

Upcoming Events and Notices

This Club Day: 5th April

Next Club Day: 3rd May

Whareora Hall 10.00am

What to bring:

- Your **Membership card** to show at the door
- **Cash** for the produce table, **produce** 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.

April Club Day

Club President, Morgan will be presenting updates on bee communication and some guidance on what to do with AFB during a fireban.

May Club Day

AGM and Honey Competition, feel free to use last years' honey if you have not extracted this season

Honey competition tips in this newsletter.....

WBC AGM Agenda 3rd May 2025

Welcome.

Apologies.

Approval of last AGM minutes.

Finance Report.

Reviewer's Report.

President's Report.

Election of Officers.

General Business.



[Apiarist's Advocate Website](#)
[March 2025 online magazine](#)

Club Day Duty Roster

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Set Up Hall From 9am | Volunteers needed |
| Set up in Kitchen 9am & Set up Lunch | Sue & Lorna |
| Wash up Kitchen from Lunch | Volunteers needed |
| Pack up / Clean Hall From 12-30 | Volunteers needed |

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.

Hive Lids for Sale

If you are interested in buying some cheap hive lids, either new or used, for \$5 each, please get hold of Laurie on 022 421 1375.

The lids can be picked up from 1478 state highway 4, Maungatapere.

News from last Club Day

 Club Day – 1st March 2025

Welcome!



'Helping Beekeepers Keep Bees'

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 Club Day – 1st March 2025

- Welcome!
- Autumn – What's going on in the hive?
- Interesting you tube videos
- Member talk time
- Nic Nac's Section
- Bulletin
- Lunch
- Hive Time - Let's see how our mite treatments went!
- Note: Hand out roster for names – April club day

'Helping Beekeepers Keep Bees'

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It's Autumn! What's going on in the hive?

'Helping Beekeepers Keep Bees'

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Autumn – What's going on in the hive?

What should we be doing?

- Treat for Varroa once honey harvest has been done (use a different chemical than your spring treatment)
- Control Robbing – Wasps and Mice especially
- AFB check – ensure this is done before you harvest your honey, especially if using the extraction plant.
- Check honey supplies – Did your hives make enough honey to get through winter? For every full frame of brood, there should be 1 frame of honey.
- Feed if necessary – 2:1 sugar syrup (2 parts sugar, 1 part water)

'Helping Beekeepers Keep Bees'

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Autumn – What's going on in the hive?

What should we be doing?

- Most areas will still have some nectar coming in, add additional supers if space is needed or manipulate frames to make space.
- Re-queening – now is your chance to requeen while there's still drones and plenty of eggs and brood in the hives
- Start preparing to winter down – what does this look like for you? Do you have space prepared for removing boxes? Have you got a plan to deal with wax moth while boxes are in storage over winter?
- Is there robbing in your area yet? Reduce entrances if necessary.

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Autumn – What's going on in the hive?

What are the bees doing at the moment?

- Most hives are still extremely active with the warm weather and nectar still around as well as large worker numbers still around.
- Dearth is approaching – What is dearth? The end of the honey flow and ample food for a lot of insects.
- What does dearth mean for the bees? Aggressive behaviours, robbing. Hives will start to consume their stores – the larger the hive, the more honey they will eat!

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What's in flower in Autumn?



'Helping Beekeepers Keep Bees'

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What's in flower in Autumn?

How many could you name?

- Aster, Echinacea, Roses, Pineapple sage, Borage & Hebe
- How many of these plants have you got flowering? Any recommendations from our gardeners?

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Interesting youtube videos

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eg_5F5BSPXY
- Beekeeping 101: Spotting disease in a beehive – Dr Mark Goodwin
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ee381dCP6JM>
- How flowers talk to bees with David Attenborough

'Helping Beekeepers Keep Bees'

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Member talk time

- Have a topic you'd like to discuss? Questions you want answered?
- Now's the time to raise your hand!

'Helping Beekeepers Keep Bees'

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Nic Nac's Section



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Bulletin

- Extraction plant closed from 20th March – get your bookings in now or risk missing out! Bookings must be made for extraction prior to the 20th.
- Honey competition & A.G.M in May
- Next Club day Saturday 5th April
- Return your library books please! And remember to write in the book if you borrow any.
- Please volunteer on the roster – even just helping for one club day makes a difference!

