



August 2026 Newsletter

Next Meeting

Date: Wednesday 5 August 2026

Where: [Johnsonville Community Centre](#)

(Entrance next to the Johnsonville Library)

Beginners Class | 6:45 PM – 7:30 PM | Upstairs in the Trust Room

This month, **Mark Wendelken** continues his series, covering **essential gear, feeding, and winter hive checks**.

Our monthly Beginners Class features an experienced club member breaking down a core topic: from basic equipment and swarm control to pests, diseases, and legal requirements. Free for all members, and everyone is welcome. Bring your questions!

Main Meeting | 7:30 PM | Main Hall (adjacent to the Trust Room)

Following the beginners session, join us for our main club meeting featuring guest speaker **Viv Harris**, an **organic beekeeper** based in the Ohariu Valley.

If you haven't been in a while, we'd love to see you there!

In this month's update:

- 2026/2027 annual subscriptions are now due 🧵
- Barbara Parkinson honoured 🏆
- Honey competition winner 🥇
- Exclusive Sugar Flour pastry cooking class 🍪



From the President

It was great to see such a good turn out to the July meeting/AGM and so good to see Barbara Parkinson's wonderful contribution to the club (by feeding us such yummy food) recognised.

I hope you all had a pleasant winter break. Now that spring is fast approaching it's time to get organised for the spring build up and swarm season. I'm not sure what this spring is going to be like with the weird weather we've had over the last 6 months – as you know I lost one hive and I have heard that others have had some heavy losses. Be prepared for anything – until recently we have had unseasonably warm weather in which case you may not have had a brood break and your hive may be going strong. The bigger they are the harder they fall and lots of brood might also mean lots of varroa and the bees will be powering through their resources. Check your hive by “hefting” ie lifting one side of the boxes to judge the weight. It is also possible that your hive may have honey but it's not in the right place, it needs to be accessible from the brood chamber. It is possible for a hive to starve even though they still have honey. It's a difficult time of year, you can check on a sunny day but be very quick as it takes a lot out of a hive if they have to heat up the brood chamber because you've taken the lid off and let all the heat out. I suppose it's better to get a bit chilled rather than starve. I've checked my bottom board and see a few mites so I've commenced a round of oxalic acid vapour treatment.

Make sure you have enough boxes and frames going into swarm season. I know in the past I've had to race over to Tawa to get equipment from John when he was running his business and then Hive World when they were operating but now that there is no local supplier of ready to go boxes and frames some pre-planning is required. The committee have been discussing holding a workshop to help members with box and frame assembly. If there is sufficient interest this would probably be in September. Last time we organised a similar workshop only one person attended. If you are keen please let me or one of the other committee members know. If there is sufficient interest we would hold a wax dipping day afterwards – probably in October.

Janine

Barbara Parkinson honoured for Services

A well-deserved honour for Barbara Parkinson! In recognition of her extraordinary contributions to the club, Barbara was presented with the Stevenson Memorial Cup, making her only the fifth person to receive this honour in 40 years.



Photo Michelle Cole: President Janine Davie and Barbara Parkinson

2026/2027 Annual Subscriptions are Now Due

A friendly reminder from our Membership Secretary, John Burnet: if you haven't already settled your annual subscription, please transfer the **\$25** fee to the Wellington Beekeepers Club bank account **03-1534-0009311-00**.

Please note: members who joined the Club and paid their subscription after 1 Jan 2026 are exempt from paying again until the next financial year starting 1 June 2027.

For those who have already processed their payment, thank you very much for staying connected to our community!

Honey Competition Champion!

We had a lot of fantastic entries across all categories in this year's honey competition, but a huge congratulations goes to Jim Hepburn for taking home the prestigious Bodmin Cup as our overall winner! Sweet victory, Jim.



Photo Janine Davie: Frank Lindsay NZOM and Jim Hepburn

🍯 Exclusive WBA Member Event: Honey Baking Class at Sugar Flour!

Calling all Wellington Beekeepers! We've teamed up with the talented **Maxine Scheckter** at **Sugar Flour Pastry School** for a hands-on baking evening designed exclusively for our members and their families.

