



Next meeting | Wednesday 6th April 2022

Where | At your place - ZOOM Meeting

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Main Meeting: Wednesday, 6th April, 7.30pm

ZOOM MEETING

Topics

Graeme Chisnal – **wasp guards and robbing**

James Withington – **monitoring feed levels and checking your hives**

Frank Lindsay – **how to manage smaller hives**

Ask your beekeeping questions at the Zoom Meeting

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Note from the President – James

Well summer will be officially over by the time you read this article. The clocks will have gone back and we will be waking up to darker mornings. Personally I have noted the return of the pesky wasps which are making a nuisance of themselves around my hives. This year I have trialed Hawkeye wasps' baits, and not to promote a product but I have found this to be really effective. About two weeks ago I noticed wasps hanging around the veggie garden so placed a bait station on the edge. Minutes later the wasps were entering and munching down on the curd looking baits. Within an hour it had attracted more wasps with them all fighting each other to get to the deadly baits. The following day the numbers were down and after several days nothing. It seems to be an effective treatment although I suspect living in a semi-rural property there are a number of wasps nest in the region.

The ongoing council by-law saga continues, with the Porirua City Council having failed to set a new meeting date, distracted with the opening of Transmission Gully. This I can see is going to be a long-drawn-out process of trying to get traction from within the councils now that the summer bee populations number are down and no complaints coming in. Thanks to those committee members who continue to aid in the battle. Watch this space.

I am excited to announce we have secured our chef for the June meeting with Kaai Selbury from Gowild is going to attend from the Chatham Islands. She is looking at doing a live cooking demonstration for us and we are just working through the logistics of it. Gowild is the company that has created freeze dried honey from the Chatham Island which has received very high accolades at last year Apiculture conference.

Some of you will have seen the recent Facebook posting about three year 13 students doing business studies and developing sustainable crayons using beeswax. Called 'Kiwi Colour Kits', they purchased a small quantity of beeswax to make their first prototype crayon with a good deal of success.



Throughout the year they will be looking for more beeswax so if you have some for sale, please let me know and I can forward on your details. I have invited them to come and present their creations at one of the clubs meeting later in the year. I feel it is a good little project to support, and purchasing their crayons and colouring-in book might make great little Xmas presents for young members of your family.

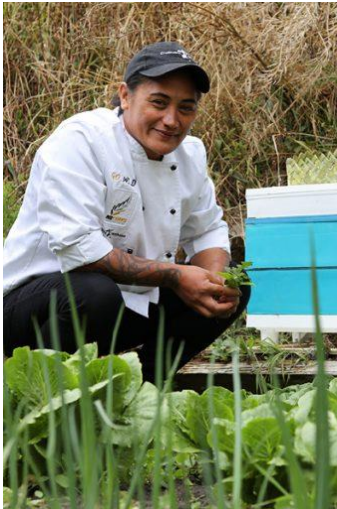


Right enough from me, see you all online for the April meeting.

James



Speaker for the June meeting



Kaai Silbery (Ngāti Rakaipaaka, Ngāti Kahungunu, Tainui) founder of Go Wild Apiary, Chatham Islands Freeze Dried Honey will be our guest speaker at the June meeting.

Kaai is also the head chef at Hotel Chatham, and is passionate about wild foods, endemic plant species and, of course, her bees.

Go Wild Apiary



Bring a Plate

To enhance the evening, and make it a real Honey Night, polish up your baking tins, ferret out that excellent honey recipe from your grandmother/mother/favourite celebrity chef and get ready to taste and share with others at meeting. And, to spread the love, we'd love to have your recipe to put in the June (or subsequent month's) newsletter, so everyone can try their hand at cooking with honey.

Recipes please to the newsletter editor edurrant@xtra.co.nz



Chartwell Apiary

Frank Lindsay

John Burnet and I started wintering down the club hives a couple of days ago and added treatments. Noticed one with very high varroa mite numbers.

All this warm weather with just a few sources flowering. Bees are eating stored honey and producing brood but they are also out robbing.

A warning to members if they haven't already treated their hives to get treatments in quickly and to do mite washes as this is the only way to know mite numbers in hives.

Note: Just thinking about the hives we inspected. Fresh nectar in them and one hive with high mite numbers without seeing deformed wing virus or crawling bees.

Indicated to me a fresh infestation so perhaps those hives are robbing, bringing back mites. Interesting.



Photo from Google Pictures



Beekeeping equipment for sale

Sandie Matcham is giving up beekeeping after 20 years.

Her two hives have been sold to a new member, but the following beekeeping gear is available for sale:

3 x half height boxes and frames for comb honey
plus approx. 150 cut comb honey boxes

\$100 ONO

Wiring frame,
Smoker and hive tool
Full bee suit – near new (size M) and gloves
Full bee suit – well used (size S)

\$75 for all items

Double sieve/strainer and square bucket
Home-made spinner (works with electric drill)

Offers over \$30 for both items

Top Bar hive (empty), macrocarpa with mesh bottom

\$250 ONO

Contact Sandie - Phone 021-264-6348 or 565-1083)



From the CE, Karin Kos

This week the annual Manaaki Whenua-Landcare Research conducted New Zealand colony loss survey was published, with the key findings making for uncomfortable reading. The survey found more than 100,000 colonies were lost over the 2020-2021 winter, equating to nearly 14% of all hives. But the more worrying outcome was that varroa was identified as being responsible for nearly 40% of all losses. In all previous surveys queen problems, rather than varroa, has been cited as the key reason for losses.