'Helping Beekeepers Keep Bees'

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Land for bees on Tutukaka Coast: Simon has recently purchased about 20 ha at Tutukaka which has a fair bit of manuka. He is keen to get some bees on the property to aid pollination but not up to doing it himself. Any members interested in the opportunity to put some hives here?

Call **Simon McArley** | 021 467 917 simon@mcarley.co.nz

News from last Club Day

Club Day Summary 1st March 2025

Morgan gave us a presentation on preparing for the dearth of Autumn (see PowerPoint slides).

Here are some additional comments from Morgan's presentation:

Wasps (Waikato / German / Common) are the large yellow and black variety of concern to bees. They generally nest in the ground, but not always. Several members have seen their nests in hollowed out trees, in banks, above the ground. Their nests can grow huge.

Kill wasps using traps and/or baits (Vespex and Hawkeye). Follow the recommended dosage, certainly not less than recommended as this can promote chemical resistance.

Paper wasps appear to be of no concern to bee hives.

It's been a big year for bumble bees. They are everywhere. Good to see.

Beware of robbing from now on – lots of bees with less and less floral bush sources, maybe different in town where planted flowering species are prioritised.

Reduce the hive entrance if you suspect robbing might happen. This time of year, try to work your hives later in the day, so if robbing starts with the hive open too long the robbing bees will have less time to get into the swing of robbing as evening approaches.

Prepare to do AFB checks. Mike Fox suggested April is a good time to do that – bees are quietening down as the weather gets cooler and there is less of them in the hive.

Check to see that there is enough honey for your bees to over-winter. Ideally you should have one full frame of honey for every frame of brood.

If you feed sugar syrup the ratio is 2 x sugar to 1 x water (by weight). You can make it yourself (heating the water) or buy the made-up solution from Farmlands (South End Ave). I think their syrup is cost effective.

If you are planning to feed sugar syrup then autumn is a good time to do that, while bee numbers are still strong. It takes a lot of effort for the bees to process and store the syrup.

Beware of possible glyphosate (Roundup etc) and/or metsulfuron-methyl (used on gorse) poisoning of your bees. Bees will attempt to collect nectar and pollen from sprayed flowers. A symptom of poisoning is bees staggering around the front of the hive. Dead bees will have their tongues out.

Autumn swarming is possible if constrained for space, although its rare.

A strong hive will control wax moths. If you are planning to store used supers over winter you can freeze the super for a week, which will kill the moths' eggs, and then store it in an airtight bag. Alternatively store the supers on end in an area with good air flow through them. Wax moths don't like drafty conditions.

Prepare for wintering down in a month or so.

Bees this time of year

The dearth period is approaching. Bees get aggressive and start robbing.

Full dearth is in April – floral sources have gone / going (suburban garden floral species notwithstanding including winter flowering grevillea and banksia species).

Bee sting potency increases towards winter. Older (less fluffy) bees have more potent stings (due to a higher protein count in their diet). Nurse bees have minimal sting (very young bees). Bees from a queenless hive with no brood have strong stings due to their higher protein levels because they are not feeding brood.

Flowering sources that are still around now are: koromiko, towai, hebe, Dombeya, borage, mangrove (maybe finished already), many suburban flowering plants.

Videos

- [How flowers talk to bees \(narrated by David Attenborough\)](#)
- [Beekeeping 101: spotting disease in a beehive \(Dr Mark Goodwin\)](#)

Nic Nacs

Bryce reminded us of what he uses to separate the supers from the brood box. He jacks up each corner of the bottom super and separates them from the brood box without causing a big disturbance and then conducts his brood inspection etc.

Send soil samples to Christchurch.

PREPARING FOR HONEY SHOWS helpful hints and tips



Categories:

- Granulated Honey: Dark, Medium & Light
- Liquid Honey: Dark, Medium & Light
- Novelty Wax Item
- Honey Based Product -appealing to at least 1 of 4 senses (sight, smell, taste, touch)

LIQUID HONEY CLASSES: Sort your frames by colour before extracting. Remember excessive heat is the enemy. Even electric uncapping knives darken honey. Correct moisture content is critical. Strain, filter, and filter again. Dust and lint will severely downgrade an entry. Check and remove froth or foam. Check for correct and consistent filling height. It is a good idea to change lids on show arrival to avoid travel stains. Polish jars and handle by lid to avoid fingerprints.

