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# IMPACT

REPORT 2022-23

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**WHEN BEE**  
FOUNDATION



# WE NEED BEES

..... *for* .....

FOOD SECURITY

BIODIVERSITY

ECOSYSTEM HEALTH



## A message from the CEO

Earlier this year, the When Bee Foundation unveiled its biggest exhibition site to date at the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show. Based on the popularity of our display in 2022, we dramatically increased our range of displays to truly reflect the broad reach of the Foundation.

The site was part of the show's first Bug and Bloom Garden, a collaboration between the Nursery and Garden Industry Victoria, the Victorian Schools Garden Program and Agriculture Victoria. We had a massive team of volunteers on hand to talk all things bees. There were representatives from Bee School at Beechworth Honey who have partnered with us in our new education hub. We had representatives from our Powerful Pollinators program giving out our popular Planting Guides. Our Bee Ambassadors were there looking after our interactive bee hive, and Flow Hive was on site for backyard beekeepers. We had representatives available to speak to farmers about Bee Friendly Farming, and our first native bee habitat display. Dotted throughout the site were information banners on all our programs, including a banner highlighting our founder, Gretchen When.

Over the show's five days, more than 108,000 people visited the show, including an estimated 3,000 students, all eager to learn about bees and the critical role they play in our lives. It was an inspiring event and a clear display of the organisation's increasing ability to reach more people. I know Gretchen would have been proud to see the work being done and the impact we are having across the community.

Along with our MIFGS exhibition, the 2023 financial year saw the launch of a number of new initiatives at the When Bee Foundation as we continue to build on our four main focuses of activity – research and development, awareness and education, connecting people and fundraising.

This year we launched the **Centre For Bee Education**, an online learning hub developed between the When Bee Foundation and Bee School by Beechworth Honey.

During Australian Pollinator Week we launched the **Australian Pollinator Count**, calling on citizen scientists across the country to count the pollinators in their local area to increase our understanding of the number and diversity of pollinating insects in the environment.

We held the inaugural **Pollinator Photography Competition**, attracting more than 600 entries, and launched the **Discover Native Bees of Australia** poster, featuring 22 native bees in full colour, captured by photographer and entomologist Dr James Dorey.

We launched a new community planting program and welcomed Carman's to the fold with the **Carman's Trees for Bees Community Tree Grants**, providing grants of up to \$500 for community groups to increase pollinator-friendly habitat.

These new projects joined our regular line-up of programs including Bee Friendly Farming, World Bee Day, our increasing range of Powerful Pollinator Planting Guides, our work as secretariat of the Pollination Security CRC Bid, our Bee Ambassadors program, the Linton Briggs Advancing Apiculture Fund, and our expanding Business Buddies program.

We are proud of the work that we at the Foundation and our teams of volunteers have done over the past 12 months. We also know that it has set us on a path for continued growth over the coming years, and we look forward to the future and the impact we can have for the benefit of all bees.

**Fiona Chambers**  
CEO, When Bee Foundation



**WHEN BEE**  
FOUNDATION

## HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE:

# Our vital work supporting bees in 2022–23

# \$53m

As Secretariat, the When Bee Foundation supported the Pollination Security CRC Core Bid Group, which attracted \$53 million in partnerships, with the When Bee Foundation contributing \$1.1 million over 10 years.

# \$50K

**WORLD BEE DAY:** \$50k investment so far as the Australian Secretariat.

# \$60K

### **COMMUNITY TREE GRANTS – CARMAN'S TREES FOR BEES:**

The Community Tree Grants was launched with \$60,000 from Carman's over three years to support community tree plantings for pollinators.

# 92ha

### **BEE FRIENDLY FARMING TREE GRANTS:**

The Bee Friendly Farming Tree Grants have awarded \$65,000 in tree grants in its first two years, planting more than 92ha of pollinator-friendly habitat.

# \$30K

**AUSTRALIAN POLLINATOR WEEK:**  
\$30k investment so far as Secretariat.

# \$257K

When Bee Foundation has partnered with Federal, State and local governments investing \$257,000 in the Powerful Pollinator Planting Guides program, with 21 guides published for bioregions in six states and territories and an additional 12 Guides under development.

# 40,000ha

**BEE FRIENDLY FARMING:** The Bee Friendly Farming program has 40,000ha of farmland certified, with the aim to grow this to 100,000ha in the next two years.

