

# Whangarei Bee Club INC

## Newsletter



June 2017, Issue 150

### Plant-of-the-Month *Contributed by John Beauregard*

Short articles of interest to Northland beekeepers, especially non-commercial beekeepers



Image from [www.nrc.govt.nz](http://www.nrc.govt.nz)

Banksia is an Australia-native group of trees and shrubs that is not recorded in Nectar and Pollen Sources of New Zealand. Long-time club member, Jim Collinson, ably fills the gap with the details of this strategic winter-flowering nectar source. Jim takes up the narrative:

Banksia can be a major source of nectar for bees from the beginning

of June through to the end of September. The variety of banksia range from low shrubs right through to the tall coastal banksia trees. Being a native of Australia Banksia generally prefer light to gravelly soils. They are drought tolerant once established. Banksia can cope with clay soils provided they are sited so water drains off. The larger shrubs should be planted in a sheltered position as the branches will break in strong winds especially when they are loaded with flowers. They flower better if sited for full sun. Banksia can be lightly pruned after flowering to maintain their shape.

Banksia, similar to our native trees, do not like fertilisers high in phosphorus, and don't like lime.  
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## Upcoming Events and Notices

### This Club Day 3 June

Same place, same time

*Check out page 2*

### Next Club Day 1 July

*See you there 😊*

### APICULTURE NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL CONFERENCE AND TRADE EXHIBITION

Rotorua 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> JULY 2017



**pī·ā·ora**  
**BEEES GIVING LIFE**

Anyone interested in the bee industry is welcome. If you are interested in attending, you can find more details at:  
<http://apicultureconference2017.co.nz/registration/>

## **Fox News** *Contributed by Mike Fox*

There's not a lot of flowers out there at present. It would be a good idea to check that your hives have enough feed stores. If your apiary is near a lot of willows that suffered badly with the Aphids in the late Summer and Autumn, it will pay to get in there and see if the bees have usable honey stores right up close. Apparently 1/3 of the sugars in the willow dew honey is Melizatoses, which is indigestible to bees. Given that another 1/3 sets like concrete in the combs it can be hard work for the bees to deal with. I've heard if you can't shift the bees away from the willows while the aphids are the only sugar source, if you feed the bees some sugar syrup it at least dilutes the willow dew so its more usable as they need it during Winter. I've seen combs full of hard sugar crystals in the spring so bad that I had to remove those combs to give the Queen somewhere to lay.

I was cutting some Poplar poles today to plant out for shade for the Horses. I was disappointed to see great colonies of Willow Aphids on the Poplars as well. This could be a disaster for erosion control on steeper land. Maybe the NRC or MPI will do something about it for them, as they haven't done much for us Beekeepers with the willows dying.

Yes, It's tree planting time now. We need lots more variety for our Bees and especially trees or plants that are flowering over Winter and Spring. Summer has enough flowers. If you are going to plant look for something in the off season to help our friends out. I have just done 400 Manuka I grew myself from seeds collected down the road. Also 25 Taiwan Cherry trees. I know they are on the BAD list, BUT they are excellent Bee tucker and start flowering in Early August. The ones I got are seedlings from the roadside at Maungatapere that I dug up when they were just 50mm tall. I potted them up and they are now over a metre tall. Being seedlings there is a lot of variability in the flowering times and some will be finished when others will just be starting.

It's a good idea to plan ahead .What's your Spring Varroa plans?. Do you have the gear on hand to do the job?. what sort of Varroa testing do you do?. I'm going to get one of those NEW test kits from NZBEESWAX , called EASYCHECK. It's an alcohol wash Jar/filter basket for about \$30. I couldn't be bothered making my own though it would be cheaper. If you are planning on using one of the 'Alternative' treatments I would do a test before to get a baseline, then again a week after treatment to see how it went.

Oh well, enough Jabbering. Go check your Bees.

## **Plant-of-the-Month** *Continued from page 1*

It is better to add compost around their roots and mulch over summer.

Banksia flowers are a rich source of nectar through the winter months for both the bees and the local birds. Our banksia plants are now well established and for the last three years we have not had to feed our six hives over the winter period.

The three main shrub varieties available are:

Birthday candles - height approx. 0.6 metres spreading to around 1.5 to 2 metres. It generally starts flowering late May through to early July. The flower spikes are around 12 cm high and are an orange colour.

Giant candles (sometimes called orange candles) - height approximately 2.5 to 3 metres, width approximately 3 metres but it can be grown as a small tree by pruning the branches in its first few years of growth. The flowers start opening around the beginning of July and carry through to the end of August. The upright flower spikes can reach up to 40 cms high but typically they are around 25 cms high. They are a deep orange colour and look spectacular when the shrub is in full flower.

Lemon delicious - height approx. 2.5 metres by 3 metres wide. It flowers from mid-July through to early September. It has upright flower spikes which start off as a lemony colour but darken to a golden shade as they mature. The flowers are approximately 20 cms high. They are always loaded with bees, resident tui and waxeyes during the winter months.

