

Margaret: Welcome to the Kiwimana Buzz. Hi everyone. Well, we're back. Good to be back. We hope you all enjoyed the festive season and catching up with family and friends and that Monday back to work wasn't too hard on you. It's all good.

Gary: Yeah, Happy New Year everybody. This is Gary here for Kiwimana Buzz. This is the show where we talk about beekeeping, gardening, and life. This is Gary here and that's Margaret over there.

Margaret: Hi.

Gary: We are beekeepers from the hills of the Waitakere Ranges in West Auckland, New Zealand. Our podcast is about beekeeping, gardening, and a bit of political issues. We have been known to go off on a tangent, haven't we, Margaret?

Margaret: Yeah, but you more than me. Is it you more than me?

Gary: No. You more than me.

Margaret: Okay.

Gary: This is Episode 40, as Margaret said, and the show notes are at ...

Margaret: kiwimana.co.nz/40

Gary: That's right, so there are the show notes, check them out. What's happening at Kiwimana?

Margaret: Gary, you start off, eh? What's next?

Gary: I know why you said that.

Margaret: I do too. Shall we go on?

Gary: We'll talk about what I want to talk about, and then we'll talk about what you want to talk about.

Margaret: Yes sir!

Gary: That's right. Well, what's happening? We have discovered a new bee club being formed.

Margaret: They actually discovered us, didn't they?

Gary: They discovered us. That's true.

Margaret: Through the internet, great worldwide web.

Gary: Indeed, and it's the Kaipara Bee Club.

Margaret: Well, it's actually the formation, a proposed formation of a bee club, which is near the Helensville area, and they want to call it the Kaipara Bee Club. They are trying to get as many members as they can to get it set up to that area because it's quite a large area. We have been working with them on some ideas for that and we'll probably do it every day.

Gary: Yeah, we will. It sounds quite interesting.

Margaret: There are a lot of mixed groups of people. From what I understand, there are commercials as well as hobbyists. From what I understand, there's a lot of lifestyle blocks, which is about 10 acres that's kind of sown in that area, so I think it would be really good if they have a good support system out there.

Gary: Yeah because we actually went up to do visits for a friend up there. George is up in the very top of the-

Margaret: South Kaipara.

Gary: Beautiful area.

Margaret: It was beautiful.

Gary: We also went to visit Claude, who's actually organizing the bee club.

Margaret: We also went to visit a lady who is looking at having bees. She had just moved onto her property that's there. What a beautiful view from the property, and it looks like it's going to be an awesome site for the bees.

Gary: Yeah, pretty neat, pretty windy there, wasn't it?

Margaret: I think it probably has got the capacity to be quite windy. That would have to be dealt with because bees don't survive too well in a very windy condition.

Gary: No.

Margaret: We found a pretty good spot.

Gary: Yeah, it was a nice time. We went up to the Macacampa farm that's where we ended up having [inaudible 00:03:42].

Margaret: No, you mean the Macadamia farm.

Gary: Oh yes. Macacampa, no I'm thinking of open bee hives. Macadamia, that's it?

Margaret: Yes, Macadamia farm. It was quite nice, we have a bit of cup of tea and a break from our travels. It was a good road trip.

Gary: It was awesome and so you guys, if you are in the Kaipara area, visit. Come along to the Bee Club, it's on what day is it? Twenty-second of February?

Margaret: No it was twelfth, isn't it?

Gary: Sorry, twelfth of February, and it will be held at 5:30 pm, so after work, and that is at Farm Land, 97 Middle Road, Helensville. There is a link on the internet, see it too. RSVP it.

Margaret: It's good to let us know if you're going to come. We would love beginners to come along and any one near that area. We know a few of you out there, so it would be good if you could join us.

Gary: We will have a chat, about bees probably.

Margaret: Yes. I'm excited for them. I think they've got some real good key people there that are going to really give a lot of value to their clubs. We wish them all the best. We will be there on their inaugural meeting to vote in a new committee and look at how they want to run the club.

Gary: Absolutely, Margaret for president.

Margaret: Yay!

Gary: Anyway, what else has happened? I was interviewed on the Expert Empire podcast a while ago. I think I mentioned it on a previous podcast. It was actually published over the Christmas breaks so you can listen to the interview on the ... click on the show notes. It has a link to that, Expert Empire. I was ...

Margaret: Oh very good.

Gary: I was interviewed about urban bee keeping and it was good.

Margaret: Absolutely, and I think it's a very popular subject to view. People call it urban bee keeping, they call it backyard bee keeping. They call it ... what's the other one that they call it?

Gary: Well, I know in Los Angeles, it's called covert bee keeping.

Margaret: Yes on space, sorry.

Gary: We will talk about that later on.

Margaret: Absolutely. What's next, Gary?

Gary: This year, because we ... the other part of the Kiwimana Buzz where we chat with beekeepers from around the world. We are looking for new people for 2014 so if you can think of someone that you would like to hear from or you would like to be interviewed yourself, have a look on the show notes, there is a link there to "How to be a guest." Come along, have a look, and we'll have a chat with you.

