



**Next meeting** | Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019

**Where** | Main Hall, Johnsonville Community Centre, Moorefield Rd

**Editor** | Eva Durrant [edurrant@xtra.co.nz](mailto:edurrant@xtra.co.nz)

### Topics for February meeting

**Beginners session** Upstairs meeting room 6.45pm

**Topic Building up your hive for over-wintering**

**Main Meeting** in the main hall at 7.30pm

**Topic Speaker: Phil Lester, about wasps/bees/varroa**

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## Note from the President

**James Withington**

Welcome to 2019. The last time I put pen to paper was just prior to the club's Christmas function and from the feedback received people really enjoyed the evening, in particular the quiz and the food truck. The purpose of having this evening was for people to meet and social with other members and seeing everyone sitting around in their groups chatting after the quiz I think this was achieved. Who knows what we will be able to come up for this year's Christmas function, although it is quite some time away.

I have been reliably informed that this season's honey flow has come to an end, with plants offering the last of the summer's nectar. From the majority of accounts the honey flow this season has been pretty good with a number of people reporting significant yields. Now is the time to safeguard your hives from robbing. Reduced entrances will ensure the guard bees have the best opportunity to keep robbers out of the hives. A common mistake is returning wet extracted frames back on during daylight hours. This almost 100% creates robbing and it can instantly become overwhelming to suppress, with bees throughout the district getting the smell of the honey and attempting to enter the hive. Remember robbing is a significant factor in the spread of AFB. Speaking of robbers, it is also that time of year we start seeing those pesky wasps trying to penetrate the hives.

It is time to start your varroa treatments before wintering down. Some hives I have seen have high mite counts and unless they are controlled quickly the hive will not survive the upcoming months or winter. With the queens starting to reduce the number of eggs they are laying, we often see the mite population explode and decimate a hive. Ensure you read the treatment instructions if you have not extracted your honey yet, as some treatments require honey that you intend to consume to be removed.



## Note from the President..cont

For those of you yet to complete extractions a reminder the club does have extractors for hire, and bookings for hiring are coordinated through John Burnet.

Any honey you intend to sell or gift should be Tutin tested prior to being sold. Again John Burnet will be coordinating the collection of samples and arranging for them to be tested for a nominal fee. John will provide further details of this at the clubs meeting next week.

Over the summer the club has invested in a number of new nuc boxes with the intention of overwintering nucs for club members. We know that members are often having to wait long periods before getting their hands on purchased nucs and this is because of unfavorable weather and the high demand at this time of year. From the club's stocks we should be able to create up to 20 nucs which would be available from mid-October onwards to new beekeepers.

Details of the upcoming beginner beekeepers course have been posted on both the clubs website and the clubs Facebook page. Bookings to attend these are again through the clubs website and commence on 9 February, spaces are limited so be in quick.

Have a great week and I am looking forward to seeing you all next Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> February, at the club night.

### TUTIN TESTING



Bring a sample of your honey (a combination of all extractions taken after the 1<sup>st</sup> January) to the meeting for tutin testing. Transfer your sample into a free specimen jar provided by John Burnet. (or take a specimen jar home and submit your sample next month)

Cost \$22 for each sample.

John will submit these in 10 batch lots to the lab in for composite testing.



# Mead competition results



**Alwyn Courtenay** was the 2018 Winner of mead making competition held in December.

The judge, **Jacob de Ruiter**, made the following comments regarding the competition tasting.

*There was no bad mead entered for the competition, that is none had a 'yeasty' flavour. Very good entries this year and getting better.*

Jacob said that he had to taste them a few times to come up with the winners claiming that he did not "swallow".

## Sweet mead category

1<sup>st</sup> place 10/10 by Alwyn Courtenay.

Sweet and clear, nice aroma and beautiful taste.

2<sup>nd</sup> place 9/10 excellent as well, but it was a late entry.

3<sup>rd</sup> equal 8/10 were Lewus Awsom and PK Tan.

## Dry mead category

There were four entries but two could not be judged as they were not in the right category.

1<sup>st</sup> place 8/10 by PK Tan. As table wine, a crisp mead, good with casserole.

2<sup>nd</sup> place 7/10 by J Randal



## Mead competition results.. cont

The **Melomel mead category** had two entries

1<sup>st</sup> place 8/10. Alwyn Courtenay. Jacob thought it had raspberry. However, it was blueberry and grape.

2<sup>nd</sup> place 7/10. J Randal.

Jacob encourages us to brew more melomel mead and to try plum or apricot which makes an interesting drink.

One entry for sparkling and was not too bad. Scored 8/10 Entry No. 7

### **This is Alwyn's recipe for the winning mead.**

There are various ways to make mead. A few words on how I do it.

