



© Franklin Beekeepers Club

# FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB

## OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

**President:** Graham Dyché  
1 Northvale Place, Pukekohe 2120  
☎ 09 238 9854  
@ [president@franklinbees.co.nz](mailto:president@franklinbees.co.nz)

**Treasurer:** Graham Wheeler  
PO Box 1082, Pukekohe 2340  
☎ 09 239 1177  
@ [treasurer@franklinbees.co.nz](mailto:treasurer@franklinbees.co.nz)

**Editor:** John Burns  
@ [editor@franklinbees.co.nz](mailto:editor@franklinbees.co.nz)

**Secretary:** Joan Leitch  
@ [secretary@franklinbees.co.nz](mailto:secretary@franklinbees.co.nz)

**Website:**  [www.franklinbees.co.nz](http://www.franklinbees.co.nz)

---

### President's Report

*"...be fruitful and multiply..."* (Gen.1:22).

Slim Harpo- I'm a king bee: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWLvm11MAaM>

Autumn and winter can be tough on the hives, they have to endure hardships. Varroa, wasps, wax moths, cold, wind, rain, lack of flowers, lack of sun and warmth, but those that get to spring get a chance to renew and to reproduce. The pace of life increases with the day length and the incoming nectar is golden income for the flow of life.

It seems odd when the queen can lay 2000 eggs a day to say that honey bee hives have a very low rate of reproduction. Many insects produce hundreds of young but invest in numbers not in nurture: they are cast to chance and few survive to reproduce themselves. For honey bees, the unit is not the individual bee but the hive, in which great care is invested, and the multiplication rate is low. Natural hive reproduction is by swarming, and the season is upon us.

Swarming is a great upheaval; a revolution in the hive. The old queen must take to the ocean of the air with her faithful crew and seek a new haven. It is a coup in the hive by the new generation of virgin queens. If swarming is natural renewal why do we beekeepers work to prevent it? Well we want to reduce the chaos, to shorten the odds, to fix the game so it goes our way. I like to think that making a split is a little less stressful for all concerned.

As the hive expands in spring, give them more space to prevent overcrowding. Replace lost hives and increase your numbers by making splits on your most vigorous hives. There is a good description of how to make splits on the FBC website, click on the Tab "documents" and find "hive splitting method" or follow the link:

<http://www.franklinbees.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/HiveSplitting.pdf>

It may seem a bit complicated, but reproduction like all beekeeping is a practical subject; give it a go and improve with practice. If it does not work out the hives can be recombined with a sheet of newspaper and as a bonus it will have reduced the chance of swarming. If the split is successful you will discover the thrill of opening a hive and finding a brand new queen, mated and laying, a new generation of life full of hope and vigour...

Dr Graham Dyché  
FBC President

---

## Obituaries

### **Stalwart of the club lost – Sean Cooke**

A Stalwart is defined as a faithful, dependable, and hard-working supporter. And that is what Sean Cooke was, for our club. A member for 3 years, and a committee member for the last 2 years, Sean was always there, working away in the background. You may have noticed him, an elderly Irish gentleman, busy lighting the smokers while the rest of us were listening to a speaker. Friendly but modest, he just liked being part of the action. His death (as the result of an accident) means that he will be missed by many of us.

### **Dr Peter Molan**

Best known for his tireless research on the properties of Manuka honey, Dr Peter Molan passed away recently in Hamilton. He was awarded an MBE in 1995 for his services to the honey industry. It was principally his efforts to investigate an anomaly in lab results which saw Manuka honey move from being an undesirable product (too dark, too strong tasting, too hard to extract) and become the black gold of the New Zealand honey industry.

For an engrossing insight into Peter's work on Manuka honey, and the reasons why Manuka honey is so different, I suggest you read Cliff Van Eaton's book *Manuka: The biography of an extraordinary honey*.

---

## **Thieves target beehives as global buzz grows over Manuka honey**

Beekeepers and farmers are being warned to be on the lookout for suspicious activity after a spate of beehive thefts thought to be sparked by rocketing prices for Manuka honey.

