



TAR ANAKI BEEKEEPERS CLUB

**February
2008**

Newsletter

What a season we are having!! The drought has just ended and the hives are already at last seasons level already and the Autumn is yet to come! Moisture levels in the soil held very well considering the temperatures and the clover managed to get in a great period of blooming between the silage making and the cows coming into the paddocks to chew off the regrowth.

We had a magnificent showing of Kamahi but the RewaRewa was poor, however the bush flowering gave a good start to the season and the yeild from that source was better than usual.

Whilst the good flows early in the season threw a lot of swarms from poorly serviced hives, several of our members found that the queen had disappeared from their hives for no apparent reason. This was very evident in the club hives which we found out on the field day in January, which was well attended. Inspection of the hives was timely as the older hive had filled its three honey boxes and was crying out for space.

The rain has brought cooler temperatures but it is only February and we could yet have a return to hot sunny days so keep the honey supers slightly offset to increase the hive ventilation and assist in the ripening of the nectar to honey but keep a watchful eye on the wasp problem as they are now starting to take an unhealthy interest in hives. If they are about the entrance then set the supers square on each other and reduce the entrance to about two to three inches. This will enable the guard bees to better inspect each potential visitor to the hive. If you do have to open the hive, then be as quick as you can and leave no honey comb exposed for longer than necessary and try not to leave any broken pieces of comb around the hive which could attract wasps or ants.

Our monthly meeting will be in the usual place, the Plunket Rooms – opposite the Warehouse, at 6.30pm. on Monday the 18th of February. We will talk about the easy way to take off honey and how to prepare it for storage. As many think that Autumn is the best time to requeen hives, we will also be discussing techniques for doing this successfully with low failure rates.

I am organizing a field day for the following Sunday – the 24th Feb. but this has yet to be confirmed. The topic for the day will be 'Queen Bee rearing', and we hope to be able to demonstrate what is involved and see how it is done with possibly 'hands on' experience. There also may be the opportunity to purchase or order Queens for your own hives.