

# NIE

## Passion for bees

Apiarist says they are vital to life

Ebony Battersby name is now emblazoned on the website of the community

### Wordy news

#### Apiarist

A person who keeps bees, for commercial or agricultural purposes. An apiary is a place where beehives are kept.



### Did you know?

Bees have a special dance used to instruct the rest of the hive where to find a food source.



# BEES TO HONEY

NEXT time you are outside, see if you can spot bees hard at work.

Bees play an important role in pollinating flowering plants. In fact a third of all human food is pollinated by bees.

But even better our winged friends harvest a sweet, thick, sticky, golden liquid that we can eat – honey.

Made from flower nectar, combined with an enzyme secreted by bees, then concentrated in the honeycomb cells, honey is not only a good sweetener, it also has many nutritional and medicinal benefits and uses.

And it's the small but very efficient bee that provides us with this tasty and healthy product.

#### From bee to bottle

LOTS of teamwork and time goes in to making honey.

Bees travel up to five kilometres in search of blossoms' nectar, the sugary liquid bees extract using their long, tube-shaped tongue (proboscis).

They store the nectar in their extra stomach and when they have a full load, they fly back to the hive.

Back at the bee hive the nectar is passed from worker bee to worker bee through their mouths until it gradually turns into honey.

Then the bees store it in hexagonal-shaped honeycomb cells.

The honey is still a bit wet, so the bees fan it with their wings to

make it dry out and become stickier. When it's ready, they seal the cell with a wax lid.

A beekeeper maintains the hives to harvest the honey and other products such as propolis, royal jelly and beeswax.

When the honeycomb in the hive is full and capped, it's ready to be collected.

The honeycomb is taken from the hive, the wax cappings are removed and the honeycomb is placed in an extractor, where the spinning movement throws out the honey.

Honey is collected from the extractor, strained and left to stand. Any leftover wax particles are skimmed from the surface and the honey is ready for bottling.

#### Buzzing with facts

■ Evidence suggests bees have been around for more than 65 million years.

■ Bees live in colonies containing the queen bee, the worker bee and the drone.

■ Neither the queen bee nor the male bees (drones) forage for nectar.

■ Bees make honey as a way of storing food to eat.

■ A typical bee hive will house about 30,000 bees.

■ It takes 300 bees about three weeks to gather 450g of honey.

■ Honey's colour, taste, aroma and texture varies depending on the type of flower a bee frequents.

### IN THE NEWS

#### Not so sweet

THERE's a pest causing significant damage to the hives of the honey bee.

The small hive beetle, a native to Africa, was first detected in Australia near Sydney in 2002 and has spread throughout New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory, and in some parts of South Australia and Western Australia.

This brownish-black beetle is a major threat to honey producers. The small hive beetle lays its eggs in the hive, the larvae hatch then tunnel through the hive and consume honeycomb, pollen and honey, leaving slimy excretions behind them.

The environmental impact of this species attack on the Australian honey bee could be devastating to the production of honey and the entire ecosystem.

### CHECK IT OUT

#### Honey popcorn

FOR a tasty snack, try making this sweet, golden-coloured popcorn.

#### Ingredients

- ★ 10 cups plain, popped popcorn
- ★ ¾ cup brown sugar
- ★ ½ cup honey
- ★ 2 tbs butter

#### Method

1. In a large saucepan, place the brown sugar, honey and butter.
2. Stir over a low heat until it is bubbling and the sugar is entirely dissolved.
3. Remove from heat and add the popcorn to the pan.
4. Stir gently until all the corn is covered in the syrup mixture.
5. Lay on a tray to cool.
6. Store in an air-tight container. Enjoy.

NEXT WEEK: What is a legend?



## NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION

Show your support for our local kids and snatch up a unique marketing opportunity at the same time. Sponsor the Fraser Coast Chronicle Newspapers in Education initiative today.

To support this program, please call (07) 4153 8588

