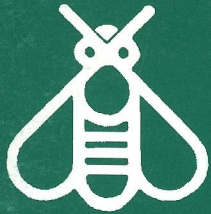


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December 2006

The New Zealand

# BeeKeeper

*Seasons Greetings*

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[www.nba.org.nz](http://www.nba.org.nz)

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## Deadline for articles and advertising

**10th of each month for insertion in the following month**

**NB: No magazine in January**

All articles/letters/photos to be with the Editor via fax, email or post:

Nancy Fithian  
Email editor@nba.org.nz

(See page 2 for full details)

**Please direct advertising inquiries to: Allan Middlemiss, South City Print Ltd, PO Box 2494, Dunedin. Phone 03 455 4486, fax 03 455 7286, email ckp@xtra.co.nz**

## President's Report



As I write this report, like many of you I am wondering if we will get any real honey crop this year, as the winds continue to pound much of the country.

Reports from our Kiwifruit orchardists are that the lower than average temperatures are limiting the availability of the pollen to the bees, as well as reducing the bees' flying time. We desperately need some warm days above 20°C and a drop in the intensity of the wind for good pollination to take place.

However, I remain ever optimistic that a change in the weather pattern will occur.

### Export issues

Problems continue to plague our exporters who are trying to complete e-certs to get product to various countries. I am very concerned that if our exporters are unable to easily export product, it could result in more product coming onto the domestic market, possibly resulting in a price war. And when product comes into New Zealand from Australia as well, the outcome does not bear thinking about.

We are hoping to convene a meeting of exporters, freight forwarders and NZFSA to try to sort out the whole mess. Currently it looks as if freight forwarders are facing high costs for verification for our low-risk products. If they pass on the costs to our exporters, they will be facing much higher charges in order to export product from New Zealand. All in all, not a satisfactory situation that will result in lower returns to the producer.

I am one who believes we should be pushing the industry good: our industry underpins the whole New Zealand agriculture and horticulture economies. Therefore the Crown should acknowledge this and ensure that policies are in place that do not burden our small industry with what we perceive to be high compliance costs.

### Tutin toxin

I would like to remind beekeepers who keep hives in Tutu plant regions to ensure

that they monitor plants for the presence of the Passion Vine hopper over the honey production season.

I cannot imagine this is likely to be an issue this season, but if the weather changes to a hot, dry and dusty summer, the hopper populations may get to a level where they produce large quantities of honey dew from the Tutin plant. The bees may then work this source if no other nectar sources are available at the time.

### Upcoming issues

As usual, we seem to get a run of consultation documents towards the end of the year on which to make submissions.

The Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) has several substances that are being progressed through the registration system (CheckMite+ for varroa treatment being one), as well as circulating a list of substances that they are looking at re-evaluating. Several of these could have consequences for the industry. We shall circulate these for comment prior to submitting a submission on the industry's behalf.

It is also proposed that there will be a GM trial of Brassicas — a submission will be prepared.

The New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) is putting out a discussion document on cost recovery that could see people who hold an RMP being charged an annual fee in excess of \$200 to cover costs incurred.

Biosecurity New Zealand (BNZ) is also circulating a discussion document on cost recovery.

### Thanks ...

I would like to wish each and every one a happy Christmas and a bountiful beekeeping season. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Executive team, Secretary and CEO and others who have attended meetings on our behalf, for their valuable input throughout the year.

- Jane Lorimer





## Varroa Agency Incorporated News

### Update from Varroa Agency Chairman Duncan Butcher

#### Battle to keep the south varroa-free continues

##### Surveillance and education are priorities for the Varroa Agency over the coming weeks.

We have to carry out surveillance work to monitor South Island beehives for any presence of varroa. We have to know that the rest of the South Island is varroa-free, to reassure not only South Island and Nelson beekeepers, but also the councils and bee industry groups that form the Varroa Agency.

We have spent some time finalising the coming season's surveillance plan, working in with Biosecurity New Zealand and the South Island Varroa Control Group (SIVCG) in the Nelson area.

More surveillance is planned in this year's programme, with greater emphasis on entry points into the South Island. We believe we can deliver that programme for similar costs to last year, which means we can keep the next levy to beekeepers the same or less than the current charge.

The programme has started in Nelson with the setting up of some swarm catcher hives by local beekeepers and members of SIVCG. Sentinel hives will be identified in high-risk areas like ports and airports later this month and the owners will be asked to test their hives two to three times per year.

The rest of the testing programme will begin in February–March 2007. Your help will be appreciated.

#### Movement control

We sent letters to all beekeepers around New Zealand in November, reminding everyone of the movement control regulations in place for the South Island, and for the Nelson and Blenheim area, and asking for your co-operation.

We remind you again not to send honey bees, queen bees and used beekeeping equipment from the North Island to the South Island, and out of the Nelson–Blenheim areas. See [www.varroa.org.nz](http://www.varroa.org.nz) or [www.biosecurity.govt.nz](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz) for more information on the new boundaries of the Nelson control area, or call the AgriQuality movement control officer on (07) 850 2823 for permit conditions.

Transport operators are also being targeted this month, with advertising and information going into trucking magazines, and information, stressing movement control regulations, going directly to road transporters.

It's important we keep up with these reminders about movement control.

We hope to repeat the education programme we ran last year (with the invaluable assistance of Frank and Mary-Ann Lindsay) at the Wellington ports over the Christmas period, to make sure ferry passengers get a pamphlet and a reminder about keeping the South varroa-free as they drive on-board.

If you are travelling across Cook Strait this year, or you know someone who is, help us to get that education message across. "Keep the South varroa-free" pamphlets are available at the Wellington ferry terminals. Your help in getting these pamphlets to travellers and truck operators when you're on-board would be much appreciated.

These pamphlets were also present at the Canterbury Show in Christchurch in November.

