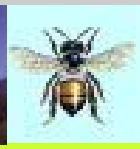




MAY 2011

Taranaki Beekeeping Club

WHAT'S ON IN TARANAKI

Next club meeting
16th May 2011
In the PLUNKET ROOMS
6.30pm
Next to New World Supermarket
Third Monday of every month

Greetings everyone.
The recent rains have given us a foretaste of the weather to come but the temperatures have been very mild. The bees have been active when the sun has been shining and they are not finding very much to collect. One of my weaker hives needed a boost so I thought that it would be a good idea to give them a couple of 'wets' to clean up and boost their stores. After two days, there was a huge collection of bees coming and going from the entrance and others running round the join between the two honey supers. Robbing had set in! I put the 'wets' on in the evening but the smell of honey on the boxes and the joyous flights of the bees round their hive attracted the attention of the bees from neighbouring hives to investigate and so the robbing started, even though there were no other hives in the vicinity. In these situations it is no use in closing the entrance to try to give the guard bees an advantage, as there are too many bees and they are very determined to collect as much as they can before the 'supermarket' runs out. I moved the hive to another location but the hive had in it less stores than before and had to be given three frames of honey and a feed of warm syrup to boost their stores and morale.

Varroa are having a field day with the warm Autumn. Have you checked on their numbers recently? Brood rearing has continued longer than usual and there will be large numbers coming from the brood nest if your treatments have not been up to scratch. Remember that the strips have a finite life so must be replaced after eight weeks to maintain efficacy. Do not try to economise on their number either as this will not be very effective and will help to promote resistance to that particular chemical agent. Something we want to put off as long as possible.

Have your hives got AFB? Would you recognise it if you saw it in your hives?
There will be a course to help you identify it here in New Plymouth on the 11th June. There will be a competency test after the course and if you pass it, you will not have to pay an annual inspection fee for your hives.

Details are as follows:

	Venue	Devon Hotel, 390, Devon Street East
	Date	Saturday 11th June.
	Starting	9.30am
	Cost	$30 for the course: $30 to sit the test.
	Registration	Deadline - Wednesday 25th May
Catering	BYO lunch, coffee and tea provided	
	Contact	Bees@beesrus.co.nz
		Stephen Black (06) 7526860

Course duration will be approximately 4 hrs followed by the written test. Contact me for application forms if you are not going to be at the next meeting of the club in the Plunket Rooms on Monday 16th May at 6.30pm. when we will be talking about the current problems, what you should have done for your bees by now and what needs to be done over the next few weeks.
See you there,
Adrian.

I have just spent the last 3 weeks in Queensland and got a pot of Ironbark honey at a market day out in the country. What an interesting flavour. A must try if you are ever over that way.

Silver-leaf ironbark

Eucalyptus melanophloia

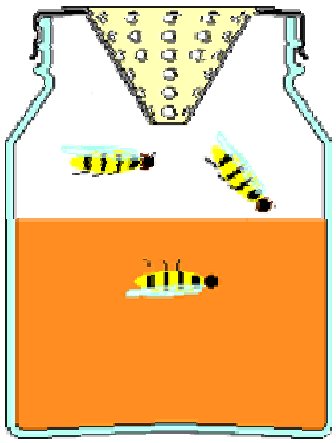
Silver-leaf ironbark grows on the granite country of the northern NSW tablelands and southern Queensland. When ground moisture is high it produces large quantities of pollen and honey. Crops of 20 to 50 kg per hive of honey have been reported. It is a very quick honey flow lasting for only three to four weeks. Tests on pollen samples collected at Mole River NSW appear to indicate the pollen is of reasonable quality with a crude protein of 20% to 23%. But the essential amino-acid iso-leucine is well below the 4% required, giving a digestible protein level of 16% to 17%. However the large volume of pollen the bees collect may substitute for this shortage of iso-leucine. (Table 34)
Bees that have worked this type of pollen while being on such a heavy honey flow may well be strong hives of bees, but would be greatly stressed and have a reduced body-protein, also silver-leaf ironbark usually flowers during the midsummer heat. The bees would be stressed through hard work and the heat. If silver-leaf ironbark has been worked for honey, it would be advisable to work a pollen source before going onto another honey flow, or to feed supplementary protein during and after the silver-leaf honey flow.
The pollen would be useful to collect, store and use as feedback to the bees, as a mix with soyflour.
Many beekeepers who work silver-leaf honey flows report that the ground needs to be very wet before the tree will yield good crops of honey. Also silver-leaf ironbark is a tree which needs strong hives to produce a good crop. It is such a short heavy honey flow that bees cannot breed on the flow and collect good crops of honey at the same time.

Waxmoth Trap:

The wax moths Achroia Grisella and Galleria Mellonella can be very damaging. A very simple and effective trap can be constructed to catch them though.
Take a 2 litre drinks bottle (with lid) and cut a 30mm diameter hole just below the shoulder neck of the bottle, then tie some twine around the neck making sure the knot opposes the 30mm hole.
Now put in the attracting mixture which consists of 1 cup white vinegar, 1 cup sugar and 1 banana peel. Top up with water until 75% of the bottle is full. Now hang it up nearby the apiary.

Wasp Trap:

The common wasp (Vespa Vulgaris) and the German wasp (Vespa or Vespula Germanica) are guilty of much robbing of honey stores in bee hives and are a nuisance in the Autumn when there are few caterpillars for them to feed on. However traps can be simply made using materials that are to hand.
The image to the left shows the general idea in cross section. The container is a screw topped jar and the cone is soldered into the jar top is a brass WBC type, but any similar cone will do.



There are versions that have an "X" cut in the lid and the resulting four triangles are bent inwards to form the cone (care should be taken that the wasps cannot escape through the triangular slots that are formed by this method).
You can use jam dissolved in water as the liquid that serves both as an attractant and as the media in which the wasps drown. Honey bees seem not to be attracted to the sticky jam liquid.
You can also use half water half honey as long as the honey has been left to start fermenting. The bees will show no interest in the mixture if the honey has started to ferment. The wasps however will literally die for it.

Beekeeping Supplies

Stephen & Fiona
Bees-R-Us
685 Uruti Road, RD48
Urenui 4378, Taranaki, New Zealand
Tel: +64 (0)6 752 6860
Email: bees@beesrus.co.nz