Northland Regional Council sounds a note of warning regarding the invasive habit of Coastal Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*.)

<http://www.gogardening.co.nz/articles/2-0-1072/banksias>

<http://www.nrc.govt.nz/Environment/Weed-and-pest-control/pest-control-hub/Detail/?id=92>

*"Nectar and Pollen Sources of New Zealand," RS Walsh, published by ApiNZ, is a principal source of information. The club's library holds a copy of this very useful booklet. The web references provide excellent photographs, some of which are from proprietary sources such as plant shops.*



## News from last Club Day

**AGM** (for the period till the end of December 2016)

Started at 10:20am. Chaired by Chris Williams and Paul Martin.

Apologies from Allan Martin (auditor)

Barbara (Treasurer) read the financial report. Noted a 50% increase in new member numbers. Discussed the performance of Northland Pure Honey (NPH) and read out the auditor's report.

Chris mentioned the highlights of the last year and thanked those involved in helping to keep the Club running.

Paul gave an overview of NPH – what has changed, the improvements recommended in the MPI audits. Noted that the NPH directors are planning a full review of NPH operations.

Chris chaired the 'election of officers'. The WBC committee is now:

**President:** Paul Martin

**Vice President:** David Pullen

**Treasurer:** Barbara Collinson

**Secretary:** Vincent lane

**Rest of the Committee:** David Herbert, Heather Rye, Grant Liddle, Mitch Morgan, Danny Vendt, Trevor Barfoote

Paul read out the 'proposed changes to the constitution'. These were voted on and unanimously passed.

AGM closed at 11am.

### Moving forward as a club

Paul will send out an email before the June meeting asking members to give their thoughts on the purpose and direction of the WBC.

Please note the July club day will be on the 2nd Saturday of the month (8/7/17). This is because there is a wedding booked at the hall for the first Saturday and romance should and does take precedence when hall booking dates clash.

DECA refresher will be run here at the club in conjunction with an AFB pest management course. Date to be announced.

Mitch will extract again after the 12th May. This is the last chance for extractions for the season.

### General Business

The club and committee thanked Chris for his work over the years. Chris will be staying on as a director of NPH.

MPI have recently launched changes to the definition of manuka. Concerns have been raised about these changes. MPI are holding public consultation meetings at present to discuss the changes they have proposed (Forum North on 9th May). There are now 3 categories of honey based on pollen count (monofloral, multifloral and non-manuka). ApiNZ does not support the changes.

Myrtle Rust, a serious fungal disease, was discovered in a Kerikeri nursery in early May. It is thought that airborne fungal spores of this rust have come from Australia. It attacks Myrtle species including gum, pohutukawa, manuka and kanuka. Work is underway to try to contain and destroy it. It is orange/yellow in appearance, on leaves. It has been in Australia for some time and has wiped out some species in some areas – not across the board. It is unknown what effect it might have here if it gets away.

There was no time left to discuss what is happening in the hives.

**Thank you  
John & Mike  
for this month's  
contributions**





## Call for contributions

If you would like to make a contribution to this newsletter, we invite you to email your submission to

[wbccommunication@gmail.com](mailto:wbccommunication@gmail.com)

## Club Day

**Whareora Hall  
10.15am**

### **Bring:**

- Cash for the produce table
- Produce for the produce table
- Your loyalty card to show at the door
- Bee suits

### **Directions**

From SH1, turn off to *Kensington*. Turn left into *Mill Road*, then right at *Whareora Rd*. Keep on *Whareora Rd* until it joins *Pataua North Rd* and carry on for a few more minutes. The hall is on the right. Park on hall side of road.

## Financial Information

Bank balances as at 20 April 2017		
Operating account		2,512.33
Savings account		18,058.04
Total funds at 20 April 2017		20,570.37
<b>Plus income from</b>		
Membership fees		430.00
Book sales		45.00
Interest received		22.26
		-
		497.26
<b>Less expenditure</b>		
Bank fees	1.60	
Hall hire	65.00	
Licences	47.44	
Apiculture subscription	230.00	
Club provisions	160.83	
Website	23.00	
RWT on interest	7.35	
		535.22
Total balance at 20 May 2017		20,532.41
<b>Made up of</b>		
Operating account	2,459.46	
Savings account	18,072.95	
		20,532.41

## News/sites to check out

Why Honeybees Are Good at Grooming (It's All in the Hair):

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/15/science/honeybees-grooming-video.html>

Couple discover successful honey business on a road trip

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/food-wine/food-news/93013461/couple-discovered-successful-honey-business-on-a-road-trip>

Beehive invention tipped to revolutionise honey industry:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/9214252/2/beehive-invention-tipped-to-revolutionise-honey-industry>

Bee losses stinging industry:

<https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/bee-losses-stinging-industry>

AKL residents have a bee in their bonnet over poisoned hives:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/92601759/auckland-residents-have-a-bee-in-their-bonnet-over-poisoned-hives>

Stung for fake 'NZ made' label:

<http://www.newshub.co.nz/home/money/2017/05/bee-pollen-exporters-stung-for-fake-nz-made-label.html>