*Don't forget, news and information on varroa will be posted regularly on the Varroa Agency's website [www.varroa.org.nz](http://www.varroa.org.nz)*



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BK 306

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# Fact sheets available from the Department of Labour

Printer-friendly fact sheets are available in the following categories:

## Youth Employment:

- Employing Children and Young People
- Being a Young Employee
- Your Rights at Work: Holidays
- Your Rights at Work: Minimum Wage

## Holidays Act 1983:

### Annual Leave

- General Entitlements
- Calculating “Ordinary Weekly Pay” and “Average Weekly Earning”
- Employees who take Annual Holidays in Advance of Entitlement
- When Pay-as-you-go Provisions can be used
- Regular Annual Closedowns
- Effect of Unpaid Leave
- Four Weeks
- Employees with Irregular or Changing Work Pattern
- Interface with Other Types of Holiday and Leave

### Public Holidays

- General Entitlements
- Payment

- Alternative Holidays (Days in Lieu) for Employees who work on Public Holidays payment
- Entitlements for Employees Working Shifts or On Call
- Calculating Payment for Public Holidays — “Relevant Daily Pay”
- Time and a Half for Time Worked
- Working on a Public Holiday
- Shop trading restrictions

### NZ Public Holiday Dates

- NZ Public Holidays 2006–2009

### Sick & Bereavement Leave

- Sick Leave — General Entitlements
- Sick Leave — Interface with ACC
- Bereavement Leave — General Entitlements
- Calculating Payment for Sick and Bereavement Leave — “Relevant Daily Pay”

### Managing Changes

- Planning for the change to four weeks annual holidays
- Entitlements on an Employee’s Resignation or Termination
- Record Keeping
- Managing Changes

## Buzzing News! Buzzing News!

*As another Year has come to an end, we at BEETEK would like to thank you very much for your valued custom. We wish you and your families a safe and happy Christmas. May the 2007 year bring you health, happiness and prosperity.*

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BK18

- Transitional Arrangements — Managing the Change from the Holidays Act 1981 to the Holidays Act 2003
- Holiday Payroll Specifications for Software Developers

### Holidays Act 1981:

- Annual Holidays
- Calculating Holiday Pay
- Public Holidays
- Special & other leave

For more information about youth rights at work, and how the changes to the Holidays Act affects you, visit [www.workplace.govt.nz](http://www.workplace.govt.nz)

### Pay:

- Minimum pay
- Payment of wages & deductions
- Minimum wage exemptions — information for employers
- Minimum wage exemptions — information for people with disabilities

### Good Faith:

- Good faith in employment relationships
- Code of Good Faith
- Undermining collectives by “passing on”

### Union matters:

- Joining a union
- Union rights

### Parental leave:

- Information for employees
- Information for employers
- Information for partners and fathers
- Information for the self-employed

### Employment Agreements:

- Who is an employee and who is not?
- Minimum employment rights
- Offering employment
- Forming an employment relationship
- Build a letter of appointment
- Terms & conditions of employment
- Sample problem-solving procedures
- Fixed-term agreements & trial periods
- Ending an employment relationship

### Problem solving:

- Can you fix the problem yourself?
- Taking things further
- Personal grievances

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BK 305

- Resolving breaches of employment agreements
- Breaches of employment law
- Going to mediation
- Going to the Employment Relations Authority
- Other actions you can take
- Going to the Employment Court
- Strikes & Lockouts

### Shop opening hours:

- Shop opening hours

### Employment Relations Act amendments 2004:

- Employment Relations Act amendments 2004

Source: Department of Labour website, [www.ers.dol.govt.nz](http://www.ers.dol.govt.nz). Their freephone is 0800 20 90 20.

**National Beekeepers' Association — bridging your knowledge gap**



## Buzzy Bee visits Hawera



On 17 November we were up in Hawera collecting some bees and visiting relations, and attended the Christmas and A & P Street parade. The theme was kiwiana and Buzzy Bee was to the fore.

- Frank Lindsay



## How far can a bee hitch a ride?

This bee travelled 121 kilometres on the side window of the truck, tucked nicely behind the window rubber. Her wings worked hard though.

- Fiona O'Brien



Bee on a side window



Bee on a window.  
Photos: Jeremy O'Brien.

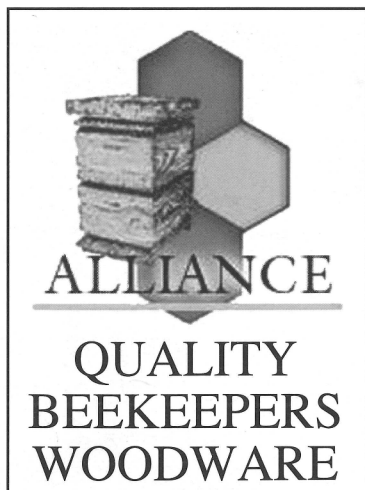


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***Merry Christmas***

Closing mid-day 22nd December and re-opening 8th January 2007.  
Over this period we can be contacted via fax 03 488 0152.

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# New Transport Service Licence requirements

Several Southern North Island commercial members who have taken their trucks in for a Certificate of Fitness (CoF) recently have received the news that they require a "Transport Service Licence" issued by Land Transport New Zealand (LTNZ). This is now compulsory for all trucks that have a CoF, and all beekeepers with trucks that are four tonnes or heavier will get caught with this requirement. It may take up to six weeks to process the licence, meaning your truck will be off the road while getting the licence. No busy beekeeper wants to suddenly be faced with that problem.

Basically this licence is a certificate (another charge by Government) that certifies that the owner/driver is aware of the requirements of loading, etc. It applies to vehicles with a gross laden weight of six tonne (6000 kg) or more. It does not matter whether the vehicle/truck is being used for hire or reward: just owning a truck over four tonne that requires a CoF puts you into the category. A load of hives or syrup could put the vehicle's gross weight up to six tonne.

## Costs

The application cost for the licence is \$30. That is not too bad, but:

1. there is a personal details form to complete in addition to the application for the Transport Service Licence. Each driver will need to complete the personal details form
2. you are supposed to be able to supply a certificate of knowledge of law and practice for the transport service class
3. there is a vetting fee of \$28 per person — as a "fit and proper" person to operate the vehicle
4. the examination and certificate for the knowledge of law and practice is arranged through another entity — meaning more fees and time wasted for the busy beekeeper
5. handbooks: there are two handbooks at \$15 each, then the exam etc, which means that you may face a cost of up to \$320 to get through this exercise.

However, there is some light at the end of this murky tunnel. Your CoF tester is able to arrange a temporary licence to enable you to keep the truck on the road while you are obtaining the necessary service licence.

There is provision for and **exemption** from sitting one or more of the certificate exams. Not all CoF testing agents are aware of the details and our initial enquiries to LTNZ did not provide any information. However, on visiting LTNZ's Palmerston North office, we were supplied with the information by a very helpful staff member there.

**Goods service operators who only carry their own goods and on a limited or infrequent basis may be granted an exemption by Land Transport New Zealand**, provided the vehicle has not more than two axles, does not cover more than 15,000 km per annum, and is in the 6000 kg range for gross laden weight — another form to complete for the exemption. Your CoF tester should have the forms, or contact your local trucking firm or LTNZ.

