THE WHANGAREI BEE CLUB

"HELPING BEEKEEPERS KEEP BEES"

Monthly Newsletter

Issue 213 November 2022

Upcoming Events and Notices

This Club Day: 5th November **Next Club Day: 3rd December**

Whareora Hall 10.00am

What to bring:

- Your **Membership card** to show at the door
- **Cash** for the produce table, p**roduce** for the produce table
- **Library books** you have borrowed
- **Bee suit** (Club has some for members to use also)

Directions: From SH1, turn off to *Kensington*. Turn left onto *Mill Road*, then right at *Whareora Road*. Keep on this road until it joins *Pataua North Road* and continue for a few more minutes.

The hall is on the right. Please **do not** park on the road, use the paddock adjacent to the Hall when the car park is full.

Bulletin

- Please put your name on the job roster when you can.
- Please help with the apiculture data survey. Here is the link to the survey. it takes 15 minutes to complete. If you have any questions you can email: Jane Pierce at AUT (bkstudynz@gmail.com) or Tina Blumenthal at EIT (TBlumenthal@eit.ac.nz).
- Join our WBC Facebook page to catch up with any new developments.
- Put your name forward as a swarm collector if you are interested – the 'swarm collectors list' on our website is being updated.
- The Winners trophies from the honey competition have now been engraved and these were presented at the end of the meeting.

Club Day Duty Roster

Set Up Hall From 9am	HELP NEEDED
Set up in Kitchen 9am & Set up Lunch	Karin de Beer & Sue Young
Wash up Kitchen from Lunch	HELP NEEDED
Pack up / Clean Hall From 12-30	Carlo Lang

All these jobs are easy and require very little time and effort, please sign up on the roster at Club Day. A big "THANK YOU" for your help.

News from last Club Day

Club Day Summary 1 October 2022

Nick gave an update on the Extraction Plant. Thanked Dave, Morgan and Adrian for all the work they have put in in recent months to bring the Extraction Plant up to MPI audit standard. As well, he thanked all the other club members who have turned up to clean and paint the Plant. We are now almost ready for the audit and the upcoming extraction season.

We then had a very interesting Zoom meeting, given by two Principal Scientists, on bee health. Here is the meeting summary:
Richard Hall (Biosecurity NZ) outlined his presentation on '**Honeybee Health**'. He is also a beekeeper, based in Upper Hut, and has spent the last 6 years studying bee health.
Richard was supported by Qing Hai Fan who is an entomologist studying bee health since 2009 in MPI's bee research laboratory in Auckland.

- A bee health guide is available on the MPI website, this includes a biosecurity visual ID guide (here). It covers a variety of topics such as recognising a healthy brood and knowing what disease looks like.
- Several current biosecurity threats: 'Small Hive beetle' originating from sub-Saharan Africa; European Foulbrood. We don't have either of these yet, but Australia does. Antibiotics are commonly used to treat disease overseas, but their use is prohibited in NZ.
- Small Hive Beetle is 1cm long (include a picture). It is attracted by beehive smell and can fly 18kms so can spread easily.
- It lays eggs in the bee brood and leaves a yeast behind which can ferments the honey (a process known as 'slimed out'). This yeast is also pathogenic (disease causing).
- There is a Small Hive Beetle Surveillance Project Call 0800 809966 to report suspicious finds. Currently there are 100 apiary sites around NZ with surveillance traps set up in hives.
- Tracheal Mites (also not in NZ yet) can cause 80% hives losses. This is a tiny mite (0.05mm) which can't be seen in the hive. Found especially in North America (colder areas).
- Tropilaelaps Mite from Asia. The worst mite out there. It is 1mm long. Moves fast. Lives inside brood cells. It is not attached to adult bees (whereas varroa is). Not here yet.
- Exotic bees e.g. Asian Hornet; Asian Honeybee; Braula Fly. Click here for more detail on all these potential pests.

Richard and Fan then talked about the bee health issues we currently have:

- Sack brood and Chalkbrood
- Wax Moth
- Dysentery (caused by Nosema or other vectors)
- AFB
- Varroa Mite. We have high levels of this parasitic mite. Parasitic Mite Syndrome can mask other bee health problems. Please complete the NZ Colony Loss Survey. At present we have 50% beekeeper response to this survey. Varroa, which has been in NZ for 22 years, is now seen as the main driver of colony loss. Europe has 15% annual colony loss and the US has between 20 – 50% colony loss.

Richard then outlined the five surveillance programs related to bee biosecurity that he is currently involved with. He gave details on two of these projects.

