



Next meeting | Wednesday 7th June 2023

Where | Johnsonville Community Centre

Editor | Jane Harding janeh@xtra.co.nz

Beginners Class: 6.45pm

Legal obligations, particularly with regard to The Management Agency (AFB) and a beekeeper's moral obligations – **John Burnet**

Main Meeting: 7.30pm

Viv Harris will give a talk entitled "Making Creams and Balms using Beeswax". Viv will talk about beeswax properties and do a demonstration on how to make creams and balms.

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From the President – Tricia Laing

Have you noticed that bees have been getting bad press in Stuff stories lately? The headings were:

May 10: Six killed by killer bees after bus crashes into hives.

May 15: Gatwick airport shuts runway after reports of nearby drone activity.

May 16: Swarm of bees ‘terrorises’ UK town, forces castle to close.

May 19: Bees swarm plane injuring six people in Thailand.

Thankfully none of these events happened in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The bus crashed into an apiary of African honeybees, commonly known as killer bees because they can be very aggressive. Luckily we don’t have killer bees here, and we usually replace the queen if we experience a hive that tends towards being aggressive in order to avoid people being hurt or dying from multiple stings.

Naming a small flying machine after a male honey bee is a bit sad since it leads to drones being bad mouthed twice over – once for their minimal contribution to their beehive; and, secondly for the activity of small flying machines closing airports. Gatwick airport shut its runway because of nearby drone activity which led to 12 incoming flights being diverted to other airports. Imagine the disruption that caused to people’s plans for May 15.

In Cornwall it is the time of the year for bees to swarm but a beekeeper has to wonder about what was behind the very high level of bee activity so loud it sounded like a plane that was noticed by a several locals who felt terrified. Checking on a map it looks like there were several swarms over quite a large area. But so scary were the bees at Restormel Castle, in Lostwithiel, Cornwall that this tourist attraction was closed.



The bees at Thailand's Khon Kaen Airport were described as a huge swarm that descended on to an engine after the aircraft had parked at the terminal. The passengers disembarked without mishap but the baggage handlers were stung when they attempted to unload luggage.

As beekeepers we know that even our gentle bees will become agitated if their hives are disturbed. The photos from Cornwall and Thailand, however, don't fit neatly into my understanding and experience of swarming bees but I hesitate to provide alternative explanations. If you have any ideas please let me know.

We are a few months away from our bees swarming but I would like to draw your attention to our website which notes that: The Wellington Beekeepers' Club offers a service to the public to collect honey-bee swarms and for the quickest response contact the WBA swarm liaison person Jim Hepburn on 021 926 823. <https://wellingtonbeekeepers.rocketspark.co.nz/swarms/>.

A big thank you to Jim Hepburn for all his work in this area.

Tricia Laing

Photo Competition in July

Our annual photo competition is being held in July. Great to be able to have this in-person again and to be able to display the photos.

Our judge this year is Bronwyn Rideout from the Wellington Photographic Society. Bronwyn will view the images electronically and judge the entries before the July meeting. At the meeting she will talk about the photos and explain her judgements, and no doubt give some helpful hints to us all. The photos will also be on display and we'll have a people's choice award also.

We're asking you to upload your photos to the website no later than 1 week before the meeting, and also to bring a print copy (7" x 5", which is



about 127mm x 178mm) to the meeting for display. If you can't be at the meeting, you can drop off a copy of the photo before the meeting at ??????

The photo categories and rules for the competition can be found here:

<https://www.beehive.org.nz/photo-competition-rules/>

So, find your best photos of your hives, or get out there and take some winning shots, upload the photos here: <https://www.beehive.org.nz/photo-competition-upload/>, by 28 June, get a print of the photo(s) and bring along to the meeting in July.

There will be a demonstration of how to do this at the June meeting.





Camp Rangī – February 2024

Some of the older beekeepers will have fond memories of various Camp Rangī events that have been held in those halcyon pre-Covid days. The good news is that Camp Rangī is coming back, in February 2024! For those who don't know anything about Camp Rangī, you are in for a treat.

Camp Rangī, organised by SNIBG (Southern North Island Bee Group) and run by the indefatigable Mary-Ann Lindsay, is a weekend away at Totara Reserve in the Pohangina Valley, talking, sharing, learning about bees and sharing banter and excellent food with a bunch of like-minded people. Everyone is welcome, newbies and old hands alike. Accommodation is in bunkrooms with shared facilities, and the river has excellent swimming holes. Camp Rangī is planned for 16-18 February 2024, and registration form will come out in September/October.

In the meantime, Mary-Ann and the SNIBG crew would dearly like to get an indication of numbers, at least 50 people need to be going to make the camp worthwhile. If you're interested, please let Mary-Ann know, by emailing her at lindsays.apiaries@gmail.com



The weather is usually wonderful...and then sometimes it's not...



Annual Subscription Renewal

The end of May is also the end of our financial year and you will have received an annual subscription renewal reminder in the last few days. Here's the text of the email again, in case it ended up in your spam folder....

