

Whangarei Bee Club INC

Newsletter



May 2017, Issue 149

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

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



Image of koreru in tree lucerne from www.teara.govt.nz

Tree lucerne (also known as tagasaste) is an important foraging plant for cattle. It is commonly grown in hedge rows. This legume is exceptionally deep-rooted and grows to 7 metres in all but the heaviest clay soils. The creamy-white flowers appear as early as May and continue flowering into the early spring.



Thank you
John
for this month's
contribution

Upcoming Events

This Club Day

6 May

AGM

Same place, same time -
Check out page 3

Next Club Day

3 June

See you there 😊

Early-winter flowering makes tree lucerne a strategic nectar and pollen source when there is little else available for honey bees. Walsh warns, however, that nectar flows can be so abundant the bees are fooled into producing too much brood resulting in a large winter cluster of bees that will require heavy feeding to carry the hive through the winter months. I suspect many non-commercial beekeepers would welcome this opportunity so as to maximise the earliest spring flows of manuka nectar. <http://www.terrain.net.nz/friends-of-te-henui-group/weeds-by-scientific-names/tree-lucerne-chamaecytisus-palmensis.html>

This column detailed loquat in the May 2016 newsletter. 2017 appears to be a good year for this valuable nectar source.

<http://www.terrain.net.nz/friends-of-te-henui-group/weeds-by-scientific-names/eriobotrya-japonica-loquat.html>

"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 title. The web references provide excellent photographs, some of which are from proprietary sources such as plant shops.

Inside this issue:

Plant of May	1
Upcoming Events	1
Last Club day	1-3
This Club day	3
Financial Information	3
News to check out	3



APICULTURE NEW ZEALAND
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
AND TRADE EXHIBITION
Rotorua 9th-11th JULY 2017



pī · ā · ora
BEES 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/>

News from last Club Day

[WBC Inc - Club Meeting 1 April](#)

Update from the Committee

Members were advised that the extraction season is nearly over. If anyone has honey still to be extracted they need to advise Mitch and give him an indication of when this will be coming in.

More work has been done on the shed at the extraction plant and the door frames for the roller doors are now up. (Continue page 2)

The committee will shortly be discussing the price NPH will be offering club members for their honey. It is expected to be in the vicinity of \$8 to \$9 per kg. Club members will be advised once this is set.

The AGM will be held next club day, 6 May 2017. There are a number of changes to the club constitution that need to be considered and voted on. These will be sent to members for consideration prior to the AGM. The club is still calling for nominations for the committee. Chris Williams has advised he will be stepping down from the President's role at the AGM, the committee and as Director of NPH. Mitch has also advised he is resigning as the extraction plant manager.

A call was put out for additional helpers for club tasks. Help is required for the hall setup, the kitchen and hall clean-up. Help is also needed with the newsletter. Juliet Tihema and her daughter have been doing a great job with the newsletter but Juliet's daughter is unable to help any longer.

Concern is that the committee members' workload ends up growing resulting in burnout. We need to spread out some of this work to avoid having a high turnover of committee members.

David and David Session

David Pullen advised hives have recently picked up and are quite busy with the weather being helpful lately.

The queen bees will be slowing down laying brood, getting ready for winter, so expect a reduction of bees in the hives before winter. Watch out for varroa as the proportion of varroa to bees when the bee numbers reduce increases substantially. Keep up the varroa treatment.

A question was asked about how

much honey to leave on the hives. David Pullen advised he usually leaves on 3 to 4 frames on second super, though these may not be full honey frames. Others leave 1 to 2 frames in one box. David Herbert advised that regular checks should be made to ensure enough food is available for the bees and if not then feed sugar syrup (or raw sugar as needed). The amount of feeding required is dependent on location and weather expectations. Most years through June and July the hive should be able to maintain their food source. The August/September period they can use up their stored food source quickly due to wetter weather. David Herbert suggested feeding around 4 to 5 litres of sugar syrup at a time and check more regularly if you have long periods of wet weather.

