

What about native bees?

Yes, we do native bees as well! Many of our members keep both.

Again, Townsville is a perfect place to keep these harmless and stingless little creatures. Among the 1500 native bee species in Australia, only 10 are social and all prefer the warmer top-half of the continent. In the Townsville area, the predominant species is *Tetragonula hockingsi*. They are about the size of an ant, yet despite their diminutive stature



and lack of sting, they more than hold their own against invading insects.

Native bees can be kept in small boxes and don't need frames. They make 'pots' to store the honey in with elaborate structures to hold them together.



Native bees working their brood which is surrounded by 'leafy' folds

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BEEKEEPERS
ASSOCIATION

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Beekeeping in Townsville



**THE MOST REWARDING HOBBY
YOU WILL EVER HAVE!**



Thinking of keeping bees? You are in the perfect location with all the help you need!

Is Townsville a good place have bees?

Townsville is possibly the best place in Australia to keep bees for the backyard beekeeper! We have warm sunny winters which means that the bees



There's always something for bees in the suburbs

can work all year round. In the suburbs, the flowers are plentiful, diverse and there is always something in flower for the bees. Suburban beekeepers often produce over 50kg of honey from one hive in a single year. In a good year, even double that quantity!

How much does it cost?*

Membership fees are still only \$20 per year! Members can purchase a starter kit consisting of a hooded bee jacket, gloves, hive tool, smoker and a gate valve (for the honey vat!) for a heavily discounted \$90.

Boxes, frames, lid and baseboard can be purchased from commercial suppliers for around \$250 for a two-box hive.

The bees themselves can be purchased from members by private arrangement.

Registration of hives with Biosecurity Queensland is around \$14 per year.

* as at March 2014

Why keep bees?

Bees are the ultimate social insect with a rich and fascinating ecology. They are also the most important pollinators in the world, responsible for one in every three mouthfuls we eat. Sadly they are on the decline world-wide. You can help bring them to your neighbourhood and, while you are at it, enjoy the products so generously provided by



Honey bees—the ultimate pollinators

the bees. It really is one of the most rewarding and enduring hobbies you could ever wish for!

How to get started

Without doubt, the best way to get started is by joining your local beekeeping club. At the Townsville and District Beekeepers Association, we can help you with information, training and ongoing mentoring. We can also help with equipment and with the bees themselves—everything you need to get started!

When you join, you will receive a starter pack of information which includes your Biosecurity Queensland hive registration form.

Club meetings

Our meetings are every third Sunday of the month and run from around 2 to 4pm. We rotate meetings at members houses and see how different people go about their beekeeping.

We don't normally have meetings over the Christmas break in December and January.

Our meetings normally commence with a hive opening which is a great opportunity to watch, learn and ask questions.



Experienced beekeepers are at hand to run through the basics of beekeeping.

Meeting formalities are usually kept to a minimum before we break for a cuppa and a chance to chat and share experiences.

Ring or email us for the details of the next meeting and don't forget to bring a chair!