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FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER

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President's Report

Muddy Waters- Honey Bee (with bee buzz guitar riff):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdVxnbAotOU>

Summer heat, summer sun, bees on task bringing in the flow.

The weather is not a topic fit for conversation according to my daughter. I disappoint her and check the forecast. El Nino threatened a summer drought but 2016 rolled in and brought us precious soft summer rain. Filling tanks, quenching the dry earth, keeping all those flowers blooming. We could be in for a good honey year. I consult the bees.

It turns out that the bees can teach me some useful lessons. They don't listen to the weather forecast; they just get on with the job every moment that is available. It seems I should slow down, pay attention and focus on one task at a time. Forget multitasking, be present in the moment, complete absorption; bee time.

Summer tasks for us beekeepers include adding boxes and then taking off and extracting that lovely honey. Bookings for the extraction room are coming in fast. The Bee Products Standards Council has been running an education campaign to remind us beekeepers about the dangers of Tutin in Honey. Three communication papers were circulated before the start of the season and can be found on the FBC web page under the "documents" tab. If you want to sell or barter your honey you will need a tutin test and you can do that through the club. We can submit up to 10 samples together for a composite test at a reduced rate compared to individual tests.

In the meantime enjoy the summer. Get out there and smell the flowers, dance in some summer rain and if you love bees come along on to the next club day on Valentine's Day 14th Feb.

Dr Graham Dyche
FBC President

Hivemasters' Report

23-1-16

Hive masters report- very very hot day

Hive 1 Brood present in bottom, full size box. Bees a bit agitated, weak hive, some nectar.

Supersedure cell was present.

Hive 2 Ok. Eggs and brood present, open queen cell. Some cells have two eggs in them. Hive one and two good space.

Hive 3 Queen seen, not much brood however much pollen and adequate space with some capped honey.

Hive 4 Strong, good brood, just enough space for brood in two bottom boxes. Much pollen, honey box under supered over queen excluder.

Hive 5 Strong brood in two bottom boxes, still brood space, lots of pollen. Under supered with one honey box.

Hive 6 Strong good brood, much pollen, bottom two boxes were swapped over, good brood space. Top bar: strong, adequate space.

A few wax moth larva were dug out of brood cells in one of the hives. Look for a trail of a different colour in the caps and investigate with your hive tools, and you may just find the culprit.

Regards Mark

New Members

We welcome the following new members to our club.

- Alanna Boulter
- Ron Clemens
- Rick Groves
- Gary Hansford
- Al Miller
- Zandria Mulligan

We hope you enjoy coming along to our club days, and all the exciting learning that goes with becoming an apiarist.

News from the Secretary

Jars

How many honey jars are you going to need this year? The club is organising a bulk supply, and we will pass on the savings to you! Price to be confirmed, but likely to be about 80 cents per jar. Please place pre-orders with secretary@franklinbees.co.nz

Extraction Room

This is now open for hire within the club. Charges are \$15 booking fee and \$10 per box. You will need to have at least 2 people there, and you must have someone with a Food Safety certificate open the room and talk you through the process. If you intend to sell your honey, you will also need to jar it in the room. Bookings through secretary@franklinbees.co.nz

Food Safety Certificate

Do you have a Food Safety Certificate? Would you like to join the small band of volunteers who open up the extraction room? Many hands make light work. Please contact a committee member if you are keen and able.

Tutin testing

The club organises composite testing of honey samples, which works out much cheaper (only \$39.50 each). The downside is that we have to wait for enough samples to make it worth sending, so the results can be delayed. If you are selling your honey and have harvested it this year (2016) then you must test for tutin. We need a small sample jar of your honey, labelled well with your surname, apiary number and any batch number.

AFB Recognition courses

These have been revamped, and the club no longer organises them. There are several courses coming to this area soon. To register for a course, complete the application form at the bottom of this website and make your payment to the bank details listed www.afb.org.nz/beekeeping-courses

The courses run from 9am - to approx. 3pm. There is an hour off at midday for lunch then completion of the course and test in the afternoon. Tea & coffee will be provided but applicants must bring their own lunch.

