



**Next meeting** | Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025

**Where** | Johnsonville Community Centre

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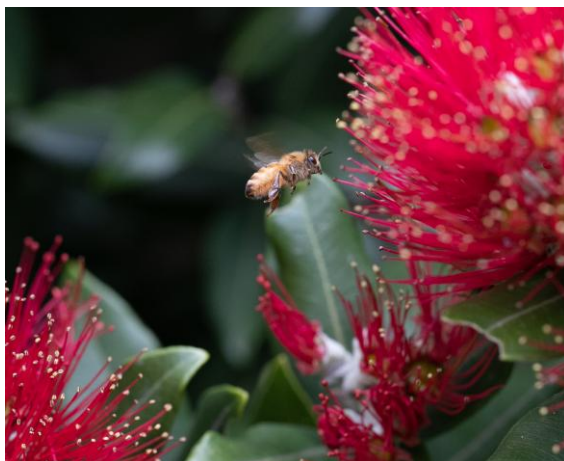
No beginners session this month, come anytime after 6.15 to get some yummy food from the food truck and socialise with other members before the quiz and mead competition

**Main Meeting: 7.30pm**

**Mead competition – Richard Brazcek will be judging. Bring your entries to the hall anytime from 6.30.**

**Quiz – James Withington will be testing your brains and memory with one of his great quizzes.**

**AND there will be doughnuts, and prizes for the best fancy dress – bee-themed or Christmas-themed – you choose!**





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## From the President

I am hoping my bees have given up on visiting the neighbours and can now get down to collecting nectar and making lots of honey. Another neighbour rang during the week and asked if the bees swarming a couple of streets away were mine. I had been out gardening and didn't notice any action from my place so I said no they weren't mine. James W messaged me later that day and asked the same question. I'm pretty sure they weren't mine but the only hive I have that might possibly have swarmed has my favourite queen 'Nefertiti' – she's big, black and beautiful. I will check the hive as soon as weather allows but I will be devastated if she has taken off.

I thought this was going to be the perfect summer with the great weather we have had recently but after the last few days I'm not so sure. The cabbage trees around here have had masses of flowers and I've noticed quite a bit of clover as well but just as I am all ready for the main honey flow of Pohutukawa we get hit by torrential rain and gale force winds.

I'm staying in Wellington this Christmas so I'm not going to make the same mistake as last year and will keep a close eye on my hives (weather permitting) to make sure they have enough room for honey but not too much so I don't end up with boxes of uncapped honey. I have been moving built out frames full of honey but not yet capped, from the top of the brood boxes into the honey supers above the queen excluder – to try and build up my supply of built out frames, give the girls something to keep them occupied when they can't fly and of course maximise honey production.

We have received lots of requests from people wishing to host bee hives on their land, from areas all around Wellington. If you think this is something you might be interested in check out the information later in the newsletter or speak to me at the next meeting.

I'm looking forward to the Christmas meeting next week and hope to see a good turnout, all bursting with knowledge to triumph at the quiz.

Janine



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## Christmas Party!

Yes, its that time of year. And its no holds barred this year, the quiz, a fancy dress competition (judged by Janine!!) food truck and doughnuts and the mead competition. So, sort out your finest bee-themed costume or Christmas-inspired clothes and sharpen your brain for Wednesday night.

Food available from 6.15. If you're entering mead into the competition, bring it to the hall from 6.30 so Eva and Richard can get the judging underway.

Quiz starts at 7.30, and the tables will be labelled geographically so the local groups can get together for the quiz teams.

There are a bunch of prizes up for grabs, so hone up on your bee trivia (and hard facts) and come along.





## Mead Competition Rules

We're hoping you've got your mead bottled and the bottles polished by now...it's the mead competition and judging on Wednesday. Last year's winner, Richard Brazcek, will be judging the entries this year. Quick reminder of the rules and classes:

There are four classes of entry:

- Traditional dry mead
- Traditional sweet mead
- Traditional sparkling mead
- Open – Nontraditional meads using Fruit (Melomels) or Spices (Metheglins) or a combination of these.

The following rules govern the Annual Mead Competition of the Wellington Beekeepers Association:

- The mead must be derived from fermented honey.
- Entries must be in a clear glass bottle (preferably 750ml) and secured with a cork or replaceable cap or stopper. Sparkling mead should be presented in stronger bottles designed to hold a liquid under pressure.





## Results of the Photo Competition

There was a good range of entries into the photo competition this year – but we can always do with more!!

Entries were judged by renowned Wellington photographer, Simon Woolf, who unfortunately could not be with us on the night. Eva Durrant presented the results.

