



November meeting | 4 November 2020

Where | Main Hall, Johnsonville Community Centre, Moorefield Rd

Editor | Jane Harding janeh@xtra.co.nz

Topics for the November meeting

Beginners session Upstairs meeting room 6.45pm

Topic:

Nectar and Pollen sources around Wellington - Eva Durrant

Main Meeting In the main hall at 7.30pm

Topics:

Argentine Ants. A talk from Brent Page from Natures Way Pest Company, Levin

Mead Making Demonstration – Tony Walsworth

Honey Competition – Frank Lindsay to judge

Please check the member register at the door!

As part of COVID-19 tracing and also to get an idea of how many members and non-members come to our meetings, we're doing a name check at the door for the next few meetings.

We're asking everyone to check the member register and add your name to a list if you're not on the member register.

Many thanks!



Contents

2. From the Committee
3. Pollen and Nectar Sources in Wellington
7. Honey Competition and Mead-Making Demo
8. Argentine Ants
9. Book Review – Interviews with Beekeepers
13. Club Policy on Glyphosate
13. Interesting Articles
14. Photo Competition Results
16. ApiNZ Update
22. What's that Weed Answers
23. Next Meeting
24. Who can I speak to?
25. Meeting Location

From the Committee

All of a sudden we seem to be in that crazy wonderful season in Wellington where everything is green and growing, the bush and gardens are bursting at the seams, the wind is howling, the sun is sometimes very warm, and the rain can bucket down at any time. Bees are either flat out gathering nectar and pollen, or hunkered down in their hives hiding from a storm. Swarms can occur at any time now, especially if we have a run of a few days of fine weather. Be prepared, put out a bait hive and you might catch a passing swarm (or get your own back...)

We have a busy couple of months of meetings too, this month is our honey competition at long last, Tony Walsworth will give a mead-making demonstration and we have a talk from a pest control expert about Argentine ants. More on each of these topics below.



December we'll have a food-truck again and also our mead competition. Tony Walsworth will be our judge again. There will be a bring-and-buy table for members to sell (and buy) things they've made from their hives such as beeswax creams and polishes, propolis treats, candles, etc. Come and get some stocking fillers!

The committee is also keen to utilise more of the functions of our new membership database system from Hello Club, such as using our membership list as a sign-in register at club nights and utilising location data to support our local cluster groups. We're going to trial using the member list at the next few meetings, so look out for that at the door and be patient whilst we refine the process.

From time to time we get requests from people wanting to host hives in their gardens, or who have hives available to put in some-one else's garden. If you know of anyone who wants to host a hive, James Withington (Club President) is compiling a list.

And keep an eye on your bees, be ready with extra boxes for the honey flow, and happy beekeeping!

Pollen and Nectar Sources in Wellington

Wellington has a huge range of plants that are good for bees, from the bush to the beach and all the weeds in-between. Below is a list of some of the better known and best pollen and nectar plants that flower in Wellington over late winter and spring to early summer.

Note the range of weed plants at the bottom of the list – these are all common in the garden and on road verges, so let a few of them flower in your garden for the bees. You're sure to have some of these in your garden, even if you don't know their names.



Take a look at the photos and see how many you know. Answers at the end of the newsletter.

Pollen and nectar sources for Wellington

Winter - Spring Sources

Barberry – excellent very early source of nectar and pollen

Tree Lucerne – good early source of pollen and nectar

Ti Kouka (Cabbage Tree) produces a surplus every third year when it flowers profusely

Five Finger – prolific nectar producer from July to September

Lemonwood/Tarata – excellent for nectar and pollen

Rangiora – nectar and honey dew from August to October

Arum Lilly – early source of white waxy pollen from August onwards

Willow sp. – valuable source of nectar and pollen. Pussy willow are the earliest and produce more than weeping willow. Crack willow also produces good pollen and nectar

Hawthorn – produces an abundance of early blossom containing both nectar and pollen

Camelia – good early source of early nectar and pollen

Koromiko – good winter source of nectar

Gorse – good source of pollen as it can flower throughout the year

Olearia sp. (e.g *Olearia furfuracea*) - Good pollen source from August to October

Hange Hange – good nectar in spring and a greenish-yellow pollen

Kotukutuku – NZ fuchsia – nectar and pollen, which is deep blue in colour

Coprosma sp. Grows everywhere but coprosmas produce a very fine pollen that the bees will harvest when there is nothing else

Laurel – excellent source of nectar from September to November

Brassica sp. Including rape, wild radish, turnip, etc. All produce good nectar

Flax – good source of pollen

Mahoe – good source of pollen over summer from October to January

Pohutukawa – excellent nectar source, and pollen.