# 3,000

Approximately 3,000 students attended the 2023 Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show in March, most making a beeline for the popular When Bee Foundation stand.

# C4BE

**CENTRE FOR BEE EDUCATION:**

A new national learning hub for science-based information about bees and other pollinators was established as a collaboration between When Bee Foundation and Bee School by Beechworth Honey.

# Discover Bees

A new Discover Bees of Australia poster was launched in May to increase awareness of Australia's approximately 1,600 undocumented native bees, and help raise \$3.6 million to support scientists to identify and document these precious pollinators.

# \$20k

**LINTON BRIGGS ADVANCING**

**APICULTURE FUND:** \$20k investment so far, strengthening innovation and leadership skills, supporting industry leadership participation and building organisational effectiveness. In June 2022, 20 executives from Vic, SA and Qld beekeeping associations took part in the inaugural program.

# 13,700

More than 13,700 people visited the WBF and WBD websites during May, the biggest visitation month in the websites' histories.



## Powerful Pollinator Planting Guides

The Powerful Pollinators Planting Guide program has seen the creation of individual regional guides providing information on plant selection and management to increase the number and diversity of insect pollinators in farm and urban landscapes. When Bee Foundation has raised \$257,000 to produce 33 guides.

As of June 2023, 21 guides have been published spanning six states and territories. These have been shared with land management groups, communities, farmers and gardeners in print and digital formats. Guides continue to be rolled out regularly and are available online. Inquiries from local councils are leading to the development of new guides.





## Bee Friendly Farming

When Bee Foundation has worked with Pollinator Partnership to introduce the global Bee Friendly Farming program to Australia.

The program supports farmers to protect, preserve and promote the health of bees and other pollinators on their land. Additional funding has been provided by Flow Hive, Australian Almonds and Equity Trustees, with in-kind support from the National Farmers' Federation, Rotarians for Bees and SGA.

The almond industry has embraced the Bee Friendly Farming program, seeing the clear benefits in committing as an industry to support pollinators, and demonstrating this commitment to consumers. As of 2023, 40,000 hectares of land has been certified across six states and 12 industries.

## Bee Friendly Farming Tree Grants

Through the Bee Friendly Farming Program, When Bee Foundation partnered with One Tree Planted and Flow Hive to establish the Bee Friendly Farming Tree Grants.

The first grants were awarded in 2021, with a second program running in 2022, providing grants between 1,000 and \$10,000 to farmers to plant pollinator friendly trees. In its first two years, Bee Friendly Farming has awarded \$65,000 in grants to farmers who collectively planted 92 hectares of pollinator-friendly habitat.

This has improved the ecosystem for feeding, nesting and breeding and in turn increased the number and diversity of insect pollinators in agriculture and urban landscapes.

## Carman's Trees for Bees Community Tree Grants

In May 2023, as part of World Bee Day celebrations, the When Bee Foundation launched its first Community Tree Grants – Carman's Trees for Bees, in partnership with Carman's which has sponsored the program for three years.

Grants of up to \$500 to community organisations to plant pollinator-friendly trees and shrubs in their local area. The grants will increase vital habitat for bees, while also raising awareness of the important role these pollinators play in food security.

Twenty grants are available with applications open to community organisations, not-for-profits, school groups, Landcare groups, sporting and gardening clubs and sustainability groups. Recipients of the inaugural grants program will be announced in August 2023.



# Centre for Bee Education

The Centre for Bee Education was launched in May 2023, a new national learning hub for science-based information about bees and other pollinators, developed in collaboration between When Bee Foundation and Bee School by Beechworth Honey. Through the Centre for Bee Education, educators and students can access learning resources, information sheets and lesson plans for hassle-free and engaging learning that fosters a lifelong passion for bees.

All Bee Education Learning Kits and resources are linked to the Australian Curriculum and the Victorian Curriculum, making them easy for teachers to integrate into classroom learning. The first Bee Education Learning Kit is Planting for Bees! and looks at the relationship between honey bees and their environment.



## World Bee Day

In 2019, When Bee Foundation became the official custodian of World Bee Day in Australia and has grown engagement with the celebration year on year.