The overall winner was Claire Hart with a photo of the children at Te Aro School where Claire manages the apiary and teaches beekeeping to the students.



*Janine Davie presenting Claire Hart with the Frank Lindsay Photography trophy*





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## Yellow-Legged Hornets

You will all be very aware that Yellow-Legged hornets have been discovered in Glenfield, Auckland. These highly invasive pests pose a huge threat to beekeepers and the general public.

From Karin Kos at APiNZ on Friday:

“The yellow legged hornet continues to concern our sector as we see numbers keep rising, with 26 confirmed queen hornet specimens as of yesterday. Sixteen of the 26 confirmed queen hornets were found with either developed nests or evidence of nesting. To date, 7 worker hornets have been found in nests.

The communications sent out to all members earlier this week stress the importance for all beekeepers, from hobbyists to clubs to commercials, to conduct active and regular surveillance of hives across the country. Useful backgrounders were provided and you can find these below.”

[MPI Hornet Detection updates and general information](#)

[Beekeepers Surveillance Guide](#)

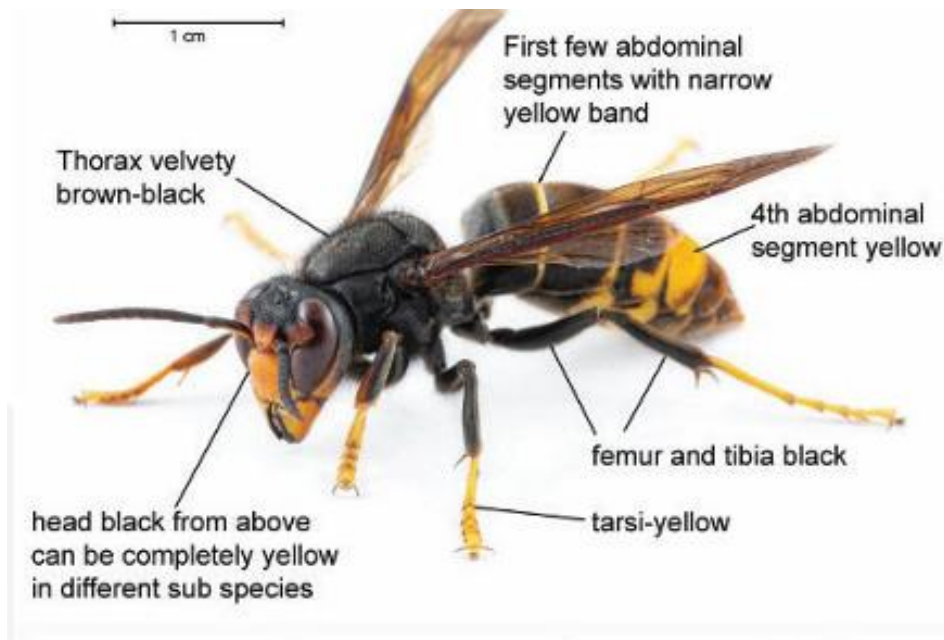
[Beekeepers Action Guide to Trapping](#)

[Beekeepers yellow legged hornet FAQs](#)

There is a lot of very useful information in these links, including how to make a hornet trap, how to recognise a hornet and what to do if you suspect a hornet or a hornet's nest.



## Picture of Yellow-legged Hornet with distinguishing features:



These hornets (1) are larger than the German wasps (2) we usually deal with and also larger than the Asian(3) or Australian (4) paper wasps that you might also be familiar with.



2

3

4





Also look out for hornet's nests:



Photo: John de Carteret – Jersey

Yellow legged hornet primary nest (September to January). At this time of year these small (primary) nests, are up to 21cm across but may be as small as a tennis ball. They contain one queen and brood (egg, larva and pupa stages) or one queen and workers plus brood.

Look under/check:

eaves, decks, soffits

garages, sheds

boats, trailers

low to ground, near water

sunny locations.



Phil Lester has also written an article for The Conversation on Yellow Legged Hornets, you can read this here:

<https://theconversation.com/a-deadly-hornet-has-reached-nz-we-can-all-help-stop-its-spread-268874>

Frank has sent in a link to this video from the British Beekeepers Association which follows the establishment of the hornets across Europe.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgS1heeKCMs>

And this is the latest media announcement from Radio New Zealand on Sunday evening.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/580439/biosecurity-new-zealand-escalates-response-to-yellow-legged-hornets>

**If you see a suspected hornet or nest, photograph and report it immediately to [report.mpi.govt.nz](https://report.mpi.govt.nz) or call Biosecurity New Zealand's exotic pest and disease hotline on 0800 80 99 66.**



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## Queens

The Club is investigating the viability of placing bulk orders on behalf of members for new seasons queens with the following queen producers:

Buller Bay Apiaries (West Coast) - currently producing and selling virgin queens. Mated laying queens possibly available in the new year.