1. Bee Pathogen Project
   This started in 2016. His team went around NZ monitoring hives. They transported bees from all over the country back to their laboratory (130,000 bees in total) where they are studied and stored. They found many things, including – a visual inspection for monitoring varroa is not as good as an alcohol wash. There was widespread evidence of: Deformed Wing Virus; Black Queen Cell Virus; Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus. Richard noted the Chatham's are still disease free.
2. Genomics of AFB in NZ (163 apiaries were used for this project)
   There are three main types of AFB sequences in NZ. All belong to the same genomic group which has been here for 150 years. Hive movements move the genetics around the country.

Richard and Fan thanked us for inviting them. Their final comment was – beekeepers are the vets for their bees. Take careful note when you inspect your hives.

Q&A session followed:

Nick mentioned he had chronic bee paralysis virus which appeared to be isolated to one hive. Seemed to cure itself. Richard replied that there is no cure. He suggested 'watchful waiting'. Social hygiene seems to cure it – ill bees are ejected from the hive.

Karin asked about the potential to use pheromones to trap varroa. Richard noted that varroa are attracted to drone cells for nutrition as they are relatively big. He noted that Phil Lester is looking into RNA interference and the use of lithium salts for varroa treatment.

Nick asked about Tracheal Mite management / treatment. Richard suggested the current varroa treatment practices should work with these mites. When they first arrive, they are bad, then the bees begin to tolerate them better.

Nick asked about poisoning of bees from karaka, rhododendron and kowhai flowers. Also camellia (as a mono crop) and hebe pollen – possibly missing an amino acid and the workers remove the affected brood.

Bryce asked about the use of 24D spray and its effect on bees. Regional Councils and/or EPA regulate the use of spraying to minimise spray drift to neighbouring properties.

Member Talk Time

Stuart Hamilton asked how you get a swarm out of a stone wall. Suggestions were to maybe use a brood box with a caged queen inside, although that may conflict with the swarm's own queen. Or just place a brood box with drawn frames on top of the wall nearby. Or you could buy (or make) a 'bee vacuum' at the start of the season. These works well apparently.
You can get a passing swarm to settle by making a loud noise e.g. a car horn or banging on a metal lid.
A swarm will communicate with its parent hive for some time after it leaves. It was suggested that if you disturb the original hive the swarm may return.
Examples of alcohol washes for monitoring varroa are isopropyl alcohol (IPA), methylated spirits, ethanol (ethyl alcohol). There are also carbon dioxide kits available to buy.

Book review: "Let the Bees Tell You." On the Holy Bible (For Beekeepers) of Buckfast Abbey

From John Beauregard: The club has a copy of Brother Adam's, Beekeeping at Buckfast Abbey, reviewed in the club newsletter, October 2013. In John's view this thin volume is one of the club's important holdings because it highlights the deficiencies of all New Zealand commercial queen rearing operations. First, nowhere in New Zealand is it practicably feasible to rear queens in isolation. The breeder has no drone control. Second, few commercial queen breeders also have a honey operation therefore testing queens' suitability for production isn't practised.

Honey Recipe Section

Mead

6 kg honey

35 gm tartaric acid

70 gm malic acid

10 tspn yeast nutrient (double normal amount you would use for a fruit wine)

2 tspn tannin powder

Water to 20 litres

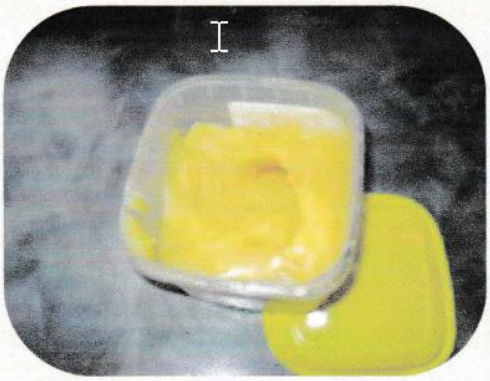
Sodium metabilsulphate (50ppm at least) 1 campden tablet per 5lt fluid easist, crushed

High alcohol wine yeast

50 mg Vit B1 (optional but helps yeast)

1/2 - 1 tspn epsom salts (optional helps yeast)

1. Mix all in a bucket, except the yeast. Everything must be fully disssolved and mixed at room temperature to luke warm. Cover and fit air lock.
2. Wait 24-36 hours. Then add yeast. Keep warm - ideal is 19-21 degrees Celcius.
3. If you have a hydrometer it will be about SG 1080-1100 (i.e. 8-10% heavier than water)
4. Within two days it should be bubbling like crazy. Wait till it slows to about 2 bubbles per minute or less, or SG of 1010 or less.
5. Rack into another sterilised bucket and wait again. Do this every 3-6 months. When it has stopped bubbling entirely and has cleared, add up to 50gm per litre of sugar as a boiled syrup. Cool.
6. Leave 2 weeks before drinking. Keep sterile.



Beeswax Furniture Polish Recipe

I tried several types of beeswax furniture polish recipes until I found one that worked really well.