Come put your favourite ingredient front and centre, connect with fellow beekeeping enthusiasts, and learn delicious new recipes in a fun, social atmosphere.

What You'll Bake:

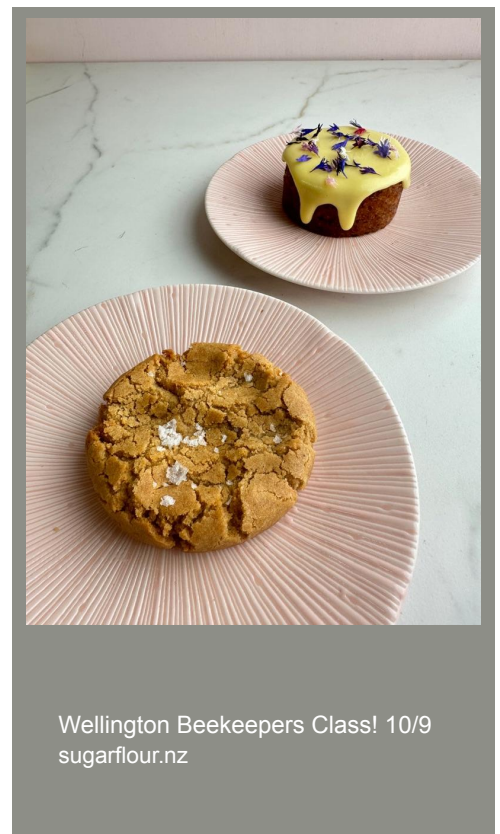
- **6 Mini Spiced Honey Cakes** with a vibrant passionfruit glaze
- **6 Brown Butter Salted Honey Cookies**

Event Details:

- **When:** Thursday, 10 September
- **Time:** 6:30 PM – 8:30/9:00 PM
- **Where:** Sugar Flour Cooking School, 7A Stewart Drive, Newlands
- **Price:** \$145 per person
- **Capacity:** **Strictly limited to 16 spots!**

⚠️ Spaces are extremely limited and expected to sell out quickly - don't hesitate if you'd like to secure your or your partners spot!

👉 [Click Here to Register](#) (or use the link below the image)



Wellington Beekeepers Class! 10/9
sugarflour.nz

Bees in the City – Public Arts Trail

A giant public art trail, buzzing with creativity and community.

For eight weeks in Spring 2026, 14 September to 8 November, ***Mills Albert Bee in the City*** will transform Wellington into a vibrant outdoor art gallery.

- 30+ giant bee sculptures – each brought to life by Kiwi artists
- 20+ community bees – decorated by schools and local groups
- A colourful city-wide trail – free, fun, and family-friendly

At the end of the trail on 26th November, each giant sculpture will be auctioned to raise vital funds for **Life Flight Trust** – the charity that operates Wellington’s Westpac Chopper and Air Ambulance Planes, providing time-critical care to more than 1,700 New Zealanders every year.

<https://beeinthecity.org.nz/>



Volunteer Opportunity: Share Your Bee Knowledge!

Help inspire the next generation of bee advocates at Wellington City Council's **Pollination in Motion Day!**

- **When:** Saturday, 12 September | 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
- **Where:** Discovery Garden, Wellington Botanic Garden ki Paekākā
- **Shift Options:** Morning (10 am – 12 pm) or Afternoon (12 pm – 2 pm)
- **Perks:** On-site parking provided

WCC is seeking up to four beekeepers to chat with families about the crucial role pollinators play in our environment. If you'd like to lend a hand, please reach out to Natasha Evans at **Gardens.Education@wcc.govt.nz** with your shift preference. Your insights and enthusiasm will help make the day a real success for the community!

World Honey Bee Day on 15 August

World Honey bee day falls on the **third Saturday of August** each year.

This annual event focuses on celebrating honey bees and local beekeepers, promoting buying local honey, planting flowers and protecting vital pollinators.