Margaret: Sounds good. You know we need as much diversity in the kind of beekeepers. We've got lots of people who have different ideas, those kinds of things, we are happy to talk about them and what people are doing in the apiary is awesome too.

Gary: Absolutely. Last week we had a visitor from Belfast, didn't we?

Margaret: Yes that was Billy.

Gary: That was a good night we had a chat with Billy. I think he flew back today, didn't he? Today is Saturday. He flew back to Ireland.

Margaret: He's been doing bee keeping for a while. It was really interesting to talk about how he keeps bees. He was asking a lot about the things that impacted our bees. It was really good to share that kind of information.

Gary: Absolutely. He brought some nice biscuits isn't that, didn't he?

Margaret: I bet it was for his son.

Gary: Yes absolutely.

Margaret: We had good conversations because they have travelled down to the UK as well and being living near and also traveling around Finland from what I understand so it was very interesting to meet up and hit those common threads because we spent some time in the UK. It was always good to reminisce about what we were up to there. It was good.

Gary: What's coming up with you Margaret?

Margaret: A bit of review. I have been talking about redoing the apiary and I've had a plan in mind for a while. We've started implementing that and the lawnmower's broken. Although Louise usually maintains our lawn quite high, the kiwi grass here in New Zealand was growing hugely. I have been working on getting that in place and putting in some small garden beds in between the two hives. That has been a lot of fun.

Gary: Looks great, isn't it?

Margaret: It's getting there. It's getting there. He's just looking at the whole apiary. We have been inspecting on our other apiaries as well. All the hives are doing pretty well. We had two failures in one of the apiaries and two failures in the Kiwimana HQ. It's pretty good after all the work we've been doing to have that very small loss, and most of those losses were due to- to a queen's- not being mated properly. We blame it on the weather really, because those hives were, the queens' house was put up, the weather changed for them. I think that they weren't mated properly, so they started reproducing drones. I thought, gosh, I opened the hive and it's full of drones and I, "Oh no we got a real problem."

Gary: It was a real boys club, wasn't it?

Margaret: It was a boy's club alright, but not a lot of use really.

Gary: That's true.

Margaret: Anyway, we love drones too to a certain degree but only at the beginning of the season.

Gary: Yeah, it's true.

Margaret: They are helpful in helping us manage in growing mites.

Gary: Yes, absolutely.

Margaret: It's all a good thing when they have drones in it at times it is always helpful. That's basically what I've been up to and going forward in the next few weeks to finish planting the other little gardens that are there. We are also looking at one of the apiaries might be going. We will have to deal with the hives that are located there and what we are going to do about that. Anyone out there who wants to buy our hives, give us a ring at Auckland (09) 810 9965 and we'll have a chat because we have to reduce our hives that we have available and to manage so that'll be cool. Give us a ring.

Gary: Well look up the way we are doing our work isn't it a little bit chaotic this year?

Margaret: I think it really has been an awesome year and it's our first year really up and running doing everything like from the beekeeping supplies to selling bees, growing bees and beekeeper services. We've learned so much from it and it's just being absolutely awesome. The one of the things that we really love is working with new beekeepers. I find that really fascinating because everybody has got the most awesome questions. You know, really interested and really want to keep their bees healthy and it makes us feel good to because we know that people are learning things that will help them manage the bees. That's been really exciting.

Gary: And do we get a Christmas card?

Margaret: Yes, that's next, Gary.

Gary: Okay.

Margaret: Anyway, from there we've started the, everything has been placed for the community education program that we are starting. I will check next week to see what sort of response we are getting and hopefully there is good response to that. It take into introducing people to the world of beekeeping and then from there we'll go into the introductions and into the actual management of bees and that kind of things. It's a very a basic course if you want to join that, there will be something on the show notes on how to do that. What's next, Gary?

Gary: No, no what's next, Margaret?

Margaret: Oh, what's next, Margaret? We were really chuffed to get a wonderful card from Roz over in the UK and she has kindly sent us a lovely Christmas card and in brackets she said, "What's next Gary?" That's the reason why and I didn't realize that I say that that much but they told go. It's really good to hear that she started keeping bees.

Gary: Yeah it was quite touching, getting a Christmas card from someone across the world.

Margaret: Yes and she said she found our podcast.

Gary: Thank you, Roz, it was good.

Margaret: She talks about that she found our podcast and that she is enjoying it, working her way through them from beginning and she says, "I really enjoy them. I find them very helpful in recommending to all my new bee friends." Thanks so much for that Roz and we hope you will start 2014 as ... awesome.

Gary: Absolutely.

Margaret: We also had another message from the website about the podcast and it's from Nick. He talks about that he really enjoys the podcast and he says that he understand that there is a lot of effort and time that goes into producing them and that it's much appreciated by beekeepers around the globe. He wishes us all the best. We say ditto, Nick, and thank you so much for taking time to give us the feedback and it really does make it worthwhile, thanks a heap.

Gary: Yeah absolutely it is really great of course. Thanks for the feedback.

Margaret: Yeah it's excellent. Yay! So what's next, Gary?

