

Valley Bees January Meeting

Meeting opened 1-30pm, chaired by Erin, Glenbo Minutes

New Managers

Noted that Jeff and Janelle Parker have taken over the farm - best name reference now "Honeybee Accommodation and Events." There have been some initial changes with our room usage, and this was discussed with Janelle. We will be holding the meetings in the meeting room, then moving up to the Athol Craig Room (in the shed) for our afternoon tea and banter following the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies received from Kayle, Dan and Marilyn, Pauline, Athol and Skaidra, Greg, Max.

Declared that Minutes true and correct, moved by Erin, 2nd Derek.

PDF of Minutes

Noted that we need to look at sending / uploading the minutes as a PDF rather than a Word document. Glenbo noted, and will comply.

Business arising from previous meeting

Beekeeping and Pollination session at Landcare on Saturday 22 February. session to be run from 9am to 1pm as a Bee and Pollination Workshop, honey bees, stingless bees, solitary bees and pollinators.

Noted that the Junior Landcare Session is in June, and is for 2 hours in the afternoon.

Noted that the 28 January date to assist at Honeybee (organised through Alan Rainbow) has been cancelled.

Flow Hive

Noted that we make the Flow Hive Report at each meeting more official, and part of the day's agenda, as we have an agreement with the Flow Hive Club to mention at each meeting, and should be recorded as such. noted by erin and Glenbo. Club Referral Program. Mark to do report., and highlight in the Minutes.

Bee Biosecurity Talk

There will be a Bee Biosecurity talk held especially for our club members on Saturday 8th February, at the Landcare Nursery facility, from 9am. The new Queensland Bee Biosecurity Officer, Dr Rebecca Laws, has been in contact with Glenbo, and this event has been arranged. The morning begins at 9am, and is free to all members. Please bring a plate to share. Tea and coffee will be supplied.

Moved by Glenbo, 2nd by ???

Requested that she bring along an AFB kit, and noted that we have a particular interest in the sugar shake technique.

And on the recording processes.

Thank yous

Erin thanked all whom assisted at our end-of-year break up. Hope all enjoyed themselves.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report available, attached to the end of these Minutes.

\$5741 balance.

Report - Workshop Session Landcare - Vic

Because in the holidays, only a dozen or so people turned up on the 4th.

Since everybody was pretty familiar, not necessary to do extracting, but one newbie turned up.

Talked about what's happening locally, with bees, flowering and honeys.

Good pollen coming in, but still a shortage of nectar supplies. Need to feed the bees.

Noted that it's a lot easier to feed the bees carbs (sugar syrup) than if there is a shortage of protein (pollen) and they need to be fed.

Trees need pollen, they don't need nectar, so that's why there is still pollen but no nectar in the flowers.

Hives.

The triple on end, brood chamber good. They would normally be swarming this time of year in a good season.

Did a health check, found supercedure Queen cells. Queen good and active, loads of eggs.

Found no Queen in another hive, placed frame with Queen cells into it.

Started one more nuc hive, plenty of brood and 2 frames honey. Queen cells in nuc.

No supercedure cells left in initial hive, see if they attempt again to create more Queen cells.

Took a small amount of honey out of 2nd hive.

Existing nuc - we had left 4 frames of foundation, 2 were made from bright yellow wax, and the other 2 was pure white wax.

Noted that the 2 white foundations were chewed all around edges, while the 2 yellow foundations hadn't been touched.

The white ones were now unusable, totally chewed. It was an empty box, mouse or cockroaches got in.

New attendee has ordered first hive ordered for next Saturday.

Noted that we need to make sure registration numbers are displayed on the hive (this is a must).

Report - Workshop Honeybee Session and Flow Hives - Mark

Started on the triple hive - took out 4 frames to spin.

Found Queen has been laying above excluder, but couldn't find her.

Hive 2 - Still no success, put 2 frames brood in on 8th December, but still no Queen, so put in Queen cell from another box.

Hive 5 - Found queen, very very hive.

Hive 6 - Queen cells, pollen coming in, not much honey.

Got a new nuc hive going.

We are a bit short on hives at the farm at the moment, bringing a new hive in soon to create a new Flow-Hive. Noted that the Flow-Hive at Landcare was the strongest looking hive regarding brood.

Smaller Queens?

