



Wellington Beekeepers Association Inc.

Newsletter - Oct 2011

**Next Meeting:
Wednesday 5th October 2011
Main Hall, Ground Floor,
Moorefield Rd, Johnsonville Community Centre.**

7.00pm Beginners meeting

7.30pm – Main Meeting

Return address PO Box 11- 089 Manners Street Wellington (ph 04 565 0164)



Subject of This Months Meeting:

Beginners: What To Do With Your Nucleus

Main Meeting: Swarm Control

WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Meetings Johnsonville
Community Centre
Main Hall, Ground Floor,
Moorefield Road

1st Wednesday of the month
Main Meeting @ 7.30pm
Beginners Tuition @7.00pm

WHO TO TALK TO

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Newsletters are published in the

last week of each month,
except January. Members
contributions to be with editor **by**
20th month. Articles should be
submitted in **Microsoft Word**
document format please.

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MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION (WBA)
MONTHLY MEETING HELD AT THE JOHNSONVILLE COMMUNITY
CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2011, 7.30PM

Present: Richard Braczek and 113 members signed in.
Apologies: Phil Guy, Ray Duncan, Verna Strauz, Mark Walter, Mason Brand, Tony Oakshank.
Visitors/New Members: 17
Minutes of the last meeting: Andrew Beach proposed minutes to be accepted. Ken Breden seconded.

Matters Arising

Introductions

Richard Braczek introduced himself last meeting. This meeting John Burnett introduced himself. John has been keeping bees for 20+ years. Apart from being Treasurer John also manages the supplies for the WBA; by bulk buying the club obtains significant discounts for members.

What's Happening in the Hives

There has been one swarm already in Masterton. Lots of varroa even when hives were treated in autumn, a lot of honey already. Bees are starting early this year, you should be doing spring cleaning, AFB checks, swapping brood boxes around, put the top brood box to bottom and bottom to top.

Q. When to do spring varroa checks?

A. Should be monitoring and then see.

Q. Did a hive inspection and only a little brood.

A. At this stage it should be full of brood.

Q. Got 1st honey super on. What about strips with honey?

A. Lots of options, some O.K with honey some not.

Q. Lots of bees lost this year but had two hives not a single bee in any more, no sign and were fed sugar recently.

A. Not much pollen and quite a few hives have gone queenless, also because it is so mild the bees have been flying so varroa re-infestation is high.

Survey

There have been 66 replies so far. We will process these and results will appear in the next newsletter. One of the things mentioned was that people would like a mentoring system.

Lobbying

Amor has been lobbying the Palmerston North council regarding beekeeping. Their original proposal was for a maximum of 2 hives on a 1000m² section, a fee and permission from all your neighbours. Now there is no fee, no permission and the following maximum hives apply:

500 m ² section	2 hives
700 m ² section	4 hives
1000 m ² section	6 hives
2000 m ² section	8 hives

A permit is now only required if you want to exceed the above.

Q. A person in Naenae wants local honey to combat pollen allergy.

A. A couple of members volunteered.

For Sale:

A four frame electric extractor (Mt Victoria). Bought it for \$900, \$2300 new. Price negotiable. See Andrew Beach for email address if interested.

Field Day

Frank is organising a diseasesathon October/November

General Business

Demonstration

Ivan demonstrated:

1. A bee escape from Denmark. It empties a super from a round hole in the hive board, this one is much faster than other models.
2. An outside water feeder. Used it all summer for water with 1 tsp of vinegar in it. A bee's life is measured not in time but in distance (the wings wear out). A water feeder saves flying time.

Feeders

John emphasised the need for a feeder for nucleus hives. If there is a spell of bad weather in the 1st week or 2 half your frames of honey will be eaten.

Options:

- \$10 for a frame feeder. You need to put something in the feeder such as dry bracken or plastic netting before adding sugar syrup. This gives the bees something to rest on so they don't drown in the sugar syrup.
- Top feeder: (p. 103 Practical Beekeeping book). You place an empty box around a top feeder on top of an internal hive lid with a hole in it and the advantage is that you don't disturb the hive when you feed so you don't need a bee-suit to add sugar water. Fill the rest of the box with bracken or plastic netting (to stop the bees with filling it with burcomb). The top feeder itself can be homemade. It can also have a greater capacity than the frame feeders (although you can have more than one frame feeder). Lead sugar-syrup soaked twine down into the hive to entice the bees up. Homemade top feeder option: take a large preserving jar or big coffee tin with 5 -10 holes drilled (or use a nail) about 1.5mm width in top. Invert over a board placed on top of the hive (extra inner cover with a hole in it works well). Put a hive inner lid and top lid on top of this extra box to ensure hive is wasp and robbing bee proof (ensure entrance reduced about an inch to prevent robbing). Place a brick or rock on top as this top box is light and easy to blow off.
- You can also feed dry sugar but syrup is faster as bees don't need to get water to have with it. Can put dry sugar on top of newspaper on top of frames. You can buy sugar in bulk from Moore Wilsons.