Gary: Okay, well we have a blog recap. What was the most popular blogs last month? The biggest one was Merry Christmas Bees there, so there have to be a podcast? I think you would have downloaded that. Second one was Tyson Kaiser, he is an Ethical Bee Remover and that was a talk we had with Tyson Kaiser from Los Angeles. We were taken back with the response of that one, weren't we? Love of people.

Margaret: That was phenomenal and I think that he had a lot of really cool things that he was able to do. I just love the way that he was so focused on getting those bees out and doing it in such a way that was beneficial to the home owner and to the bees. Well done, Tyson.

Gary: Yeah that's great. The popular thing was what's happening in Karen's garden? What's that about?

Margaret: That was Karen's blog about her garden and her grandson who's part of, very much a part of the things that go on in the garden. That was well responded to. We are waiting for some new updates so we will keep you posted on that one, guys. There's another point that you make here and that's that we got 53% of our audience or listeners are from the United States of America.

Gary: Yeah it's fantastic, isn't it? Hello, everyone in America.

Margaret: Hello, and thanks for listening to us out here in down under in Kiwi land. Awesome!

Gary: You've discovered us and thanks a lot. Tell everyone you know about us.

Margaret: We've just been doing a lot of the podcast and interviews that we've had with those in America and Canada. Just really learning about different things that are going on for you guys is actually really helpful to us, so thanks for that, too.

Gary: Yes, absolutely. Well, shall we move on to the news?

Margaret: I just want to make a mention that a lot of our Kiwi listeners, they don't give us a lot of feedback, but today we found out that our customers who are also listeners actually really love our podcast but they are a bit shy I think to say anything. Don't be shy, guys. Get in touch and let us know what you think and if there is anything we can do better. That will be awesome because the Kiwi side of things is very important to us. We want to know that we are meeting those markers as well. Thanks.

Gary: We have had a few customers here they come over and say, what was that the other day? I thought-

Margaret: We've had a few now.

Gary: He was going to travel all the way to Napier listen to our podcast.

Margaret: It's right and we really appreciate that and it was Simon. Today Chris was talking about the podcast and how he enjoys that. Let us know.

Gary: It would be great to hear from you guys.

Margaret: Yes, awesome!

Gary: Okay, well let's move in to the news. [Music]

Margaret: Reporting from Kiwimana HQ is Gary. Please go ahead, Gary.

Gary: I love that jingle.

Margaret: Is that your news?

Gary: No, no that's not the news, that's just the jingle. Anyway we have an article here the, "Guerilla beekeeping in LA" This is about another for those misconceptions of many residents of Los Angeles who are afraid of bees and the thought to make urban beekeeping in LA legal in the future.

Margaret: You fit behind the time line you LA local council or however it's run by there.

Gary: I think they are. I think they are a bit behind the times. This was touched on the interview with Tyson Coser as well because him being from Los Angeles. He talked about the battle attorney having to make urban beekeeping legal.

Margaret: Well I think it's a really sad state of affairs that they have to fight to get this going. When you listen to the interview that there was a gentleman in there who makes some comments which I think are quite incorrect and have a listen to it guys and see what you think because-

Gary: Let's listen to it and we will come back and talk to you in a second.

Margaret: Yeah that will be awesome.

Gary: Okay here it comes guys.

Female 1: Honeybees had a hard time of it in recent years but bees are thriving in urban areas where beekeeping is allowed. Places like San Francisco and San Jose. LA could be next if the coalition of amateur beekeepers has anything to say about it from the California report Collin Berry has the story.

Collin: Deep in a sunny surly backyard, Fifty thousand western honeybees are adjusting to a brand new hive. Yesterday these bees were living under the eaves of the house in Wood Year, 20 miles away. They are here today because Walker Rollins and Kirk Anderson removed them humanely. Now they are settling in getting oriented to their new surroundings.

Female 2: Observation hive is about 8 months old.

Female 3: There was just a little cluster like this big when I got it and you can see now.

Collin: Anderson and Rollins are part of a club called Backwards Beekeepers whose members relocate bee colonies in LA several times a week and in doing so they are breaking the law because beekeeping in LA is illegal. The city's most common tactic in dealing with feral bees is to exterminate them. Kirk Anderson.

- Kirk: Most of the people have a bad opinion about feral bees. I have gotten maybe 30 seconds worth of experience working with them. Bees are like people, everybody has a bad day. If a beehive has a bad day, if you try to burn them or people want to have them destroyed. If the person has a bad day, they put them on Oprah.
- Collin: Many folks are scared of bees. It might be uneasy with the thought of fifty thousand of them living next door. Yet finding an LA city official who will speak on the subject isn't easy. After more than a dozen calls, I reached Gran Lorenzo, an urban forest manager for the city. Lorenzo says about while he wouldn't oppose the law that allows beekeeping in residential areas, his agencies rationale for eradicating bees in public spaces is based on evidence of a dangerous new hybrid.
- Gran: I'm not a bee professional but I think most of the hives, I actually spoke to a pest control adviser earlier today. That 80% of the hives now, they are finding are actually Africanized colonies now. They are not the European bees. Evidently what happened is that bees really are becoming a more homogenous species now.
- Collin: Kirk Anderson who's raised bees for 45 years thinks this is nonsense. Bees aren't pests, he says and relying pest experts to determine the city's bee policy is ludicrous.
- Luther: All bees are defensive. There's always been mean bees or they could be mean for different reasons. For understanding them you can do things so you don't trigger their meanness or their defensive actions.
- Collin: Across the city, Rob and Chelsea McFarland run a non-profit called Honey Love. After piloting feasibility studies and launching petitions, McFarland has begun lobbying the city's 95 neighborhood councils to make beekeeping legal in LA.
- Chelsea: We go up against all this, right after the ordinances that are much heavier topics, things and drugs and all of these and when we come, we're more like. "Yay,