For the past three years, the Foundation has partnered with the Australian Farmers' Markets Association to increase awareness among market visitors through the We Need Bees campaign and the Bring Your Buzz campaigns. Markets across the country rolled out messaging to thousands of visitors.

In 2023, celebrations were kicked off with a message from When Bee Foundation Patron His Excellency General the Honourable AC DSC (Retd) Governor General David Hurley. Events were held by community organisations across the country and included market stalls, craft sessions, bee hotel building, information sessions and webinars.



## Australian Pollinator Week

Australian Pollinator Week was founded by Dr Megan Halcroft in November 2015 to acknowledge Australia's important and unique insect pollinators during our southern spring. In 2019, When Bee Foundation became custodian of Australian Pollinator Week to increase awareness of bees and other wild pollinators in the Australian landscape.

Australian Pollinator Week has become a highlight on the calendar for these often unrecognised yet vital contributors to our food systems and environment.

In 2023, celebrations took place across the country and included Pollinator Picnics, Wild Pollinator Counts and webinars featuring discussions by bee experts.



# Pollinator Photography Competition

In 2022, the Australian Pollinator Photography Competition was launched as a key event of Australian Pollinator Week. The competition had two categories, an open category and a Student category and received 674 entries.

The Discover Bees through Photography webinar held during Australian Pollinator Week had more than 140 registrants who

came to hear the announcement of the winners and learn from some of the country's best pollinator photographers.

The competition was supported by iWoohoo, Beechworth Honey, Rotarians for Bees and Burt's Bees.

Below: Open Winner — Leafcutter bee on Darling Pea by Erica Siegel.



## Australian Pollinator Count

Australian Pollinator Week 2022 saw the launch of the inaugural Australian Pollinator Count. Citizen scientists across the country were encouraged to count the pollinators in their local area and submit their results online.

Collecting this data helps build an understanding of the number and diversity of pollinating insects in the environment. Learning resources, including an online learner guide and quiz, were produced to help participants prepare for the count by learning to identify native pollinator species.

**Australian  
Pollinator  
Count:**

## CRC for Pollination Security

When Bee Foundation has taken on a pivotal role in the establishment of a Pollination Security CRC. The CRC will focus on improving pollination efficacy, biosecurity and the sustainable management of honey bees and other pollinating insects. A key focus of the CRC is the development of a national pollination strategy.

The Foundation is acting as an independent secretariat to support the Pollination Security CRC Core Bid Group, made up of representatives from industries and businesses dependent on pollinating insects, research and development organisations, universities, state government departments, and other sector stakeholders.

Professor Jean-Pierre Scheerlinck was appointed CRC bid CEO in July 2022. The Core Bid Group's Stage 1 submission was successful and having raised \$53 million in funding from governments, industry, research partners and corporate community, is now in the final running with 5 other bids. The When Bee Foundation has committed \$1.1 million over 10 years.

 **Pollination  
Security CRC**



# Discover Bees

When Bee Foundation has launched a Fund to support an ambitious campaign by Taxonomy Australia to discover and describe all remaining Australian native bee species over the next six years. To date, 1,680 bees have been identified and taxonomists estimate another 1,000 bees are yet to be discovered. Documenting the remaining bee species will require

a 16-fold increase in the current rate of discovery, at a cost of \$600,000 per year for six years, totalling \$3.6 million.

In May 2023, the When Bee Foundation launched the Discover Bees of Australia poster with photography by James Dorey, to increase awareness of Australia's native bees and help raise funds for this important project.

