

WHERE TO GET NEW BEES FROM?

So, you have decided to take up **BEEKEEPING**

You have done lots of research and joined the **BEEKEEPING CLUB**

Over the winter you will be **GETTING** your boxes and hive sites **READY**

It's **ALL SYSTEMS GO** except for **ONE** thing

..... **YOU NEED BEES!**

Hopefully this information will help to answer your questions and get you organised with bees for a cracking start to spring and a good first honey season.

You can get your bees a number of ways: 1. Existing hives 2. Swarms 3. Packages & 4. Nuc's

I'll start with how we got our bees and how our hives have grown from **1** in 2012 to **8** in 2020.

Hive 1:

An **existing hive** that we bought from another beekeeper:

We bought our first hive from someone who was down-sizing their apiary. This method can be very useful but it is also important to follow the ***rules** regarding the safe & legal disposal and acquisition of existing honey bee hives.

***NB:** This paperwork is found with the Beekeeping Registration form and is available from Agriculture Victoria found below & **Here**. At the very least you must have current paperwork from the beekeeper you are acquiring your bees from that prove the hive is free from AFB and EFB spores. This can be in the form of a Honey Test or Smear Test with results from Gribbles Pathology.

Hive 2:

A **swarm** at Inverloch Primary School

Our beekeeping mentor was alerted to swarm at Inverloch Primary School and called to see if we were interested in catching and keeping it. We jumped at the chance. Having 1 hive is lovely but having 2 hives is so much better. 2 hives gives you the ability to compare one with the other; to see if one is stronger than another; to note if the queens are behaving well with any differences in the temperament and ***productivity** of those hives. The swarm was duly caught and placed in a new hive beside our first hive.

DO YOU REALLY WANT/NEED ANOTHER HIVE?

South Gippsland Beekeepers Swarm List Info:

The swarm list is updated every year with those wanting to catch swarms. Get your name on the list early in spring.

Contact: Julian Walker

0413 252 128

[Email](#)

Digressing slightly: ***Productivity** does not just mean the collection of nectar and the storage of honey but also the collection and storage of pollen, the brood numbers, the brood pattern, drone numbers and cleanliness within the hive also. Are there more beetles/grubs, dead bees and general debris in one hive than the other? Is there evidence of hive-robbing with bees fighting at the entrance or attempting to enter one hive through gaps on the sides of the hive? All of these things may mean that one queen is not as productive as another.

**Hive 3:
A tiny swarm**

Not long after we got our first swarm we noticed a tiny swarm in a small bush on our property. It may have been from our hive but not necessarily. These bees were put into a Top Bar Hive.

**Hive 4:
A swarm in a
possum box**

These bees were established having been in the possum box for at least 6 months. It was full of comb, honey, brood and lots of rather angry bees. A five frame 'Nuc Box' was placed up in the tree beside the possum box. Most of the bees and (fingers crossed) the queen too, were shaken or dumped into the Nuc and it was left there overnight. It was evident in the morning that they had made the move across to the Nuc without much fuss so we took it home and made another hive from it.

Hives 5-8:

These were all subsequent swarms from our own hives. It was our choice to keep these swarms and a cheap easy way of splitting hives, as it turned out. It is perhaps not the way all beekeepers would increase the size of their apiary though.

NB: Back then I knew nothing about the importance of quarantining swarms of undetermined health and was quite lucky to never have any diseases in any of those early hives. Ideally if you already have a hive you need to quarantine the new ones away from them. Swarms that you acquire need to be placed in a quarantined area for the first season and honey tested for AFB/EFB ensuring that there is no danger of spreading any diseases to your existing apiary.

Swarms can carry diseases, one of those being AFB, American Foul Brood. To help control this, give swarms foundation to build on, not drawn comb as it will encourage them to deposit any infected honey they have carried with them. Don't feed swarms until larvae is seen. This gives the bees a chance to purge themselves of AFB spores. Both suggestions above should encourage the bees to consume any infected honey and subsequently defecate it. Neither ensures AFB eradication unfortunately

YOU CAN BUY AN ENTIRE COLONY FOR YOUR NEW HIVE/S - TIME TO ORDER NOW

Contact your local beekeeping supplier/s to ask if they can get you any 'packages' of bees.

Packages contain small colonies of approx. 10,000 worker bees - a few drones and plus a caged and mated queen with attendants.

**Suppliers in South Gippsland
Jeeralang Apiaries:**

Stan Glowacki - 0413 136 878

Fisher's Beekeeping Supplies:

Robert Fisher - 0437 501 133

Hill Top Hives:

Peter Gatehouse - 0423 244 107

OR 

South Gippsland Beekeepers has a 'Nuc' list.

This is usually the result of splitting a hive into two, often as a means of swarm control. Queens are not caged.

Club Members may use the list to sell or buy a small colony of bees.

If you would like to put your name on the list, nice and early please, you will be contacted with the name of anyone in the club who has 'hive-splits' to sell.

contact our VP: Peter 0423 244 107

Notice of Disposal of Hives (including nucleus colonies)

Livestock Disease Control Act 1994
Livestock Disease Control Regulations 2006
Regulation 50, Schedule 8

You are required to notify the Bee Registrar within seven days if you have disposed of some or all of your hives by sending this 'Notice of Disposal of Hives' form to the Bee Registrar, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, PO Box 2500, Bendigo Delivery Centre, Victoria, 3554, fax to (03) 5430 4505 OR email to beekeeper.registration@agriculture.vic.gov.au. For enquiries please telephone **1800 356 761**.

I,
(insert full name)

of
(insert address)

Registration Number:

give notice that I have disposed of hives, formerly my property
(insert number of hives)

TO
(insert full name of new owner)

OF
(insert address of new owner)

New Owner's Registration Number:

I now ownhives.
(insert number of hives)

Signed Date:
(signature of disposer)

If you now have zero hives and would like to be removed from DJPR's bee register database please tick this box

Information to Note:

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (the department) is committed to protecting your privacy. All personal information will be handled in accordance with the department's Privacy Policy and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic). For more information, a copy of our privacy statement is located at www.economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au/privacy. Enquiries about access to information should be directed to the Department's Privacy officer by email privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au. The information provided by beekeepers on application forms for Registration as a Beekeeper may be provided to Victorian and local government agencies, and police where it is deemed necessary to identify hive ownership.