

# Creating a Buzz

## The humble honey bee is in need of our help.

Of all the food we eat, approximately one third relies on honey bees for pollination.

Worldwide, honey bee numbers are declining. Threats facing bees include the varroa mite, pesticides and a decline in sources of pollen and nectar for the bees to eat.

## What can you do?

- By maintaining a bee-friendly garden, you can help to restore the hard-hit honey bee population, and help bee-pollinated plants and crops.
- Over the page is a list of nectar rich plants and some handy bee tips. Try including some of these plants in your garden if you are planning to add in some new plants.
- Avoid using garden sprays and seeds that contain neonicotinoids which harm bees.
- Try to do your spraying in the evenings, after bees are asleep.

Interested in taking this idea further with your local Rural Women NZ group?

We are keen to hear from any groups who are interested in championing planting for the honey bee in their area.

## Other ideas to consider:

- Host a honey bee awareness event - invite along a local bee keeper or honey bee expert to talk about bee keeping and/or planting for bees.
- Work with your local school, tramping club, Girl Guides or Scout group to take cuttings from pollen and nectar rich plants, nurture them into small plants, then have a planting bee in your area.
- Work with your local council, school, community board or Iwi who have access to land that could be used to plant a community garden in pollen and nectar rich plants or even a bee corridor.

Please contact Kiera Jacobson at Rural Women NZ if you have a project in mind - 04 473 5524 or [kiera.jacobson@ruralwomen.org.nz](mailto:kiera.jacobson@ruralwomen.org.nz)

## Bee Buzz!

All worker bees are female. Bees mate high in the sky and afterwards the male bee loses the reproductive part of his anatomy and dies.

On one flight from the hive, a bee will visit between 50-100 flowers. Bees use their antennae to smell. They can detect nectar 2km away. A bee flies at approximately 24kph. Bees communicate by 'dancing'. They do a waggle dance which tells other bees the distance and direction of food.



## Avoiding a Sting

Foraging honey bees rarely sting while away from the hive, if threatened they usually fly away. If you are buzzed by a curious bee, they tend to fly in straight lines, so you can usually shake a pursuing bee by weaving or running around a tree.

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



## Nectar Rich Plants suitable for New Zealand gardens

This is not a definitive list, but a good place to start.

Banksia spp.	Manuka ( <i>Leptospermum scoparium</i> )
Barberry ( <i>Berberis</i> spp.)	Manatu ( <i>Plagianthus betulinus</i> )
Bee balm ( <i>Monarda didyma</i> , <i>M. citriodora</i> )	Kumarahou ( <i>Pomaderris kumeraho</i> )
Bottlebrush ( <i>Callistemon</i> spp.)	Lavender ( <i>Lavandula</i> spp.) & varieties
Borage ( <i>Borago officinalis</i> )	Mexican aster ( <i>Cosmos</i> spp.) & varieties
Brassicas ( <i>Brassica</i> spp.)	Mimosa ( <i>Acacia baileyana</i> )
Buddleia ( <i>Buddleja salviifolia</i> )	Northern rata ( <i>Metrosideros robusta</i> )
Buttercup ( <i>Ranunculus repens</i> )	NZ lacebark ( <i>Hoheria populnea</i> )
Cabbage tree ( <i>Cordyline australis</i> )	NZ jasmine ( <i>Parsonsia heterophylla</i> )
Californian lilac ( <i>Ceanothus</i> spp., cvs)	Persimmon ( <i>Diospyros kaki</i> )
Catmint ( <i>Nepeta</i> spp.)	Penstemon ( <i>Penstemon</i> spp.) & varieties
Coneflower ( <i>Echinacea purpurea</i> )	Phacelia <i>tanacetifolia</i>
Clover ( <i>Trifolium repens</i> )	Poached egg plant ( <i>Limnanthes douglasii</i> )
Cucumber, melon, zucchini ( <i>Cucurbita</i> spp.)	Pohutukawa ( <i>Metrosideros excelsa</i> )
Dahlia ( <i>Dahlia imperialis</i> ) & varieties	Rewarewa ( <i>Knightia excelsa</i> )
Echium spp.	Rosemary ( <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> )
Gum tree ( <i>Eucalyptus</i> spp.)	Sage ( <i>Salvia apiana</i> , <i>S. fallax</i> , <i>S. officinalis</i> )
Harakeke / NZ flax ( <i>Phormium tenax</i> )	Sneezeweed ( <i>Helenium autumnale</i> )
Heather ( <i>Erica</i> spp.)	Sunflower ( <i>Helianthus annuus</i> )
Ice plant ( <i>Sedum spectabile</i> )	<i>Symphytum grandiflorum</i>
Kanuka ( <i>Kunzea ericoides</i> )	Thyme ( <i>Thymus vulgaris</i> )
Karo ( <i>Pittosporum crassifolium</i> )	Tree lucerne ( <i>Chamaecytisus palmensis</i> )
Kohuhu ( <i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i> )	Tulip tree ( <i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i> )

Note: spp. = species

### Honey bee friendly flower seeds

[www.wildforage.co.nz](http://www.wildforage.co.nz)

### Helpful resources

[www.fedfarm.org.nz/membership/Industry-Groups/Trees-for-Bees.asp](http://www.fedfarm.org.nz/membership/Industry-Groups/Trees-for-Bees.asp)

National Beekeepers Association - [www.nba.org.nz](http://www.nba.org.nz)

### Awesome honey

[www.sweetreehoney.co.nz](http://www.sweetreehoney.co.nz) (An entrant in our Enterprising Rural Women Awards 2013)



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