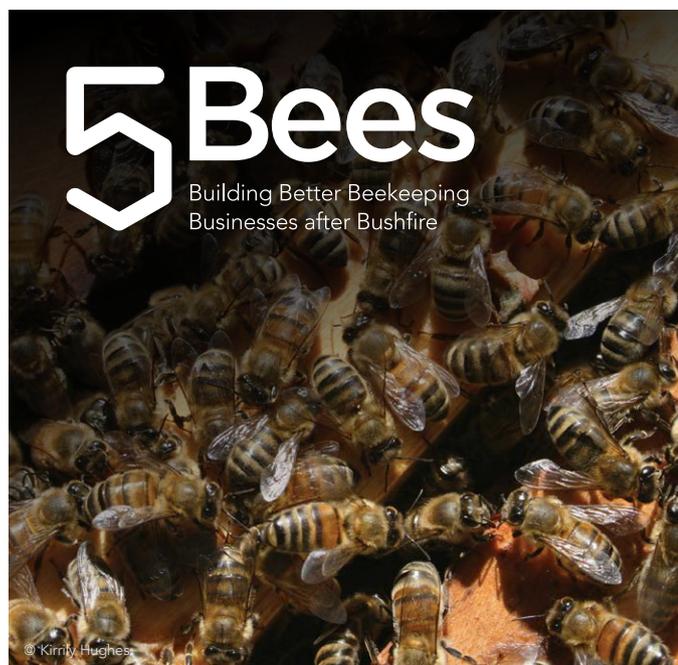


# Linton Briggs Advancing Apiculture Fund

When Bee Foundation established the Linton Briggs Advancing Apiculture Program to honour the legacy of Linton Briggs' dedication to the Australian beekeeping industry.

The program is dedicated to strengthening innovation and leadership skills in the beekeeping industry, supporting industry leadership participation and building organisational effectiveness.

In June 2022, 20 executives from three state beekeeping associations – Victoria, South Australia and Queensland – participated in the inaugural Linton Briggs Board Effectiveness Program.



## 5Bees

The 5Bees program supports commercial beekeepers to recover from bushfire and drought. Established in 2020 through the When Bee Foundation's Bushfire Rebuild and Recovery Fund, with support from AustOn, Anthony Costa Foundation and Beechworth Honey, the program helps beekeepers adapt to a changing climate and increasing incidents of severe weather conditions including drought, bushfire and floods.

Grants of up to \$8,500 support beekeepers to implement new technology and systems that will increase hive production and performance, decrease production costs and enhance business viability.

The 5Bees program manager has brought together 15 commercial beekeepers from five states (WA, NSW, SA, Vic, Qld). Current trials include hive cameras for remote monitoring, scales on hives for remote monitoring of honey production, bee venom collection and an integrated record keeping system for enhanced biosecurity and business decision-making capabilities.

## Green Carpenter Bee

The Green Carpenter Bee Conservation Project is an initiative of the When Bee Foundation with support from ANZ Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, Flow and Seacology. The project has supported the development of artificial nesting substrates produced by Kingscote Men's Shed on Kangaroo Island. The group has so far produced 500 nesting substrates for the endangered Green Carpenter Bee. The focus of this project has recently expanded due to the impacts of the catastrophic 2020 bushfires.



# The When Bee Foundation Research Apiary

The When Bee Foundation Research Apiary is located at North Richmond in the Hawkesbury region of New South Wales on the property that was once the home of the Foundation's benefactor, Gretchen When.

The Research Apiary is a fully funded resource available to researchers and organisations to study pests, diseases and other issues that affect bees. The findings improve our scientific understanding of bees and help tailor best practice management strategies to improve bee health and welfare.

The Research Apiary has 20 hives and allows researchers to test various management interventions in a practical field environment, under controlled conditions. In 2022, the research Apiary was used by the University of Sydney who provided funding to equip fourteen of the hives with monitors.



## Plan Bee

The Plan Bee program uses innovative breeding technologies to help secure Australia's honey bee population and transform their performance. Through research, partnerships and education the project generates gains for beekeepers in honey production and improve productivity and profitability for primary producers in pollination-dependent industries.

The When Bee Foundation is a core partner in the project which is run by AgriFutures, with funding and support from NSW Department of Primary Industries, University of Sydney, Better Bees (WA), Olam, Costa Group, South Pacific Seeds, Beechworth Honey, Monson's Honey and Pollination and other commercial beekeepers. So far, the project has \$3.7 million invested over three years, with 42 per cent of this co-investment raised through When Bee Foundation bringing partners to the table.

## Conferences and Shows

In 2023, When Bee Foundation collaborated with the Victorian Schools Garden Program to bring an immersive and interactive display to the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show. The When Bee Foundation display was in the Bug and Bloom Garden, a dedicated area for school groups and young families.

The display included a live hive demonstration, a native bee habitat display, a Flow hive display, Powerful Pollinator Planting Guides and information about Bee Friendly Farming and the Centre for Bee Education. Volunteers from the Bee Ambassador program and Rotarians for Bees and teachers from Bee School by Beechworth Honey were on hand to answer questions about bees, pollinator-friendly gardening and When Bee Foundation programs.

