



March meeting | 1 March

Where | Johnsonville Community Centre

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Topics for the February meeting

Beginners session 6:45pm upstairs:

Graeme Chisnall will talk about varroa treatments and the need to check for tutin in your honey.

Main Meeting 7:30pm:

We have a guest speaker this evening, Julia Kasper from Te Papa will be talking to us about how we can support Aotearoa/New Zealand's native bees, particularly this year when the NZ native bee Ngaro Huruheru (*Leioproctus fulvescens*) has been named as our first "Bug of the Year"

And, in April – the honey competition, so dust off those presentation jars and get them looking good for April!



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From the President

The impact of Cyclone Gabrielle has been profound for many people, our friends and families. Members of my family live in the Western Bay of Plenty and their vegetable gardens were totally ruined but they are all fine. I hope your families are coping well too.

In one of the photos of devastation resulting from Cyclone Gabrielle I saw a beehive, three boxes high, covered in mud with no evidence of bees. Recently The Management Agency, National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan sent out an email letting commercial beekeepers know where they could seek help to cope with the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle. I sent them an email indicating that many beekeepers who have not been affected by Cyclone Gabrielle are very concerned for the beekeepers and the bees who have been affected. I asked two questions: (1) Is there a place where beekeepers and friends of bees can donate money or time to support beekeepers who have been affected? Could this be coordinated through beekeeper's local Clubs? (2) Has any thought been given to beekeeping practices that could be developed when, for instance, flooding or gale-force winds are forecast for an area? I am thinking about whether I could block my hive entrances and load hives onto a vehicle to move them to higher ground/different location. My



questions have been passed on to ApicultureNZ but I am yet to receive a reply.

At our recent WBA Committee meeting we discussed these issues and agreed that our support would be best targeted at other hobbyist beekeepers, via the local bee clubs, rather than at commercial operators. We are working on finding the contact details for clubs in the affected areas. Our thinking is that we will prepare Nucs in spring and transport them to clubs in affected areas as a donation to them. Please, if you are able, prepare Nucs for donation. If you have any ideas about how hobby beekeepers can protect their bees in extreme weather events please let me know.

A big thank you to all the people at the February Meeting who shared their ideas about topics they would like to cover during the year. Your ideas have informed the Committee's programme planning.

Tutin testing

(This is a repeat of the article in last month's newsletter, for those who may have missed it)

Members are reminded that all honey extracted after 1 Jan should be tutin tested if they intend selling, bartering or donating their honey. Refer following link for further information:

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/honey-bee-products-processing-requirements/managing-tutin-contamination-in-honey/>

Testing is NOT necessary if you intend using your honey for your own consumption and I would also add that in the seven years that the Club has been organising lab testing (over 800 samples in total) not one has been found to be over the maximum allowable level for tutin (0.7mg per kg).

The Club offers a composite testing service over the next three months. Cost is \$20 per test and free sample jars are available from me. Samples will be forwarded to the lab for composite testing in batches of ten which enables us to keep the cost relatively low. You can also provide your sample to me in



your own plastic screw-top medical specimen jar (minimum requirement is 50 grams per sample). Honey must be liquid - no comb or chunk honey will be accepted.

The Club has demonstrated to MPI we operate in a low risk area with a targeted testing regime. Therefore if over three years your honey has tutin levels below 0.035mg/kg you are only required to test one in every ten years thereafter.



Spot the difference - Native Bee and Honey Bee



NZ Native Bees

As you probably know, NZ has a number of native bees, 27 different endemic species in fact. Most are solitary, they do not build big hives or nests, and don't produce honey. They also rarely sting and aren't affected by varroa!

Native bees need flowers nearby as they do not fly big distances. Native bees are crucial to our native ecosystems as they are the most effective pollinators of plants such as kanuka, manuka and Pohutukawa.



At our meeting on Wednesday we will have a talk from Julia Kasper from Te Papa who will talk to us about the first NZ "Bug of the Year" and how the bee club can help support our NZ native bees. The bug of the year is *Leioproctus fulvescens*.



Leioproctus fulvescens

Leioproctus fulvescens is known as a “digger bee” because females of the *Leioproctus* species dig holes in the ground and lay single eggs which are fed with pollen and nectar foraged from nearby flowers. *Leioproctus fulvescens* is found in the South Island.

And here is the link to a lovely story about a local boy (Crofton Downs) who knows all about NZ native bees:

<https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2023/02/20/the-boy-and-the-bee/>



Calendar for the next few months

The committee has mapped out the programme for the next few meetings, many thanks to Graeme Chisnall for looking after the new beekeeper sessions.

And note the honey competition and photo competition coming up!

