

BeeZotted hive care

Thank you for purchasing a BeeZotted hive of Australian native stingless bees. We hope that your new bee family brings you many years of pleasure.



Siting your new hive

Hives are best sited with the entrance **facing the north-east** so that they catch the morning sun until around 10am. It would be a place where you would be comfortable to park your deck chair all day, all year round.

In **hotter climates** the hive should be in mottled or patchy shade from 10am. Excessive heat will kill a hive. In **cooler areas** the hives can be exposed to more sunshine till later in the day, as they won't venture out until the temperature exceeds 18°. In your garden it may work better to have a summer spot and a winter spot. (See 'How to move a hive' further on.)

Mounting your new hive

Before you mount your hive, record its weight on your calendar. In this way you will be able to gauge that your hive is growing and healthy as the months pass. You might want to weigh it two or three times a year. (If you find your hive has lost weight contact Matthew to discuss your options.)

All BeeZotted hives come with a pipe attached to one side, which can easily be placed over a star picket. Choose the star picket length that will most suit your needs. Once you have hammered it in, oil the star picket from the ground up to prevent ants getting in. For the same reason, ensure there is no foliage touching the hive.

If you choose to place your hive on a log or bricks or something else instead of a star picket, ensure that there is an oiled cloth barrier (such as a chux wipe) between the hive and the surface. This cloth will need oiling every couple of months or so.

Once the hive is mounted, **remove any tape or dressing gauze that is covering the bee entrance AND the air holes underneath**. The tape is only there to prevent the bees escaping during transit.

Leave the metal mesh in place over the entrance and air holes. The mesh is there to keep hive beetles out. For more information about hive beetle visit our website www.beezotted.com

If the temperature is over 18° you should see some bee movement immediately. If the hive has been in transit for a few days it may take a couple of hours before the bees peek out.

Signs of a healthy hive

- Lots of activity at the entrance with bees coming and going once the day warms up.
- Depending on your area, you will see the bees returning with little side saddle bags of pollen.
- Every few minutes bees emerge from the hive with a little bundle of debris, which is the casing from the hatching babies.
- Good weight gain over time.

Warning signs

- Little or no bee activity on a warm day.
- Frenzied ant activity on or around the hive. If the hive's support is kept well oiled there should be zero ant activity.
- Any other predatory insects taking excessive interest in the hive.
- Hive has lost weight.
- Dripping or foul-smelling seepage. This may be a fatal sign that the hive has been invaded.

Ongoing care

- NEVER SPRAY OR DEPOSIT PESTICIDE OR HERBICIDE NEAR YOUR HIVE. Any chemical use nearby could put it at risk. However, it's okay to be near a swimming pool with chlorinated water.
- Keep hives free of cobwebs and foliage, including long grass.
- Ensure hive is not in direct line of an irrigation system.
- Keep star picket or cloth barrier oiled.
- Replace any tape that has perished (it is added protection against predators).
- Only ever open a hive when robbing or splitting.
- Every few years sand and repaint hive. This can be done at night time after taping the bees up.
- **It is normal for bees to swarm from time to time.** (See more about this on our website.)

In case of extreme weather

In a **heatwave** it's good practice to place a wet hessian bag and/or a thick foam or cardboard box to provide extra shade over the top of the hive. Protect from direct sunlight, even in the early morning. If it gets **very cold** cover the hive with a dry hessian bag and a thick box. Some people have even been known to place hot water bottles or electric blankets on their hives when there's a cold snap!

If there is a bushfire or flood warning, remove hives sooner rather than later.

Moving a hive

The general rule for moving a hive is **less than a metre or more than a kilometre at any one time**. Tape bees up and **move at night only**.

The easiest way to move a hive across the garden (more than a metre) is to tape it up and move it after dark to a friend's house more than a kilometre away. The bees can be let out there, left for a day or two's sleepover, then taped up again for the return journey.

If hive is taped up for moving or renovation, ensure it is kept in a cool, shady place.

Robbing or splitting a hive

After a while you may decide to rob your hive of honey or split it in two. This requires great care. Please contact Matthew or see the website for more information.

Contact us

For any queries or concerns, please call or email and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Don't Worry, Bee Happy!

Matthew and Juliet