Local police have also warned rural beekeepers to closely monitor their hives and to report any thefts.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/agribusiness/71897082/thieves-target-beehives-as-global-buzz-grows-over-manuka-honey>

## Hivemasters' Report

Bayvarol Varroa strips were put into all our club hives on 17 September, but not the top bar hives.

---

## Secretary's Report

### Swarm Collection

Every year we have a contact list of members willing to collect swarms from members of the public. We will cover the 'how to' at a meeting later this year. Swarms can be a good way of increasing your hive numbers, but you will need to have the time to collect them. If you are interested in being on the list, please contact Joan ([secretary@franklinbees.co.nz](mailto:secretary@franklinbees.co.nz))

### AFB Inspections

Do you have your DECA, allowing AFB inspections? Are you willing to inspect hives for other members, for their annual return? We are considering instigating a small fee to cover your costs. Please email Joan ([secretary@franklinbees.co.nz](mailto:secretary@franklinbees.co.nz)), so that we can direct members to a neighbour with a DECA.

---

## New Members

We welcome the following new members to our club.

- Caroline Lynch
- Lyn Murphy
- Kerry Hirst
- Valmai and James Laycock
- Elaine Appleton
- Karen Dobson
- Jin Hoang
- Jeanette and Ian Barnes
- Marcus Lonsdale-Cooper

We look forward to seeing you at the next club day.

---

## Honey Research Ongoing

You may recall that last year a number of Franklin club members donated honey to Dr Claire McDonald, a researcher for MPI's Manuka honey research. She was thrilled with our donation, especially because we are able to be quite specific about the site it is harvested from, and the flowers the bees are likely to have visited. She is keen on testing Manuka, kanuka and other sources, to identify their differences.

This season (2015/2016) she would like to expand the tests to include some performed in overseas labs. So she is looking for 1kg donations. She can send pots to us, for mailing back.

Could I have an indication of members who would be interested in donating this much honey, please? No obligation if you don't get the harvest you expect!

Email: [secretary@franklinbees.co.nz](mailto:secretary@franklinbees.co.nz)

## Beehives around the world



WBC hive (photo taken in England September 2014). Mixed cedar and other timbers, painted. Note ventilation/bee escape in peaked roof, and porch or rain guard over landing board. The WBC hive is the only double walled hive still in common use.

The WBC is the classic British beehive, more commonly seen with tapered, sloping outer boxes and painted white. The hive in this picture with the straight sides and plinths around the bottom of each box that overlap is an old design. This hive is probably over 75 years old! Inside are smaller square boxes which take 10 “National” sized frames. The double walled design allows for better insulation. It also makes it a more expensive hive, difficult to move and slower to work.

In the late 1800’s there were many designs for beehives, often each region of the UK had its favourites. The WBC hive is named after William Broughton Carr who invented it in 1890. Carr (1836 to 1909) was born in Yorkshire, he was a beekeeper and businessman who became the editor of the “Bee Journal and Record”. The WBC hive became popular due to its promotion in the bee journal and also because the thin inner boxes could be made from readily available fruit boxes.

Graham Dyche

If you see an interesting hive on your travels take a photo and share it with us by sending it to [editor@franklinbees.co.nz](mailto:editor@franklinbees.co.nz) If you can include a few words about the hive that’s even better.

---

## Wasp management trials

Earlier this year the Department of Conservation teamed up with a variety of community groups to undertake a pilot trial of a wasp baiting system at five South Island sites totalling around 5,000 ha. These sites all had areas of beech forest with plentiful honeydew, one of the key factors for supporting really high populations of wasps. The purpose of this pilot trial was to demonstrate the effectiveness of the system for delivering a really meaningful level of wasp control across wide areas using a method that was very safe and reduced the risks to non-targets to a minimum.

More information:

<http://foreverbeech.co.nz/news/wasp-management-takes-the-sting-out-of-the-forest>  
<http://www.franklinbees.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Wasp-Bait-News01.pdf>

## Tutin toxin in honey food standard

The following is a synopsis of the tutin toxin in honey food standard which must be complied with by all beekeepers who wish to sell or barter honey.

It is extremely important that the potential severity of tutin poisoning is not underestimated, as the consequences for both the consumer and the beekeeper may be severe.

There are considered to be four conditions required for tutin toxin to appear in honey: Tutu plant, presence of passion-vine hopper, foraging bees and extended dry weather.

