

## About the Project



Though widely regarded as part of the natural Australian environment, our common honeybee is not a native; it was imported from Europe 200 years ago. Despite the benefit we have gained through pollination and honey production the European honeybee has spread widely and become an ecological pest and an urban nuisance.

Our Society takes the view that the honeybee should exist in managed colonies in the care of competent beekeepers and, where possible, feral colonies in the bush and in wall cavities etc. should be eliminated since they occupy sites otherwise used by native birds and animals. Feral colonies also pose the serious potential to harbour diseases and pests such as the varroa mite.

Very little data about the extent of the problem exists so the WBFS is launching a study this Spring's swarming season to discover the impact of feral honeybees in the Macedon Ranges.

The main aims of the Project are to:

(1) gain information about the extent of Swarm Activity within the Designated Area

(2) collect information about feral colony infestation

(3) determine the effectiveness of bait boxes to capture swarms and;

(4) discover the usefulness of attractants.



## Project Support Team

Jim 0427 290 012

Carolyn 0403 916 863

Ewen 0417 939 911

Matt 0417 313 002

Samantha 0428 465 792

Tino 0499 500 148

## Project Stages



### 1 Registration & Bait Box Collection

In order to participate in the project you must register. This allows us to gather data on the participating locations so that the project analysis will be more meaningful and useful.

**If you completed the Participant Survey:** If you have already completed the participant survey online, we will collect some additional information from you to complete your profile: Name, Address, Phone Number.

**If you have not completed the Participant Survey:** We will provide you with a registration form when you collect your bait box.

All participant information will be completely confidential. We will assign a bait box number to each participant and only the bait box number will be referenced/used in any project reports.

### Bait Box Collection Dates

Sunday



20

2:30pm - 3:00pm

Before WBFS  
August  
Meeting

3:00pm - 4:30pm

Boxes will be available  
following the meeting  
as well.

Tuesday



22

12:00pm - 2:00pm

Woodend Men's Shed | 988 Black Forest Drive  
(Old Sawmill Site)

If you can't make any of these pick-up times  
contact [тино.corsetti@mrsg.org.au](mailto:тино.corsetti@mrsg.org.au) to arrange  
a delivery.