Ground weeds such as Speedwell, Shepherds Purse, Buttercup, Trailing St Johns wort, Wood sorrel, Dandelion, Scarlet pimpernel, foxglove, clover, chickweed, oxalis, onion weed, yarrow, chicory.

What's this weed?



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9. Answers on Page 22



Honey competition and Mead Demonstration

At long last we are able to hold our honey competition for this year. Not the ideal time for liquid honey, as a lot of honey will have naturally creamed over winter, hopefully you've all got a jar of two left to put into the competition.

The honey competition rules can be found [here](#)

Also this month, Tony Walsworth will be giving his mead making demonstration. Tony's explanation of mead making was part of the September newsletter. If you want to refresh your memory, you can read it [here](#).





Argentine Ants

(information from Manaaki Whenua website)

The World Conservation Union lists the Argentine ant as one of the world's worst invasive species. The Argentine ant originally established in Auckland in 1990 and is now a problem in an increasing number of towns and cities throughout New Zealand. From one urban area to another, Argentine ants hitch rides in freight, potted plants, rubbish, vehicles and other such goods.



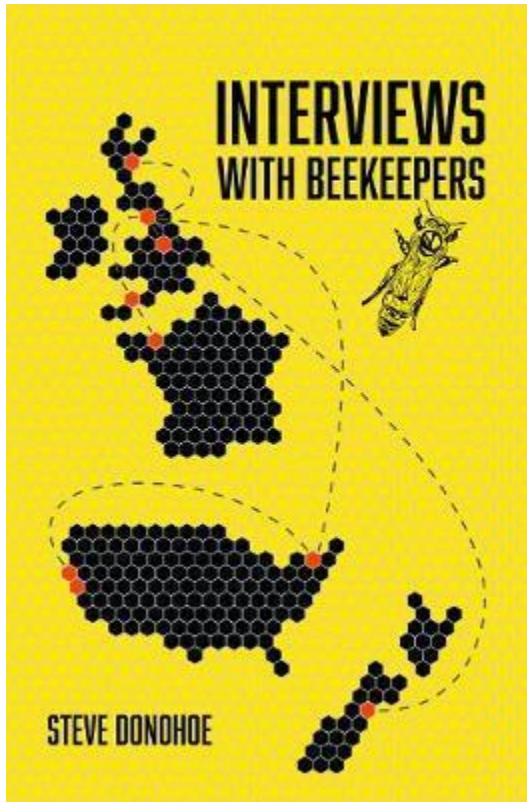
However, many natural areas are also at risk, and an infestation has been found on Tiritiri Matangi Island in the Hauraki Gulf, a highly valued open sanctuary and scientific reserve.

[Distribution of Argentine Ants in New Zealand.](#)

Argentine ants are only 2-3mm long and are a uniform brown colour. They have multi-queened colonies and can form super-colonies that dominate over other ant species. Argentine ants predate on beehives and rob hives of honey.



Interviews with Beekeepers” by Steve Donohue



Interviews with Beekeepers

Steve Donohoe – published UK 2020

Reviewed by Judith de Wilde



I'm really excited to have been asked to do this review and pass it on to you. What a great opportunity to read a book hot off the press, that includes prominent names in the bee industry, from around the world.

An introduction to me, Judith, the reviewer; I started beekeeping through the kindly encouragement of a neighbour five years ago and I am forever grateful for her introduction. I was hooked, but rapidly grasped that there was more to it than placing a hive in my back yard and waiting to harvest honey. I loved everything about my bees so as a beginner beekeeper, with limited knowledge/skills and a couple of failures under my belt (together with the successes), I joined the local Wellington Beekeeping Club to absorb as much information as possible. Librarian was a natural progression. Wow, free access to endless reading material. Reading is one thing, practical application another. I was very lucky to have Trevor Bryant come into the picture and be my mentor for a couple of years before his passing. I miss him dearly. Without a mentor there is a huge gap in the literature to transform the beginner hobbyist beekeeper into a competent keeper of healthy bees with the skill set to expand.