Make your enquiries now so that you are not suddenly faced with a disaster by having your truck off the road for up to six weeks. If you can complete the application for the service licence and personal details plus an exemption certificate, hopefully your requirements will be met quickly and efficiently without delays.

Details are available over the internet at the Land Transport New Zealand website <http://www.landtransport.govt.nz/commercial/service.html>. You can also look up, print or get a copy of factsheet 47, which has most of the information concerning the licence.

Good luck.

- Neil Farrer

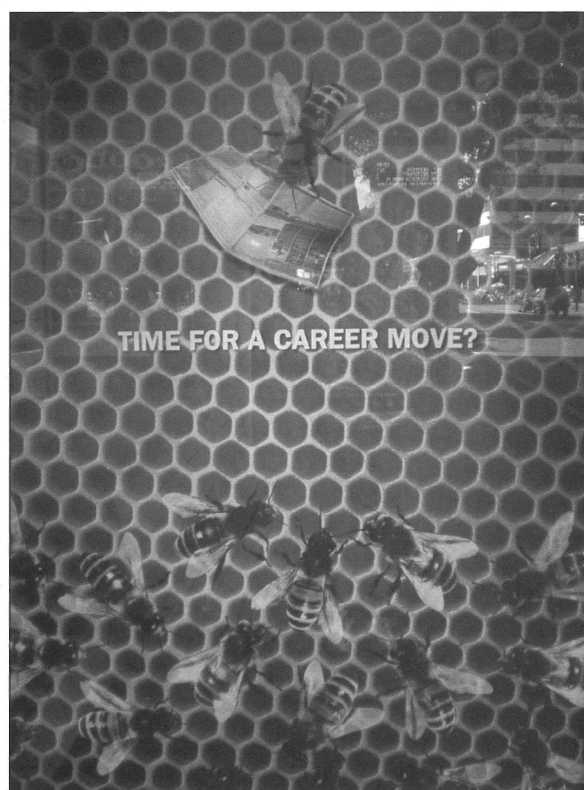
*[Editor's note: every time the trucks are tested you will have to produce a copy of the Transport Service Licence. Hint: photocopy your Transport Service Licence and keep a copy in each truck.]*



## Queen Street, Auckland ... a hive of activity at any time

Jeremy took some photos of a bus shelter early this year in Auckland. We viewed them from the bus going up Queen Street and went back and took them. The photo is an advertisement for the 'employment portfolio' of the *New Zealand Herald*.

- Fiona O'Brien





# Merry Christmas



We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our customers for their business throughout the year and also wish our customers, their families & staff a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.



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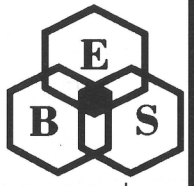
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BK121



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# From the colonies



## Northland Branch

Our branch was in need of a chairperson to keep things ticking over so I stepped forward and was duly elected. We would all like to thank Simon Peacey, who has been chairman for a number of years and has withdrawn because of other commitments. In Northland beekeepers are fairly far-flung so it is difficult to get together for meetings. At our last branch meeting in August we were lucky to have Jacqui Todd from HortResearch to talk to us about her work with bee viruses. A good number of Whangarei Bee Club members joined us for that meeting.

Avocado and kiwifruit pollination is almost over now and truckloads of hives are being transported around the north chasing Ti Tree gold — almost as profitable as 'Northland green'.

Fire brigades have been at work lately with grass fires. It's time to be careful with smoker ash. Fires can be very embarrassing, as some of us have learnt the hard way.

Biosecurity (or lack of it) is on our minds as Argentine ants are becoming established up here. Some areas are badly infested and they are particularly attracted to beehives. In some cases bees have absconded. The authorities don't appear to want to know about it or take any responsibility.

We are trying to organise an AP2 seminar for next year, so let us know if you would be interested.

All the best for the season. May the extractors keep rumbling under the new regulations.

- Garry Goodwin

## Auckland Branch

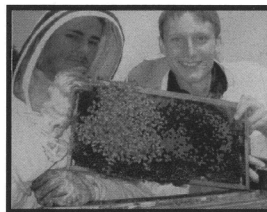
Work's been pretty hectic lately with pollination. All the kiwifruit hives are now in place so that's given us a chance to get into our Manuka sites. Not a lot of action there though; the flow just isn't happening. The Pohutukawa has come out; I noticed it about 10 days ago down on the west coast. The Kanuka is also starting to flower in small areas.

The hives are looking really good, nice and strong, but just seem to be ticking over as far as bringing in a crop. It's been windy and cold and some hot settled weather would be rather welcome. The swarming urge seems to be starting to fade off (we hope). We've had quite a lot of supersedure even though the hives were all requeened in the autumn, which was surprising to me.

- James Harrison

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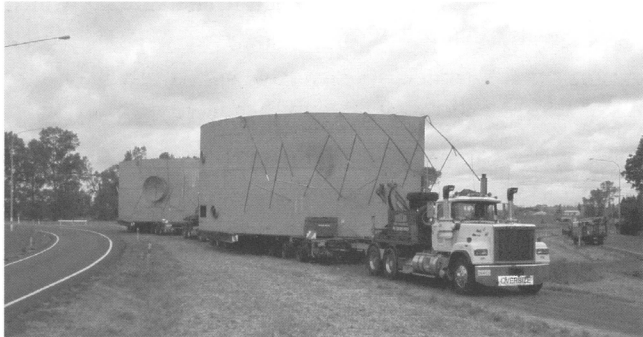
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## Waikato Branch

On Thursday 9 November, the rain, hail, sun and snow showed that New Zealand is truly a country of many seasons. I have never before had to wear thermals to do pollination but needs prevailed. Beekeepers in Ohakune called it a day when snow descended on their truck while in the yard.

Around the yards, beekeepers are finding that some hives that were previously on good nectar flows are now needing to be fed sugar. Hives are also being moved to Manuka, and those not in pollination but near bush are starting on a Kamahi flow. Cabbage Trees are also in profuse flower right around the North Island.

Pollination has its share of hazards, more often than not in the orchards. However the photos on this page show in broad daylight what cannot be obviously seen at night. We followed these two trucks for half an hour, and travelled only four kilometres in the dark. There were about seven power utility vehicles accompanying the normal string of pilot vehicles. We were told they were silos; however, once again daylight revealed that it was in fact one silo cut in half. Let's hope that next week all the bees will be over in the Bay of Plenty, as apparently there is another load to come through.