Most bees should be able to find some sources of nectar over winter when weather permits. It was suggested that you get used to the feel of the weight of supers while the bees have enough food. Using this as a guide you should be able to check the weight of the super to judge if the hive needs feeding.

A question was asked related to requeening now. David Herbert suggested this would be around the last week he would requeen. A member advised he has put a number of queens into his hive over the season but there is never any brood and he can't find the queen when he looks. David thought there is a possibility there is an unmated queen in the hive which would be hard to see. It was suggested he moves the hive around 50 metres away, shake out all the bees off the frames. Put the hive back together and place back in the original site. The bees will fly back to the hive but the queen won't. Then introduce a new queen. Mike Fox suggested that a bit of honey be placed around the queen cage to distract any bees around the queen to reduce the possibility of

them attacking the queen.

Ants can be a problem. The ants that congregate on the top of the hive are generally not a problem. Can use cinnamon to discourage them. Argentine ants are in a different category. They live in the ground and will attack and destroy the brood in a hive. Some beekeepers set up a water trap/obstacle at the base of the hive to stop the argentine ants.

It is coming up to the time to start considering wintering down your hives. David Herbert suggests getting the hive down to one super. If you have honey in the second super swap the supers around by putting the brood box on the top but watch out for robbing. David Pullen advised if there are two brood boxes the queen will naturally move up into the second box for winter.

Wasps are starting to make their presence felt so watch out for these. You can use traps to kill these by using a jar with water and some protein source such as salmon. Put a hole in the lid of the jar and place near the hives. The wasps will go into the jar through the hole but are unable to fly out. There is also good feedback on the effectiveness of Vespex bait stations. You do need to sit an online test before being able to purchase this. Vespex comes frozen and needs to thawed out and put in bait stations. A number of beekeepers purchase this in a group as you don't need much. Cost is approximately \$168 for a 1.5 kg pail plus postage. Just type in Vespex on Google to find more information on this.



Another question regarding moving hives a short distance and the best method for this. *(Continue on page 3)*

(Continues from page 2)

Most common method is to either move the hive approximately 1 metre at a time or take it away to another site over 3 klms away and leave for two to three weeks before bringing back and placing at new site. A member discussed reading about a method where branches and foliage are put in front of a hive which was moved a short distance. The bees come out and re-orientate themselves. A couple of other members advised they had tried this and it seems to work. David suggested they try it and give us feedback at the next meeting.

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

Whangarei Bee Club Incorporation		
Bank balances as at 20 March 2017		
Operating account		3,129.97
Savings account		18,042.65
Total funds at 20 March 2017		21,172.62
Plus income from		
Membership fees	570.00	
Book sales	45.00	
Grafting training	10.00	
Donation	1.00	
Interest received	22.97	
		648.97
		21,821.59
Less expenditure		
Auditor fees	440.00	
Bank fees	2.00	
Hall hire	65.00	
Licences	47.44	
Repairs and maintenance	212.13	
Paddock and chain for gates	102.17	
Club provisions	351.90	564.03
Website	23.00	
RWT on interest	7.58	
		1,251.22
Total balance at 20 April 2017		20,570.37
Made up of		
Operating account	2,512.33	
Savings account	18,058.04	
		20,570.37

News/sites to check out

Bee-have! Competition costs half a million:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/news/92074433/bee-have-competition-costs-taranaki-manuka-company-500000>

Northland iwi has million dollar operation:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/91931617/northland-iwi-turns-family-pastime-into-multimillion-dollar-manuka-honey-operation>

Bees at risk from overstocking:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/91618381/bees-at-risk-from-overstocking-as-outside-honey-firms-move-in-beekeepers-say>

Warre hives = NZ's most natural honey:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/food-wine/91756186/warre-hives-providing-new-zealands-most-natural-honey>

Honey crop one of worst in 10 years:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/agribusiness/91746191/Honey-crop-one-of-the-worst-in-10-years>

Grant received to study bees:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/waikato-times/news/hauraki-herald/91413688/paeroa-business-agrisea-receives-74000-grant-to-study-bees>