



FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB

MAY NEWSLETTER 2018

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PRESIDENTS REPORT MAY 2018

Email: president@franklinbees.co.nz

At the recent AGM a new committee was elected, I was extremely shocked and honoured to be nominated for the position of club president, loving a challenge in life I decided to accept and only hope that being the second female president, I can fill the shoes and keep the good work going from the previous presidents.

When you look at how the bees work and coordinate a hive it is a thing of beauty, each bee has an important job to do, whether it is nursing the young, removing the dead, gathering nectar and pollen or defending the hive from predators, I would like to see the club operating as a hive does, where each and everyone one of us has our own little jobs and input that collectively make for a smooth running and fun club while always keeping in mind that with bees we never stop learning.

Hopefully you all found the recent Mother's Day club meeting fun, informative and enjoyable. It was great to have two suppliers there to inform us of a range of products out there that are beneficial for our bees if we find ourselves in a situation where we need to feed them.

With the upcoming June meeting being a more practical one, with moving what is left at the cow shed to the barn, sorting out the club's hive-ware; de-waxing, removing propolis and painting any boxes, along with checking the frames, it will be another opportunity for us to learn together how to look after our gear and winter down.

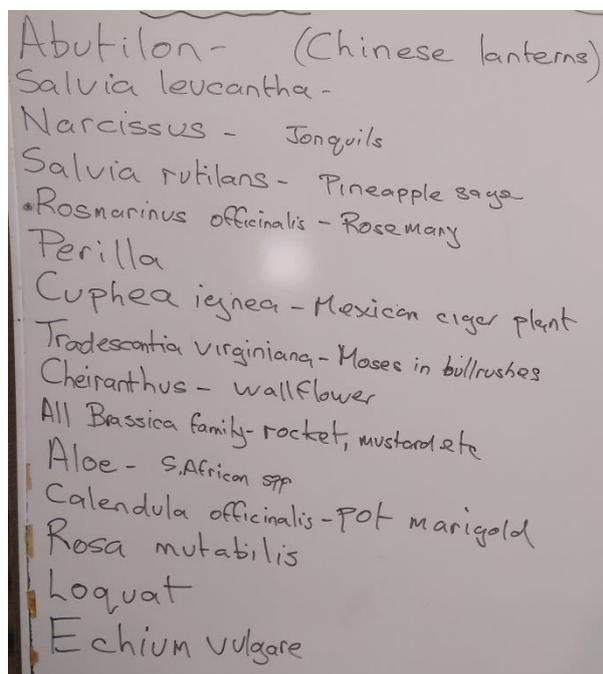
You may well leave the club after the meeting and take the opportunity to have a cup of tea, coffee or a wee glass of mead and ask yourself the following questions?

- What does my beehive need?
- Have I cleaned my boxes and frames of any residue wax and propolis?
- Have I checked for any repairs that may be necessary?
- Are my hive tools, smoker and protective gear clean and in good working order?
- What spring treatment shall I use this coming spring for treating varroa?

Bee happy

Tania Brown (*President*)

FLOWERS OF THE MONTH



MAY MEETING NOTES

The May meeting was a hit, even with it being Mother's day. Our special guests took us through products we could use at this time of the year and the pros and cons. It was a great interactive day with a great spread of food. The subject for those who didn't make it was feeding your hives, so top feeders, frame feeders, protein, enzymes and more.

Our two guests Adam (Ecrotek) and Thomas (Ceracell) discussed feeding solutions and other advice for us. Both Adam and Thomas encouraged people to come to their show rooms and touch the products and get a feel for them. Both show rooms are really close together physically so it's easy to compare the offerings. Way better than seeing in the magazines you should have got from The Beekeeper if you are a registered beekeeper.

Great to have a reality check that these guys also have had to go through a learning curve with some poor results and have come out the other side with some great learning for us and advice:

- Insulation under lids. Makes it warmer and drier, just like our homes. The bees maintain the temperature of the hive, so the harder the work the more they eat and quicker they die.
- Levelling of hives so entrances lower than back. Especially for top feeders. Stops moisture pooling in bottom and creating a damp environment.
- Insulation property of honey in frames. Feed if necessary to keep the stores there to insulate.
- Reduced entrances for wasp and robbing. Down to 1 bee gap if needed.

Top feeders: Ecrotek and Ceracell both have bee-saver solutions and made in NZ. Ceracell has a solution for hives that are not levelled by having corner feeding access points.

Advantage over frame feeder was mentioned:

- Not having to open the hive (which is a disadvantage also as not checking how the hive is doing and how much to feed).
- Large feeders if can't get back for a while.
- Does have some insulation property.