Sterilise all the gear including the work bench. I use no rinse steriliser.

Mead is made with honey and water. Optional extras yeast, juice of a lemon, and tannin.

I've got 5 litre glass carboys - dissolve between 1 to 2.5 kilograms of honey into some of the water. It's easier with warm water. The water I use comes from a stream so as to avoid chlorine.

I use 2.2 kilograms to 5 litres add to the glass carboy, plus the juice of 1 lemon. Dissolve 1 teaspoon of tannin powder into 50 mls of hot water, and 2 teaspoons nutrient salts mixed in hot water.

Pour the mead yeast into the carboy. Leave 5cm head space. Put the stopper with air lock into the carboy. Then store in a cool place for 30 days. Then rack it. Continue to rack at 30 day intervals.

When you rack you can taste the mead and if not sweet enough mix more honey with some of the mead and add to carboy then back to the cool place for 30 days.



## Queen on Queens

Steve Mackay collected this swarm on LH roundabout on the last day of 2018.



**879,758**

Registered beehives in NZ (August 2018).

**14885**

Tonnes of NZ honey produced in 2017

**Taken from the ApiNZ website**



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## Beekeeping Quiz



1. How fast can a honey bee fly?
2. How many times per minute does a honeybee flap its wings ?
3. How many trips does a honeybee make to a flower to make one teaspoon of honey?
4. How many kgs of honey do honeybees need for winter?
5. How many stomachs does a honeybee have?
6. How many odorant receptors do honeybees have?



Courtesy Google Images



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## February checklist

Taken from *Practical Beekeeping in New Zealand* by Andrew Matheson & Murray Reid

- ✓ Test for varroa mite levels and treat if necessary, especially if in acute phase
- ✓ Remove honey before applying varroa treatments
- ✓ America foulbrood check
- ✓ Extract honey
- ✓ Late summer queen rearing
- ✓ Check for wasps.

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## Newsletter contributions

If you have any interesting news or facts about bees, beekeeping, beekeepers, etc, and wish to share these with club members -send them to the editor:

Eva Durrant [edurrant@xtra.co.nz](mailto:edurrant@xtra.co.nz) or call on 027 311 8700

Contribution deadline: before the end of the month prior to next meeting



Your contributions make the newsletter more interesting!



## Holiday Programmes

I attend a few holiday programmes over the summer. As expected, honey tasting and the smoker were the most popular activities.





# WBA beginners' courses

## Beginner Weekend course

Sat 9 Feb and Sat 16 Feb (12 hours in total) 9am to 4pm

followed by a field day at the Club's Chartwell apiary (date to be advised)

Cost - \$250 which includes an instructional work book.

Participant numbers limited to 20.

Johnsonville Community Centre Trust Room (Upstairs Meeting Room – entrance off Moorefield Road)

## Beginner Course - Monday evenings

18 Feb – 18 March (5 evenings in total) 7:00 pm to 9:30pm

followed by a field day at the Club's Chartwell apiary (date to be advised)

Cost \$250 which includes an instructional workbook.

Participant numbers limited to 20.

Johnsonville Community Centre Room 4 (Semi-circular Meeting Room, East End, Ground Floor – entrance off Frankmoore Road)

Course fee must be paid to Club's bank account  
031534 – 0009311 – 00 prior to first session.

Please indicate participant name and 'Mon course' or  
'W/E course'.



# AFB Recognition Course



 THE MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
NATIONAL AMERICAN FOULBROOD  
PEST MANAGEMENT PLAN

AFB Recognition Courses are scheduled on

**Wed 13 Feb at 9am** and **Sat 30 March at 9am** at

**Hardwick Smith Lounge, Norfolk Street, Belmont, Lower Hutt**

Courses cost \$100 per person and are limited to 25 paid participants – the course will be listed as full on the AFB website once this has been reached.

Beekeepers must have at least one season's practical beekeeping experience **BEFORE** attending AFB courses – they are not suitable for beginners.

AFB courses are based on the 'AFB Elimination Manual' copies of which are available from John Burnet at the regular monthly Club meetings.

All enquiries about AFB courses to [training@afb.org.nz](mailto:training@afb.org.nz)

Please register on-line at <https://afb.org.nz/beekeeping-courses/>

**AFB Refresher Course (no test)**

Sat 2 March at 10am

Hardwick Smith Lounge, Norfolk Street, Belmont, Lower Hutt

Cost \$30



## Nuisance bees (nuisance beekeepers)

The WBA has received several complaints redirected from WCC about bees being a nuisance in the suburbs. For instance, complaints about a hive too close to the footpath and a member of the public getting stung; many bees flying through a neighbouring property causing a danger to children playing in their paddling pool; leaving deposits on windows, washing and cars, etc.