bees.” It’s just like you guys are the most delightful ordinance we’ve ever had to write on.

Collin: These beekeepers believed that cities with their diverse vegetation and lack of agricultural pesticides are the bees best bet for countering colony collapse. Legalizing bees in LA would be a big win for everybody. Honey Love’s, Rob McFarland.

Rob: Our belief is that by encouraging people to keep bees in the city, we’re creating a population of bees that are protected from the things that are affecting bees on a sort of commercial level.

Collin: An occurrence also has the ear of Council member Mike Bonnin from the city’s 11th district. Bonnins’ proposal allowing beekeeping in single family residential neighborhoods is moving for the planning commission and could be up for a council vote in as few as five months.

Mike: It’s sensible and reasonable measure. Currently we allow single family homes to do truck gardening, which is growing of berries, flowers, fruits, herbs, mushrooms and nuts for private use or for sale at farmers markets. This would essentially afford the same opportunity for beekeeping.

Collin: Back in Silver Lake, Russell Bates, who founded Backwards Beekeepers with his wife Amy Seidenwurm, says interest in bees is strongest where people are passionate about local agriculture and sustainability.

Russell: That’s happening in California, in cities large and small, cities like Arcadia and cities like Brooklyn and San Francisco and Auckland. It’s bubbling up wherever people are curious about how to be a little bit more in tune with nature.

Collin: Officials estimate there are 10 colonies of feral bees in every square mile of LA. With support for the new law starting to squirm, the state’s biggest city could be bee friendly by this time next year. I’m Collin Berry in Los Angeles.

Gary: Well that was a good one.

Margaret: I think the guy who- that guy, Collin did a really good job on that, supposed that that we were end. One of the things that we did when we were having issues with the Auckland council is that we did design. We created a submission form based in minus the external local council and created through the internet to all our listeners. We had a huge response to that compared to a lot of the goods that we are dealing with that. We were very pleased about that. The best thing is do is, I don't know how it's heat up in LA but hey have local bodies in New Zealand and all this sympathetic council. One of the other ways is to lobby all those local bodies and get those on board as well and then you can take that to the main central government. That would be my idea.

The part that I didn't like about that is the comments made from that guy who said that the bees are becoming Africanized. I think he needs to go back and have a look at what he's saying and find a research to back that up because that may not be true.

Gary: Well apparently he got the information from a pest controller. Sorry.

Margaret: I get that. I think from the pest controllers point of view is to make bees seem as bad as possible so keeps working.

Gary: Yeah, maybe. My interview with Tyson last couple of weeks ago, he said he hasn't come across any Africanized bees. That's what he does for a living. It just seems insane to me that they are saying that they think 85% of the bees in LA are Africanized.

Margaret: The gentleman who made that comment needs to go back and have a look and prove that. If he's working for a local government and he's saying such inflammatory statements then he needs to prove it. Despite talking to a pest control officer that is not proper researching. That needs to be properly established.

Gary: Yeah.

Margaret: They will find that there wouldn't be any merit to that comment.

Gary: Well he did make one good point. He said he's not a bee expert.

Margaret: I agree with him.

Gary: He needs to educate himself and maybe go and talk to the people from the Honeybee Love.

Margaret: Yeah.

Gary: Talk to those guys, talk to Tyson.

Margaret: Even just probably beekeepers.

Gary: To keep clear.

Margaret: That's right I agree.

Gary: Absolutely.

Margaret: The other thing I was thinking next, a lot councils, this is why we lobbied there in Auckland council. Always put these into a peace category and they do that because they don't have any resources within council to deal with these. They have biodiversity people but they aren't specifically beekeepers and they don't really understand bees to my knowledge. Anyway, it's my understanding. A lot of local councils or local government needs to have a look at getting a [inaudible 00:28:38] that deals with beekeeping. That would be really awesome. Now working councils are currently looking at getting a bee policy which is different from the pest control perspective.

Gary: Yeah sounds good.

Margaret: Interestingly, a pest control guy can get up to a \$180 for a call out.

Gary: I know there is money in there.

Margaret: That's in central but they will ask the beekeeper to come and collect the swarm and they don't pay anything. Where's the value?

Gary: Exactly.

Margaret: And plus you're saving bees.

Gary: You got to save the bees. Good luck you guys in LA. I hope we helped out here.