Two half silos and trucks parked up for the next big night's move



Inside of silo, not seen in dark

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BK282



The silo took up both sides of the road from fog line to fog line, and scraped under the power lines with scoops.

From all of the Waikato Branch, Season's Greetings, as we close the end of our hundredth year in celebration. We have been around longer than Plunket and the RSA, so we really are an institution.

What a tremendous year we have had as we reflect back:

- a fleet of protesting beekeepers travelling in convoy from around NZ to Wellington to try and halt the importation of honey. Although not successful, the protest raised the beekeeping profile even higher
- our 100th AGM! We took time to think what it was like 30, 50, 100 years ago
- Conference in Hamilton, with wonderful support from beekeepers across New Zealand and our sponsors.

Challenges include:

- NZFSA, completing Risk Management Programmes
- Carniolans — this year's thoughts
- Finding time and AP2s to do the AFB checks
- Varroa: alternating treatments — where are we on the resistance scale?

Looking forward to 2007: NBA Conference in Dunedin and Apimondia in Melbourne, Australia. Happy New Year!

- Fiona O'Brien

## Hawke's Bay Branch

It has been dry and windy and unlike most of the country we would appreciate some rain. Honey flows have got off to an early start but something in the conditions has caused a lot of late swarming. In some cases, despite hives having plenty of room and not being overly strong, up to three quarters have swarmed. Fortunately it is not as bad as that everywhere: some areas have had few problems.

Our annual disease inspection day went well with a large number of volunteers turning up. Unfortunately one hotspot was found and will be followed up. Most hives inspected were in good condition except where varroa treatment had been

delayed or forgotten: in these hives PMS was very apparent and some of them were within a few days of dying.

- John Berry

### Southern North Island Branch

Pollination is in full swing, with the usual problems of swarms and keeping hives up to strength. Late nights and early mornings for many members. However, the season has been a mixed bag with the rapid changes of weather from cold and rain to the odd warm day; paddocks are muddy and access is often difficult.

Taranaki reports a difficult time but Kamahi and other bush sources are starting to produce nectar. The Taranaki Beekeepers' Club is active with good attendance at meetings, and also runs club hives for members to learn more about beekeeping. The Wanganui Beekeeping Club reports that their hives in the city are growing rapidly with nectar flowing in, and supers are on.

The Manawatu and Wairarapa beekeeping clubs are also active with good attendance at meetings and club working sessions at hives. The Wellington Beekeepers' Club produces an excellent newsletter full of interesting snippets about beekeeping, both historical aspects and new ideas. Hobby beekeepers in our area are well served by the clubs from each area.

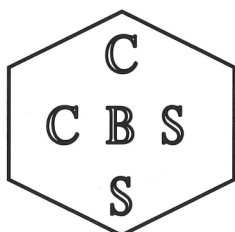
As we approach the Christmas season, best wishes to all for a happy family time, with hopefully a break from the grind for a few days to enjoy Christmas and New Year.

- Neil Farrer

### Nelson Branch

As of early November, Biosecurity New Zealand has set the control line for the containment of varroa in the Nelson area. The original control area included the top of the South Island, from east to west coasts, as an emergency response to the varroa incursion, but was based on regional zones. The new line has been set to contain the varroa within a smaller area than the original line, but to allow as many beekeepers as possible to still move around to carry out normal beekeeping activities.

As North Island beekeepers will remember well, no line will suit all beekeepers. Beekeepers pollinating in the Nelson area and honey gathering further west will be the hardest hit with this new control zone. The hives, although under treatment for varroa inside the incursion area, cannot be moved to their honey sites that are past the Hope Saddle. Areas like Lake Rotoiti, Murchison, Maruia, Reefton, and the West Coast will be out of bounds. About 600–800 hives will be affected (my guess, not an accurate number) and these will have to remain in large 'dumping' sites post-pollination, and fed sugar syrup to keep them alive until next spring. The emotional and financial turmoil to these commercial beekeepers is a price no one would like to experience, and I personally feel that there is still a fear and denial here related to the 'varroa is here to stay' theory. The treatment has become worse than the ailment itself, especially when we hear that 60 per cent of the feral colonies within the Nelson area have varroa. Swarms with varroa have also been captured in Richmond.



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**To the Beekeeping Industry,**

***We will be closing down from mid-day on the 22nd December  
and re-opening on the 15th January.***

***For any emergency requirements please leave a message on  
our answerphone which will be cleared daily over this period.***

***The team at Ceracell thanks you for your support and wish  
you a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!***

Despite the fact that some beekeepers have stated that this is the worst swarming year within memory, it appears that Biosecurity New Zealand and the South Island Varroa Control Group plan to proceed with the 'elimination' plan for feral bait poisoning in the first part of December (at the earliest), when it is hoped that a new poison, other than fipronil, will have been approved for use.

We look forward to the two-day varroa workshop being planned by Biosecurity New Zealand in January 2007.

So what is happening with bees and hives in the Nelson area? (Yes, we still do some beekeeping too!) As you can imagine, for many beekeeping has been somewhat hard to focus on this spring! As one would expect, our wonderful spring has produced hives that are far too strong for the late season cold and nectar dearth. Hives are swarming, but if you can contain them and keep the numbers fed, **those of us who can still take our hives to honey** this year look positively to the season.

Oh, and did I tell you the best news: we no longer have to apply for permits to move bees and equipment within the control area.

- Merle Moffitt

### Canterbury Branch

Spring continues to be slow, cold and wet; however, when the sun shines one is reminded of the potential.

I guess everyone is putting the final touches to their hives before the flow, which really can't come soon enough now.

Canterbury Branch members had lunch at the Ashburton Hotel last Sunday. It was a very relaxing afternoon and much enjoyed by those who intended.

Lastly, on behalf of the Canterbury Branch I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous new year.

PS: After last weekend's camping fiasco, if anyone out there has a looming drought problem, they can pay us to camp on their front lawn: guaranteed rain!

- Brian Lancaster



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## Melbourne, Australia, 9-14 September, 2007

With registrations now open on our website at [www.apimondia2007.com](http://www.apimondia2007.com), it is pleasing to report that as at 24 November 2006 we have 24 delegates registered. The first registration came from Belgium.

The countries represented so far are Australia, Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia. We want you to register so we can add your country to the list from which delegates are coming.

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The Organising Committee recently visited the site for the Technical Tour day on the Friday of Apimondia. The program being devised is very exciting and will have something for everyone. More details will be published on the website soon.

The Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre was also visited to firm up the program and this venue will provide a world class venue for Apimondia 2007.

