



# The Apiarist

..... High Weald Beekeepers' Newsletter

## Chairman's Chatter

Not quite the ripsnorter year I was anticipating when writing the last Chairman's Chatter... actually, really rather bizarre weather-wise.

In fact, one of my colonies went down with what I'm pretty sure was a case CBPV (Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus).

It's a miserable business where one finds large quantities of dead, dying and very weak bees immediately in front of the landing board and with no immediately apparent cause. This can be mistaken for poisoning but in that case the bees would be spread over a much larger area, meters rather than 0.5 meters.

I already knew what CBPV looks like and was reminded of my very first colony of bees some 8 years or so ago, which came down with it. They were some of the 'horse killer bees' from Nutley and were really delightful, very gentle and calm, and of course, being my first and only bees I was very precious about them. It had been a long cold wet spring through till the end of June. The bees were cooped up for prolonged periods in their hive and as it turns out this was a contributory factor in them

succumbing. Day after day, I went down to see bees struggling to make it back home and large piles of dead bees immediately in front of the hive, as if they had literally fallen off the landing board.



I had no clue what to do and other members of the association had not seen this before either. I re-read all the books I had but to no avail. Finally, I called the SBI (Seasonal Bee Inspector), Dave Rudland, and after much deliberation and calls to head office the diagnosis was proclaimed as CBPV. 'So, what can I do about this, David?' I asked. 'Pour petrol on them ...kill'em off.' was the reply ...

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### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- July 30 Bee Banter – Crowborough – Crow and Gate
- August 3 Beginners Course – 2019
- August 17 Members Workshop – (Winter Preparations?) Details TBC
- September 7 Beginners Course
- September 21 Apiary Working Party – Slab Castle Details TBC
- September 24 pm Bee Banter – Crowborough – Crow and Gate
- September 26 Preparing Honey for Showing by Maggie Pratt – Timings and Venue to be confirmed
- Full Calendar & Details
- <http://hwbka.org.uk/events/>

a death sentence... not a big deal for someone like him with numerous hives but with my one and only precious hive I was quite upset.

I duly complied but not realising I was meant to pour the petrol into the hive and not wishing to ruin all that wax, I poured petrol into trays on the crown board inside my WBC and left with a heavy heart. Later that night I started reading a new book my son had bought me as birthday present, 'Beekeeping for Dummies,' which I had been rather sniffy about - after all I'm no dummy. But lo and behold therein was my salvation. Find the Queen; dump all the bees 50m away and only the strong uninfected ones will make it back. This will reduce the viral load and they may pull through.

So, at about 1:00 am I went down the garden in my pyjamas and dressing down with my head torch on and removed the petrol trays. The bees were incredibly angry, sounding like an air raid siren from 20 meters away and they punished me accordingly...the head torch being the perfect targeting beacon. Over the following few days I completed the proposed course of action and, yes! They pulled though eventually.

It turns out CBPV is probably present in most colonies and is only a problem when colonies are under stress or confined. There are 2 types of CBPV: Type 1 where the bees exhibit abnormal trembling motion and have spread or dislocated wings and Type 2 where the bees appear black and shiny, both fatal for the individuals concerned. Neither are vectored by varroa mites unlike viruses such as DFW, but rather through lesions resulting from their hairs being rubbed off in overcrowded cooped-up colonies. It has to be said that Varroa mites also create lesions of course. Like a flu epidemic, I suppose, in any closed communities it spreads quickly. Bees

are lost until there are not enough to cover the brood and the colony dies out. There is a more comprehensive article on the National Bee Unit website which can be downloaded as a pdf from here: <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=275&video=03#video> and which I strongly recommend reading, as according to Diane Steele our current SBI, it's on the increase and you may need to deal with it. Interestingly the advice on many web forums these days is to take the Dummies' route. I know Helen Hadley also tried this with success.

'So, what happened with your current outbreak Coxon?' I hear you ask. Well, I didn't follow my own advice, preferring to monitor and learn what I could, now with the added luxury of having many other colonies. I improved my hygiene and gave them more space in the shape of 3 empty supers. I removed the dead bees in front of the hive and scorched the earth. I also kept the ground cleared so I could easily see if the condition was deteriorating or improving and, thankfully, they have pulled through and are now a large successful colony.....*nil deperandum.*

**Peter Coxon**

## The Bank Job

### *We're going in through the ceiling!*

I received a call from Peter Coxon to see if I would go and investigate a report of bees at the old Nat West Bank in Heathfield. The building is currently being refurbished and being turned into a solicitor's office.