Further information on tutin toxin in honey and recommendations from the Bee Products Standards Council New Zealand on this Youtube video: <http://youtu.be/ZO-Loed8pWw>.

### Food (Tutin in Honey) Standard 2010

A beekeeper who sells or barter honey must– maintain records to demonstrate compliance; and provide a written statement when requested to do so. There are five options available in this standard:

**Option one:** Holding test results that show maximum toxin levels were not exceeded and which must be kept for four years. This option is not available for box section comb honey.

**Option two:** Holding harvest records for four years that demonstrate low risk harvest date where honey is taken from supers placed on hives **after 1<sup>st</sup> July and removed by 31<sup>st</sup> December**.

**Option three:** Holding records for four years that demonstrate tutu is not significantly present in the predictable foraging range of identified hive locations from which honey is harvested.

**Option four:** Holding records that demonstrate low risk areas at the locations of all hives from which honey has been harvested. A **low risk area** is the South Island below latitude 42 degrees South including all offshore islands below latitude 42 degrees South.

**Option five:** Holding records for four years that specify locations of all apiaries from which honey is harvested and can demonstrate low risk areas by testing of targeted honey samples for three consecutive years, and thereafter confirm that ten percent of apiary sites have been tested for tutin, and that no individual result has shown more than 0.1mg/kg for honey or 0.01mg/kg for comb honey. Targeted honey samples means a representative sample of honey from an apiary, or apiaries with a common foraging area, and harvested between **1 January and 30 June**. This option is not available for box section comb honey.

**Requirements relating to sampling and testing honey** (other than comb honey): a representative homogeneous sample from each batch should be submitted to an appropriately accredited laboratory.

**Sampling and testing of cut comb** honey to comply with Option One and Option Five is available if it is representative of the harvest date and apiary from which it was taken and all the drip and leftover comb from a comb honey harvest from a single apiary site is homogenised and sub-sampled, and will only comply where the maximum level is less than 0.01mg/kg,

### Reporting of results of testing

(1) A person who has submitted samples to a laboratory for analysis for tutin in order to comply with this standard must provide the following information to MAF– The name and address of the beekeeper; location of the apiary, quantity of honey the sample relates to, whether the sample is from an individual apiary site or multiple apiaries, whether the honey is comb honey or extracted, batch or lot number, the testing laboratory and the results.

**Please note:** This is a condensed summary of the regulations pertaining to tutin toxin in honey, and the full standard should be read on the NZFSA website. Clearly option four is not available to North Islanders.

Please take special note of the following:-

**A person must adopt one of the options ...., but undertaking an option ... does not abrogate the possibility of a prosecution under the Food Act 1981**

Where the honey tested exceeds the minimum allowed, it is best to view sections 18 and 19 of the Food (Tutin in Honey) Standard 2010.

PB 27 April 2015

---

## Rare bee-eater birds at Cumbrian quarry attract thousands

Two breeding pairs of rare bee-eater birds have been found at a quarry in Cumbria (UK).



Photograph: Mark Thomas/RSPB

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/aug/25/spy-bee-eater>



If you would like to contribute articles, recipes, photos or any other content for the newsletter or website, please get in touch we would love to hear from you

Email John Burns @ [editor@franklinbees.co.nz](mailto:editor@franklinbees.co.nz)

## German Wasps – An Alert



German wasp *Vespula germanica*



Angelica archangelica



Euphorbia charachia

Over the past few days we have captured and killed in excess of 10 queen wasps. This is a little worrisome as it may not auger well for the coming season. It is rather unusual as we have not encountered this number at this time of the year in the past. The wasps were feeding mainly mid-morning or so when the sun was on the flowers. A good blast with an insect spray did wonders for the elimination of the critters; however when there were bees about as well, I used a butterfly net.

The insects were feeding on the flowers of Euphorbia charachia which has a lime green flower; and on Angelica archangelica which also has green flower heads. See photos- While it does not show up on the photo, the Angelica had clearly visible beads of nectar on the florets.

Peter Biland

---

## What are your bees into at the moment?



The bees in our garden have been collecting copious amounts of pollen from the flowering bluebells.

