



Taranaki Beekeeping Club



WHAT'S ON IN TARANAKI

'Greetings Fellow Beekeepers.

Your new beekeeping season is about to start with the queen beginning to lay as the weather warms up. Currently it is warm in the sun and the Spring buds are swelling' - wrong, wrong, wrong! Apparently we are still in Winter with hail storms, high gale force winds and driving rain!

The eggs that the queen has been laying over the past month will have developed in the brood nest, so the numbers will have increased consequently there are more mouths to feed. With nothing coming in to feed them, the nursemaids will be using the stored honey in the vicinity. If this cold snap lasts, the stores may go down quickly, so keep checking the weight of the hive by 'hefting'.

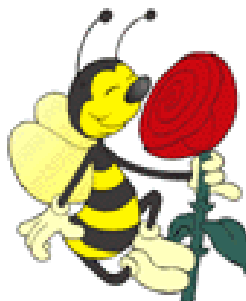
There are a lot of Spring flowers out there now but, as you know, in this world you don't get something for nothing. If the sun does not provide the energy for the plant to secrete the nectar, the plant won't make any and will not be pollinated so there will be a low yield of fruit. I suspect that there will be a shortage of early plums this year! I note that the nectarine and peach blossom is about to burst on the scene so there may also be a shortage of these fruits, unless the sun appears, the temperatures rise and the wind drops allowing the bees to do their pollination work. Also flowering are the Willows, Thebaliu, Magnolia, Gorse, Banksia and quite a lot of the small garden weeds like chickweed, cress, daisy, periwinkle and the occasional buttercup. All will produce nectar but only if the weather is warm.

If you haven't already done so, on the first, fine, warm, windless opportunity, open the hive for a quick inspection. Starting with the bottom boards - give them a good scrape to remove the dirt and debris. Inspect the two outside frames in the bottom box to see if they will be good enough for another season. Discard them if they are black, have a lot of drone cells on them or damaged cells or cells filled with a lot of pollen, especially if it is hard or mouldy. Replace them with frames of comb that you have stored after extracting the honey from them last season. Don't put frames with foundation in their place unless you have nothing else. In this position and at this time of the year the bees will do nothing with them and they may become damaged by other insects or mice.

Have a quick look in the brood nest to see if the queen is laying well and the brood is healthy. Do the same with the other super - the second box.

At this time of the year in Taranaki we should have bees using both boxes to about three-quarters of their capacity. There will be stores of honey towards the outside of the box, with brood nest in the centre and maybe a couple of empty frames right on the outside. The size of the brood nest will vary from hive to hive depending on the quality of the queen or her age or both, also the number of bees that were present, when the hive was wintered down in the Winter.

Next meeting of the club on Mon. 19th at the Plunket rooms opposite the Warehouse at 6.30pm. We will be discussing Swarms and Swarming. This is probably the most important meeting of the year as if you get things right now, you will have a successful season but if you get your manipulations wrong then you will lose bees, a lot of honey and maybe the whole hive. See you there. Adrian.



Next club meeting

19th September 2011

In the PLUNKET ROOMS

6.30pm

Next to New World Supermarket

Third Monday of every month

Do's of AFB Control

- Inspect your hives for AFB at least twice a year.
- Inspect hives before removing bees, honey or equipment.
- Inspect all brood frames.
- Shake bees off the frames before inspecting them.
- Train yourself and your staff in techniques to recognise and eliminate AFB.
- **Report AFB to the Management Agency within 7 days.**
- Burn infected colonies.
- Feed pollen substitutes rather than pollen.
- Feed sugar syrup rather than frames of honey.
- Use hive and apiary quarantines.
- Only use approved sterilisation methods.
- Use a thermometer and timer when wax dipping (10 min at 160oC).
- Treat hives to clear up parasitic mite syndrome (PMS) before checking for AFB.
- Become an approved beekeeper.
- Get suspect AFB samples tested.

Dont's of AFB Control

- Don't feed drugs to control AFB.
- Don't scorch boxes to sterilize them.
- Don't try to control AFB by removing diseased frames.
- Don't extract honey from infected colonies.
- Don't feed bee-collected pollen to colonies.
- Don't feed extracted honey to bees.
- Don't let hives get robbed out.
- Don't shook swarm.
- Don't let stock knock over beehives.
- Don't use steam chests to sterilise infected equipment.
- Don't distribute the equipment from dead hives between other hives.

Don't allow colonies to die of varroa or any other cause.



INFECTED CELLS



Club contacts

Adrian King 753 4681 President
Stephen Black 752 6860 Secretary
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Beekeeping Supplies

Stephen & Fiona
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Beekeeper tasks & duties

Beekeepers' tasks vary depending on the season. In spring (breeding season) they:

- check the food supply, health and laying ability of the queen bee
- check beehives to prevent swarming
- breed replacement queen bees
- provide a pollination service by renting hives to orchards and farms
- collect the hives when the flowering period is over.

In summer they:

- visit apiaries and place boxes on hives to prepare for honey production.

In autumn (harvest time) they:

- shake bees off combs or use a blower and collect the honey
- extract honey from the comb using machinery at the honey house
- store empty boxes away until the next summer
- may collect other bee products, such as pollen, propolis (an antibiotic gum or resin) and wax
- may collect and package bees for export
- feed hives to ensure that they have sufficient food until spring.

Throughout the year they:

- check hives for diseases such as the varroa mite or American foulbrood (AFB)
- treat hives for the varroa mite, or destroy diseased bees and hives that have AFB
- inspect hives using hive tools and a smoker
- build and repair hives, although they mostly do this in winter
- divide colonies for replacement or increases in bee numbers
- run the business and keep records
- repair mechanical equipment
- test for active honey, which has antibacterial qualities and is used for health reasons
- may analyse and test micro-organisms or send them away to be analysed
- may be involved in retailing, processing and packing honey.

Beekeeping equipment and supplies.

Serving Taranaki Beekeepers for over 30 years

Ecroyd's authorized Taranaki agent

Ray and Barbara Scott

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