Frame feeders: single, double and triple frame feeders to suit how much feed you want to give. There are ones with ladders to stop drowning bees or the more simple versions where you need to include something like mesh, bracken or anything that's dry and won't ferment the sugar syrup. Both Ecrotek and Ceracell had similar products and being made in NZ. Ceracell did have a wooden solution (covering over feeder with ladder) for those who liked more wood in the hive.

Supplements included:

- Agrisea from both Ecrotek and Ceracell. Is added to the sugar syrup.
- Ecrotek Brood Booster with enzymes and other nutrients. Is added to the sugar syrup.
- Protein supplements that are made into patties from both Ecrotek and Ceracell. This was for when pollen was in short supply naturally. Is made into patties using sugar syrup.

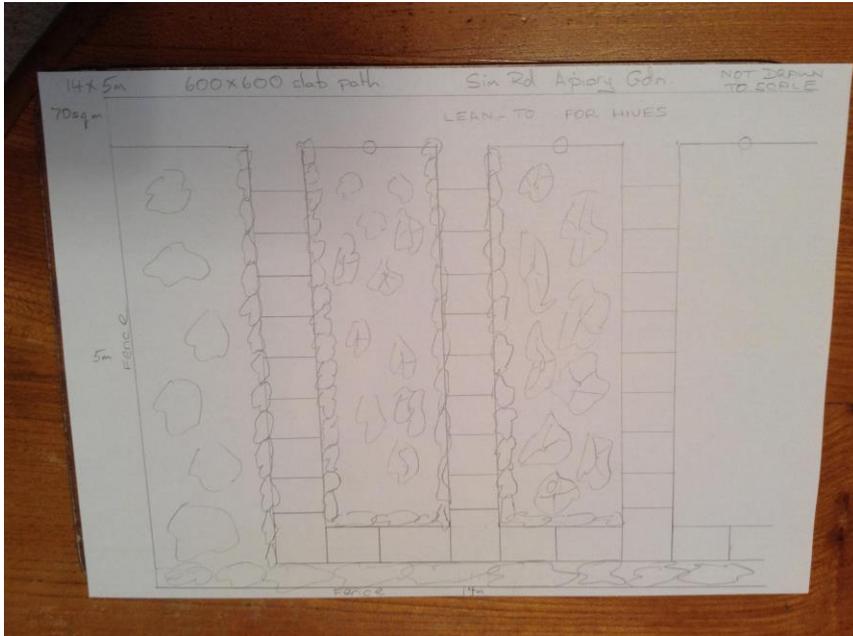
Congratulations to:

- Anna Mastrovich door spot prize from Ceracell
- Barbara Spicer door spot prize from Ecrotek
- Steve Benham for the other Ecrotek spot prize. Steve later donated the top feeder to the club. Thanks Steve!
- Brenda Bolland for the Mother's day raffle
- Adam Corbett for a bottle of wine from the raffle

The committee meeting occurred after the club day. Feel free to stick around and hear what's going on and what decisions are being made. We encourage you to get involved with your club.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE BARN

The Gardening team of Steve Benham and Katherina Short have big plans to turn the place into a bee haven. Pavers are in the process of being laid out ready for planting post hives being moved.



FEEDBACK FROM FACEBOOK QUESTION, THE NEWSLETTER

One of the key things we want to do as a club is make sure we support you, the members. How do we do this? Well, we asked on the Facebook page and the responses are all consistent, what do we do in our hives?

All the hives should be wintered down which includes:

- Check feed levels adequate. The Practical beekeeping book (page 93 in the 4th edition) suggests 7-9 full depth frames of feed or 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ depth frames for a normal colony.
- Top bars, remember to minimise the space the bees have to keep warm by moving the follower board. Make sure it's sealed so no wasps can get in around the follower board or under the top bars.
- Feeding if needed, but main feed should be already on. Cooler weather is harder for the bees to store it.
- Cleaning off top bars and removing propolis so better seal.
- Entrances reduced to help with wasps
- If going to insulate the hives have that in place
- Queens. Most likely they have been on and off the lay so look for eggs/queen.
- If hives are right next to each other they share warmth.
- If the hive has been weakened and is small consider dropping the frames into a nuc box as its smaller space to keep warm and they generally do better. Or, try the trick in the latest Beekeeper magazine with polystyrene sheets.

Now is the time to clean up your gear and build/repair. Join us at the next meeting for a practical time doing this.

HIVE MASTER REPORT

The latest Hive Master Reports are on the Facebook page; keep an eye out for it!

Winter has arrived by the looks of things, getting colder damnit!!

Grant & I moved the Sim Road hives to the cowshed site to re-orientate them prior to moving to the new clubrooms, 3 hives in total. The three topbar hives are doing OK, entrances reduced right down, 4 colonies in total.

The 4 other hives have also been wintered down with a couple of litres of sugar syrup added to everything. They are slowly being moved back to under the roof of the cowshed, to protect them a little from the weather, and also to get them used to living under cover before we move them to the new clubrooms. We are still waiting for a truckload of mulch to tidy up the 'lean-to' area prior to moving hives, hopefully moving some really soon!