*Lydia Burns*

## Update on Nosema and Lotmaria gut parasites in FBC hives

In the last FBC newsletter we wrote about the problems some beekeepers in the Coromandel and elsewhere had faced last season with hive losses which seem to be associated with high levels of gut parasites. The FBC committee decided it would be interesting to get the club hives tested for the “three amigos” *Nosema apis*, *Nosema ceranae* and *Lotmaria passim*.

Our hives appear healthy and it seemed a good idea to get a “baseline” test of these organisms to compare with any future tests on hives which may have a problem. A sample was taken in late August and sent to the nature lab in Gisborne for testing. Twenty bees were taken for the test, (around 3 bees from the outside of each hive at the cowshed site). The results came back below:

<i>Nosema apis</i> :	low level
<i>Nosema ceranae</i> :	non detected.
<i>Lotmaria passim</i>	high level

A level of *Nosema apis* is expected as it is normal to find it in hives. Nil *Nosema ceranae* is good news, this is a more recent type of *Nosema* and gives more problems than *N. apis*.

The high level of *Lotmaria passim* is harder to interpret. It is a newly described, but not newly emerged gut organism. That we have high levels but detect no problems suggest it is not a worry unless found in conjunction with *N. ceranae*. It will be interesting to compare our results with those from the wider survey in NZ.

---

## Bees in the News

### ***Royal Jelly Isn't What Makes a Queen Bee a Queen Bee***

New research suggests we had it backward: It's what future queens aren't fed that matters.

Full Story: <http://tinyurl.com/prh9g6d> and <http://tinyurl.com/nun8b55>

### ***Argentine Ants Carry Virus Deadly to Honeybees***

A biologist at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand, has found that ants can carry the deformed wing virus, a pathogen linked to colony collapse in honeybees.

Full Story: <http://tinyurl.com/qc8v63r>

### ***Bees get help for upset tumms***

Who knew that bees could get diarrhoea? Those who do know might be interested to hear that a Wanganui manufacturer has a new product to prevent it.

Full Story: <http://tinyurl.com/pnozeje>

### ***More News...***

The Waikato Domestic Beekeepers Association and the NZ Beekeepers forum maintain a list of bee-related news.

Link: <http://www.waikatobeekeepers.org.nz/bee-news/>

Link: <http://www.nzbees.net/forum/forums/bees-in-the-media.16/>



Did you know that old newsletters are published 'an issue late' on our website at <http://www.franklinbees.co.nz/newsletters>

## Dates to Remember

### AFB Hive Inspections

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> August – 30<sup>th</sup> November

### Club Day

Date: Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2015

Venue: At the club apiary.

Program: 10:00 am Cuppa and discussion  
10:30 am Open the hives

### Club Day

Date: Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2015

Venue: At the club apiary.

Program: 10:00 am Cuppa and discussion  
10:30 am Open the hives

*“Every beekeeper must [either hold a DECA, or] ensure that every honey bee colony in every beehive owned by that beekeeper is inspected for American foulbrood cases by an authorised person on or after 1 August and on or before 30 November each year commencing in 1999.”*

More Information: <http://afb.org.nz/biosecurity-national-american-foulbrood-pest-management-strategy-order-1998#32>

View our online calendar at [www.franklinbees.co.nz/calendar](http://www.franklinbees.co.nz/calendar)

---

## Venue Directions

The club address is 733 Paerata Road (State Highway 22), Paerata 2676, New Zealand.

Traveling on SH22 towards Pukekohe, the club house is on the left hand side. Traveling towards Drury, it's on the right. At 733 there is a red letterbox and a driveway that forks – left goes to a house, take the right that travels 100m past old sheds and terminates at a turntable by a disused concrete-block cow-shed. This is the apiary site.

When visiting the site, please ensure you park on the old turntable, taking care that the driveway is kept clear.

**When leaving the site, please take great care joining the traffic. Vehicles approaching from the right are not very easy to see.**

### Quarantine rules

To reduce the risk of spreading disease, the committee decided (20th October 2014) to restrict the bringing of any used bee keeping equipment (including gloves) to club days – the only exception is bee suits.

Where required, gloves and other equipment will be provided by the club.

This rule is not just to protect the club hives, but to also protect you from taking diseases home to your own hives.