hives to Steritech about mid October. Please let me know as soon as possible if you have hives that you would like to send. The total weight of each unit must be less than 25 kilograms and they must be double wrapped and double emlocked. We have some extra emlocks available to members to help with packing. NSW Agriculture publishes an Agnote detailing the wrapping required which can be accessed at <http://tinyurl.com/j9g78>

Transport cost depends on the number of hives sent and is usually about \$6-\$7 per hive. Please contact Lyn or Pat Shiels on Ph 62862421.

New Charges

Single Hive \$8.80

Double Hive \$16.50

Triple Hive \$23.10

Prices for irradiation of honey are available on application.

Tips for swarm collecting.

I have been collecting swarms of bees over the last few years and pass on a few tips if you wish to do so yourself.

When collecting swarms ensure that members of the public are not at risk of being stung. Encourage them to watch from a window or keep low and a distance of at least ten metres.

Wear all appropriate protective clothing.

Make sure the bee boxes, lids and bases fit snugly and can be firmly secured with an emlock. The Beekeepers Association of the ACT own a supply of emlocks that can be borrowed by members. Plastic hive parts slip quite easily and are not recommended. Frames of undrawn foundation are ideal for swarms as the bees are designed to build comb in springtime and leave the mother hive with a store of wax in their glands.

Remove the lid from the bee box and place as much of the swarm into the box as practical. A swarm on a branch is easy to drop onto the frames by cutting the branch and gently lowering the swarm onto the top of the frames.

Swarms on a fence or tree trunk can be scooped onto the frames. A two or three litre plastic milk bottle is ideal. Rinse the bottle, cut the base and leave the lid on. Carefully scoop the bees away from the flat surface and tip the bees onto the frames. The bees cling to each other and in some ways flow like a thick liquid. Several scoops will have the bulk of the swarm on top of the box and the rest of the bees should find their way into the box over the next few hours.

Remove the emlock, place the lid on top but leave a gap for the bees to find their way into the box. Firmly secure the lid with the emlock.

Leave the box close to where the swarm alighted for a day or two. Recycling bins are a good platform. The greater the distance from the box to the swarm site the longer it takes for the stray bees to find the box. Do not leave stray bees as these are likely to be a nuisance. A bee sting victim might sting you with a lawsuit in these increasingly litigious times.

Collect the box very early once the strays have found the box. Temperature should be less than ten degrees and this may involve a five or six am start. The hive entrance should be blocked using some foam rubber or a rag. The lid should be adjusted so that the box is now secure.

Move the bees to their new home and unblock the hive entrance. Drive carefully around corners and over bumps.

If you have a number of hives on the site it would be prudent to first quarantine the newly collected swarm at a separate site to monitor for disease. Add the new swarm(s) once you have determined that the new hive is healthy.

I advise that protective clothing be kept close at hand when transporting the bees. If the bee box develops a leak

you don't want to have to reach next to the box to access your protective clothing.

Advise the person with the swarm of how much you charge for swarm collection. You are providing a service that involves at least two trips to the swarm site and there is the risk that your equipment will become infected with foulbrood.

Determine as much as possible about the swarm so that you can determine what equipment you need:-ladder, bee scoop, saw or pruning gear.



A swarm list is kept by the Beekeepers Association. Members can add their details to this list through the webmaster.

Swarms in possum boxes and nesting boxes can be difficult to deal with especially if these have been there a long time. Many beekeepers don't touch them.

Swarms on public land should be collected only if you carry public liability insurance. These swarms should be reported to Canberra connect.

Swarms can be combined with an existing hive to increase the workforce and productivity of the hive. Ensure the correct techniques for combining hives are followed.

I am happy to collect swarms especially for those new to the hobby. I charge \$30 to non-members of the Association and a nominal fee to cover travel cost for members.

Once swarming season is over the hive should be requeened as the existing queen is prone to swarming, as will be her progeny.

It is good practice to minimise the number of swarms your hives throw as each swarm reduces your workforce and as a consequence your honey yield.

I invite any queries on swarm collecting to hosking@cpic.com.au

Tips on swarm minimisation will be discussed at the next meeting of the Beekeepers Association of the ACT

Happy swarm collecting.

Mark Hosking

Native Bee Workshop in Sydney

The biggest native bee workshop ever will be hosted by the University of Western Sydney - Hawkesbury on the 14-15 October 2006!

Seminars and practical sessions on a wide range of native bee topics will be presented by leading native bee specialists from across Australia.

Topics include: Beauty and Diversity of Native Bees, Encouraging Native Bees in your Garden, Secret Lives of Carpenter Bees, Rescuing Native Bees and Restoring Bee Habitat, Stingless Beekeeping, Boxing and Splitting Stingless Bee Hives, Crop Pollination with Native Bees, Blue-Banded Bees for Greenhouse Tomatoes.

The workshop will be presented by Dr Michael Batley, Dr Anne Dollin, Mark Greco, Megan Halcroft, Dr Katja Hogendoorn (SA), Martyn Robinson, Dr Tish Silberbauer and Russell Zabel (QLD).

For more details on this exciting event, please visit: <http://www.aussiebee.com.au/seminars.html>

Photo of the Month by Darren Pearce



Please send your bee photos to Lyn at editor@beekeepers.asn.au

Tool of the Month



Mike Devey is using these handy broccoli boxes as swarm collecting boxes and also as nucleus boxes when equipment is in short supply as often happens at this stage of the year with swarm collecting at its peak.

A piece of dowel rod is drilled through the box at either end. Four or five frames can be suspended from these rods for the swarm to cling to. A small hole is drilled at one end to provide an entrance. The bees can remain in the broccoli box for as long as necessary because they are building on their permanent frames rather than wasting resources building comb inside a temporary box.

A word of caution. When the box is used for swarm collection make sure that there is not space around the dowels to allow bees to escape during transport and ensure that the dowel is unable to slip and come out of the hole.



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