Gary Milne, (Southern Sun Apiaries, Otaki) - new season's mated laying queens.

At this stage queen rearing is about one month later than normal so mated laying queens are not expected until mid-Dec.

Cost is likely to be \$60 - \$70 depending on courier and size of order.

If you are interested in joining a bulk order please forward your name to John Burnet ([johnburnet@xtra.co.nz](mailto:johnburnet@xtra.co.nz)).

Mated laying queens also available from:

Mark Grenfell – Days Bay – six queens expected to be available for Christmas (Phone 027-447-3337)

If members have any nucs available for sale please contact John and details can be circulated to all members.





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## Ceracell beekeeping jackets and veils for sale (water-stained)

The Club has purchased from Ceracell Beekeeping Supplies several beekeeping jackets and veils at a special price of \$65 (about one third usual retail price).

These are made of heavy-duty cotton, zip-fronted but and are water-stained but cleaned.

These are available in sizes XL only although there is also 1 x 2XL and 1 x 3XL available.

They will be available for trial fitting and/or purchase at the Dec meeting.

Any enquiries to John Burnet (Phone 0274-379-062)

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## Hive Sites Available

The club has been approached by a few people with offers to host hives on their property. If you are interested, please get in touch with the property owners directly.

**Tawa:** Simone Bull. "I have a lifestyle block in Tawa that I want to make available for people to manage hives and support the bee population... in exchange for a bit of hands-on learning and maybe the odd jar of honey. If this is of any interest to your members, please let me know."

Simone (027608219)

[ngahauefarm@hotmail.com](mailto:ngahauefarm@hotmail.com)



**Johnsonville:** Mary Silvester. "My neighbour and I have fruit trees but there aren't many bees, so we hand pollinate. Would any club members be keen to park hives in our Johnsonville back yards? I have planted rosemary to attract bees, but to no avail as yet.

My phone number is 027 7171 030.

[silvest@windowslive.com](mailto:silvest@windowslive.com)

**Brooklyn:** Eamonn Deverall. "My name is Eamonn and I live in Brooklyn in Wellington. I'm keen to learn about beekeeping, and to host a managed beehive at our place. My great grandfather kept bees, and I'd like to restart the tradition, as well as for ecological reasons. Our place is in the bush, and we have flowering plants as well as berries and a few fruit trees. We don't use insecticides.

I thought that learning by being there when the beekeeper comes would be a great way to learn - but the two places in Wellington who advertise this are not placing hives at the moment

I wondered if you knew anyone who might be interested - we would pay for the service of course. Even if there was one of your members who could be a private tutor?"

Eamonn 0273578149

[eamonn.deverall@gmail.com](mailto:eamonn.deverall@gmail.com)





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## What's Coming Up?

Our first meeting for 2026 will be in February. Mark Wendleken will take the newbies session and talk about honey extraction. For the main meeting we have a guest speaker – Leonard Foster – who is a bee researcher from British Colombia.

March – Janine will take the newbies session on robbing, wasp guards, autumn varroa treatment and getting ready for the end of the season. John Burnet and Paul Chapman will be talking about wasps and other pests and how to deal with some of these organically.

April – Eva will talk wintering down with the newbies and the main meeting will have a bit of a Health and Safety focus, how to make beekeeping easier and safer and some other information about risks and dangers with beekeeping.

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## Dedicated Beekeeper!



And here's a photo of a beekeeper collecting a swarm at home. Not too remarkable, but 2 hours earlier this beekeeper went into labour, and expected to give birth not long after this photo.

What a dedicated beekeeper!





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## Who can I speak to?

President – Janine Davie [president@beehive.org.nz](mailto:president@beehive.org.nz)

Treasurer – Eva Durrant [treasurer@beehive.org.nz](mailto:treasurer@beehive.org.nz)

Secretary – Jane Harding 027 421 2417 [secretary@beehive.org.nz](mailto:secretary@beehive.org.nz)

Membership – John Burnet – 0274-379-062

Supper co-ordinator - Barbara Parkinson – (04) 2379624

Swarm WhatsApp Administrator - Jim Hepburn (021 926823)

Newsletter Editor - Jane Harding - 027 421 2417