JUDGES CONSIDER: colour- correct class, show stewards can assist you here. Aroma, cleanliness, freedom of fermentation, crystals, foam or froth, density/viscosity, flavour, container and general appearance, accuracy, and uniformity of fill.

FOR NATURALLY GRANULATED OR CREAMED HONEY CLASSES: firmness of honey, texture and evenness of grain are considered. Appearance in the jar, layering and lack of bloom are all considered.

Preparing liquid honey

- selection – choose the best for: clarity, taste, scent, colour.
- filtering can improve chances. There are many methods, but lint from filters can destroy your chances.
- getting rid of incipient granulation is best done in bulk. Trying to improve just one jar is often very difficult. The effects of heating can change colour and taste. If you must, try a short time in a microwave rather than longer heating.
- pollen in honey is not a fault and can be a selling point in everyday trade, but it can easily be mistaken for granulation by a judge, so it is best to put in clear looking jars for showing. Too much pollen downgrades your entry.
- removing specks: - using a tube or straw they can be sucked out, but it is better they were not there at all. Many specks come from putting perfect honey into dusty jars. It is easy to wash tea cloths so use good ones and wipe all jars with care.
- bubble problems – filling with the jars pre-heated helps stop air sticking to the sides. Allowing time for bubbles to escape whilst in the settling tank is the best, so prepare in good time, let the honey settle and fill jars slowly. Bubbles under the shoulder of a jar can easily be dislodged using a clean bent wire, then skimmed off later.

Faults which downgrade

- lack of clarity – pollen in clear honey
- No “bits”: includes cleaning the jars of dust prior to filling, ensuring that all top foam and associated bits and pieces are removed and not cuddling the cat just before filling your jars. Clean the jar outside
- floaters, (apart from dirt), such as wax specks, little bubbles
- smears on glass, tipped honey on otherwise clean lid
- poor aroma, or the lack of any.
- boring or poor flavour, or the lack of it
- Your honey should be well-filtered to start with, pour it down the side of the jar (like a pint of beer) then you can remove the foam when it forms on top and top up the jar
- Jar the week before and keep upright, change the lids when you get to the competition if it may have been tipped up on the way
- Fill to the base of the jar neck, not more or less

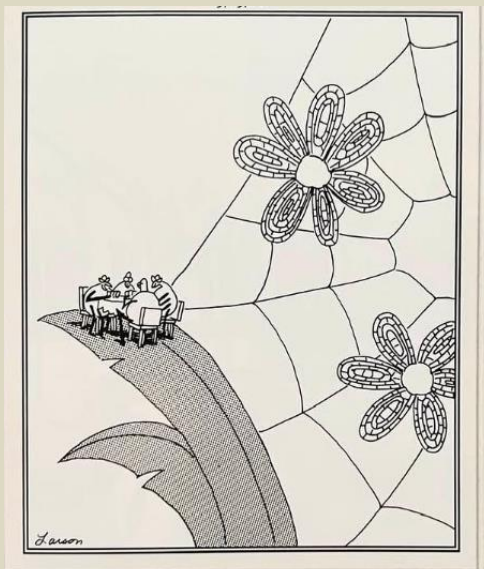
Aroma: This will pick up

- “toffee” smell (over heating in melting to liquid honey or pasteurisation)
- Thymol etc from treatment still in hives at harvest
- Over smoked hives at harvest
- Fermentation

Moisture: needs to be below 18.5 (often entries are a bit high). This affects the keeping quality (i.e. higher moisture content leads to fermentation). Bear in mind your honey will take up moisture from the air in our humid environment if not sufficiently sealed. Overnight (lids off) in a closed-up room or pantry with a dehumidifier is sufficient to take it down.



APICULTURE
NEW ZEALAND



"You and Fred have such a lovely web, Edna—and I love what you've done with those fly wings."

Sticky business for honey producers in beehive boom comedown

Last year there were 533,838 registered beehives in New Zealand – a far cry from the 918,026 at the peak in 2019

How to be a responsible beekeeper on your lifestyle block

Classified as livestock, bees may be small, but they come with big responsibility – and big rewards.

According to industry advocate and membership organisation Apiculture New Zealand, there were 519,815 registered beehives and 8190 registered beekeepers in New Zealand as of October 2024.