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Have you started thinking about what you will enter in the World Honey Show? Any delegate can enter the competition. Make sure you start early and do not miss out on an opportunity to showcase your honey or wax to the world.

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It may seem a long way off but for those coming to Australia from overseas please visit the website and look at the Travel Information. You will need to obtain a visa to come to Australia and, except for New Zealand residents, this visa must be obtained before leaving home. Secure your visa early to avoid any delays.

- Trevor Weatherhead (Organising Committee)  
[queenbee@gil.com.au](mailto:queenbee@gil.com.au)



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# UK importing manuka honey for cancer patients

A British hospital is importing manuka honey in bulk from New Zealand to use on mouth and cancer patients after surgery.

Doctors at Christie Hospital in Didsbury, Manchester, said they hoped it would reduce the patients' chances of contracting MRSA and help lessen inflammation.

MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus) is a strain of golden staph which has developed antibiotic resistance, first to penicillin since 1947, and later to methicillin and related anti-staphylococcal drugs.

Popularly termed a "superbug," it was first discovered in Britain in 1961 and is now widespread.

A New Zealand biochemist, Peter Molan, of Hamilton, has spent two decades researching the capability of some manuka honey strains to battle a large range of bacteria, including E. coli, salmonella and helicobacter, as well as actively promote wound healing, even in antibiotic-resistant infections such as MRSA.

Nectar from some manuka — leptospermum species also found in Australia — produced a valuable "active" honey. The anti-bacterial properties of ordinary honey produced a valuable "active" honey. The anti-bacterial properties of ordinary honey — due to hydrogen peroxide produced by a glucose enzyme — have been known to traditional healers for centuries

but other "bio-active" compounds in some strains of manuka honey are found only in New Zealand and Australia.

While the effect of the glucose enzyme are broken down by heat, light and other enzymes, the additional healing component of manuka honey does not break down in the same conditions and it can be used to treat some wounds and ulcers.

On average, 120 tons of "active" manuka honey is sold each year, and it sells for up to 20 times the normal retail value of ordinary honey, but its bio-active content can vary widely.

The honey has been used on special honey-coated dressings at the Manchester Royal Infirmary since May.

Now 60 patients at the hospital are taking part in a study to see if the honey can prevent infections resistant to antibiotics.

Dr Nick Slevin, the specialist leading the program, said: "Manuka honey has special anti-inflammatory and anti-infection properties and is believed to reduce the likelihood of MRSA infection."

The honey costs up to £12 (\$NZ36.32) for a jar, but the hospital has imported 400kg in bulk to help keep costs down.

[Source: Reprinted from 'Gleanings' in Bee Culture, October 2006.]



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# About the Apiary

November has been a difficult time for the bees. The weather remains unsettled but daytime temperatures are now at summer levels and bees are flying whenever they can. This start-stop nectar collecting pattern has resulted in a lot of queen cells being developed and quite a few swarms. It has also meant that the bees have been switching between nectar and pollen collecting, resulting in more pollen than normal coming into the hives. The bees have been storing it in the honey super above the brood nest.

In November when hives are stressed by a lack of nectar and pollen you can assess just how good an apiary is. Normally the bees can get out and keep nectar and pollen requirements up to the rate they are being used, but not this year. Several apiaries in good producing areas have had to be fed to keep them going. Hopefully the unsettled weather is behind us and with the approach of summer the bees can do their thing and bring in plenty of honey.

Interestingly our bees aren't the only insects affected by the weather. I have seen quite a number of queen wasps hanging around the hives and bumble bees are only just getting away, judging by the number of tiny bumble bees visiting the flowers. Hopefully with this slow start, the wasps won't be such a nuisance to our bees in the autumn.

## Supering up and uniting hives

December is when the main honey crop starts in most areas of New Zealand. Beekeepers should be aware that bees can fill a super in just a few days when the weather and hive conditions are right. The idea is to keep the bees bringing in nectar.

If you are not keeping a close eye on your hives, it's best to super the hives up in anticipation of a good flow (put on at least two honey supers), rather than come along in a couple of weeks' time to find the hive completely packed out with honey. You get best results when the honey super is put on directly above the brood nest, as this stimulates the bees into gathering nectar to fill the empty cells. This is referred to as "under-supering". Lift off the top super(s), put on the new super and return the super to the hive on top of the new super. Commercial beekeepers don't have time to do this and just put more supers on top when they see the bees coming into the top super, covering two or three frames.

If you only have foundation frames, lift two drawn frames from the super below and place them in the middle of the foundation frames to encourage the bees to come up into the super. In a few weeks' time rearrange the frames so that the foundation frames are interspaced with drawn frames and the bees will draw them out a lot quicker.

If you have a lot of weak hives, or split hives to stop them from swarming, now is the right time to unite them. One strong hive will outperform two weak hives. It's just a matter of maths: two thirds of the bees in a hive are there to maintain the brood nest. The rest are field bees. If you unite two hives, a third more bees will be out bringing in nectar.

Hives are easily united at this time of the year. Select the hive with the youngest/best queen. Remove the roof from

the other weak hive and put two sheets of newsprint on top of the frames so they are covered. Take the supers with the selected queen and place them on top of the other hive. If it's a hot day, move the top super of the top hive back a little on one corner to create a top entrance so they won't overheat. If the two hives were situated side by side, move the combined unit halfway between their existing positions so all the field bees return to the hive. The bees will slowly chew through the paper, merging without fighting and the bees going down from the top hive will detect the other queen and dispatch her. Well, that's the theory and it works 80% of the time, but sometimes you can end up with a completely queenless hive so have a nuc handy just in case. Add two honey supers and hope for a good crop.

If you are new to beekeeping and have a number of weak hives all set up this season with new queens just going into the second super, you could make a couple of big hives by adding frames of emerging brood from a number of hives into one. The trick here is not to transfer the queen as well. Take a couple of frames of emerging brood and give each frame a single shake downwards to remove the field bees (less than half will drop off). Check the frames over twice, looking for the queen, before placing it into the middle of the brood nest of another hive.

An alternative method is to go through the donor hive and locate the queen first. Move this frame to the side of the super along with one other frame of brood. Then transfer all the remaining brood frames into the recipient hive. Reassemble the donor hive so that the two brood frames are in the centre, fill in the gaps with drawn or foundation frames and close up.

A quick method to stop any fighting between the bees from the different hives is to spray Glade® air freshener over the top of the frames and into the hive entrance. This disguises the smell of the hive and the bees will merge without fighting. In a couple of weeks the brood will have emerged and you have a strong hive.