Drury - 5 March 2016

Ramarama Hall - 9am

Registrations close 23 February 2016

Drury - 19 March 2016

Ramarama Hall - 9am

Registrations close 9 March 2016

Manukau - 12 March 2016

Old Flat Bush School Hall Manukau - 9am

Registrations close 2 March 2016

Mercer - 28 May

Mercer Rowing Club, 9am

Registrations close 18 May

Manukau - 13 March 2016

Old Flat Bush School Hall Manukau - 9am

Registrations close 3 March 2016

Wasp control

The award winning wasp bait, Vespex, is now available to the public. This is protein based, so does not attract bees. But it is ecotoxic, so you need to apply to become an approved user (watch a video and sit a short online test). www.merchento.com/vespex-information

The bait and bait stations are rather expensive too, so it may be worthwhile checking whether you have enough wasp numbers to warrant it. This is called Activity Testing, and is easily done. You need a tin of chunky sardine cat food, and 20 shallow dishes such as jar lids. At midday (fine weather), place a spoonful of cat food in each lid spaced 5m apart in a line. Spread the cat food a bit. Leave for one hour, and then walk the line and count the wasps. 20 or more means that they are present in numbers which need treating, and are receptive to protein bait.

If any members are interested in becoming approved users and hiring themselves out, they should let the club know (secretary@franklinbees.co.nz) – we will maintain a contact list for members.



Common wasp



German wasp

German wasp nests are grey. Common wasp nests are brown. The world's largest recorded wasp nest was discovered at Waimauku (near Auckland). It was 3.75 metres tall and 1.7 metres wide.

Source <http://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/animal-pests/animal-pests-a-z/wasps/>

Relocating a colony of bees

Last month a neighbour tapped me on the shoulder and asked if I was a beekeeper (I was wearing a bee suit at the time). It turned out she had a swarm of bees that had moved into the back wall of her garage and she asked if I could relocate them. Now I am quite experienced at collecting new swarms hanging in trees and in hedges. I have scraped them from fence posts and even worse out of the grass, but swarms in buildings I have always found to be too difficult.

My neighbours' bees were gaining access to her garage under the corrugations of the fibre cement cladding (much too fragile to remove) and were in the cavity formed between the cladding and particleboards nailed inside the garage. She said they had not been there long, but there were quite a few bees coming and going and they were becoming a nuisance in her small garden. I said I would have a go at moving them the following weekend.

Luckily I remembered FBC member Kerry Hirst had shown us his "bee-vac" at the October club day and I rang Kelly to see if he could help. We arrived as arranged at 7pm on Friday. It was a hot, windless January evening and we were soon sweating in our bee suits in the back of the garage. Kerry set up his bee-vac and we removed the board to find a much bigger colony of bees than we had imagined. Six long combs packed with brood and honey and covered in thousands of bees - obviously they had been there for some time.

Kerry set to work gently vacuuming the bees into the box of his bee-vac. The suction is set to the minimum so as to not harm the bees and so the process is slow. After all the bees were removed the comb was cut out and the wall cavity cleaned up so as to not leave any wax or odour to attract swarms next season. The whole job of extraction took 2 hours and a few pints of sweat. A successful outcome for the FBC team, one happy bee free neighbour, a relocated colony in a new home and a big thank you to Kerry and his bee-vac!



Kerry and his Bee-vac



In they go... Kerry saves the bees.

Written by Graham Dyche



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

Bees in the News

EU scientists begin review of ban on pesticides linked to bee declines

Risk evaluation could pave the way for a rolling back of the hard won EU-wide ban on three neonicotinoid pesticides.

Full Story: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/jan/07/eu-scientists-begin-review-ban-pesticides-linked-bee-declines>

Conservationists betting on bees to ease clash of humans and elephants

'Bee fence' idea has been buzzing since hives were deployed in Kenya and Botswana to reduce conflict – and now groups look to roll it out in Tanzania

Full Story: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/03/conservationists-beehives-humans-elephants-clash-tanzania-kenya>

Beekeeping firm that helps ex-prisoners back on their feet is a sweet success

Thanks to seed money from the Illinois department of corrections, Sweet Beginnings employs 40 people a year and enjoys a recidivism rate of just 4%.

Full Story: <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/nov/05/jobs-after-prison-beekeeping-company-former-prisoners>

NZ honey exports double in November on manuka demand

The value of honey exports jumped to \$27.4 million in November from \$13.6 million the same month a year earlier, according to the latest Statistics New Zealand data. That helped boost the annual value of honey exports in the 12 months through November by 45 percent to \$281 million, the figures showed.

Full Story: <http://www.nbr.co.nz/article/nz-honey-exports-double-november-manuka-demand-b-183442>

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

Club Day

Date: Sunday 14th February, 2016
Venue: At the club hives.
Program: 10:00 am Cuppa and discussion
10:30 am Open the hives

Club Day

Date: Sunday 13th March, 2016
Venue: At the club hives.
Program: 10:00 am Cuppa and discussion
10:30 am Open the hives

AGM & Honey Competition

Date: Sunday 10th April, 2016
Venue: At the club hives.
Program: 10:00am To be confirmed in April/May 2016 newsletter
Honey competition rules are online at www.franklinbees.co.nz/documents

View our online calendar at 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.