Noted also that Queens recently have been smaller in size. Maybe Queen able to go up to top super due to her size. Seems she prefers top super when given the choice, but noted that not a lot of activity, and no honey stored, below her if she is laying higher in the hive. Nothing at all in frames below excluder.

Report - Workshop Native Bee Session - Derek

Held yesterday - native bee hive in watermeter and in a PNG box. All went well, one was *Carbonaria*, one was *Hockingsi* (in the PNG box). Very full, but very little brood and pollen, only just arrived, lot of building going on. Very successful splits / transfers.

Good turn-out, a few new faces to the session. Talked about different methods of feeding bees. It's been observed as a very poor season for our native bees, lot of stress on hives. Lot of hives being fed. Talked about John Klumpp's feeding technique. Film canister, PVC pipe and caps, talked about making up feeders. Scones and tea followed, supplied by Bill and Nicky, thanks offered. Thanks offered also to organisers for the day.

Watermeters and on-site work

Someone spoke to their watermeter man, and told to just take them, but to be respectful of the site, of the hive, and leave in a good, cleaned condition. Don't leave so that it is exposed, or a new have for disease and pests, i.e. Phorid fly etc. Please, we must have a sign at the site, just a hand-written note, to declare that we are currently removing a hive. Spoke of bob Luttrell, who has a series of old water meter boxes with active hives, installed on his property, operating very successfully.

Native Bee Morning - 2nd Sunday in February

In February 2nd Sunday, we will hold a show and tell of different box designs, swap and discuss different ideas and techniques. In particular, we will look at the concept of having the honey chamber at the very bottom of the hive.

Here at Honeybee, 20 Hasthorpe Road. 10am start, please bring a plate to share. Free.

Report - Top Bar Hives - Scott

Building one for club, going slow but coming along not much free time. Doing at the Men's Shed.

Top Bar hives are the same - one is doing stronger than the other, took one bar out to put into 2nd hive, lots of brood and bees, but absolutely no honey.

Swarm and aggressive hive takeover

Glenbo spoke of story with swarming bees on the mid NSW coast, a friend of his who has 100 hives, observed a swarm high up in a tree on his property, when it took off he followed it. It went to his row of 10 or so hives, settled on the end one, and hagen attacking the hive for a takeover. Very aggressive fighting and swarm-cloud of bees. Steve noticed the attacking hive were a different strain of bee, very clear, crisp division of stripes, different size, different behaviour. Steve is very tuned in to Asian bees, and discovered it was 100% not Asian bees, just a different previously unseen species in his area.

The swarm saddening stopped attacking, and began an assault on another hive further up the chain. This was equally as aggressive. Steve noticed a clump of bees

out the front, picked it up, brushed it apart and noticed his Queen, from that hive, was right at the centre of the small cluster, being stung to death. so these attackers had entered the hive, captured the Queen, and removed her to kill her. she was already stung multiple times, so Steve placed her on the top of the hive, and just as suddenly, at the attacking swarm instantly defending upon her to sting her. He had fires in the area that he need to attend, so no more observations / end results were observed, but Glenbo will follow up with Steve to get an update on the outcome. Most interesting.

General business

Discussed meeting room here at the Farm

New set-up, as it will be a breakfast room for the new managers. We will move chairs and tables, return as it was. we are Decided to eat up at Athol Craig Room. Social chat over there, we have cups and hot water. Less impact on their business as a Wedding and Convention Centre.

We removed boards and posters, if we keep honey stand, we are to maintain and keep clean.

Native hives need to be moved (Vic). Next Saturday we will make these changes. Native hives, one hive disappeared. Okay to keep solitary bee hotel at front. Flow hive Deb has taken. Solitary hives area to be taken away, and remove observation hive.

Bee cutout we will take as well, and we can use at Bee Open Day.

The bee tree with the live hive in the trunk - this will need to be cut out, tree is dead. When remove it, Vic has requested that he be there, and that we can take centre section with hive and place it elsewhere.

Honeybee hives are okay where they are.

Good to use Athol Craig Room, notify new managers with the standard yearly dates.

Let them knot if there are any new usages.

Most wedding bookings are on the Saturday, people are generally left by Sunday morning.

If there is an event on, have meeting in Athol Craig Room.

Ask about the pews, and the chairs available.