The show took place over five days and 108,500 people attended. Approximately 1,000 students were booked each day from Wednesday to Friday.

The When Bee Foundation attended several other conferences and shows including 2023 HortConnections, the 2022 Bee Congress, Australian Native Bee Conference, Landcare Conference and the 2022 Australian Almond Conference.





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# About the When Bee Foundation

The When Bee Foundation is an Australian registered not-for-profit charity that promotes awareness of the importance of bees for food security and raises funds for research that addresses the national and global threats to bees.

We engage with all levels of government, the apiculture industry, bee reliant food industries, universities, research organisations and community. We fund vital strategic research, education and conservation initiatives that strengthen bees, improve pollination efficiency and increase food security and ecosystem health.

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## Our Patron



**His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)**

As both Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and a keen apiarist and amateur beekeeper, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) is delighted to be the Patron of The Wheen Bee Foundation.

As Patron of The Wheen Bee Foundation, David Hurley enjoys supporting Wheen Bee Foundation's valuable work and spending time with the dedicated staff, volunteers and supporters.

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## Our Founder



**Gretchen Wheen**

Gretchen Wheen was one of Australia's best-known beekeepers. She was one of the first suppliers of quality queen bees to Australian and international commercial beekeepers and a pioneer in instrumental insemination of queen bees.

Gretchen donated her estate to establish the Wheen Bee Foundation, with the aim of supporting and developing research, innovation, training and communication to ensure a viable beekeeping industry to protect Australia's food supply.

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## Our CEO



**Fiona Chambers**

Fiona Chambers has 30 years' business experience in producing and marketing agricultural and horticultural commodities in Australia and overseas. She has lectured in Business Management and Marketing at Marcus Oldham College and convened the Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Program and the Apple and Pear Australia Ltd Emerging Leaders Program.

Fiona has undertaken Churchill and ISS international study Fellowships related to agricultural industry development (2003, 2010) and is a Fellow of the Williamson Community Leadership Program (1995).

She has been CEO since October 2016.

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## Our Board



**Dr Max Whitten AM**  
Foundation Chairman

Max Whitten (BA, BSc, PhD, FAA, AM) is an Adjunct Professor, School of Biological Sciences, University of Queensland. He was formerly Chief of CSIRO Entomology and Professor of Genetics at the University of Melbourne.

Max was the first Chairman of the Honeybee Research and Development Council. His research interests centred around genetic means of controlling insect pests and the ecological genetics of pesticide resistance. His wider interests have been in public good research, sustainable agriculture and biodiversity.

Max is a founding Director, serving on the Wheen Bee Foundation Board since August 2009.

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**Jodie Goldsworthy**

Jodie Goldsworthy (BAppSci, Grad Dip Strat Mkting) is a fourth-generation apiarist and Director of Beechworth Honey, one of Australia's largest independently owned specialist honey businesses. Jodie is determined to increase public awareness about the importance of bees and is a keen advocate for research into the threats to nature's most efficient pollinators.

Jodie Joined the Wheen Bee Foundation Board in June 2010.

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**Robert Costa**

Robert Costa is a co-founder of Costa Group, Australia's largest grower, marketer and exporter of fresh fruit and vegetables. His knowledge of the commercial aspects of the horticultural industry and strong business acumen played a significant role in building the Costa business into the success that it is today.

Robert joined the Wheen Bee Foundation Board in May 2016.

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**Des Cannon**

Des was a commercial beekeeper for 25 years and Editor of Australia's leading beekeeping journal, The Australasian Beekeeper, for 14 years. His science teacher background and decade of teaching 'Beginning in Bees' and 'Beekeeping as a Business' for NSW DPI played a role in his appointment to the RIRDC Honeybee R&D Advisory Committee for 11 years, including 5 years as Chair.

Des joined the Wheen Bee Foundation Board in February 2018.

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**Rex Carruthers**

Rex Carruthers is a commercial beekeeper from Cooroy, northern Sunshine Coast hinterland, Qld. Rex operates an apiary of 2000 colonies with his main business focus being the pollination of almonds in Victoria. Rex has been a member of the Queensland Beekeepers' Association (QBA) for 25 years, and was on the state executive for 9 years, three as state President.

Rex joined the Wheen Bee Foundation Board in July 2021.



## Contact details

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