



FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB

I asked Peter Smith from the Franklin Bee Club, what is an easy method to create new queens and colonies? This is what he does with great success. Thanks Peter for sharing this information.

It's good practice to split a hive in spring to prevent swarming and also to disrupt the varroa mites breeding cycle.

Peter writes:-

This is a great way to split a hive and getting the bees to naturally breed their own queen, which is readily accepted and also a good way of preventing swarms when done in early spring.

WHAT YOU NEED



- A strong colony in two full sized brood boxes, with about nine frames of brood.
- A spare full sized Box with either empty or drawn frames (9 or 10 frames)
- A Bottom board, roof etc. for the new hive
- A Queen excluder

WHEN TO DO IT

During spring and summer, when the sources of nectar and pollen are abundant in your local area.

WHAT TO DO

1. Find at least four frames of brood with mainly eggs not older than 3 days in your old colony.
2. Move these frames to a new box (shaking all the bees off the frames); placing the frames in the middle of the box. Shake any bees back into the lower box.

*** Be very careful to make sure you don't trap the original Queen in the new box***

The frames in the new colony should consist of:-

- A minimum of 4 frames of eggs
- One or two frames of pollen
- Two frames of honey
- A spare empty frame.

You should concentrate on getting eggs that are less than three days old, these will make the best Queens. Have the honey and pollen on the outside of the eggs, the eggs should be in the centre of the frames.

1. This empty box now full of bee less frames becomes the queen rearing unit.
2. Add empty frames into the parent hive to replace the frames you have removed in a similar configuration as the new box.
3. The queen excluder is now put onto the parent hive, with the box of beeless frames on top of this. Leave this configuration for 24 hours.

Configuration of New Colony Frames

SPARE
HONEY
POLLEN
EGGS
EGGS
EGGS
EGGS
POLLEN
HONEY
SPARE

Queen excluder on top of old hive



After 24 hours



1. The top box will now be full of young nurse bees looking after the frames of brood with the original queen below the excluder.

2. Take the new box above the excluder, and move it sideways. You should see plenty of nurse bees looking after the brood in the top box.



3. Place the new box in the location of the old hive, with a new bottom board and roof. This step will add some flying bees to the new colony.

4. Move the old boxes to the side at least three or four feet away.



5. You may need to put an extra box onto the split and it is a good idea to put a box onto parent hive to house the expanding hive.

Five Weeks Later

Check that new box has a new laying Queen. If you open the hive prior to the five week period you endanger the whole operation.