AFB RECOGNITION COURSE

The AFB Recognition Courses for 2018 are up on <http://www.afb.org.nz/beekeeping-courses>. I want to highlight the upcoming one in Drury which is 4 August. We strongly recommend everyone is trained on AFB recognition. Any questions please contact info@afb.org.nz who are very helpful.

INTERESTING READING

Over the past month we have had some interesting contacts come in that you may be interested in. As a club we haven't checked them out and are not endorsing.

Trees for Survival <http://www.tfsnz.org.nz/>

I was thinking some bee club members may have land they would like planted up. The schools provide the plants and come and plant them. The landowner provides the site, and looks after the trees as they become established. It's win/win/win/win for the school children, the land owner, the environment, the waterway, and of course the bees who forage from these plants such as flax, cabbage tree, manuka and kanuka.

Nosema help mike.sim@biobees.co.nz

I'm looking to practise screening bees for Nosema and maybe other gut parasites if possible. Bumblebees can suffer from Nosema bombi, a relation to the Nosema species that infect honeybees, and may also get slight infections from the more honeybee specific species. We have tested occasionally using PCR methods, but to keep costs down and to screen more often, I would like to start screening using microscopy. Our bees are largely free from Nosema, which is great, but doesn't help me practise identifying them, so I was wondering whether any of your members would have any colonies they were not too sure about and would like someone to put under the microscope? At this stage I won't be using a haemocytometer to quantify the spores, instead it will be to determine whether Nosema is present, and maybe give a qualitative measure of the disease pressure.

I'm pretty new to Nosema screening, hence the request, so this wouldn't be an expert test, and I won't be able to reliably differentiate between Nosema apis or N. ceranae. Hopefully though, I will be able to give the beekeeper a general estimate of Nosema prevalence in the hive.

I'm not sure whether your beekeepers tend to do their own testing, so not sure what sort of response this might generate, and timing may not be very good. Obviously this would be done for free, but I wouldn't be able to go out and collect the samples, and could probably only process a few 10s of samples if they came in a rush. If anyone was interested, all I would need is a fresh sample of 30-50 bees (sampled live but euthanized, ideally foragers) from the suspect hive in a zip lock bag. If local I could collect the samples or they could be delivered to me here at Horticulture Pukekohe.

FRANKLIN BEE CLUB DIRECTIONS

Venue: 137 Sim Rd

Directions:

From Pukekohe –

Carry on past the old club rooms and Caltex/Golf club (Karakā Rd). The second road on the right is Sim Rd, and it has a turning bay halfway along the passing lane.

From Drury –

Head towards Pukekohe. Once you have passed Blackbridge Rd on your right, Sim Rd will be coming



up on your left. At Christmas, trees are sold at this corner. There is also an equine vet clinic at this corner. 137 Sim Rd is nearly 1.4 km along this road. Watch the sharp right hand corner halfway along. Please park on the verge. This allows room for other residents to get past. We want to stay in their good books!

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 and hive tool) to club days – exception is your bee suit.

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

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

HELP ALSO REQUIRED TO ASSIST THE HIVEMASTER

If you are willing to assist, we require volunteers to aid the hive masters. The current work load to check and look after 2 apiary sites coming into peak season can be time consuming, if anyone would like to assist Martyn, please contact Tania at president@franklinbees.co.nz, and we can arrange a suitable time.

MEMBERSHIP OF FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS

In March you should receive an automated reminder that membership fees are coming due for the 2018/2019 year. If you haven't received these, please let the secretary know as we may not have the right contact details.

Talking of contact details, if your email address, contact details, physical address has changed let us know so we can update our records.

We have nearly 200 paying members now, which helps us to keep the fees low. Please contact: secretary@franklinbees.co.nz if you do not wish to continue your membership, so that reminders aren't sent.

Welcome to our newest members:

Gabi Kuster, Brian Himsley, Tira Taylor, Jan Robinson, Aj Jaralla, Lizzy Frawley, Ruth Andrews, Kathleen McGilvray, Colin North, Anthony Mead

Looking forward to getting to know you and how we can support you.

VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST AT CLUB MEETINGS

We would like to involve members more at club meetings, if anyone is able to assist in setting up the room for a meeting, and clearing away at the end please contact president@franklinbees.co.nz

BEE CLUB COMMITTEE MINUTES

Should anyone require a copy of the minutes from the last committee meeting, please send me an email at editor@franklinbees.co.nz, and I will gladly send them by return. The committee meeting happen after the club day, so stick around and hear what we are upto for yourself.

BEE CLUB NOW ON FACEBOOK

Please join us on the new Facebook group share your experience and questions. It's a great place to learn too and meetup with people.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/458676694483940/>



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

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