Thursday



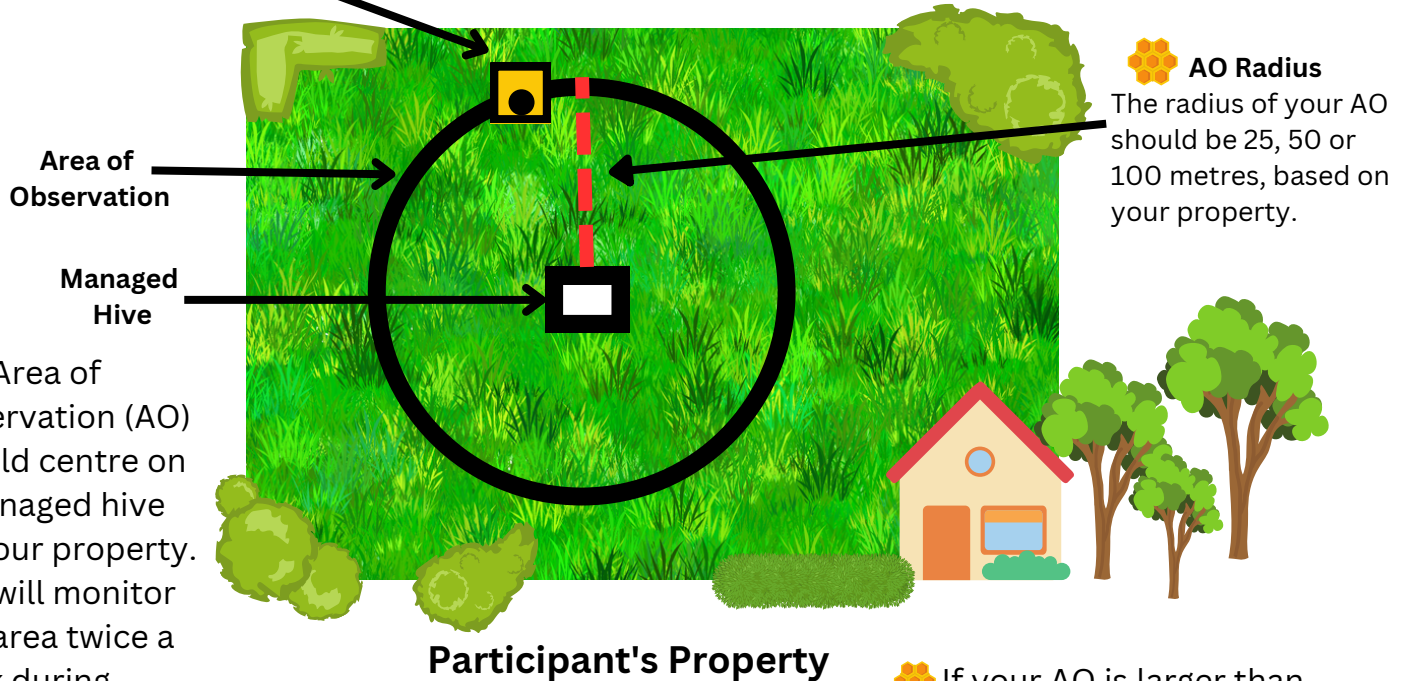
24

4:00pm - 6:00pm



## 2 Bait Box Placement: Determine the Area of Observation (AO)

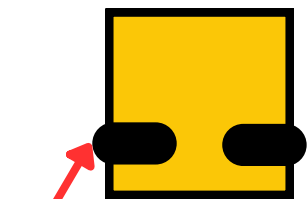
Your bait box should be placed between 20 metres and 100 metres away from any managed hive. This determines your Area of Observation



The Area of Observation (AO) should centre on a managed hive on your property. You will monitor this area twice a week during spring.

Your AO should be roughly circular in shape.

If your AO is larger than 100m radius, simply estimate the radius.



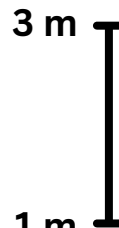
Make sure that the clips on the underside of the bait box are secure.

You will be supplied with an attractant pouch to be placed inside the bait box.

If possible, position your bait box so that the opening faces north east.

### Bait Box Placement: Height

Your bait box should be placed between 1 and 3 metres above the ground.



Bait Box

Note: The bait box remains the property of the WBFS

### 3

## Swarm Collection Preparation

The bait box stays on your property for the duration of the project. If a swarm occupies the box, you will need a container into which you will transfer the swarm.

Ideally this would be an empty 8-frame hive box with new frames, complete with lid and bottom board. Alternatively you could have a corflute nucleus box.



8 Frame Hive  
Including bottom board & lid



Corflute Nucleus Box

If you don't have one of these collection boxes but you intend to keep the swarm - following the biosecurity checks - you will need a hive to house the colony.

If you're not a beekeeper and do not intend to keep the swarm then speak to the project team and we will bring a collection box with us when we come to retrieve the swarm.

### 4

## Swarm Monitoring - Twice-Weekly Check-In

We will provide you with a paper and/or an excel spreadsheet\* to record your twice-weekly findings when you check your bait box and Area of Observation.

If there is no swarm at check-in, you'll simply record "No Activity".

If there is a swarm, you'll be asked to record the following:

- Size of swarm
- Source of swarm (Own hive, known hive, feral hive)
- Swarm settle in bait box  
vs
- Swarm lands in Area of Observation on branch/other structure
- Attractant used



1 Football = Small Swarm



2 Footballs = Medium Swarm



3 Footballs = Large Swarm

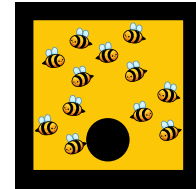
How to  
measure  
the swarm?



## 5 Swarm Transfer

Follow this procedure if a swarm settles in your bait box:

1. Wear your bee protective clothing.
2. Detach the bait box from its mounting and hold above your prepared collection box.
3. Open the bait box by turning the swivel clips on the underside of the box. Gently shake the bait box so the bees fall into the collection box.
4. There will be bees flying around as well as those that fall on the ground around the collection box. If the queen has successfully been transferred, the other bees will all gradually make their way into the collection box.
5. Mark the collection box with your bait box number.
6. This set-up can be in place for two to three days prior to collection.



Bait Box  
with Swarm



Collection  
Box

This same methodology should be followed if you find and collect a swarm that lands in your AO even if it doesn't take up residence in your bait box.

*Note: If you are not a beekeeper, a project team member will assist you with the swarm transfer process.*



## 6 Swarm Collection & Biosecurity Check

Swarms represent a biosecurity challenge to our environment. A swarm can also present a biosecurity challenge to any existing hives that you manage or that are managed on properties near you.

The WBFS project team will coordinate a quarantine and biosecurity process for collected swarms. If you would like to keep the swarm collected in your area of observation, participating in the biosecurity process will give you improved peace of mind that your swarm has a better chance to develop into a healthy and productive colony.



### Swarm Collection

Call Jim Sansom  
0427 290 012

Jim or another project team member will come to your property to collect your swarm. The swarm will be taken to a central location and kept until an authorized biosecurity expert checks it and confirms it is disease and pest free.

The biosecurity check is ***important!***  
*Don't risk exposing your other colonies to potential diseases and/or pests.*