The builders had started to remove the ceiling on the first floor and had been greeted by a large quantity of bees. It turned out that the bees were entering through an airbrick and had built their hive between the ceiling and the flat roof at the rear of the property.

It became clear later that there had been a hive there for some years and evidence of several attempts to exclude them in the past was obvious. I persuaded the site foreman to give me access to the property over the Bank Holiday weekend. On the Saturday morning I headed to Heathfield with every piece of beekeeping equipment I posses that wasn't currently in use or nailed down



The first job was to set up a small scaffold platform and light the smoker. I removed the plasterboard to expose the full extent of the comb. There was a lot! A good puff of smoke and I started removing the newer comb with the honey stores, shaking the bees into a nuc box and putting the comb and honey into a tub ... well most of it anyway.



As the entire comb was above me, and no matter how steady and careful I was, I couldn't avoid getting covered in honey and nectar as it dripped down from above. Very soon myself, the tools and scaffold were covered in a sticky gummed up mess and there was no water on site.

Just in time Sue turned up with refreshments so, time for a break, clean up and change of bee suit. Refreshed and a lot less sticky I started removing the sections of comb with the brood. I cut these out

and shook the attached bees into a nuc box. I then trimmed the sections to size placed them in empty frames held in place with rubber bands.



I filled five 14x12 frames this way and added a last frame of foundation. I scraped all the wax from the timbers so there was now nowhere for the bees to hide. All the timbers and ply were heavily pitted from wax moth damage; another indication there had been bees here for a long while.

By this time there seemed to be a lot of bees in the nuc but still more in the ceiling and covering the windows. I had been looking for the queen all along but had been unable to spot her.

I proceeded to scoop up bees from the windows with a dustpan and dump them in the nuc box. It all seemed a little chaotic at this point so I decided to leave everything alone for a while and popped home for a bite of lunch.

When I returned later on the bees had settled right down, there were no bees flying outside or around the entrance. However, there were a good number of bees still covering the windows. There was a reasonable number in the nuc and a scattering of bees on the floor. I continued to carefully scoop more bees off the windows and put them in the nuc. Then the bees on the floor were scooped up. I spotted another little cluster of about 20 bees hidden behind the leg of the scaffold and there was the queen! I quickly picked her up and put her in a cage and then into the nuc box. I placed the nuc by the window that

had the most bees on and decided I could do no more until the evening.

I returned at dusk, released the queen from her cage and shut up the nuc. I left another nuc box with some frames at the window to try and collect the remaining bees. I then picked up the nuc and bees put them in the truck and transported them to my home apiary and opened them up the next morning.

I returned to the bank the following evening, collected the remaining bees and swept up those that hadn't made it.

Job done.

The bees are now in a 14x12 hive and doing nicely.

**John Miller**

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## **DIY Equipment**

### **Entrance Block and Hive Carrier Poles**

When is a stick not a stick? For beekeepers, it is when it's either an entrance block or a hive-carrying pole!

#### **Entrance Block:**

The standard entrance block sold by suppliers retails at around £4 each. A 2.1 metre length of 20 mm x 20 mm stripwood can be bought at most DIY stores for around £5. From this you can get five national entrance blocks, which works out at £1 per unit and is one of the easiest items to make yourself.

First, cut the stripwood to length, approximately 420 cm for national hive but check your entrance, as there is quite a variation between hives and manufacturers. From the centre point, mark about 80 mm either side (160 mm total). Mark 10 mm from the bottom and then

connect all marks to form an 'entrance'. If you already have an entrance block, then use this for the template.

Cut out the marked area using a jigsaw and sand the edges smooth.

Repeat the process on the next side (perpendicular to the first) this time with a smaller entrance (70 mm total). This will give you both summer and winter entrance openings.

I have found that, when using the metal mouse guards, the bees are unable to get out of the end holes due to the sloping design of the entrance. They are then restricted to using just three or four holes in the mouse guard. If this is a problem, simply square off the entrance and they will have access through all of the holes.

You don't need to limit yourself to using the same style. Polyhive entrance blocks have the same summer entrance but a series of 10 mm holes for the winter entrance. This is a good defensive block but could cause problems with removing dead bees during winter.



