



BEEKEEPERS HAWKES BAY INCORPORATED

Our Hub lives on through the local affiliated club Beekeepers Hawkes Bay Incorporated. The club continues to grow its membership of both hobby, commercial and semi-commercial beekeepers. The club meets on the first Thursday in the month at the Pakowhai Hall from 7 to 8 pm, when the stories usually continue over a cup of tea or coffee.

The club held its first workshop at the Guthrie Smith Arboretum at Tutira, north of Napier. The Arboretum spreads over 90 hectares and the Arboretum Trust has dedicated plantings of bee forage. The education centre accommodates 38 people and was a good venue for us and we hope to build on this year's event. The Arboretum is open to the public on Sundays from October to May from 9 am to 5 pm, and entry is free.

Club Treasurer Dave Hills (shown here presenting on AFB) brought his hives to the Education Centre for the weekend, which centred on bees and their management.



The workshop was supported by Chris Ryan, an experienced arborist responsible for the plantings, who provided a tour of bee-friendly trees recently planted on hillsides; Linda Newstrom-Lloyd, who gave an excellent insight into plant structure and how it affects bee foraging; Trevor Gillbanks, who discussed preparing for spring and varroa mite management; and Kyle Atkinson from BEE-IQ solutions, who demonstrated his wasp disruptor. Treasurer David Hills led the discussion on managing AFB and finished with groups reviewing some scenarios and planning their management from start to finish. We look forward to working further with the Arboretum Trust to support their vision of providing an educational and research resource for ecology, trees and bees.



Dinner at Guthrie Smith Arboretum Education Centre. Photos: Murray Bain.

The club has secured its first community apiary site, providing an opportunity for those not able to house their hives on their own property. We have established a site for 12 hives with room to expand to 24 if required. Club members will be able to hire a site relatively cheaply, and we can all ensure they receive the support they need to keep their hives healthy.

The next step is to plant bee-friendly trees along the fence line adjacent to the road, displaying to the public the types of trees that are favoured by bees and we hope that will encourage them in their planting

continued...

choices. The trees will be labelled and we and the public can see how quickly and how well the different species grow over time.

Wasps a problem

Spring is now upon us, and some club members have reported trouble with wasps throughout the winter. Parts of Hawke's Bay have been relatively dry over winter and I suspect the streams and rivers haven't flooded as much as usual, leaving the wasp nests high and dry. Club members at Waimarama and north of Napier have reported wasp issues, and a local stockman reported having difficulty feeding his dogs due to the number of wasps feeding on the dogmeat.

The kereru are making short work of the tree lucerne and the willows are well on their way. Fruit trees are blossoming and the pollinators are keeping busy shifting hives.

Let's hope this season is a good one and the problems of boundary stacking and disease prevalence are not as bad as last year. Success in business is underpinned by integrity and honesty; without them, a business will ultimately fail. Let this be the season of integrity and honesty, not the search for the last dollar, thus compromising bee health and at the expense of those well-established local businesses founded on hard work, integrity and honesty.

- Brian Cowper

NELSON/UPPER SOUTH ISLAND

Buds are swelling on several crops, boysenberries already have green tissue and apples will not be far behind. Many plants have early bloom. The season is upon us, with bees starting to get going, which appears earlier than last season. Possibly not surprising, given we have already had some lovely sunny days with temperatures over 18°C. Several beekeepers have already stated feeding to help build up hives for the coming season.

The Nelson Beekeepers Club will begin evening checks of its apiary, once daylight hours are longer and temperatures warmer. This club is a fantastic way for any new beekeepers to gain knowledge and confidence from a friendly and enthusiastic group of like-minded people.

- Jason Smith

NORTH CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Warmer weather is bringing out the beekeepers as well as the bees: our club days are picking up again after a winter lull.

The club hives fared well with only one succumbing to the winter; the rest have started filling the brood chambers nicely.

Spring sprung a few weeks earlier this year, with some of the wild plum blossom starting to fade on the first day of spring, which reached 20°C. We are hoping this is signalling a good season ahead, despite the cold snap in early September.



Hazelnut pollen. Photo: Adobe Stock.

An abundance of fruit blossoms is keeping the bees busy, along with spring bulbs and the start of the early willows.

- Nick Thorpe and the NCBC team

A bee on Erica. Photo: Adobe Stock.

