

MEDIA RELEASE

Eastwoodhill Trees for Bees II: Promising Trees to Nourish Honey Bees

March 3, 2014

Beekeepers, farm foresters and other land administrators are expected to converge on Eastwoodhill Arboretum in May for the second Trees for Bees conference.

Expert speakers include Landcare Research scientist Dr Linda Newstrom-Lloyd from the Trees for Bees NZ program, landowners, beekeepers, scientists and policy makers who are engaged in planting to improve bee health.

This year's program, on May 9 and 10, will showcase the progress made in identifying the best plants to nourish bees. It will present several case studies of plantings by landowners aiming to gain more bees, improving pollination and honey harvesting.

Information on the biology of bees and their need for protein-rich pollen will be presented along with ways to remedy the problems of severe pollen shortages at critical times of the year. Such pollen shortages cause bee colonies to decline.

"Eastwoodhill has provided a wealth of new tree and shrub species for analysing protein in pollen. As a result, we have added a large number of new species to our New Zealand bee plant list, giving landowners greater choice," said Dr Linda Newstrom-Lloyd.

Conference attendees will learn of two demonstration farms that have been planting trees for bees. One, a smaller sheep and beef farm in Gisborne, aims to improve clover pollination. The second, which will be seen in Saturday's field trip is a large East Coast hill country property. They have focused on planting trees that provide year-round high quality pollen, sustaining their bee population before and after manuka honey harvesting.

Panel discussions both days will provide ample opportunity for questions and the exchange of information including how planting programs such as erosion, riparian protection, timber, and native restoration can improve pollen supplies.

Conference committee member and Past-President of the National Beekeepers Association of NZ, Barry Foster believes the depth of information will be of great value and interest to farmers, beekeepers, lifestyle blockers and gardeners alike.

"Without bees, pollination does not occur. Without pollination, the variety of crops and foods that we can grow will decline. It is in everyone's interest to ensure the health of bees and their hives," he says.

Registration will begin March 20, expressions of interest to attend can be emailed to enquiries@eastwoodhill.org.nz.

Further information on the programme will be provided at www.eastwoodhill.org.nz/conference or call Eastwoodhill on Tel. 863 9003.

An account of the research project can be seen at www.eastwoodhill.org.nz/trees-for-bees-returns-to-eastwoodhill.

Ends.

For more information on Trees for Bees NZ, contact Linda Newstrom-Lloyd at newstroml@landcareresearch.co.nz

For more information about the conference, contact Cherie Mirko, Express PR, 130 Ormond Rd, Gisborne. Tel. 867 7444 cherie@expresspr.co.nz