#### **Hive Carrier Poles:**

When you have to move hives to another location, two people can easily do this over a short distance. However, the person at the back cannot see where they are putting their feet and this could lead to some interesting situations! It becomes more difficult if

you have to carry over rough ground or any considerable distance.

One solution is to build a pair of hive carrying poles and transport the hive like a sedan chair (nothing is too good for our ladies). I used to strap the hive on top of two poles and this worked well enough until I noticed someone had submitted their version at the National Honey Show. Unfortunately I didn't take note of their name so I can't give them due credit, but this is my attempt to replicate their design to carry a National hive.

#### Equipment needed:

Two 2.4 metre lengths of 2" x 2" carcass

Two 600 mm lengths of 10 mm threaded rods

Respective nuts or wing nuts



#### Method:

- Firstly, cut the carcass down to an appropriate length (I worked on 1.8 metres).
- Using a belt sander or power file, round off the ends to slightly longer than the width of your hand. Trust me, it is more comfortable to carry a heavy hive if the poles are rounded!
- From one of the carcass off-cuts, cut to 400 mm in length then cut down that length giving you two pieces 45mm x 20mm. These will become the supporting braces.
- Glue and screw these braces to the middle of the poles using three #5 x 40mm screws.
- Next, drill one 10 mm hole 350mm either side from the

centre point of each pole. This will take the metal rods.

- Secure one end of the rods with a double nut super glued (or welded) in place. The other end will use a wing nut but I am trying to find a better style of securing, as the current one is somewhat small. Make sure you use large washers or metal plate to prevent damage to the poles.

**How to use.** First, make sure the hive



entrance is securely closed and the hive strapped to the floor. Two straps across in each direction are best.

Pass one rod through the poles and secure the other end with a large wing nut. Make sure the support braces are on the inside.

Place the poles either side of the hive with the braces within the 'rebated' sides of the hive. Thread the second metal rod through the poles and secure with the wing nut. Double-check the tightness and security of all fixings before lifting! You may consider using another strap around the poles and hive but that may not be necessary.

It may sound complicated and seem too



much but, if you are carrying for some distance, it's worth the effort.

**Steve Davies**

#### Bees - are they protected?

"Bees - are they protected?" It seems an odd question for us as beekeepers to ask as, of course, we as beekeepers can see no reason for anyone to want to destroy any type of bee, let alone honeybees. However, the general public often look towards us as knowledgeable experts in all things bee-related and so it is important that we should know the facts; and the bottom line is, that whatever we may feel, "No, bees are not protected". In fact, there is no mention of bees of any type in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents>

Having said that, there are several relevant guidelines and advisory documents that relate to bees, and it is worth being aware of some of them.

**The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website has in its "Guidance" section a frequently asked question page (FAQ) relating to biocide use.** <http://www.hse.gov.uk/biocides/faq.htm>

One of the questions in the Pest Control section is: **"Are honey bees beneficial insects?"** The reply is: *"Honey bees, both feral (wild) and colonised, are important beneficial insects, not normally considered as pests. They live either in the wild in nests, or as colonies in hives kept by beekeepers. In either case, they will only sting people if strongly provoked. Because of their beneficial role, every effort should be made to avoid carrying out control treatments against honeybees."*

*Treatment with a pesticide should be considered only as the last resort."*

Another question in the FAQ is: **"Should you treat a honey bee nest?"** The reply is: *"If you are asked to treat a feral honey bee nest, you should assess the situation carefully. Have honeybees from the nest stung people, or are they at risk because of its location? If the nest is not causing any risk to public health then you should carefully consider the alternatives before carrying out a treatment. If you are a member of the public, it may be better to consult a Professional Pest Controller rather than attempting to treat a nest yourself – see the question 'Can you recommend a Pest Control Company' for further details of contacting a Professional Pest Control company."*

And also: **"What precautions should you take while carrying out a honey bee nest treatment?"** The reply is: *"If you consider treatment is the best option, make use of the British Beekeepers Association's spray liaison scheme. This will enable local beekeepers to be warned by their own Spray Liaison Officer. It is important for you to talk to local beekeepers in this way before treating a nest. Remember, members of the British Beekeepers Association can provide advice and can sometimes remove accessible feral honeybee colonies, avoiding the need to use pesticides. Only use an HSE approved insecticide. Always read the label and use the product safely. Once the treatment is complete, you should take every reasonable action to prevent foraging honey bees from gaining access to the treated nest, by removing the combs or blocking the nest entrances."*

It is almost certainly because of this guidance that responsible pest controllers will ask people to call their local beekeeping association to

assess the situation before they will consider exterminating a bee's nest.