Month	Beginner's session	Main Meeting
March	Varroa Treatments – Graeme Chisnall	Guest Speaker – Julia Kasper – NZ Native Bees and how we can support them
April	Wintering Down – Graeme Chisnall	Guest Speaker – Phil Lester – how bees communicate Honey Competition
May	Apparatus, Materials, Repair and Building of Hiveware – Graeme Chisnall	Anaphylactic Shock, Bee Allergies, Bee Sting responses - tbc
June	Legal requirements and regulations for keeping bees – John Burnet	Beeswax and its Properties – Making your own balms – Viv Harris
July	Midwinter checks, pre-emptive swarm control	AGM Trees for Bees – tbc Photo Competition



Update on Competitions and Awards

As advised in the previous newsletter, we've re-established a programme for the club awards and trophies. After a few disruptive years it will be good to have these back in play.

Honey competition coming up in April. Link to the criteria and categories here: <https://www.beehive.org.nz/honey-competition-rules/>

Photo competition in July, along with the AGM and hopefully a guest speaker. Link to photo competition rules here:

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

More information on uploading photos and judging to come.

Mead competition in December with the Christmas function.

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

Gadgets and Gizmos. We'll hold a presentation in November for this award, but you can bring your idea or gadget to any meeting to show to the members. And what constitutes a gadget or gizmo idea, you ask? Previous winning ideas have been things like:

- A metal wasp tunnel to prevent wasp infestations
- A hive lifter
- A top bar hive nuc box

So, if you've got an idea, or a gadget you've invented to make your beekeeping easier or quicker, bring it along and crow about it at a meeting.



Participation in the Apiculture National Surveillance Programme

As you know, New Zealand's biodiversity is extremely valuable and important. And the absence of many foreign pests and diseases is also extremely valuable to our economy and way of life. It is incumbent on everyone in New Zealand to support our biodiversity and pest-free status and to ensure we maintain it. We don't want another situation where a new pest like small hive beetle slips into the country, as we had with varroa some years ago.

Many government agencies are involved in keeping pests and diseases at bay, and for beekeepers, the National Apiculture Surveillance Programme is key to this. Our very own Stuart Turner is one of the authorised persons who undertakes the inspections for AssureQuality, so if you get a request for an inspection of your apiary, be pleased you will be doing your bit to support our relatively pest-free status. The following message comes from The National Apiculture Surveillance Programme.

Participation in the National Apiculture Surveillance Programme

The National Apiculture Surveillance Programme (NASP) has the responsibility of ensuring that exotic pests and diseases affecting honey bees are kept out of New Zealand. The surveillance activities are undertaken by AssureQuality on behalf of the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). AssureQuality contracts beekeepers who are appointed as "Authorised Persons" under the Biosecurity Act 1993 to carry out surveillance activities. They are well-trained to inspect beehives for signs of pests and diseases as well as collect samples for testing in the laboratory. In addition, the training ensures that everyone participating in the NASP attains a high level of professionalism and adheres to strict confidentiality standards regarding their work and the apiaries they visit.

During autumn months, selected beehives in areas where pests and diseases could enter New Zealand from overseas are inspected and sampled. These areas include places that receive people and cargo from other countries, such as ports, airports, transitional facilities, large cities and



tourist centres. Since NASP does not own beehives, it relies on beekeepers living in and around these entry pathways to allow their beehives to be inspected. We therefore need you to participate in the programme to ensure that we:

- Continue to protect our industry from pests and diseases not present in New Zealand
- Can quickly find and deal with any pest or disease that slips through the border
- Ensure our trade partners continue to trust our biosecurity system and allow our honey and other bee products to be exported around the world
- Contribute to New Zealand's international obligations on reporting pests and diseases of honey bees



Small Hive Beetle, one little critter we DON'T want



Local Groups Update

At the February meeting, members got together into local groups to get to know each other and work out how we can support each other locally in our beekeeping endeavours. The following groups and contact persons were set up:

Porirua/Kapiti	pk.propserv@xtra.co.nz
Johnsonville/Newlands	lindsays.apiaries@gmail.com (Chartwell Apiary manager) johnburnet@xtra.co.nz (Chartwell Apiary manager)
Wellington Central/ Karori/Wadestown	
Wellington Eastern Suburbs	alec@mackay.eu.com
Lower Hutt/Petone/Eastern Bays	richardmbraczek@gmail.com (Wingate Apiary manager)
Upper Hutt	michele.vandaalen@gmail.com (Wingate Apiary manager)

As you can see, we're lacking someone to look after the Wellington Central, Karori/Wadestown area. If anyone in that geographic area is keen to take a lead here, please get in touch with Tricia or myself (Jane)

At every monthly meeting we'll ask for any input or comments from these groups, so we can keep the groups alive and relevant.



Next Meeting

April's meeting will be the honey competition. We're looking to have a chef alongside the judge to give us some tasting thoughts from the various honeys on offer.

We're also hoping to have a talk about communication between bees.

Meeting Location

Johnsonville Community Centre

Moorefield Road, Johnsonville





Who can I speak to?

President and Vice President– positions vacant

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
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Swarm WhatsApp Administrator - Jim Hepburn (021 926823)
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