Margaret: I think you have done an awesome sight. You just embraced where you want to go. It's my view and tell it to the bees.

Gary: We have to get some of you guys on the podcast because- especially that cute girl. I love the comment about Oprah.

Margaret: I thought that was awesome. Maybe we get some bees on there as well because you really have to have a balanced perspective.

Gary: Have you seen that YouTube video of Oprah giving bees to everybody.

Margaret: No, I haven't seen it.

Gary: Oh you must. I'll put that in the show notes.

Margaret: Oh that would be good.

Gary: It's hilarious. It's funny.

Margaret: Moving along, we're-

Gary: Moving along?

Margaret: Yes.

Gary: Top-bar hives and comb honey, this is from the honeybee sweet blog and Rusty answers the question about is top-bar beekeeping better for comb honey and are top-bar bee hives good for beginners? I've got a theory.

Margaret: I've got a theory and it's based on absolute, literal and practical strategies.

Gary: I actually made some comb today from some friends that we got from our other apiaries.

Margaret: They are looking good.

Gary: It looks great. We have never done that before. It was an experiment so probably he has a blog post about it. I don't know how a top-bar would be better for comb honey. I suppose because it's got no wire on it. You don't need to put wire in a [inaudible 00:31:00] anyway.

Margaret: Maybe it's a lot softer or something. I don't know. Working my top bar, the comb is really soft, I heard that over time it gets a bit harder. If you're cutting the comb off and using it for comb honey, then I can only imagine that the comb, the new comb they make is going to be soft. Maybe that's what it is.

Gary: Maybe. From your experience Margaret, is top-bar better for beginners or do you think that beginners stick with the linked strip stall hard.

Margaret: To be honest, we've only had have top-bar two months I think, so two months or three months something like that.

Gary: Yes, somehow you're going to get used to it though.

Margaret: it's very early days for me but the thing on us when I managed a linked stress high with the frames and everything, I felt more confident because the frames hold everything together. I can look in the cells. I can maneuver them without a fear of loss. With the top-bar hive, I have find that the comb just drops off and it's very difficult for the bees to regain it especially over the season. The top-bar hive was a swarm so you don't expect it to be quite prolific. Eventually not very prolific at all, it helps going on but losing the comb when it fell off. I lift it for them and they cleaned it all up but it creates a lot more work for them. My thought said that I'm the jury dash on as.

Gary: Well, we'll have to do some blog posting about that, I mean her experiences. It was quite good so he could have rusty but similar opinion about it.

Margaret: I personally don't think- because you did ask me what I think about the beginner beekeepers. I personally think that they should have a hive system which is easy to manage that you are not dropping the comb because it's very hard to inspect them and take your cells for diseases especially here in New Zealand. I think it's really important. I put in a frame on the buzz in the top that hung, and it seems to be doing well so I'm going to make some more of it.

Gary: Cool. Okay, let's have a little music interlude and we will be back with the news. [Musical Interlude]

Gary: Okay, now ...

Margaret: Awesome.

Gary: The next story. Accused of harming bee, Bayer researches a different culprit. This is a story about the Bayer Company. Bayer is actually setting up some bee research labs and they are claiming that varroa mites are the cause of bee deaths, not Neonicotinoid. This sounds like a response to the opposition to Neonicotinoids in Europe or are we being cynical, Margaret? Come on, maybe Bayer is trying to do a good thing here. What do you say?

Margaret: Okay well-

Gary: I'm playing the devil's advocate.

Margaret: Devil's advocate. Well I think that I am cynical because the behavior, they say past behavior is a good indicator of future behavior. The effect that they have created- synthetic products to treat varroa for the bees knowingly that their products will create resistant means to me that they have created that varroa to be a super varroa which therefore, does make sense that it would be more harmful to the bees now than they were 6 or 7 years ago, maybe 10 years ago when varroa pest started really-

Gary: Harming.

Margaret: Harming or turning up in all the hives. To think that they have better sense of it dealing with it now is they've created that problem. In the past they have created the problem by creating resistance in the varroa. They full aware and knew the same with herbicides and pesticides that they used that, when they use synthetic treatment that the natural insects or the target does modify itself to protect itself and become stronger. It's the same with weeds, they do exactly the same and it gets harder and harder to get rid of.

Gary: Well that is the dirty old super weed, isn't it?

Margaret: Absolutely and I think that Bayer has contributed to that super weed and that super varroa, Now they are saying, "Oh we are going to save you and we are going to get rid of the varroa. The varroa is the culprit of all the problem." I totally and absolutely disagree with it completely. My view is that organic treatments are the only way to go.

Gary: Absolutely. The ban on the Neonicotinoids started in Europe on the 1st of December. Let's see what happens.

Margaret: That's within Europe. Didn't they have it banned in France? That was quite some years ago.

Gary: Yes that's true, it's the European Union. I think it was blocked in certain parts of the European Union but this is a type of ban I think.

Margaret: I understood that France they banned them.

Gary: Yes I think they banned them on certain crops and certain continents like its limited there. We will find out and we will have some investigations and see if it makes any difference.

