

Information Sheet - Nucleus Method of Artificial Swarm Control

Equipment required:

Nucleus box with frames (drawn comb or foundation)

or

A spare brood chamber, coverboard & floor with 4 or 5 frames

A dummy board

On finding queen cells (none of which are sealed) during a regular inspection proceed as follows...

Nucleus method – making up the nuc

1. Put a frame of food plus bees into nuc box (check for queen cells & remove)
2. Find the queen and put her and the frame she is on in the nuc box. Remove all queen cells from this frame. There should also be a small amount of brood on this comb
3. Shake in bees from two more frames
4. Close with a dummy board
5. Block the entrance with grass and place the nuc to one side (bees should release themselves after 24-48hrs)
6. Feed the nucleus if necessary

This will keep the old queen as a back-up if the new queen should fail.

Nucleus method – the colony

1. Check the combs in the colony carefully. Remove only very large, nearly sealed queen cells
2. Pick an open queen cell with a larva, in a good position, and mark on the frame
3. Fill up any gaps with spare frames and close up the colony

Nucleus method – one week later

1. Check the marked frame for the chosen queen cell, don't shake the frame! If the chosen queen cell is missing or damaged choose another sealed queen cell
2. Remove all other queen cells from that frame
3. Shake bees from all other frames and remove all other queen cells

Leave the colony 3 weeks and then check for a laying queen

Build up nucleus into a colony or unite later

Never leave more than one queen cell in a colony!