It started in the United States on **August 22, 2009**, after a group of beekeepers successfully petitioned for an official USDA proclamation by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. Organised further in **2010** by the non-profit [Pennsylvania Apiculture Inc.](#) to promote beekeeping education and honey appreciation nationwide before expanding into a globally recognised observance.



Tracking Tech Helps Push Yellow-Legged Hornets Back

(Source: Richard Rennie, *Farmers Weekly*)

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is cautiously optimistic that an intensive eradication blitz using cutting-edge tracking technology has successfully pushed back the invasive yellow-legged hornet (*Vespa velutina*) in Auckland.

Speaking at the recent Project 2030 industry open day, Sharon Morrell, MPI's regional manager for On Farm Support, detailed progress on the \$12 million biosecurity response. Discovered on Auckland's North Shore late last year, genetic testing indicates the infestation likely stemmed from a single fertilised female arriving in late 2024.

The response combined extensive ground field work with innovative technology. Over 100 field staff deployed 2,300 traps and nearly 12,000 bait stations across urban Auckland. Drawing on UK expertise, teams shifted focus from searching for nests to using hornets themselves to locate them. Field staff attached miniature radio transmitters, known as "VespaFinders," to hornets to trace them back to their nests using handheld detectors. Thermal drones were used to pinpoint hidden colonies in dense bush, alongside AI-enabled cameras at feeding stations.

To date, the team has destroyed 132 nests, accounting for 77 queens, 1,090 males, and 3,479 workers. Encouragingly, no hornets have been detected since April.

While no hornets have been found outside Auckland, complete eradication remains the ultimate goal. With 438 active registered apiaries located within the 11 km surveillance zone, MPI is conducting a winter review and asking all beekeepers to maintain strict vigilance and report any suspicious sightings immediately.

[Read the full Farmers Weekly article here](#)



Poem Taken from a Pic's Peanut Butter label

Submitted by John Burnet.

Whangaroa

Early morning, the dawn sky
a lighter shade of dark blue in the east
and the morning star shining.

I'm fed up with city life
I'm off up north for a while,
Doubtless Bay or Whangaroa.

somewhere I can have a garden;
scarlet runners, baby marrows
get an old fridge to smoke kahawai

and worry about the varroa mite
getting into my beehives,
worry about my worm farm.

The sound of bees working in the garden;
that's the life. I can hear them now;
humming like tyres on the main road.

- William Butler Smith

For Sale: Honey Extraction Kit

- **Lega 3-Frame Manual Extractor:** Italian-made, used only once. Excellent condition (RRP ~\$600).
- **Includes:** 2 x 20L Polypail buckets with lids, plus a double stainless steel strainer.
- **Price:** \$400 ONO

John Burnet can bring the complete set to the August meeting for the buyer.

Contact John on 0274 379 062





WBA WhatsApp Group for advice and Information

Designed for members to connect, the WBA WhatsApp forum allows you to seek guidance from senior club members, ask experienced keepers questions, and share general insights about beekeeping. The platform is fully operational, and Sarah welcomes new participants to sign up.

To become a part of the group and find answers to your complex questions, please reach out to Sarah Dye at sarah.c.dye@gmail.com.

What's Coming Up?

- September | Fireside Chat with Maxine Scheckter from [Sugar Flour Pastry School](#)
- October/November | Varroa Planning and Desensitisation of bee stings
- December | Xmas Quiz and Food Truck

Who can I connect with?

- **Janine Davie** | President president@beehive.org.nz
- **Eva Durrant** | Treasurer treasurer@beehive.org.nz
- **Michelle Cole** | Secretary & Newsletter Editor secretary@beehive.org.nz
- **John Burnet** | Membership info@beehive.org.nz | 0274 379 062
- **Tatjana Manabe** | Librarian committee@beehive.org.nz
- **Kevin Campbell** | Webmaster webmaster@beehive.org.nz
- **Barbara Parkinson** | Supper Coordinator
- **Jim Hepburn** | Swarm WhatsApp Admin 021 926 823

We welcome your stories, articles, recipes, podcast links, and photos! If you have any content you would like to share in the newsletter, please email it to secretary@beehive.org.nz.