FRAME CLEANING

Tai's Frame Cleaning Service \$1.50 per frame.
For more info contact Tai Pullen 020 415 815 64
taipullen9@gmail.com
516 State Highway 1 Otaika Whangārei

MPI Bee biosecurity resources

Research reports, articles, and guidance on bee biosecurity and health. Click on title for link to website

AFB newsletter update

Much abuzz on Otago queen bee breeding farm

Maggie James visited the 1500ha Otago farm of Invermay Agricultural Research Centre, the home of Betta Bees. There she talks through the queen breeding business with hands-on owners Frans Laas and Rob Waddell, including their procedures for delicate instrumental insemination (II*).

Betta Bees is potentially the country's most advanced queen bee breeding programme, due to its focus on II queens to assist genetic improvement.

Honey Market Update

LEARN TO TASTE HONEY LIKE A PRO

3-DAY LEVEL ONE INTRODUCTION TO THE SENSORY ANALYSIS OF HONEY

Wednesday 2nd–Friday 4th April 2025

CENTRAL AUCKLAND LOCATION

Specifically designed for NZ varietal honey, this 3-day immersive training will introduce you to the art and skill of sensory analysis. The curriculum will be consistent with the time-honoured and respected Italian National Register of Experts in the Sensory Analysis of Honey Experts and will inspire you to enter the diverse and exciting world of honey appreciation.

The course is primarily designed for beekeepers, packers, and honey technicians for quality assessment, but also offers invaluable insight for chefs, food writers, nutritionists, or passionate foodies.

The course content will include:

- the physiology and techniques of sensory analysis
- learning to memorise, record, express and share findings
- defects and solutions to mitigate those defects
- possible value-added products
- honey food matches and cooking with honey
- lots of opportunities to taste and record a diverse range of New Zealand honey.

This advanced apicultural education programme is to support excellence, quality, and innovation in the honey industry. It has been developed in collaboration with the ApiNZ Education and Skills Focus Group.

Training will be conducted by *Maureen Conquer*, ApiNZ National Honey Competition Senior Judge and Apimondia NZ Representative.

*You can almost smell it.
Honeys ready for tasting at
the honey sensory course.
Photo supplied.*



Places are limited, act now to secure your seat.

Course Fee \$1100. Enquiries to maureen@wildforage.co.nz, 021 956 349

Financial Statement

Whangarei Bee Club Incorporation

Opening Bank Balances as at 21 February 2025

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Operating Account | 9,509.59 |
| Savings Account | 36,228.10 |
| Total Funds | 45,737.69 |

Plus Income From

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| New Members | 110.00 |
| Hives & Bee equipt sales | 30.00 |
| Renew Memberships | - |
| Book sale | 45.00 |
| Interest-01 | 88.34 |
| | <u>273.34</u> |
| | 46,011.03 |

Less Expenditure

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Bank Fees | - |
| RWT -acct01 | 39.75 |
| Club Day Expenses | 149.99 |
| Hives & equipt purchase | 105.95 |
| Web Site - OnLine designs | 50.60 |
| Repairs Maintenance | 8.00 |
| Whareora Hall Hire | 80.00 |
| Bookeeping | 450.00 |
| Xero - Monthly Sub | 64.69 |
| | <u>948.98</u> |

| | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Funds advanced to NPH | 5,600.00 |
| | 5,600.00 |

39,462.05

Total Balances as at 20 March 2025

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Operating Account | 3,185.36 |
| Savings Account | 36,276.69 |
| | <u>39,462.05</u> |

Other News and websites to check out.

New AI genetic tool reveals when bees get stressed

Why a deadly parasite is not all bad news for bees in Australia

Varroa destructor mite detected in Queensland
Sticky business for honey producers in beehive boom comedown

No winners in trade war fallout from US tariffs says Canadian honey exporter

Comvita cuts 67 jobs in EU and UK but could rebound in 2026

Scientists find clues on pollen expiration date

Beehive sensors: new hope for honeybee colonies

Chef-turned-beekeeper: Ken Brown

Scientists warn of severe honeybee losses in 2025

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



Thanks to all contributors of the Newsletter



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

Beequip

Golden Bay Cement

NZBeeswax

PGG

Farmlands

Mattersville

Ecrotek