"Interview with Beekeepers" by Steve Donohoe is a book that fills this void. Nothing beats the knowledge and advice of a successful, experienced beekeeper.

Author Donohoe is a hobbyist beekeeper with a deep passion for bees. He decided to write the book that he wanted to read. A book with trusted wisdom from experienced beekeepers. Donohoe spent time interviewing some of the most successful legendary figures in the beekeeping industry from around the world. This book is a collection of their wisdom, experiences, opinions and stories.

Donohoe sets the scene at the start of each interview. He does it so well that you feel like a silent observer, you can almost hear the accents and feel the atmosphere. Each interview is recorded and transcribed for the reader. The interviewed giants in this book are;

Murray McGregor, commercial beekeeper, Coupar Angus, Scotland

Michael Palmer, commercial beekeeper, Vermont, USA

Ray Olivarez, commercial beekeeper, Orland, California, USA



Peter Little, self-sufficient commercial beekeeper, Exmoor, UK

Peter Bray, former commercial beekeeper, Airborne Honey, processing, packing and marketing, Leeston, NZ

Richard Noel, transitioning to commercial beekeeper, Brittany, France

Randy Oliver, former commercial beekeeper, now concentrates on research, California, USA

David Kemp, former Brother Adams employee, previous inspector, author (two of his books live on my bookshelf), Nottinghamshire, UK

Topics covered various techniques of varroa treatment, methods of insulation, ventilation in hives, practices in swarm management, queen rearing, queen introduction methods and so much more. I gleaned so many useful nuggets of information. For example, Murray McGregor changing old comb out with undrawn foundation in autumn and his technique to make this work in Scotland. There really are too many hints and ideas for me to list in a review, you'll just have to read the book for yourself. The interviewees were honest about failures and lessons learnt. Information on techniques learnt from years of experience is priceless. I am grateful to them for sharing freely in this manner.

One quote, "Your bees are only as good as your neighbour's bees"

It didn't just stop there, controversial issues were discussed such as natural beekeeping, hive material, best type of bee, genetics and queen breeding, neonicotinoids, economics and the political scene, just to cover some. Interestingly neonicotinoids were not something of serious concern to these commercial beekeepers. They are very aware of nature, I think this is a trait of all beekeepers, but they were more concerned about what chemicals will follow. One passing comment tickled me, "All aeroplanes should be grounded and turned into saucepans". Covid-19 has highlighted that this may not be such a silly comment. Concerns over loss of foraging resources was a common theme. I was saddened by the bad wrap for New Zealand packaged bees in past years by a couple of the interviewees, but I am too new in this industry to add any comments. I am however extremely grateful that we do not have to contend with the many diseases and pests described in this book.



Donohoe's introduction to New Zealand was touching and I'm happy that he enjoyed our beautiful country so much. Yep, I'm obviously more patriotic that I realised. Peter Bray gave a great brief history of the New Zealand honey industry over the last 20 years and an enlightening insight into the manuka story, myths and naming rights, capturing the complex issues around economics, exports, bureaucracy and the MPI standard. It is a shame that we did not get to read Lorraine Muldoon and Rae Butler's stories.






The finishing chapter was a delightful interview with David Kemp giving a wonderful insight into Brother Adams pioneering queen breeding programme and detailed techniques used, which are still relevant today.

Another delightful piece was when Donohoe asked Murray McGregor during his discussion on queen rearing, "Can you tell that its going to be a good day today? Murray laughs and responds, "Sometimes in the morning you can say - a lot of drones will die today!"

All agreed that good beekeeping is about a good queen, good nutrition and good health husbandry. The key to commercial success is excellent bee husbandry and to diversify. The shared advice to going commercial was take it slow, don't give up your day job, build up knowledge and equipment gradually and take the plunge only once truly commercially viable.

This is a fabulous book to read and it is wonderful to have something in print that goes beyond a book for beginners.

This is not a book for the non-beekeeper or the one to two hive hobbyists. You need to have some knowledge of beekeeping terminology and beekeeping experience. This is a book for the individual looking for the next level of information, potential expansion and the experienced beekeeper interested in what other practices/tips are out there, which could potentially be adapted into their own beekeeping operations. Being fresh off the print, personal opinions and commercial climates both here and abroad are relatively current.

