

APRIL 2025

THANKS TO OUR ROVING
JOURNALIST SUZZANNE BETTS



NEWSLETTER



Fundraising
dahlias



Deirdre solving all
the problems

Autumn is always a celebration of dahlias, and these beautiful gems were donated from one of the queens' stunning garden as part of our monthly fundraiser. With 8 months of learning under our belts, it was time to test our knowledge in the virtual apiary we set up for workshop 9. Each hive in the *apiary* was experiencing its own issues (coincidentally, problems raised in our facebook group...) and the queens were divided into 4 groups to solve each problem. It was a chance to do undertake specific diagnose for each hive, to think through solutions and take a macro look at the apiary to see how other hives may help or hinder the problems faced. At the end of this session, we came together as a large group to hear how each group undertook their diagnosis and the solutions implemented - and everyone passed with flying colours! Following this theoretical session, we took the same system thinking into the real apiary and start resolving some of the issues as we prepare to Winter the hives down until Spring.

HABITAT FOR ALL BEES



As beekeepers we are often asked about native bees.

In Australia we have over 1,500 native bee species with 100 of these calling Tasmania home. Tasmanian bees, like most of the world bee species, are solitary - each is the 'queen' of their domain.

Some bees, such as the reed bee, are semi social and will live in packs with other female bees, working together and sharing resources.

A common questions we get is, can you collect honey from native bees (the answer in Tasmania is no, because they are primarily solitary bees) and, are bee hotels useful in my garden? Again, the answer is generally no, as Tasmanian bees are so small, bee hotels are not designed with their habitat in mind.

Instead, try and keep items like old logs, reeds and dried stems from plants and flowers in your garden. For more information visit Dr Henry's webpage, [Tasmanian Bee Hotels](http://www.tasmanianbeekeepers.com.au) to learn more.



Australian Native Bees State-by-State Location Table - extracted from www.aussie.bee.com.au

	QLD&NSW	ACT	VI C	SA	WA&NT	TAS
1. Stingless Bees	Y				Y	
2. Yellow & Black Carpenter Bees	Y				Y	
3. Green Carpenter Bees	Y	?		Y		
4. Reed Bees	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
5. Blue Banded Bees	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
6. Teddy Bear Bees	Y	?	Y	Y	Y	
7. Leafcutter Bees	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
8. Resin Bees	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
9. Homalictus Bees	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
10. Masked Bees	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

SPOTLIGHT ON PROPOLIS



Propolis

Propolis (or bee glue) is produced by bees when they collect sap or resin from trees and mix it with beeswax and saliva. Researchers have uncovered that it is more than just 'glue' - as well as being a sealant, it is also a disinfectant, assists with disease prevention, temperature regulation, waterproofing and protection from intruders. Bees will use propolis to 'mummify' intruders into the hive - I have once seen a mouse in a hive that suffered this fate! Propolis also contains a number of vitamins and minerals, including vitamins (B1, B2, B6, C, E) and minerals (magnesium, calcium, potassium, sodium, copper, zinc, manganese and iron and for these reasons, has gained popularity as a natural remedy for humans. As an anecdotal observation, I have noticed that hives producing a lot of propolis are healthier, stronger and produce more honey. Leading up to Winter, bees are busy using propolis to seal any gaps in the hive and is also one of the many reasons opening hives in Winter needs to be avoided - as well as letting cold air into the hive and breaking up the Winter cluster, cracking the hive open takes a while for the bees to reseal with propolis again.



Bees on a propolis trap

COLLECTING PROPOLIS

Beekeepers collect propolis by using a trap. The trap replaces a hive mat and the bees fill the gaps in the trap with propolis. Lids can be chocked open to encourage bees to produce more of this bee glue. Once filled, the mats can be put into a plastic bag in the freezer and once frozen, 'cracked' in the bag to release the propolis. As a product it is used to make tinctures for the common cold as well as dermatological applications for wound healing, cold sores and acne.

BEE LOSSES-USA

Following on from early reporting in our newsletter in February, the USA is experiencing unprecedented bee colony losses of 60-70%. The problem is, that no one knows exactly what is happening. Coupled with Donald Trump and Elon Musk's widespread cuts to federal agencies including the Agriculture Department laboratories, often responsible for studying mass bee deaths, it is unlikely we will find out any time soon. Read what Dr Juliana Range (yes the one and same we interviewed last year!) has to say [here](#) and watch her interview with us [here](#).



WORLD BEE DAY - MAY 20

May 20 marks World Bee Day and we will again be celebrating with a morning tea and invitation to the general public to join us - the event will be part of our Bee Queens program on May 17, and will include a disease presentation from Tasmanian VDO Carson McGinty as well as a demonstration on how to render dirty wax to make it clean. You are encouraged to bring a friend along for this event. The event will be held at Calverton Hall in South Arm, with the presentation starting at 11 am, morning tea and wax rendering presentation to follow. Pre book tickets [here](#)

LEATHERWOOD

We all know how delicious Leatherwood honey is. Tasmanian Beekeepers are seeking new markets as they face an oversupply of honey, with many local producers struggling to sell their excess stock. Beekeepers from the Tasmanian Beekeepers Association have travelled to China and Singapore and will soon travel to Dubai looking for customers who value the quality of the honey we produce here. "There's a limit to what we can sell in our small state, we supply far too much for the state and Australia, so we need to find more markets overseas," reports TBA President, Lindsay Bourke. Full article [here](#)