Another alternative is to Damaree the hive. Find the queen in the hive and put the frame she is on into a super of foundation frames on the baseboard. Put on a queen excluder and place the old super on top. Fill the gap created by the removal of the brood frame with another foundation frame. This method confines the queen to a single frame until the bees have drawn out the foundation frames. In the meantime, the brood will have emerged and because they are not required to tend to the brood nest, they become field bees. Result: more honey than would have been expected. (NB: check for queen cells five days after completing this operation, and remove them.)

## Preparing to extract; making up nucs

At the same time as you are supering and uniting hives, get your honey extracting equipment ready. This means completely cleaning down and sanitising the equipment to kill any bacteria on the surfaces. Honey in the frames is completely free of bacteria. We all have been brought up with the notion that it doesn't matter what you do, nothing can live in honey so it's a safe food. That's not quite right. It's

us and our equipment that introduce foreign bodies into the honey when we handle and extract it. Be scrupulously clean and justifiably proud of the product you produce. *NB: when you start extracting, please put aside a composite sample of honey from each apiary in case you are selected to provide honey samples for AFB testing.*

December–January is also an ideal time to make up replacement nucs. There's plenty of nectar and pollen around and there are mature drones in most hives. Before attempting this, work out how many nucs you want to make up and order mated queens or 10-day-old queen cells if you live close to a queen producer. When the queens or cells arrive, select a weak hive, one that is not progressing or has swarmed (check it first for AFB), then split it into thirds. That is, if the hive is three supers high, put a split board between each super and even up the brood frames so that there is the same number in each split. If you want to use 4–5 frame nuc boxes, divide up the frames equally between brood and honey and pollen frames and lay the nuc boxes out in a circle, with entrances facing inwards on the spot when the old hive was. The bees will quickly equalise their numbers. If you found the old queen in the hive as you were dividing it up, well and good — mark her and put her in a nuc. If you didn't find her, she will be in one of the nucs. If you have received queen cells, gently wrap the cell cup and three-quarters of the cell in oven foil, leaving the bottom third of the cell exposed so the queen can emerge. The foil acts as a barrier and stops the bees chewing into the cell and killing the queen. Put one cell in each nuc and leave for 10 days.

If you have received caged queens, pop a queen in each nuc, but don't remove the protective tab to release the queen. After three days go through each hive again and look for eggs (i.e.,

if you didn't remove the old queen) — the one with the eggs will have the old queen in it. At the same time, look over the face of the comb that contains young brood and rub out any emergency queen cells the bees have started. These cells will contain young larvae swimming in heaps of white royal jelly. Then observe the manner of the bees on the outside of the queen cage. If the bees surrounding the cage are feeding the bees in the cage, the queen is ready to release and you can remove the tab and close the hive. But if the bees are crowded around the cage with tails down, perhaps balling the queen, it may mean there is already a queen in the nuc. Without using smoke, gently remove each frame and look for another queen. Remember not all hives have a single queen. There could have been a virgin queen in the hive or perhaps a second queen if the bees were going through a supersedure exercise before you disturbed them.



Bees balling a queen cage.

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BK174

Virgins slim down after emerging and have a very pointed abdomen. They tend to move around quickly, pushing through the bees, and can be found anywhere in the hive. A mated queen will be surrounded by bees that move out of her way. They will generally be on a brood frame but not always.

Expect about 80% of the virgin queens to mate and become productive. They generally mate when it's a calm day with a temperature over 20°C. If the weather remains inclement, expect a lesser rate of success.

Well, that's it. I'm still in catch-up mode making things I didn't this winter.

### Things to do this month and next

Check feed, check for failing queens (spotty larvae, laying in only a few frames), swarm control, control weeds, introduce nuclei, fit foundation in to comb honey frames, super hives, prepare honey house equipment. First honey extraction in some areas, but check for AFB before removing any honey.

In January, continue supering and remove honey. Monitor hives for varroa mite levels. Perhaps do a first full treatment in February after removing all honey supers. (Some beekeepers are now doing this in one operation, putting in the strips as soon as they remove honey supers.) If the mite threshold is reached before the honey flow is finished, consider putting on bee escape boards between the honey supers and the brood supers.

- Frank Lindsay



## US devising a standard identity for honey

For too long honey has been the subject of adulteration and other nefarious practices that detract from its natural health and related values as well as being a delightful source of a sweet food and an internationally rising medication for wound and post-operative dressings.

The American beekeeping industry through its several arms is now taking action to create a standard definition of honey. Previous attempts have foundered on the opinion by the FDA (US Food and Drug Administration) that the industry is trying to reduce competition. However, by petitioning under another section of the law that seeks to co-ordinate US and international standards more success is anticipated.

A large part of the problem has been brought about by mislabeled or misbranded products capitalizing on the good nature of honey. Many of these products either contain no honey or so little that which ever way you look at the product the public is deliberately deceived.

The problem is not greatly different in Australia and if beekeeping associations really want to do something useful for the industry they should be combining to counteract these spurious intrusions into our product.

[Source: Reprinted from The Australasian Beekeeper, October 2006, page 140.]



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## Bees like it hot

Research from Queen Mary, University of London has shown that bees prefer to visit warm flowers and can learn to use colour to predict floral temperature before landing.

In the hunt for their next meal, it has long been thought that bees head for the flowers that contain the most nectar or pollen. But as bees need to invest energy in maintaining their body temperature, a flower's temperature might be seen as another reward.

Writing in the August issue of the journal *Nature*, Professor Lars Chittka and his team have shown that in a world where flowers of different species differ in temperature, bees might cleverly pick the ones that offer warmer nectar — and they can learn to identify such warm flower species by learning these species' flower colours.

### Bees choose flowers which are warmer

Chittka and his team tested whether the bees could use flower colour to identify warmer flowers. In a 'foraging bout' the bees were offered a choice of four purple artificial flowers and four slightly cooler pink flowers, placed in random positions.

Fifty-eight per cent of the bees chose the warmer, purple flowers. When the colours were switched and the pink blooms held the warmer nectar, 61.6% of the bees preferred the pink flowers.

### Bees can predict warmer flowers from their colour

Chittka explains: 'What the bees appear to be doing is a bit like us drinking a hot drink on a cold day. If you need to warm up, you can produce your own heat, at the expense of some of your energy reserves — or you can consume a warm drink and save on investing your own energy,' he said. 'The interesting thing is that bees don't just prefer the warmer drinks — they also learn to predict the flower temperature from the flower colour.'

