SEPTEMBER &
OCTOBER
2026

BEE QUEENS

WOMEN+ BEEKEEPERS

NEWSLETTER





The beekeeping season has officially kicked in - how do we know? Because it has taken a bit longer to get this newsletter out! Seriously though, the bee season has certainly started where I am - with prickly box already starting to flower on the South Arm Peninsula. Our Bee Queens program this year is kicking along nicely, with the most recent workshop held at Government House. We had a chance to look in the hives on site (a first time with bees for some participants) and we also took a tour of the stunning gardens with Bettina - a noticeable difference in Spring growth compared to the last 2 years of cool Springs. Thank you to Her Excellency the Honourable Caroline Wells, Governor of Tasmania for hosting us and to Bettina for organising our visit and for being such a wonderful tour guide , it is always such a treat.

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WORKSHOP 2

Some say this is where most of a beekeepers' life is spent , tinkering away in the shed. Our second workshop was a hands on experience learning how to put flat pack boxes and frames together, how to use a variety of handtools and the benefits of having a jig .It was a wet day, but a productive time together at Grumpy Bee, Ross Gordon's shed in Crabtree. Thanks to Ross for hosting us and to Kristen for sourcing the macrocarpa hive boxes from the Somerset Community Shed - it is always fantastic to support local community based enterprises. We will also be hosting a juig making workshop with the South Arm Ciommunity Shed in January, details TBA.





MAKING NUCS

In early October, a group of graduate Bee Queens visited some apiaries on the South Arm Peninsula to practice making up nuc boxes. This was to aid the Big T program, raising better Queens, on the Peninsula. The program is aiming to breed hygienic queens to help all beekeepers if/when varroa mite arrives in Tasmania. Early tests are proving positive and this year, we continue to raise queens with these improved genetics. Katrina, Julie and Leissa were incredibly industrious, leaving us time to also look at the queen cells being raised, the cell raiser and the breeder queen colony. Queens raised with these genetics are available for all Tasmanian beekeepers.

REQUEENING

At the end of October, Georgia and Chris jumped in to help requeen our education hives at Rookwood Estate in Ranelagh. These hives have just finished pollinating the organic apples and we were keen to put new (Big T) queens in these colonies before our first workshop with the new-bees on site. We had four queens we needed to find, and as usual some were easy and others proved a little more evasive requiring us to use the 'rough' method - shaking bees off every frame into a box with a queen excluder screwed to the bottom. Not all of the queens were marked, making the job a good challenge for all involved. Bhy the end, our eyes were swimmiing with bees, but a job very well done. Thanks Chris and Georgia for making this possible



Drone pic courtesy Georgia