Happy reading, Judith de Wilde 5 stings     



Club policy on Glyphosate

At the last meeting, the WBA committee discussed the issue of glyphosate in weedkillers. Glyphosate is the most widely used herbicide in the world, most commonly known in NZ as the active ingredient in Roundup. Glyphosate residues have been found in honey. Whilst NZ Food Safety doesn't consider the residue level a threat to human health <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-safety/food-safety-for-consumers/whats-in-our-food/safe-levels-of-contaminants-in-food/agricultural-compounds-and-residues/glyphosate> there is concern that poisons like Roundup, and in particular the surfactants (or wetting agents) that are mixed with the herbicide, can be dangerous for bees. We'd like to encourage gardeners and local councils to not use herbicides containing glyphosate or surfactants on flowering plants and especially not where bees are present. The club is preparing a policy statement on Glyphosate that we can use to take to councils and other bodies on this.

Interesting Article

Meet the Bee Brokers -

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/oct/18/meet-the-bee-brokers-you-never-stop-learning-about-bees-theyre-just-incredible>

Almond growing in Australia requires huge numbers of pollinator hives. Good for beekeepers and almond orchardists but is this a sustainable future?



Photo Competition Results

The photo competition was held last month. Bruce Hutton was the judge and gave a very interesting perspective on finding good photo subjects and taking good photos. Entries were down on previous years, probably due to all our COVID disruptions, it was still lovely to see the entries we got. Next year's photo competition is planned for August, so get snapping over the summer, you only need your phone! This year's winning photo was taken on an i-phone.

The Category winners were:

People and Environment – Richard Hall

Creative Open – David Henderson

Bees – Richard Hall



People and Environment Category Winner – Richard Hall



Open Winner – “Nature’s Bounty” by Dave Henderson



Bees Category Winner and Overall Winner – Richard Hall



From the CE, Karin Kos

The New Zealand BeeKeeper journal has a very proud history stretching back to 1939 when Taranaki-based beekeeper Gilbert Kirker put out the first ever edition. Since then it has been a trusted source of information and news for beekeepers. It has been a quarterly publication and most recently a monthly (11 issues per year) publication.

Over the last year, ApiNZ has been considering the future of the journal to ensure we continue to produce a high-quality publication in a smart, cost effective way. I signalled at the AGM that we were looking at moving to bimonthly publication of the journal, and I can now confirm that from April 2021 the journal will be printed every two months.

You will continue to receive your journals as usual for the remainder of this financial year (until March 2021). However, starting in April



2021, you will receive issues in April, June, August, October, December and February.

Moving to bimonthly publication will reduce the costs involved in producing a high-quality print publication and will lessen the workload for our volunteer contributors and the ApiNZ management team.

All members will continue to receive a subscription to the journal as a membership benefit; either an e-journal (non-commercial members) or a hard copy (other members). The cost for additional hard copy journals is currently \$58.75, but this will change when the journal moves to bimonthly publication. We will update you on these costs early next year.

ApiNZ remains committed to the journal and providing relevant, useful content for our members. If you have any comments on this decision, please email: editor@apinz.org.nz.

Giant willow aphids needed urgently

The Scion team urgently needs help in keeping its populations of *pauesia nigroavaria* - the biological control agent for the giant willow aphid alive. Despite the large number of GWA around in summer, in spring they are scarce. The Scion team are asking for



people to get in touch if you find multiple colonies measuring 2cm or more in length. If you contact stephanie.sopow@scionresearch.com or belinda.gresham@scionresearch.com they will respond to arrange collection and shipping.



The November issue of the New Zealand BeeKeeper is now available online and will be reaching your letterboxes next week. In this issue we find out how bacteria could offer clues into developing higher grade mānuka, John Berry shares his tips on beekeeping in November and we learn how a bee sanctuary on Niue is progressing.

We also share a review of Dr Phil Lester's new book on honey bees and Analytica explains the basics of honey chemistry, plus we talk with an artist who creates artwork from old beehives. Cover photo: Hamish Pulley.



Apimondia to run online honey fraud conference next week

Apimondia is presenting two online beekeeping conferences in November 2020 and February 2021. The first conference is entitled 'Honey Fraud Industry' and will be held on 8 November 2020. The conference will feature four expert speakers including researcher and Apimondia president Dr Jeff Pettis and Dr Norberto Luis Garcia.