The results show that floral temperature can serve as an additional reward for pollinating insects in a context where there are also nutritional rewards available. Flowers have a

variety of tricks by which they warm themselves: some species are thermogenic, ie, they can produce their own heat; others make use of the absorption of solar radiation, either passively or through a range of structural adaptations.

The findings may have importance for the evolution of specific floral structures and for the connection between floral sensory cues, floral temperature and pollinator behaviour.

'Bees associate warmth with floral colour' is published in *Nature*, Vol 442, (7102), 3 August 2006.

[Source: Reprinted from *Bee Craft*, October 2006, page 10.]



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# Safe handling your smoker

The first thing to observe is that most beekeepers have adopted good habits in handling their smokers with the result that the use of a smoker in periods of high fire danger is permissible.

But, this concession to common sense and practicality carries a heavy burden if something goes wrong and the beekeeper is found to be negligent when a fire ensues.

Oddly enough it doesn't matter what type of fuel is used. It's how the smoker is handled that determines safe usage.

The following are some hints on safe smoker usage. Of course there are others and a wide range of variations so it's a case of good common sense and modicum of practicality.

1. Never keep smoker and fuel in close proximity to each other. Most beekeepers have a corn bag or similar filled with their preferred fuel. Place the fuel well away from the hives and vehicle and always within sight.
2. Light the smoker on a patch of bare ground or cleared rock. It's safer than the tray of the truck or the top of a hive although they are probably better than a grassy or leafy area.
3. Pack the smoker tightly. This will ensure that [a] thick bed of unburnt material is on top. This bed [will] prevent sparks and cool the smoke. You should be able to hold your hand comfortably no more than 70mm from the spout and not burn your hand when the smoker is pumped vigorously.
4. When the smoker is well alight place it on top of a hive — never on the ground let alone on a grassy or leafy area.
5. An alternative is to hold the smoker between your legs. *[NZ BeeKeeper editor's note: not recommended while wearing wet weather gear.]*
6. A hook on the front of the smoker barrel is another alternative to safe placement.
7. Make grass mowing or whipper snipping (weed eater) around the hives and nearby area as part of your fire safety and smoker control program.
8. Want to take a break? Place the smoker inside a sound, empty hive body where it's always within sight.
9. When finished extinguish the smoker by pouring copious quantities of water into the barrel. Tipping a lit smoker

onto the ground, even bare ground, can lead to sparks getting away and igniting a fire.

10. Never plug a smoker. It might sound like a good idea to slow the burning rate while you're off doing something else or travelling from one apiary to another. But, the fact is the fire is still burning, the chances are it's unattended and that's a recipe for danger.
11. Never drive a vehicle with a lighted or plugged smoker in the cabin or worse still on the tray. I've seen vehicles catch fire following this act of extreme foolishness. And finally;
12. Keep the smoker in a metal box with a secure lid.

*[Source: Reprinted from The Australasian Beekeeper, October 2006, page 154.]*

*[NZ BeeKeeper editor's note: here's our offering for number 13 (unlucky for some): Ensure you have a good insurance policy.]*



## NIWA's climate outlook: November 2006 to January 2007

A moderate El Niño event in the tropical Pacific will have an influence on New Zealand's climate through to the end of summer 2006–07. Stronger than average southwesterly airflow is expected over the country; below average pressures are likely to the southeast of New Zealand.

Temperatures are expected to be average or below average in all regions. Rainfall is expected to be normal or below normal in all regions except the west of the South Island, where above normal rainfall is expected. Streamflows and soil moisture levels are likely to be normal or above normal in the south and west of the South Island, and normal or below normal in other regions.

Normal tropical cyclone risk is expected in the New Zealand region during the 'cyclone season'. This means there is an 80% chance, between November and May, of an ex-tropical cyclone passing within 500 km of the country.

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# Harvest Declaration July 2006

Some beekeepers will have done their training early in 2006 so the form they have is out of date.

Beekeepers need to have the updated form shown below when you start extracting. If you use the incorrect form it will affect your export certificates.

Effective from 1 July 2006

**STATEMENT FOR THE TRANSFER OF BEE PRODUCTS BETWEEN LISTED ESTABLISHMENTS**

Consignor name and identifier:	Consignee name and identifier:
--------------------------------	--------------------------------

Consignment details

Description of goods	Quantity & Package Type	Identified as (code number)	Net Weight

The bee product contained within;

	Yes	No
(a) meets the requirements of the "apiarist and beekeeper statement for the harvest of honey or other bee products for human consumption" and is suitable for human consumption.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) is of New Zealand origin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) has always been processed, stored or handled within a NZFSA listed bee products premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) has always been processed, stored or handled within EU listed bee products premises, and is eligible for the European Union.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) has been prepared for export in premises either registered and complying with the Food Hygiene Regulations 1974, or registered as a risk management programme under the Animal Products Act 1999, or operating a Food Safety Programme, and have a certificate of exemption from the Food Hygiene Regulations 1974, pursuant to the Food Act 1981.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(f) Is eligible for the listed countries (meets requirements as notified by way of OMAR)		

Processing details (if applicable) – use this space for any additional required declarations.

If you have answered "No" to any statements (a) to (e) provide further details for affected product, where required (including the product name, date, and code).

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*I declare that all the statements made in this document are true and correct. I am aware that the details provided will be received and retained by the processor and may be provided to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (New Zealand Food Safety Authority) for the general administration of the Animal Products Act 1999. I consent to that happening.*

Operator signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Operator Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: It is in offence under section 127 of the Animal Products Act 1999 to provide false or misleading information in this supplier statement and under the Privacy Act 1993 you have certain rights of access to and correction of personal information held about you.

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More from the Hawera Christmas parade.