Q. What ratio sugar to water?

A. Fill a container 7/8ths full with sugar and then fill to top with boiling water. This gives 60% sugar syrup. White sugar for sugar syrup.

Demonstration

Martin Tolland did a demonstration of a box lifting device. Martin is a beekeeper and teaches at Onslow. He has started a bee group at the school, the kids have made hives. One of the problems in the future is lifting full super or brood boxes by children when they can weigh 25+kg. They have constructed a device from an American beekeeping book which allows a box to be lifted easily by two people. Material costs are \$15 and it takes about 3 hours for senior students to make. They are selling it for \$80 and the proceeds go towards the costs of the beekeeping. Please phone Martin on 478 8189 if you are interested.

Varroa Control – organic methods

A DVD was shown about varroa control options. The easiest methods are the non organic miticide strips (Bayvarrol, Apistan etc) which are still effective in our region but resistance has already occurred up north and is expected here in about 2 years.

- Thymol 4 gms of crystals into a dish. 8gms per colony. Sprinkle over top bars.

Luke spoke about the use of formic acid ('flash' method)

Put an absorbent pad on a mite tray and add formic acid ones a week when no mites or twice a week when you see mites. Had one severe attack and kept adding formic acid but then we had the snow so there was a delay to inspect. Result was that lost the brood but kept the laying queen so the hive survived. You need the repeats because it only kills mites outside the brood. 50 mls per hive.

Marcus spoke about icing sugar.

Tried unsuccessfully to use icing sugar. The hive died during the cold snap. Dusted each side of the frames of bees with icing sugar and then counted the varroa drop. Did in autumn, stopped for 4/5 weeks, treated again and got a 400/500 mite drop. 1 week later did again and got mite drop of 20. Thought successful but didn't realise that the bottom board was blocked by dead bees. Learnt that should treat more often, every couple of days. This method also only works on mites outside the brood.

Tony spoke about oxalic acid

Tony gave a warning about the Varroa Book regarding oxalic acid. Tony made an oxalic acid solution as per the instructions of the 'Control of Varroa' green book (see write up last newsletter). He lost thousands of bees across 6 hives because this was too strong for them. The quantities for the correct 3.2% concentration of the oxalic acid solution is 54g oxalic acid to 1 litre of water. You put 5 ml over the bees between each frame where there is brood, a calibrated drench gun is good. Too much solution can kill a hive too so research this method well before use. Only kills mites on adult bees and only use once in autumn or winter (or it will taint honey and could be too much for hive). Ed Note: [formula needs to include sugar ie 54g oxalic acid crystals with 1kg of sugar in 1 litre of water.](#)

Topic for Next Meeting: Swarm prevention.

Meeting ended with social and supper. Next meeting Wednesday 5 October 2011. 7pm New Beekeepers Course, 7.30pm Meeting.

What research is going on for our bees in NZ?

Plant and Food Research.

- VSH queens have gone out on trial to 6 beekeepers. Assessment for VSH levels, production, temperament etc of these queens will be undertaken during this next season.

Negotiations are underway with Bee Breeders re the management of the rest of the VSH population.

- Investigation into ways to make organic varroa controls more effective in New Zealand.
- Pollination manual. This will be written in plain language that will clearly lay out the relationship between bees and their crops and how growers can best manage that relationship to ensure good crop outcomes and maintain healthy bee populations.

Landcare Research

“Flowers for Healthy bees in times of Pollen dearth”

An SFF project running 2010-2013 with both NBA and BIG Federated Farmers involvement.

The objectives are to:

- Extend the plant database
- Put together local community plant shortlists
- Get pollen profiles of short listed plants
- Conduct tests of high protein plants
- Conduct public workshops, attend field days and conferences to distribute information gained from research

Key outcomes:

- Farmers will have more reliable pollination services.
- Bee health, population sizes, and disease/pest resistance will improve
- Beekeeping and farming will be more profitable and sustainable and can claim environmental benefits for Farm Quality Assurance Schemes with native plantings for bees.

Institute of Environmental Science and Research

Looking at microbiological loadings of honeybees.

Institute for Innovation in Biotechnology

Interested in the dihydroxyacetone and methyglyoxal concentrations in stored manuka honeys.

Manuka Research Partnership

Aim of the MRP is to develop knowledge to produce Manuka plantations capable of greater yields of honey suitable for medicinal products.

Lincoln University

Bee behaviour, foraging ecology, bees in the agricultural landscape.