The second conference to be held over 5 & 6 February is entitled 'Back to basics, back to bees' and will focus on sustainable beekeeping based on scientific research. It will include presentations from Prof Tom Seeley and Prof Marla Spivak, as well as discussion of the use of hyperthermia to manage varroa. More information on both conference can be found [here](#). There is a charge to attend these conferences.

New app to identify myrtle rust

A new app has been developed to help identify plants in the myrtle family which will in turn help in the monitoring and reporting of the fungal disease myrtle rust. Plants in the Myrtaceae family include mānuka, pōhutukawa and kānuka.

The app, [NZ Myrtaceae Key](#), contains more than 1,600 images of myrtle species, hybrids and cultivars and will make it easy to identify relevant plants and then report signs of the tell-tale yellow spores of myrtle rust. The app is free and was developed by Biosecurity New Zealand, Manaaki Whenua-Landcare Research, Unitec and the National Forestry Herbarium. It can be downloaded from the Google Play store



and a web-based version is available [here](#). Information on how to report myrtle rust findings can be found [here](#).



Rātā with myrtle rust. Photo from www.myrtlerust.org.nz.



Anniversary of Eastwoodhill Arboretum

Eastwoodhill Arboretum in Gisborne is celebrating its 110th anniversary on Friday 6 November. The Arboretum encompasses 131 hectares of exotic and native plantings and has been an important research facility for the Trees for Bees Research Trust. More information on the event and ticket sales can be found [here](#).



IN THE MEDIA

[Researchers find sweet spot for kiwifruit pollination](#)

[First murder hornet nest discovered in US](#)

[Natural mead maker on right side of history](#)

[Chatham's freeze dried honey offers unique culinary experience](#)



Primary Industries New Zealand Summit and Awards will be held on **23 & 24 November** at Te Papa in Wellington. The two-day summit has sessions on sustainable land-use and adapting to future demands on farming practices. ***ApiNZ members are entitled to a \$100 discount on the registration fee.*** To access the discount, enter the promotional cod MOK8KS when [booking online](#). (Please note the discount will only work for one registration at a time, so if it doesn't work initially try again later).

The **Big Buzz Festival** will be held on **14 February 2021** in Matakana, north of Auckland. This free, family-friendly festival will celebrate bees, honey and ethical beekeeping. If you are interested in becoming a stall holder you can apply [here](#). More information about the festival can be found [here](#)

What's that Weed answers

1. Yarrow
2. Foxglove
3. Shepherd's Purse
4. Oxalis
5. Onion Weed
6. Fumitory
7. Trailing St Johns Wort
8. Speedwell
9. Wild Turnip



Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on December 2nd. There won't be a beginners meeting next month, come along and enjoy a gourmet burger from the food truck instead.

Bring along something sweet to share for dessert.

Tony and Gayle Walsworth will once again be judging the mead competition, so dust off your best tipples and bring it along to be tried and tasted.

We'll also have our Bring and Buy stall. So get creative with the products of your bees, (not honey!) and do some bartering and bargain hunting for Christmas. Whether you make face creams or furniture polish, propolis lozenges or beeswax wraps, come along and share them with the rest of the club.

Calendars will also be for sale.

We won't have a meeting in January, the first meeting of 2021 will be on Wednesday 3rd February.



Who can I speak to?

President - James Withington 0272 851206 jwithington2016@gmail.com

Vice-President – John Randall (04) 4769959 john@gingerwillow.com

Treasurer - John Burnet (04) 232 7863 johnburnet@xtra.co.nz

Secretary - Jane Harding 0274212417 janeh@xtra.co.nz

Committee Members

James Scott - Membership and website (04) 565 0164 james@scott.gen.nz

Frank Lindsay – (04) 478 3376

Judith de Wilde – Librarian (04 235 8173) kiwicavingrose@gmail.com

Barbara Parkinson – Supper co-ordinator (04 2379624) parkinson@xtra.co.nz

PK Tan - 021 1093388 pk.propserv@gmail.com

Tony Coard - puruwai@gmail.com

Jill Dalton - jimh.jilld@gmail.com

Tricia Laing - 0274 766540 tricialaing48@gmail.com

Janine Davie – j.davie@orcon.net.nz

Bill Studd – bill@wrl.kiwi.nz

Newsletter editor

Eva Durrant 027 3118700 edurrant@xtra.co.nz



Meeting location

Johnsonville Community Centre, Moorefield Rd, Johnsonville.