Janelle makes floral arrangements. She will make up a VB Community sign on the room.

Hail report

Not much damage seems to have taken place, even though some stones were huge, less impact if fewer bigger stones, than when blanketed by masses of smaller stones, this will absolutely shrewd the trees, leaves, flowers, fruit-set etc. Strawberry farm - Wider spread of hail stones, long distanced between.

Hail through roof of hive

Glenbo observed a recent site visit, where the stones had been reported at 130mm size, that a hail stone had hit a nuc box, punched a hole in the roof, through the liner lid and into the hive, where the impact of the stone had crushed the frames inside the hive, compressing a few frames and bending them out of shape.

Replacing native bee boxes

Replacing native bee hives/boxes used for yesterday's session.

2 beautiful boxes used. Reg, Merv, Mark...

Purchase 2 replacement boxes at club's expense. Mark to be reimbursed for cost of timber for outer boxes. Moved by Erin, Sara 2nd. Passed.

\$\$\$ Dollar donation from VB to bush fires

QBA is running Hive Aid after the bushfire damage. Money going back to beekeepers.

Moved by Brian, 2nd by Sara, that VB makes a generous donation.

\$1000 donation was suggested. To be researched more, and a motion will be moved in the February meeting to recommend an amount for the donation, and be put to the meeting.

In the meantime, check with QBA and talk to Pauline / Kayle.

\$\$\$ Dollars from grant

MRCCC has the money in our account for the grant for Bee Open Day. Check with MRCCC / Deb.

Used as a deposit to hold the Pavilion, MRCCC will make this deposit. Glenbo will follow this up, and report to Maree.

Asian honey bees

Asian honeybee has now moved further south, hugging Tully. Extended the exclusion zone.

Report - Solitary bees - Robyn

Her Firetail resin bees are driving away the Blue-banded bees. They don't seem to cohabitate well together. Are the clay pipes useless, given that mostly the Resin bees are there?

Making own blocks, challenging with hardwood, using drill presses, drilling safer in pine, but a bit hairy / furry, burn at the front of the hole. Comment on drilling hardwood, keep removing drill to clean flutes out.

Neon cuckoo bees - beautiful, but destructive. Diversity is good, but are Neon cuckoos any good?

Using mainly 170mm deep 5mm and 8mm holes. Only uses the 3mm for the Halictids, the small native solitary bees.

Firetail resins go in front ways to check out, then go in backwards to lay eggs. They don't mind going into vertical holes.

Not many unwanted insects at this stage.

NuPlas hives

Comment on NuPlas Hives (available through Club). Good insulation. Bees don't seem to beard as much, but this is only a short-term observation.

Very good report on the hives.

Remember that VB has a relationship with the makers, Club Referral Program, and put your order in through the Club.

Pollen in frames

One more observation, when setting up new hives, 2nd outside frame quite often has extra pollen stores in it. In tough seasons, good management is to just have pollen in

one frame.

Chalkbrood

Suggested put a bit of banana skin in the hive, fresh once a week. Another remedy is to use fresh, thinly sliced pieces of Camphor laurel, sliced around 1/4" thick. Place a few on very top, inside hive, and one jutting out jammed into the entrance. Old method was change your Queen, Vic - not necessary with Camphor laurel. Cinnamon oil seems to work as well, onto an lcy-pole stick, a few drops, put in entrance. Some use a light salt, but not sure on this one. Nothing has been actually proven to clear it up, but we all have our theories, so stick to what you are comfy with. Spores can be alive for 10 to 20 years.

Meeting closed 2-58pm, on the dot!

Raffle

Glenbo and Tom were winners...but as beekeepers, we are all winners, are we not!

Time for Tom's Poetry Wizardry

Due to drought and bush fires, many beekeepers are looking for new sites, so there are long journeys ahead...

There are long, lonely journeys
on rough unmarked tracks.
Make-shift camps, sketchy meals,
tired eyes and aching backs.

They work us too hard,
these tireless marvels with wings,
who guard their sweet harvest
with plenty of stings.

But we take it in Winter
with bodies like ice,
or ninety-nine in the shade
for a heart-breaking price.

Rising costs; stolen hives;
burnt-out sites; ring-barked trees.
You don't have to be mad to keep bees...
...but it helps!