There are many factors that beekeepers said contributed to varroa losses, including reinvasion post treatment, timing issues with treatment, as well as the belief that varroa issues were due to ineffective products. Of concern was the finding that approximately 4% of those beekeepers who responded to the survey said they did not treat for varroa at all during the season, and that around a quarter do not monitor their treatments.

The fact that colony losses are increasing year-on-year is a concern, and we need to do more as an industry to first understand the reasons for this, and second, be in a position to take action to halt the trend. While Biosecurity New Zealand has indicated it is stepping up an education campaign and doing more research into varroa, as an industry we should be collectively investing in relevant industry-driven research. This can only be achieved by a collective funding scheme. See our media release on the Colony Loss Survey.

Colony Loss Survey [here](#)

The full survey results can be found [here](#)



Things to do this month

Frank Lindsay

Winter down hives. Check feed and the effectiveness of mite treatments. Make sure top-bar hives have 10 frames with honey in them.

Carry out an AFB check. Slope bottom boards to the front so rain runs out of the hive. Fit mouse guards or reduce entrances to 400 mm x 7 mm. Replace rotten or damaged supers and bottom boards. Attend to fences, check for wasps and control grass.

During extraction, go through the honey supers and reject any old, dark frames you cannot see light through. Store frames with foundation or light frames on the outside with darker ones towards the middle. Freeze stored supers to kill wax moth eggs and larvae or store in a shed that is open, well lit and provides a good airflow through the supers. (Fit queen excluders top and bottom to prevent mouse damage.)

Defend - stingers out!

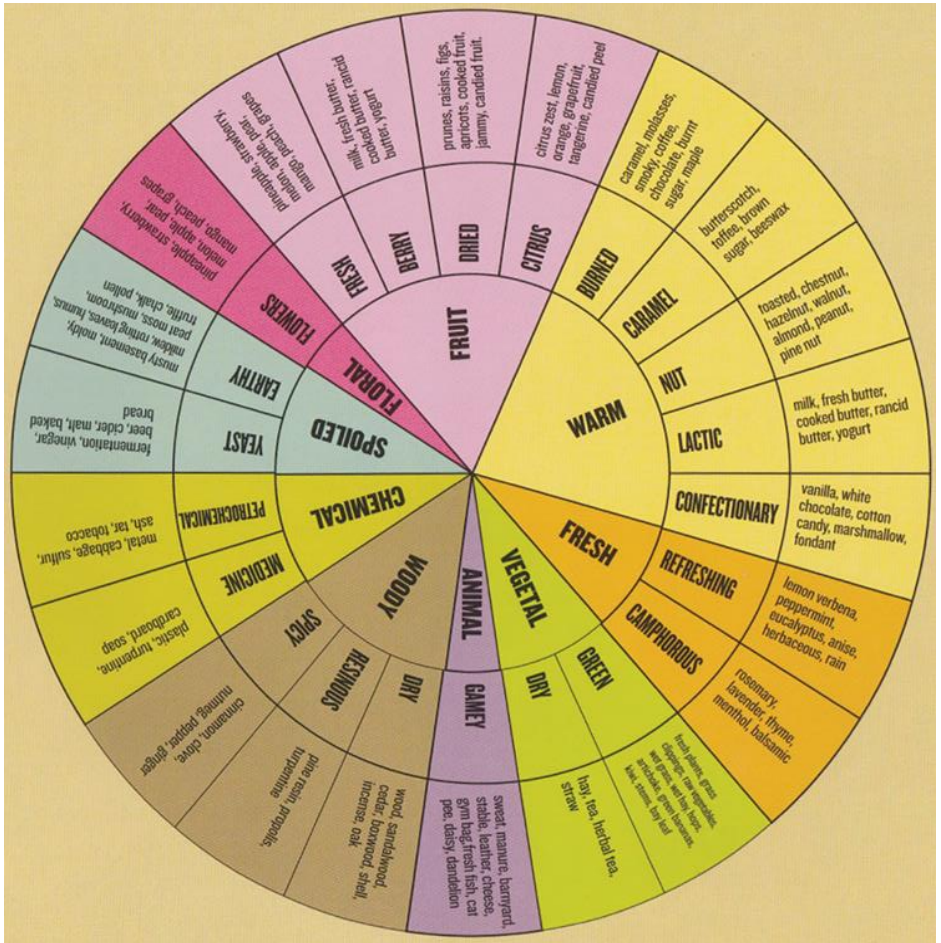


(Eva Durrant)



Honey tasting wheel

The honey tasting wheel can give common descriptor labels which can use when to describe a flavour when tasting honey.





