



**March meeting** | 2 March

**Where** | Online Zoom meeting

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**Zoom meeting this month as we are still in the Covid-19 Red traffic light phase.**

### **Topics for the March meeting**

**Beginners session: No beginners session this week join us for the main meeting at 7.30pm**

**Main Meeting 7:30pm:**

**Requeening. Frank will talk about requeening hives**

**APiNZ conference video on Apiculture – James Withington to present.**



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## From the President

With the final official days of summer upon us and the cooler nights being present, you will have no doubt have noticed a change in your hives activities with the conclusion of the honeyflow. For those of you who are yet to extract your honey, don't forget there is a requirement to have this honey tested for tutin. John Burnett is collecting and forwarding on those samples to be tested at Hills laboratories at a price of \$15 per sample.

If you are requiring an extractor to use, John also is the contact person for booking one of the clubs honey extractors, I know that currently most weekends are booked out, however these are available during the week.

Unfortunately, due to the rapid spread of covid cases throughout the country, our club meetings will be online for the foreseeable future.

This makes common sense due to this variant being highly transmissible and also restrictions placed upon us by the Johnsonville Community Trust in the use of the venue.



I know there have been several attempts to hold a field open day at the clubs apiary site however due to inclement weather these continue to be postponed. Keep an eye out in your email box for the next proposed day for inspection to occur. Again covid protocols of social distancing and scanning in will be required if you intend or making these days.

Hopefully most members have now placed varroa treatments within their hives and should be getting on top of mite numbers. Treatments need to remain in the hive for the entirety of their recommended treatment time to ensure your hive is in the best possible condition going into winter. For those of you that did not order Apilifevar from John previously, I know that he is making additional orders so contact him. This is a good maintenance treatment to leave in the hive during the winter months.

For those of you considering a midwinter escape don't forget the Apiculture New Zealand conference is going to be held in Christchurch in late June / early July. This conference is in conjunction with the trade show, where all the major beekeeping retailers have stands and can offer conference specials. It is also a good time to not only meet fellow beekeepers from throughout the country, but listen to some international key note speakers, or you might like to go along to enter into one of the many competitions including the honey competition or the decorated beehive.

In relation to the ongoing issues with the Porirua City Council and the keeping of bees in their area, I'm waiting for a new meeting date to be set, where the ongoing issues can be discussed. Thank you to those that have made submissions and suggestions and I will be raising your points with the council during that meeting.

See you all online on Wednesday evening where this months meeting main topic will be requeening, which Frank Lindsay will present

James Whittaker



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## Robbing Guards/Screens

As you will be aware, robbing of hives can be a problem at this time of year when the nectar flow dries up and there are wasps or other hungry bees around.

You can help your bees to fend off robbing by fixing a simple screen in front of the entrance to a hive that. The resident bees soon learn to use the 10mm gap at the top when exiting and entering the hive. Robbing bees and wasps are attracted to the honey plume that flows out of the old hive entrance and are blocked by the mesh from entering

John Burnet has provided the following instructions and photos for building your own simple screens.

The robbing screen consists of a rectangular wooden frame (approx. 400mm wide x 100mm high) using four pieces of 20 x 10mm wooden beading or trim. A piece of shade-cloth is stapled across the frame (Photo 1 & 2). The screen is then screwed to the front of the hive (Photo 3) covering the entrance.



*Photo 1 – Front of Robbing Guard*



*Photo 2 – Back of Robbing Guard*



*Photo 3 Robbing Guard in place on a hive*



# Stuff you might be interested in

## Online content links to amuse and educate you.

Dandelions as a superfood <https://gardentherapy.ca/superfood-dandelions/>

Comvita supporting Wasp Wipeout in Hawkes Bay

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/wasp-wipeout/300524077/wasp-wipeout-comes-to-hawkes-bay-with-sweet-deal>

## Varroa Treatment

Now is the time of year to be giving your hives their autumn varroa treatment, if you haven't already done so. Varroa can increase very quickly, so you should treat as soon as the honey is off the hives. A number of varroa treatments also require warmer temperatures to work properly.

Republished below is a summary of the main varroa treatments prepared by Janine Davie.

Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Chemical	Physical Form	Operator Safety	Main Advantage	Main Disadvantage	Cost
Apistan	Fluvalinate	Synthetic pyrethroid	Strips	Low risk	Easy to apply	May be mite resistance	\$10 per brood box
Bayvarol	Flumethrin	Synthetic pyrethroid	Strips	Low risk	Easy to apply	May be mite resistance	\$12. per brood box
Apivar	Amitraz	Amadine	Strips	Low risk	Easy to apply, not a synthetic pyrethroid	Should alternate with another treatment	\$10 per brood box
Apiguard	Thymol	Essential oil	Gel	Skin irritant	Natural	Needs warm temperatures, 2 trays 2 weeks apart	Approx \$11.36 (\$5.68 each) per brood box
ApiLifeVAR	Thymol, Eucalyptol, Menthol, camphor	Essential oils	Impregnated wafers	Low risk	Natural	Needs warm temperatures	
Generic	Oxalic Acid	Organic acid	Vaporised crystals	Corrosive if inhaled	Cheap, no need to open hive	Skill required to apply. High initial cost - vaporiser/battery/OA	\$7-\$50 \$75-\$300 Battery
Generic	Oxalic Acid	Organic acid	3.5% solution in sugar syrup	Corrosive	Cheap, quick to apply	Best if brood free	Various
Generic	Oxalic Acid	Organic acid	Strips soaked in 60/40 solution glycerine & oxalic acid	Corrosive Need mask / gloves when assembling	Relatively inexpensive	Can be time consuming to assemble strips	Oxalic Acid 40% Glycerine 60% Strips \$25
Generic	Formic Acid	Organic acid	Liquid solution	Corrosive, combustible	Cheap	Hazardous to operator and bees	
Formic Pro	Formic Acid	Organic acid	Contained in pads	Corrosive, combustible	Can kill mites in capped brood	Potentially hazardous to operator and bees	\$29.90 for 2
Generic	Icing Sugar	Sucrose	Powder	Low risk	Cheap, natural	Low effectiveness	
Generic	Food Grade Mineral Oil	Oil	Fine mist (fog)	Risk of lipoid pneumonia	Quick, no need to open hive	Effectiveness? Fire, health risks	
Mite Zapper	Drone Cell trapping	Electrical heating	Frame	Low risk	Low risk	Timing is important	



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## Testing for tutin

As you probably know, if you harvest your honey after 1 January, you must get the honey tested for the presence of tutin. Tutin is a neurotoxin found in a native NZ plant in tutu (*Coriaria arborea*). When passion vine hoppers (tiny insects) feed on the sap of tutu plants they excrete a substance called honeydew. When bees feed on this honeydew it can end up in honey. When people eat this honey, they can get very sick.

Tutin in honey is not usually a problem in Wellington, however tutu does grow in the Wellington area so you need to get the honey checked.

Our Club arranges composite tutin testing through Analytica Laboratories and sample jars for this purpose are available through the Treasurer who will have a supply of jars at the next few meetings. Samples will be submitted to the lab in batches of ten and cost will be \$15 per sample (normal individual sample test cost is approx \$100). Results are normally available and emailed to submitting members within 3-4 days.

For more information go to:

<https://apinz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Tutin-and-the-risks.pdf>

and

[www.mpi.govt.nz/managing-tutin-contamination-in-honey/](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/managing-tutin-contamination-in-honey/)

And if you're unsure what tutu looks like, check out the composite photo on the next page.



Photo courtesy of ApiNZ.



**APICULTURE**  
NEW ZEALAND

**#testfortutin**



**What am I?**





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## Feedback on the Monthly Meetings (and anything else!)

In January the committee met to review how we proceed with meetings in 2022 under the new Covid Protection Framework (traffic light system). Johnsonville Community Centre has a limit of 100 in the main hall for meetings under the Red traffic light system, and all visitors to the JCC need to be vaccinated. Whilst these restrictions are in place we cannot hold face-to-face meetings like we used to, so we will continue with Zoom calls. When these restrictions are lifted we will review our meeting procedures in line with MOH guidelines and the JCC requirements. In the meantime, we are still keen to hear from members about meeting topics, meeting formats or anything else you would like to see happening in 2022.

If you've got feedback or ideas, please send to James Withington [jwithington2016@gmail.com](mailto:jwithington2016@gmail.com)

And thanks to Janine Davie for the lovely Christmas bee photos!

Have a happy and safe holiday season everyone, may your bees bring in lots of honey.

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## Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on 6 April and will probably also be a Zoom meeting, depending on where we are at with the Covid regulations.



## Who can I speak to?

**President** - James Withington 0272 851206 [jwithington2016@gmail.com](mailto:jwithington2016@gmail.com)

**Vice-President** – Frank Lindsay (04) 478 3376

**Treasurer** - John Burnet (04) 232 7863 [johnburnet@xtra.co.nz](mailto:johnburnet@xtra.co.nz)

**Secretary** - Jane Harding 0274212417 [janeh@xtra.co.nz](mailto:janeh@xtra.co.nz)

### **Committee Members:**

Membership and website: James Scott - (04) 565 0164

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# Meeting location

Johnsonville Community Centre, Moorefield Rd, Johnsonville.

