1. PaDIL Species Factsheet

Scientific Name:
*Tetragonula hockingsi* Cockerell, 1929
(Hymenoptera: Apidae: Apinae: Meliponini)

Common Name
"hockingsi" Sugarbag bee
Live link: [http://www.padil.gov.au/pollinators/Pest/Main/138563](http://www.padil.gov.au/pollinators/Pest/Main/138563)

Image Library
Australian Pollinators

Partners for Australian Pollinators image library
- Western Australian Museum
- South Australian Museum
- Australian Museum
  [https://australian.museum/](https://australian.museum/)
- Museums Victoria
2. Species Information

2.1. Details

**Specimen Contact:** ANIC, CSIRO Canberra -

**Author:** Dollin, A., Walker, K. & Heard, T.


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2.2. URL

Live link: [http://www.padil.gov.au/pollinators/Pest/Main/138563](http://www.padil.gov.au/pollinators/Pest/Main/138563)

2.3. Facets

**Status:** Native Australian Beneficial Species

**Host Genera:** Fresh Flowers

**Bio-Region:** Australasian - Oceanian

**Host Family:** Avicenniaceae, Myrtaceae

2.4. Diagnostic Notes

We call these bees "Sugarbag"; however, they are better described as Australia's stingless, social honeybees.


Type data: Syntype(s) workers (number of specimens unknown, a specimen is labelled 'type' and has the registration number Hy/3722), Cape York, QLD.

In *T. carbonaria*, *T. hockingsi* and *T. mellipes* the side of the thorax is evenly covered with fine hair. This distinguishes them from *T. clypearis* and *T. sapiens*, in which part of the side of the thorax is shiny and sparsely haired.

Except for the body size (*T. hockingsi* larger) and distribution differences, there is no distinct character to separate *T. carbonaria*, *T. hockingsi* and *T. mellipes*.

They have similar colouration, pilosity and male terminalia.

However, the nest architecture is fundamental to the distinction between *T. carbonaria*, *T. hockingsi* and *T. mellipes*.

In *T. carbonaria*, the brood cells form a complete horizontal spiral comb. Normally there is no external entrance tunnel.

In *T. hockingsi*, the brood cells form small irregular horizontal combs. Normally there is no external entrance tunnel.

In *T. mellipes*, the brood cells form small irregular horizontal combs. Most nests do possess an external entrance tunnel.

*Trigona hockingsi* occurs in parts of NT and in northern QLD whereas *T. carbonaria* mainly occurs in southern QLD and in NSW. *T. mellipes* occurs in NT and WA.

*Trigona hockingsi* is diagnosed by: - Female worker body colour jet black- Female worker measurements= body: 4.1-4.5mm; Wing (including tegula): 4.4-4.7mm- Mesopleuron and metapleuron densely and evenly
covered with fine, short hair- Malar space hirsute and relatively long- Mesoscutum without distinct glabrous bands
- Male drone body colour similar to worker- Male measurements= body 4.0-4.4mm; wing (including tegula): 4.5-4.7mm)- Male hind tibia wide and flatter apically as in T. clypearis- Male last tergum apically rounded not beaked

Source:
Anne Dollin (pers. comm. May 2009) wrote the nesting notes.

2.5. Web Links
AURUKUN: http://uqconnect.net/~zzrzabel/aurukun.html
Overview: http://www.hermparkss.eq.edu.au/Bee_Blog/trigona_hockingsi.htm
3. Diagnostic Images

**Antenna - drone:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Antenna - female:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Dorsal view - drone:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Dorsal view - female worker:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Genitalia - drone:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Head front - drone:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria
**Mesoscutum - drone:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Mesoscutum - female worker:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Mesoscutum drone oblique view:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Mesoscutum female worker oblique view:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Mesosomal side - drone:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria

**Mesosomal side - female worker:** Ken Walker Museums Victoria