Margaret: I just hope the consumer can see into this bee key center and understand that for Bayer's own in and not necessarily for the bees. If it's a Bayer they can see

that they only got 9 hives in it. Why didn't they have a 100 hives in it? They justify some of the research that they were doing.

Gary: They keep going. I'm joking.

Margaret: Well who knows, I mean 9 hives to me sounds like that's not even going to really catch what's going on. They talk about in the article about that the research one of the Bayer represented is saying that the research that's being done is inside a laboratory. I'm sorry, can't research those kinds of things just in laboratory. You have to do it in the field.

Gary: Oh no, no, what he was saying that the studies that prove that Neonicotinoids are bad were done in laboratories and that many thing. I think that's a piece of scrap, isn't it?

Margaret: That wasn't right because that's not. They have to get from the actual colonies that they have collected. They can't do that in a laboratory. For them saying that was the only thing that was done, that's not true.

Gary: Time will tell I guess and if anybody from Bayer wants to come on the show then get in touch. The next thing to talk here about the bee research in Kiwimana.

Margaret: I look forward to someone talking to us from Bayer.

Gary: Exactly. It would be interesting to see what they're planning on.

Margaret: The article does have quite a bit of Bayer's representatives speaking on it.

Gary: I think it's good to start an argument. Have a read of the article, go ahead and see what you think and comment in the show notes that's Kiwimana.co.nz/40. Yeah we are 40 now. Anyway, the next one is related, isn't it? What's all that colored stuff on the grass seeds and this is a great post Jodi Braning, "Why in New Zealand, we need to have Neonicotinoids on grass seed sold by our [inaudible 00:40:02] products and yikes." We agree. Why do we need this product in New Zealand at all?

Margaret: I agree.

Gary: Thoughts, Margaret.

Margaret: Thoughts oh, plenty. I'm really disappointed because it's the whole thing about commercials or multinational companies telling us that if we put all this crap basically on top of seed, it's going to make better but I can't see it. I can't see that putting chemicals on food crops is going to be healthy for me. Sorry, I think they are just poisoning me.

Gary: They are and apparently, did you see that other study that was recently released that they are saying that Neonicotinoids should fix early childhood, children.

Margaret: You think about it.

Gary: A healthy touch on it.

Margaret: The last couple of generations, autism are growing hugely. Is it diet related? Is it what the parents were eating before the children were born and that is affecting the newborn children? I haven't done huge research, but when you have a look at how common autism is now, is it because people are labeling it differently? I'm not sure, but to me the health of children is definitely being affected by chemicals that are in our world today that weren't here 30 years ago.

Gary: Even like in the 40's, there wasn't the supermarkets that we have now. Things are different. People might have their own gardens, didn't they?

Margaret: Most farmers grew crops and rotated them, they have companion planting, and they feed manure to their land. The crop rotation created the healthy minerals and everything for the grass to grow and feed the cows that were feeding off that grass. Now they are feeding cows food that's not natural, it got all sorts of added hormone and whatever else that they are doing. The grain feeds so they are giving lot maize. I don't know how many cows there out in the field and say, "I really want to have a cob of corn."

Gary: That's true. This article is quite a good article, if you see grass seed with funny colors on it, that's probably Neonicotinoids stored inside. Try to avoid these guys because you don't want the bees trying to eat it the cover and stuff in it.

Margaret: The other thing is that the consumer will read the label: seeds specially treated to fight pest or something to that nature. They guarantee that your crop will grow but I don't know what's going to end up in your soil. If you are feeding it to your goat or your horses or your cows or whatever, you're literally feeding them chemicals straight to your food source.

Gary: If your grass just got it. Even tea, you slightly you make a fistful out of them. There is a certain percentage that would still be in your soil.

Margaret: Absolutely it's always the reason that you sit down and anything. Even if people say, it's only active for 48 hours. That's bullocks because in that 48 hours, what sort of amount of insects or animals will be feeding on that food.

Gary: Neonicotinoids there half-life is about two years. That's a long time. Forty- eight hours maybe sort of spraying it but I don't' know, anyway.

Margaret: That's when I spoke when we were worried about the spray for getting rid of some of the willow trees and the waterways. I was told by the council that residual effect would be gone after 48 hours. I thought I don't believe that one moment.

Gary: No, me neither.

Margaret: Anyway, what's happening next Gary?

Gary: Well what's happening next?

Margaret: We went to the Auckland Bee Club, didn't we?

Gary: We did and we ate and this is related to the story. We had a good time with the Auckland Bee Club and we talk to the bee lady, didn't we?

Margaret: Yes, it was very interesting.

Gary: We talked about the bee movie, which was interesting. I was shocked to discover that most of the bee movie was wrong.

Margaret: We live by it.

Gary: That's how we do beekeeping by watching the Bee Movie. If anyone hasn't seen it, it's a cartoon movie with Jerry Seinfeld.

Margaret: He's one of the voices on there.

Gary: It's all about life inside a hive.

Margaret: I think the thrust of the movie is how important bees are for pollination.

Gary: I think it was a good movie.