How beekeepers have created resistant Varroa

CONTROL OF VARROA

A guide for New Zealand
beekeepers

This article has been taken from the Control of Varroa handbook (Chapter 7), to remind beekeepers to use varroa mite treatments with care and attention.

Incorrect use of control products

Apistan® strips are designed to be left in hives for only eight weeks, during which time they release a constant amount of fluvalinate per day. After that time, the amount of fluvalinate released begins to decline. For this reason, the strips must be removed. Otherwise, the mites will be exposed to low concentrations of fluvalinate and may build up resistance.

Some beekeepers have shown that while they are good at putting the strips in the hives, they can sometimes be tardy in removing them. When they put the strips in the hives in spring, they just add them to the strips that were placed in the hives the previous autumn and spring. This practice has produced resistant varroa overseas by exposing mites to low concentrations of fluvalinate. Another practice that may produce resistant mites is to use less than the recommended rate of control products. This practice is contrary to the label instructions and although beekeepers do this to save money, it may cost more in the end as it can produce resistant mites. Varroa is likely to build up resistance to all pesticides (synthetic and organic), given enough time and misuse of products. Varroa resistance has so far been reported to acrinathrin, amitraz (Apivar®), bromopropylate (Folbex®), chlordimeform, coumaphos (Check-Mite+®), Perizin, flumethrin (Bayvarol®) and fluvalinate (Apistan®).



There are however, a number of things that can be done to slow the resistance process:

- ❖ Follow the instructions on the label.
- ❖ Only use the pesticide when it is needed.
- ❖ Use the recommended concentration of pesticides so that mites are not exposed to low concentrations.
- ❖ Remove the pesticide when recommended, again so varroa are not exposed to low concentrations of the chemical. A useful tip is to mark the hive with the date of application and the number of strips so it is obvious when the strips need to be removed.
- ❖ Do not re-use the strips.
- ❖ Do not rely on just one chemical. Alternate chemicals that are from different chemical classes to reduce the chance of cross-resistance. An example of this approach is the use of Apivar® in the spring and Apistan® in the autumn, rather than Apistan® and Bayvarol®. (which are from the same chemical class). The Apistan® treatment will kill most of the Apivar® – resistant mites and the next Apivar® treatment will kill most varroa that have become resistant to Apistan®. Eventually mites may develop resistance to both amitraz and fluvalinate. However, this will hopefully take a long time.
- ❖ Encourage other beekeepers to also use techniques that will delay resistance. Any resistant mites that are produced will eventually find their way into other beekeepers' hives.

To delay resistance: **Use only registered products**
 Follow the instructions carefully
 Alternate control methods



A varroa control tip from Vietnam

Beekeepers in Vietnam also practice non-chemical control of varroa. Frames of worker comb often have the bottom corners cut out in a triangle shape, and these are then rebuilt by the bees as drone comb. When the drone brood has been capped, the triangles are removed and destroyed at intervals of about 15 days.

Chapter 12.3.6

CONTROL OF VARROA, Guide for New Zealand Beekeepers, by Mark Goodwin & Michelle Taylor

Interesting Websites

From pesticide detox to increased longevity, the benefits of the sweet stuff for bees go well beyond simply nourishing the hardworking insects in the hive.



It should come as no surprise that bees know a lot about honey. They aren't only honey producers, they are also consumers, and pretty sophisticated ones at that. Offer a sick bee different variety of honey, for example, and it will choose the one that best fights off its infection.

[Bee gold: Why honey is an insect superfood - BBC Future](#)



A beginner's guide to the pollination happening in your backyard

To drag you back to your classroom roots, the process of pollination is described as the transferral of a plant's pollen (plant sperm) from the anther (part of the stamen which is the male anatomy of a flower) to the stigma (part of the pistil which is the female anatomy of the flower). The result is fertilisation and the ability for a plant to be able to create fruit and/or seeds.



[A beginner's guide to the pollination happening in your backyard | Stuff.co.nz](https://www.stuff.co.nz/Wellington/2018/08/22/1000000000/a-beginners-guide-to-the-pollination-happening-in-your-backyard)

The Keeper of Sacred Bees Who Took on a Giant



To save her native Maya bees and their shrinking forests, Leydy Pech waged a fierce campaign on multiple fronts.

https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/maya-beekeeper-leydy-pech?utm_source=Atlas+Obscura+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=f995a30b4e-



EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_03_26&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f36db9c480-f995a30b4e-67619093&mc_cid=f995a30b4e&mc_eid=cb32e840c2

The Truth About Apistan - Ceracell

There is a lot of misinformation, misunderstandings, and outright lies, circulating in the New Zealand beekeeping fraternity about the very excellent varroa control product, Apistan. I plan to set that right.

[The Truth About Apistan - Ceracell](#)





Who can I speak to?

President – James Withington 0272 -851 206 jwithington2016@gmail.com

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Meeting location – a Zoom meeting at home.

WBA April Meeting

Time Wednesday, April 6th 07:30 PM.