University of Otago

Queen retinue pheromone: royal manipulation of worker bee brain and behaviour, the genetics of polyphenisms in bees.

GNS Science

Adulteration of honey with sugar.

Authentication – identification of honeys of foreign origin.

Scion (NZ Forest Research Institute Ltd)

Scion have shown interest in collaborating with Trees for Bees with regard to including good pollen producing plants (for bees) in the functional forests for the future.

Oritain

Scientific proof of country (and even region) of origin of food through chemical and isotopic signatures. Database is being developed from honey samples.

Catalyst R & D

Investigation into Plant Alkaloids.

Consultants

Barry Donovan

An independent entomologist, with interest in bees of all kinds , pollination and wasps. For honey bees his present interest is in the possibility of using chelifers (i.e. pseudoscorpions) to control varroa.

John McLean

Consultant Entomologist; a retired professor with 30 years experience working with pheromone- and semiochemical-based (pest) management systems. In the case of the honey bee it is more about promoting healthy productive hives. SuperBoost is a brood produced contact pheromone with several roles throughout the hive – making for fascinating research!

NBA Involvement

The NBA is currently helping out with funding for the VSH queens project .

If you would like to donate money to help with continuing research for this or future projects: The General Research account number is: BNZ Paraparaumu Branch, 02 0733 0057338 001.

A Message for Beginners

This is a message for all those members who are getting a nucleus in the near future. Last year there were a few problems with people not quite understanding the procedure to be followed. To this end, at the beginners section of the meeting at 7.00 pm, we will explain exactly the way that you will receive your nuc, what equipment you need to provide, and follow up ways of working. PLEASE can everyone who will be getting a nucleus this year, make an effort to come to this meeting so that everything runs smoothly. You can imagine that with 50 plus nucs being made, there will be a lot of equipment around, and we do not want mistakes to be made. There will be ample time for questions. I suggest you bring a pencil and paper to the meeting to make notes. With a bit of luck, in a few weeks you will all have your bees I know you have been looking forward to, so lets make this a successful operation with no problems.

See you all on Wednesday 5th October at 7.00pm. I will have the mesh floorboards available for those who ordered them and a few spare.

Cheers, Andrew Beach andrewbeach@hotmail.com 04 9041634.

Club Appreciated by New Members

New club member Lisa Northcote from Kilbirnie, Wellington wrote in to say...

“We’re very impressed with the easy going yet informative nature of the club meetings and want to take this opportunity to say thanks to the Wellington Beekeepers Association. You’re encouraging a lot of budding beekeepers and doing a great service to the community.”

Alternative Food for Bees

Thanks to Jessica Ryan (Horokiwi, Wellington) who would like to share this website for members who are interested in learning about 'protein feed for bees'.

<http://www.mirofeeds.co.nz/bee.cfm>

WANTED TO BUY

Old used supers – but may no longer be bee-proof

Reasonable condition (no rotten boxes)

Gaps and holes OK but boxes must be sound

Full Depth or Three Quarter size required

To be used for Shop Interior display purposes

Up to \$5 offered for each box

Contact: John Burnet (Treasurer)

Ph. 232-7863 or 0274-379-062

Recipe for Challah (Sweet Bread)

According to Jewish tradition, meals eaten during the Sabbath begin with two complete loaves of bread. This special plaited "double loaf" commemorates the manna that fell from the heavens when the Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years after the Exodus from Egypt. The manna did not fall on the Sabbath; instead, a double portion would fall the day before the Sabbath.

Part of the ritual involves setting aside and blessing a portion of the dough which is subsequently burned. (An alternative is to wrap it in cooking foil and discard it).

This recipe is courtesy of Malindy Rosin from the Auckland Synagogue

(Makes two large loaves so suggest halving the recipe. You can also add in a few raisins for variety).

60g active yeast

2C warm water

¼C vegetable oil

1½C honey (reserve a little to brush hot challah)

4 eggs (plus one yolk mixed with 1t of water for glaze)

1½t salt

4C whole wheat flour

5½C white flour, sifted

Place yeast, water, oil, honey, eggs and salt in a bowl and stir to combine. Using your hands, mix in the flours. Turn out the dough and knead until the dough is smooth. Place the dough in an oiled bowl, cover and set aside in a warm place for one hour until doubled in size.

(At this stage, if following tradition, the challah is "separated" and a special prayer and blessing is said).

Divide the dough into six even sized balls, place on a tray and set aside in a warm place to rise for 30 minutes. Roll the balls into long sausages. Make two plaits using three sausages of dough each. Place on baking trays and brush with egg yolk mixture, to glaze.

Bake in preheated oven at 180°C for 30-35 minutes or until firm and golden brown. Remove from the oven and brush with extra honey while still hot.



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