## Club Contacts & Beekeeping Specialty Groups

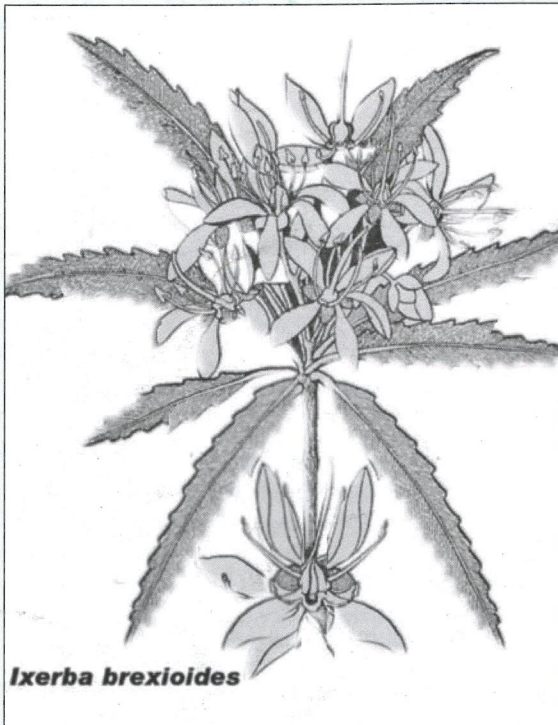
<p><b>WHANGAREI BEE CLUB</b> Meets: 1st Saturday each month (except January) Time: 10 am, wet or fine (we are keen)</p> <p>Contact: Mike Maunder Phone: 09 437 5847 Arthur Tucker Phone: 09 438 4283 Kevin &amp; Melissa Wallace Phone: 09 423 8642 (Wellsford)</p>	<p><b>AUCKLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC</b> Meets 1st Saturday monthly at Unitec, Pt Chevalier, Auckland.</p> <p>Contact: Carol Downer, Secretary Phone: 09 376 6376 Email: fairy-angel-peewee@xtra.co.nz</p>	<p><b>FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB</b> Meets second Sunday of each month at 10.00am for a cuppa and discussion. 10.30am open hives.</p> <p>Contact: Peter Biland Phone: 09 294 8365</p>
<p><b>WAIKATO DOMESTIC BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION</b> Meets every third Thursday at 7.30pm.</p> <p>Contact the Club President: Brian Fowles Phone: 07 8438 737 (evenings)</p>	<p><b>HAWKES BAY BRANCH</b> Meets generally on the second Monday of the second month at 7.30pm, Arataki, Havelock North</p> <p>Contact: Ron Phone: 06 844 9493</p>	<p><b>TARANAKI BEEKEEPING CLUB</b> Contact: Stephen Black 685 Uruti Road RD 48, Urenui Phone: 06 752 6860</p>
<p><b>WANGANUI BEEKEEPERS CLUB</b> Meets on the second Wednesday of the month.</p> <p>Contact: Neil Farrer Phone 06 343 6248</p>	<p><b>MANAWATU BEEKEEPERS CLUB</b> Meets every 4th Thursday in the month at Newbury Hall, SH3, Palmerston North</p> <p>Contact: Alastair Macpherson 25 Te Arakura Road, RD 5, Feilding Phone: 06 323 2563</p>	<p><b>WAIRARAPA HOBBYIST BEEKEEPERS CLUB</b> Meet 3rd Sunday of month (except January) at Norfolk Road, Masterton at 1.30 pm.</p> <p>Contact: Arnold Esler Phone: 06 379 8648</p>
<p><b>WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS ASSN</b> Meets every second Monday of the month (except January) in Johnsonville. All welcome.</p> <p>Contact: John Burnet 21 Kiwi Cres, Tawa, Wellington 6006 Phone: 04 232 7863 Email: johnburnet@xtra.co.nz</p>	<p><b>NELSON BEEKEEPERS CLUB</b> Contact: Kevin Phone: 03 545 0122</p>	<p><b>NORTH CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS CLUB</b> Meets the second Monday of April, June, August and October</p> <p>Contact: Mrs Hobson Phone: 03 312 7587</p>
<p><b>CHRISTCHURCH HOBBYIST CLUB</b> Meets on the first Saturday of each month, August to May, except in January for which it is the second Saturday. The site is at 681 Cashmere Road, commencing at 1.30pm</p> <p>Contact: Jeff Robinson 64 Cobra Street Christchurch 3. Phone: 03 322 5392</p>	<p><b>SOUTH CANTERBURY REGION</b> Contact: Peter Lyttle Phone: 03 693 9189</p>	<p><b>DUNEDIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB</b> Meets on the first Saturday in the month September–April, (except January) at 1.30pm. The venue is at our club hive in Roslyn, Dunedin.</p> <p>Contact Club Secretary: Margaret Phone: 03 415-7256 Email: flour-mill@xtra.co.nz</p>
<p><b>ACTIVE MANUKA HONEY ASSOCIATION (INC)</b> Contact: Moira Haddrell, Chairperson P O Box 862, Cambridge Phone: 64 7 827 3286 Email: info@haddrells.co.nz</p> <p>or</p> <p>Denise Tryer-Harding, brand manager P O Box 19-334, Hamilton Phone: (07) 957 9999 or 0800 747 377 Email: dharding@piperpat.com</p>	<p><b>NZ COMB PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION</b> Contact: John Wright Phone: 09 236 0628</p>	<p><b>NZ HONEY BEE POLLINATION ASSOCIATION</b> Contact: Russell Berry Phone: 07 366 6111</p>
<p><b>NZ HONEY PACKERS AND EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION INC</b> Contact: Allen McCaw Phone: 03 417 7198 Contact: Mary-Anne Thomason Phone: 06 855 8038</p>	<p><b>NZ QUEEN PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION</b> Contact: Russell Berry Phone: 07 366 6111</p>	

**Is your group or Branch missing from here?  
Please contact the National Beekeepers' Association – inside front cover.**

# Trees and Shrubs of New Zealand

*Ixerba brexioides*

**Common name: Tawari**



Tawari is a wide-spreading evergreen tree 17m high, probably the most beautiful tree in the New Zealand bush.

The leaves are coarsely serrated, thick and tough, varying from eight to 18 centimetres long. The large waxy white flowers are over 25 millimetres across and are produced from October to December, depending on location.

The Tawari is rarely found below 1000 feet above sea level. The abundance of these trees has been greatly reduced in number.

It freely yields nectar. The honey is dull white, very sweet and mild flavoured — often with an almond-like aftertaste. The keeping qualities of this honey are poor as the honey is high in moisture content.

The nectar of Tawari is in large globules in the flower, and during strong winds the nectar is blown out of the flowers and covers everything under the tree. I have seen bees collecting the nectar off the leaves and the ground when this happens.

- Tony Lorimer



Articles published in *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* are subject to scrutiny by the National Beekeepers' Association publications committee. The content of articles does not necessarily reflect the views of the association or the publisher.

## Monitor those mice!

Mice are now breeding around your apiaries. Your bees provide a nightly diet to keep them and hedgehogs going. During the winter mice are still active and are determined to get at the honey stored in your hive. This photo shows how a single-minded mouse chewed the side out of the top feeder so it could squeeze up the side of the roof and get into the small entrance hole on the top crown/split board.

Now is an ideal time to put out baits in plastic bottles under a few hives in each apiary.

- Frank Lindsay



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