Margaret: I enjoyed it. [Crosstalk 00:45:32]

Gary: That's true. Anyway, this next article is Monarch reign is in danger of ending- this is another story from New Zealand- and loss of habitat and extreme weather, chemicals and garden trends are decimating numbers of beautiful Monarch butterflies in New Zealand. We actually talked to Gordon at the Auckland Bee Club, didn't we? He's got a similar story.

Margaret: He was interested obviously in the Monarch butterfly and is also part of the Monarch Society and I think that they are- he's part of it- I'm sorry I can't remember the actual name- and he was talking about how he saw people tramping down swamp plants without any real understanding of what that meant. We all know that with Monarchs, they will come back to a site where they were either hatched from or it's being communicated to them by other Monarchs that they can go there and lay eggs.

When you cut down their food source and their habitats then yes, there are going to be real losses. I think that what's happening is that there's no

understanding for what it means when you chop down a tree or a regular plant that's been in that garden for a while. Think very carefully about that before you get rid of it because that means that you are getting rid of that food source. My advice is that think more about something before you chop it down. I guess that's all we can do. Maybe if you don't know what something is for, go and do a bit of research so you know what sort of harm you might be doing or how you can benefit.

Gary: Yeah, absolutely, and just be aware of what you're putting into the soil and what you're doing. This article is a good article about the loss of habitat. It's sad, isn't it? What would your recommendation be about that?

Margaret: Join a club, join the society who deals with Monarchs and find out ways that you can get the kids involved, because Monarchs are so awesome to watch. We've got a swamp plant tree here and it has been sorely neglected, but even so it's got new seeds on it. It's got some Monarchs at the moment and hopefully, they'll all hatch and be awesome.

Gary: Absolutely. Anyway, let's head over to the musical and we'll have a talk about some questions from you guys. [Music] Okay, we're back. We've got some questions here. We'll go through these- not all of them- but which ones would you like to answer here, Margaret?

Margaret: How many times do you treat mites with the oxalic acid vaporizer? We sell the Kiwi Oxalic Acid Vaporizer. It's a product that we highly recommend. We use it in our hives and have done for quite some time. We use it in combination with [Epi-Life 00:49:03] fire treatment. Both those treatments what we do is- Our Kiwimana method is that we do it over to cover a 28-day period. You do it say on a Monday, you put it in and then you wait seven days and then you repeat it three more times, so it's 28 days in total. That's once every seven days.

Gary: Absolutely. Another one, how to build a bee hive frame jig? We've got an article about how we use our bee hive frame jig, but we've never had to build one. Maybe that's a good article for the future.

Margaret: Yeah, I think so, because I do a lot of those in the workshop, and to have a good jig is really helpful to make it a lot easier. We've seen lots of different methods that are helpful.

Gary: We've come up with that wiring jig, haven't we? That we've been playing around with, that we were experimenting with. That's [inaudible 00:50:13].

Margaret: Which ones?

Gary: The ones to wire them up with a bit of wood for the tensioning.

Margaret: Yeah. What about the bee hive splits? There's a question there that someone asked about how to make bee hive splits with good results. We've got a really awesome hive splitting method on our website and 100%.

Gary: Yeah, it works pretty well, depending on the weather when the queen gets mated, but other than that, it's all good. This one last here, this is the last one we'll talk about, what type of business is beekeeping in New Zealand? Ooh, what's that? I'd say it's a hive business. What type of business do you think it is?

Margaret: I think that it's very expensive, not to put anyone off, but yeah.

Gary: It's hard work.

Margaret: You really need to be committed to what you're doing in terms of beekeeping. If you've got a couple of hives, it's awesome because you can manage that, you can get your gear and rotate it and hopefully, if you get enough gear, you can manage your hives effectively. It's when you don't have enough money to have enough gear or you just wing it too much, you really have to understand what you're doing. My view is that it is a challenging and variable business. When you look at your bees going off to a new beekeeper, you feel very proud. When you pour that honey into your honey jar from your extraction, that's where the rewards are.

Gary: Absolutely. Let's move on to what's coming up. [Music] Well, that's bluesy.

Margaret: Yeah, I like that one. It's really cool.

Gary: What's coming up, okay, so I'll say the ones I'm going to do and you can do the ones you're doing. I've got one coming up, how to move bee hives and this is going to be very helpful for the organic family, isn't it?

Margaret: Yeah.

Gary: Because we have to think about moving those guys because the farm was sold so we'll have to move them somewhere, so that's going to be useful. I read an article about, "Has it all become just too much?"

Margaret: Jeez, I've had that this year.

Gary: I know. Well, that's about all the trials and tribulations of having more bees and boxes and having boxes without frames and all the stress of the year, so it was kind of like an outpouring of emotion there so I don't know if I'll release it or not.

Margaret: It might be too heartbreaking.

Gary: It might be too heartbreaking for people.

Margaret: I think the thing is that beekeeping is such an interesting hobby or business or whatever.

Gary: Obsession.