Club's annual membership subscriptions require renewal from 1 June 2023. Please now pay \$25 to Wellington Beekeepers Association bank account at Westpac – account number 031534 – 0009311 – 00. Please ensure your name is included with your payment. Family or partners at the same address do NOT need to pay a subscription.

Please note if you have joined since 1 Jan 2023 or renewed your sub since this date you do NOT need to pay again. Your annual subscription will be valid through to 31 May 2024.

Please also log into our club membership system (Hello Club) via our website (www.beehive.org.nz) and update your address or contact details if necessary. The system will allow you to reset your password if required.

As you may be aware, the Club provides partial compensation to members who have had to destroy any of their hives due to infection with AFB (American Foulbrood) . If this has happened to you over the past year please advise the Treasurer your name, Hive Registration number, date AFB found, number of hives infected, also your bank account number. We will confirm AFB reporting with The Management Agency and calculate reimbursement amount based on total number of destroyed AFB hives reported by members. Last year reimbursement paid was \$120 per hive.

Thanks
John Burnet
Treasurer



Mānuka Honey Ruling

As you will no doubt have read, the Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand (IPONZ) has ruled that Aotearoa New Zealand cannot trademark the term Mānuka Honey and therefore we cannot object to the use of this term by other countries. Opposition from the Australian Manuka Honey Association centred on the lack of “distinctiveness” for NZ Mānuka honey and IPONZ has ruled that the term is more descriptive than distinctive, and therefore could not be trademarked.

Needless to say, the honey industry, and in particular the iwi-led Mānuka Charitable Trust, is very disappointed. However, the fight is not over, and there is no doubt more to come in this space.

There is a good summary of the history of this situation and interviews with some key players in the latest [Apjarists Advocate](#)





Painting Hives

If you've got new hive boxes, or your hive boxes need a refresh, or you need something to do on a wet winter afternoon, how about painting your hive boxes? There's a great article in the "Good" magazine about painting your hive boxes:

<https://webmail.xtra.co.nz/appsuite/#!/&app=io.ox/mail&folder=default0//wj%7Dl1ejmsfermrn>

You don't need to buy new paint, any left-over exterior grade paint will do. Retailers sometimes also have mis-tinted or leftover paint cheap or free. The article suggests not to use dark paint as bees prefer lighter colours, others have suggested dark paint keeps the hives warmer in winter. I've got both, I can't say I've noticed a difference in the bees as a result.

Wax-dipping the boxes is always recommended and you can paint the boxes once they've been dipped.

And paint the boxes before you put the bees in them....



You could paint the boxes, or you could go overboard and win an art prize...



Hive for Sale

1 x Bee hive with strong colony (requeened over last summer). Includes sufficient hive-ware for two complete hives (about 6 boxes and associated gear) also sufficient honey stores to meet colony's winter requirements.

Currently three boxes high and located at Club's Chartwell apiary as owner has been unable to care for it over recent months and now wishes to give up beekeeping.

Cost \$300 ONO

Contact Joss van Herk – Phone 027-439-2130

Fancy being on the committee?

Got an interest in being on the committee? Want to have more of an input into what happens at meetings or what the club gets up to? At the AGM in July we will be looking for nominations for general committee positions and we welcome new faces and new ideas. Duties are not onerous, we have committee meetings about 3 or 4 times a year, where we plan the calendar for the next few months and make decisions on club issues. Meetings are usually by Zoom, you don't even need to leave the comfort of your own armchair...



Not this committee...



Useful links and information

Try our facebook page, lots of interesting links and stories:

<https://www.facebook.com/wellingtonbeekeepers>

Honey Bee Research Centre at Guelph University in Canada, one of Frank's favourites: <https://hbrc.ca/>

Scientific Beekeeping, Randy Oliver's beekeeping blog with huge amounts of research and data: <https://scientificbeekeeping.com/>

Apiarists Advocate: [Apiarists Advocate](#) a NZ based online magazine with a wealth of information and opinions on beekeeping and the state of the industry in NZ. You can subscribe to the online magazine (it's free) and twice a year Patrick publishes a compilation of the best stories from the previous few months in print form. Something else to do from your armchair. You can order a copy of the print read [here](#). The print magazine costs \$29, but if more than one club member a copy, the multi-copy discount applies and each copy is only \$25. You can find out more about the print read [here](#).

July meeting

Our July meeting is of course our AGM, which we aim to get over in a very short amount of time (last year James got us through in 25 minutes). We won't hold a beginner's meeting in July. And don't forget to upload your photos for the competition and bring along a print for showing the rest of us.



Who can I speak to?

President - Patricia Laing tricialaing48@gmail.com>

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

Secretary – Jane Harding 027 421 2417 janeh@xtra.co.nz

Committee Members

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

Web Master - Jason Bragg - (021 527 244) email@jasonbragg.me

Librarian - Ellen Millar - (021 709 793) msoon.email@gmail.com

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

Swarm WhatsApp Administrator - Jim Hepburn (021 926823)

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