Beekeepers can position hives so that bees exit and fly in a direction away from neighbours and footpaths. Provide a barrier such as a fence or hedge so that bees will fly high over a public area.

During the hot weather, ensure your bees have access to water near their hives, otherwise they will seek it in your neighbourhood.

### **Need ideas on how to provide water for your bees?**

- Shallow dish of water filled with stones, pebbles, clean sand and either refilled every day, or leave under a dripping hose.
- A towel folded in a dish filled with water.

Provide water regularly close to the hives so that bees can rely on this water source.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH7aNZ7sFE4>



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# Researchers develop a machine learning method to identify fake honey

by Ingrid Fadelli , Tech Xplore



**Bright-field image of pollen. Credit: He, Gkantiragas and Glowacki.**

A team of researchers at Imperial College London and UCL have recently developed a new method to authenticate honey using machine learning and microscopy. Their technique, outlined in a paper pre-published on arXiv, could detect diluted or mislabeled honey at a far lower cost than existing methods.

Honey is produced by bees after they collect nectar from flowers, break it down into simple sugars and store it inside honeycombs. Honey is currently the third most counterfeited food product globally. It is often mislabeled, which entails selling one type of honey for another, or is diluted it with other substances, such as sugar syrup.



## Identify fake honey..cont

"Honey is made by bees from plants," Gerard Glowacki, one of the researchers who carried out the study, told TechXplore. "Plants have pollen, and each plant has a different pollen. If Manuka honey, for instance, has no Manuka pollen or no pollen at all, then it's not Manuka honey."

Fake honey costs significantly less to produce, and this can adversely affect producers of genuine honey, forcing them to lower their profit margins or sometimes to leave the market altogether. In addition, beekeeping practices in the production of fake honey are often sub-par compared to practices in genuine honey farming, which can result in the mistreatment of bee colonies. Effective and low-cost methods to authenticate honey could help to identify fake honey quickly, so that it can be removed from the market or re-labeled correctly.

"Melissopalynology, authenticating honey from its botanical sources, has been around for a good few decades, with a reputation of being a slow and specialist process," Peter He, one of the researchers who carried out the study, told TechXplore. "We thought that we'd be able to speed things up with an operator that didn't suffer from human things like tiredness, forgetfulness and boredom."



# Beekeeping Quiz Answers



1. 24 kph
2. 180
3. Over 150 trips
4. 16 kg
5. two
6. 170



Looking good for honey this year. Ed



## APICULTURE NEW ZEALAND

**UPDATE – 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

**From the CE, Karin Kos**

### **Honey sales on Facebook**

We have recently had a number of reports of honey sales on Facebook. While there is nothing wrong with selling honey through Facebook, all honey sold in New Zealand must still meet regulatory requirements and honey cannot be imported into New Zealand. Where there have been complaints of non-compliance we have worked with MPI and asked them to investigate.

One of the most concerning cases involved producers of Australian honey selling directly to New Zealand consumers. We contacted the company involved directly and also asked MPI to investigate. We understand that the company concerned is no longer selling honey to New Zealand customers.

We will continue to monitor Facebook sales and will be talking further to MPI to be extra vigilant in this area. If you do see listings that don't appear to be compliant, please report these to MPI using this e-mail address: [Food.Compliance@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:Food.Compliance@mpi.govt.nz)



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## Interesting Websites

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6593003/Giant-honey-bees-perform-hypnotic-defensive-dance-ward-predators.html>

The bees, also known as Apis Dorsata, push their abdomens up into the air in a defence technique known as 'shimmering'



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### **CATCH THE BUZZ – Georgia Scientists Show That More Propolis Means Healthier Bees, and Here’s How to Make That Happen.**



By: Andrew Porterfield – Entomology Today  
Propolis is a pliable, resinous mixture that honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) create by mixing a variety of plant...

[Read on »](#)



## Who can I speak to?

**President** - James Withington 0272 851206 [jwithington2016@gmail.com](mailto:jwithington2016@gmail.com)

**Vice-President** - Tricia Laing 0274 766540 [tricialaing48@gmail.com](mailto:tricialaing48@gmail.com)

**Treasurer** - John Burnet (04) 232 7863 [johnburnet@xtra.co.nz](mailto:johnburnet@xtra.co.nz)

**Secretary** - Jane Harding (04) 421 2417 [janeh@xtra.co.nz](mailto:janeh@xtra.co.nz)

Best times to reach Jane are evenings, and Friday Saturday/Sunday

### Committee Members

James Scott - Membership and website (04) 565 0164 [james@scott.gen.nz](mailto:james@scott.gen.nz)

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