Some recipes just had beeswax and turps, which made the furniture look quite 'smeary' when applied and you had to really rub to get it shiny. There were others that only contained various oils and these did not seem to 'stick' well.

This recipe is one I made up from experimenting with both techniques. As it cools, it does become thick, but is still easy to use.

I discovered it works **really** well as a neutral shoe polish too.

Desarae

Ingredients:

1 part beeswax
2 parts linseed oil
2 parts olive oil
2 part turps

Equipment:

Double boiler
Spoon (or wooden Chopstick) to stir with
Jar or container to store in

Instructions:

* Grate beeswax
* Put on top of double boiler
* Add oils
* Stir till beeswax just melted
* Remove from heat
* Stir in turps carefully and keep stirring till well mixed
* When cooled, pour into jar or container

You can add an essential oil if you like to give it more fragrance (e.g. lemon, lavender or pine)

pī·ā·ora BEES GIVING LIFE | APICULTURE NEW ZEALAND

Conference 2022 videos now available online

Click here to view selected presentations from the ApiNZ Conference 2022.
Please note: only presentations in the main auditorium were recorded and some videos are not available for general viewing due to publication restrictions.

Honeybee swarms generate more electricity per metre than a storm cloud

Swarms of western honeybees can generate an electric charge of 1000 volts per metre, a voltage density greater than thunderstorm clouds and electrified dust storms

The discovery came as a surprise when Ellard Hunting at the University of Bristol in the UK and his team were tracking weather at a field station near their university. They noticed their electric field monitors recorded a jump in atmospheric electric charge despite no storm activity. However, at the same time, nearby western honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) were swarming, a behaviour the insects do when looking for a new home. Click here for the article.

American Foulbrood Survey

The University of Canterbury is currently running a survey to gather information from NZ beekeepers on the impact of American Foulbrood (AFB) in NZ hives. The results of the survey will be used by the Active Bacteriophages for American Foulbrood Eradication (ABAtE) project to further their understanding of the impact of AFB. The survey is open till 4th of November 2022. You can complete the survey here.

Pioneering UMF: A beekeeper's story

Being in the honey industry for 40-odd years is not enough for Margaret and her husband Bill Bennett. The couple started beekeeping in 1976. Bill had inherited his love for bees from his uncle, who was also a beekeeper. "We produced a bit of mānuka honey and we had it tested and found it had the health-giving attributes that are unique to mānuka honey and thought 'oh this is great'."

And that's where the real story begins, click here to listen to the interview and read more

From engineering to beekeeping: the story of Mihai Curjos, the beekeeper who owns the first wax sheet production facility in Cahul. Read more here

Monique is new to Whangarei and setting up/adding to a native forest/garden in the Kamo Gumtown Road area. She is wondering if there are any beekeepers that would like to rest any hives in this area, she would be happy to accommodate.
0272901701 moniqueh293@gmail.com

Hives for Sale:

Stuart Hamilton has 9 hives left for sale ($350 +GST per hive).
Ph: 021 488 770 stujhamilton@xtra.co.nz

FRAME CLEANING

Tai's Frame Cleaning Service $1.10 per frame.
For more info contact Tai Pullen 020 415 815 64
taipullen9@gmail.com
516 State Highway 1 Otaika Whangārei

Financial Statement

Whangarei Bee Club Incrporation

Opening Bank Balances as at 20 August 22

Operating Account		40,271.19
Savings Account		404.99
Total Funds		40,676.18
Plus Income From		
New Members	330.00	
Subs	300.00	
Club Day -Cash Sale	52.00	
		682.00
		41,358.18
Less Expenditure		
Bank Fees	6.60	
Web Site - OnLine designs	96.60	
Whareora Hall Hire	160.00	
H Rye - Club Day Exps -Pizzas	244.80	
Organised Kaos - Food Caravan	465.00	
Engraving Systems	96.90	
N Watkins - Apivar	62.20	
		1,132.10
		40,226.08
Total Balances as at 20 October 22		
Operating Account	39,821.09	
Savings Account	404.99	
		40,226.08

Call for contributions

All you budding writers out there, we are looking for contributions to the monthly newsletter. It can be a one-off article or an ongoing piece. If you have something to add, then please email it to wbccommunication@gmail.com

Other News and websites to check out

New Zealand drowning in mānuka honey after a boom in beekeeping

Beekeepers stockpile as international demand falls

Award-winning Mānuka honey from New Zealand comes to the UK

How robotic honeybees and hives could help the species fight back

Insect-slapping flower stamens maximize pollination

Betta Bees winding up after 18 years

Varroa mite bee pollination berry grower impact

Thanks to all contributors of the Newsletter

Thanks to our sponsors for their support of the Honey Competition at Whangarei Bee Club:

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