Margaret: Oh yeah, obviously, definitely obsession because I think it's like any animal that you keep whether it's a horse or a goat or a deer. You have to manage them. You have to make sure that you're providing them with the right environment, those kinds of things, and the right kind of home or whatever. I think it may be a problem solving one once you realize that there are things that you need to look at. If you're looking at it in a really positive light, I think having these things ... What was that saying you said that it's only a mistake if you don't learn from it.

Gary: It's true.

Margaret: With beekeeping, you need to be patient.

Gary: We have learned a few things, didn't we?

Margaret: Yeah. You have to be really patient and you need to be prepared.

Gary: What blog posts are you coming up? I can see a couple there. You can maybe talk about them.

Margaret: Well, I did one about Grumpy Bees because we had a few comments and questions about why are my bees grumpy so I've done an article about that. Also, What's Blooming in the Garden is coming up as well and that's just to let you know what's happening here in New Zealand. Some of the plants that are coming up that most of you will be aware of.

Gary: Yeah, clover at the moment.

Margaret: Yeah, there's white and red.

Gary: Okay. Let's move along because it's 10:00 at night here and we've got a movie to watch.

Margaret: That's right, that's right. We've really been having a few issues with our internet so we had to be a bit delayed with our recording.

Gary: Anyway, let's talk about-

Margaret: It's filling into our personal time if you please.

Gary: It's fine. I like doing this so it's fine.

Margaret: Yeah. We're loving it and it's all good.

Gary: We have a feedback from you guys. This is a section in the podcast that we talk about iTunes reviews and we have just got another iTunes review from Roz Argema, five stars and then she said, "Great podcast. Great podcast from New

Zealand. Great advice for helping new beekeepers and interesting interviews with other beekeepers, podcast and authors, info and technique, equipment, seasonal beekeeping activities, also gardening and environmental discussions.” Oh, that’s great. “Listen to them all from the beginning.” I am. Wow. This is dedication, Roz.

Margaret: That looks to me like a different Roz, because this one is not the same username.

Gary: This may be [inaudible 00:56:27] name.

Margaret: Oh, I see, I see.

Gary: Because this is people’s iTunes log on name.

Margaret: Okay. Well, that’s great. She not only sent us a card ...

Gary: She did a review as well. If you’ve got iTunes, please leave us a review at kiwimana.co.nz/iTunes and we’d love to hear your reviews and we’d love to hear from you. Our contact details are ...

Margaret: info@kiwimana.co.nz.

Gary: Our address is kiwimana.co.nz, if you’re not listening to this on our website. Margaret, would you love to get an email telling you when we publish new blog posts and podcasts?

Margaret: I always get one. I’m part of the mail out so I’m happy to get that. We’ve got a quite a few subscribers now and the feedback is very positive and yeah, I think everyone needs to get our free newsletter.

Gary: I think so. It’s a weekly wrap up of what we’re doing. It tells you about our new blog posts. It also tells you some international beekeeping news and also Kiwi Beekeeping news for all you kiwis out there, so it’s kiwimana.co.nz/signup.

Margaret: Awesome.

Gary: We haven't got any extra bonus material today so I think that wraps up the show this week. Margaret, have you got anything else to say to our audience?

Margaret: Just that we're in the summer now. It's on the first of December so you've got a couple more months now to get your honey and monitor your mite levels. If you need to treat, you need to consider the honey on or off so that's up to you. We encourage organic treatments only because that will help with killing varroa without creating resistance. Basically, enjoy the rest of summer. Today was an awesome day out there and we just loved it.

Gary: Oh, it's beautiful. We had some customers coming over and we made cups of tea.

Margaret: On the deck, it was just fantastic. Then we had a barbecue for dinner and it was just awesome out there and a gin and tonic, it was just yummy.

Gary: We sold David his very first bee suit.

Margaret: We did get new bee supplies in so check out our site for any products. If you can't see it, just give us an email. That will be cool.

Gary: Absolutely.

Margaret: Wish you all the best for the rest of the summer in New Zealand. I hope you guys over in the cold places have got enough fires and logs to keep you warm.

Gary: Absolutely. We get a lot of comments about people over up to the northern hemisphere looking at our beautiful photos of the summer and they're all jealous I think. Enjoy the coldness there guys and the snow and the hail. Just enjoy that.

Margaret: I bet it's so shocking, but I agree.

Gary: It's beautiful down here and we're making the most of it.

Margaret: We're making the most of it. We had a shower a couple of days- Was it a couple of days or yesterday? We had quite a bit of heavy wind and rain showers and that was okay because it filled up our water tanks so I could go and do some washing and water the gardens so that was awesome.

Gary: Exactly, but it's giving you guys out there a chance to read your beekeeping book and do some-

Margaret: Listen to Kiwimana podcast.

Gary: Absolutely. Just do some study, buy a new beekeeping and learn something new.

Margaret: Read out interesting blogs.

Gary: When the season starts, you'll have all that new information. I just want to say thanks guys for listening. I know there are lots of things that you could be doing and I really appreciate you listening to our podcast-

Margaret: Cheers guys.

Gary: From the bottom of our hearts so thanks guys. We'll see you in a couple of weeks. [Music] That's a wrap.

Margaret: See you.