**The HSE website also has guidance covering risk assessment for bees and non target arthropods**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pesticides/topics/pesticide-approvals/pesticides-registration/data-requirements-handbook/bees-and-non-target-art.htm>

The main guidance document can be found at the link below. Section 4 deals particularly with bees. [https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/plant/docs/pesticides\\_ppp\\_a\\_pp-proc\\_guide\\_ecotox\\_terrestrial.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/plant/docs/pesticides_ppp_a_pp-proc_guide_ecotox_terrestrial.pdf)

**The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) was published back in 1994**, and was the UK Government's response to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). To support the work of the UK BAP, the UK BAP website was created by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) in 2001.

UK BAP priority species were those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action.

A list of insects including many bees is listed at:

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5169>

N.B. as a result of devolution, and new country-level and international drivers and requirements, much of the work previously carried out by the UK BAP is now focused at a country-level rather than a UK-level, and the UK BAP was succeeded by the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework' in July 2012. The UK list of priority species, however, remains an important reference source and has been used to help draw up statutory lists of priority species in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

So, at the moment, no bee species in the UK are protected, but they should only be treated with pesticides as a last resort. Pesticide treatment of solitary bee species is unnecessary. Pesticide treatment of Bumble bees and Honey bees should only be undertaken if the bees present a threat to public health and all other options have been exhausted. You must not proceed with a Honey bee treatment until you have read the essential guidance.

A very good article appeared in The Express newspaper on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017 that advises householders on what to do in the case of unwanted bees. It can be read online at:

<https://www.express.co.uk/life-style/property/806021/how-to-get-rid-of-a-bees-nest>

The public view of honeybees is becoming much more informed, almost certainly because of media articles such as the one above. The result is that government also needs to become similarly informed. A debate pack (no: CDP 2017/0226) was prepared ahead of the debate held in Westminster Hall on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017 on the UK bee population. This pack can be viewed at:

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2017-0226/CDP-2017-0226.pdf>.

Things are moving in the right direction and one day, hopefully in the not too distant future, bees may well become protected.

**Peter Halford (June 2018)**

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## Another Nasty Bee Tale....

Last Summer, while working for Deborah Park, it became apparent that her bees were out of order. I would sit having my lunch 20 feet away from her hives and bees would come and buzz me. Occasionally I would end up inside the tool store seeking refuge, peace and quiet while I ate my sandwiches. Occasionally when I walked past the hives I would get stung. If Deborah opened up the hives while I was there I would be bothered by the bees when gardening and chased.

I think she had bought them from someone in Yalding and to begin with they were delightful. However, as many of you know if you buy lovely Buckfast bees quite often two generations down they turn nasty.

I think what finally triggered her to change those bees in her apiary was the fact that she went to help one of my beginners. They had bought a nucleus of bees from Paynes and they were lovely to handle. It made her realise that she was putting up with unacceptable behaviour from her three very productive colonies.

Here is what we did. Encouraged by me, Deborah purchased two nuclei from Heather Hawkes. These were small units but headed by nice Queens. Heather had got this strain of bee from me a couple of years ago and I knew they were lovely because I had made sure she had very good tempered bees as she has small children that play next to her hives. I fetched these two nuclei one evening and took them to Deborah's house and placed them right next to the 2 hives that were giving us the most problem. The next day we hived those bees into full sized hives that looked very similar to the hives occupied by the troublesome bees. We filled up the boxes with foundation despite it being so late in the year (the reason for doing this is that I didn't think we would be able to go back into the colonies until

October and I wanted to give the bees space).

A couple of days later I turned up late in the evening. Her son, a rugby player and strong, was to help us. We went to the two troublesome hives and stuffed foam into the entrances. Or at least that is what I thought we were going to do – it transpired that one of the hives didn't have a classic entrance and we had to use gaffer tape instead. Needless to say this did cause a problem, as there was some leakage of bees! And boy did those bees try and have a go at us! We certainly needed our bee suits. The colonies were extremely large and prosperous, and they certainly didn't mind losing a few foragers! Fortunately, Deborah had some large sheets, which we were able to drape over the colonies and I think this prevented us being more badly stung than we might have been.

We placed the two hives into the trailer and with the ride on lawnmower drove them to another part of the woodland. The site had been prepared, strimmed and two wooden pallets placed on the ground onto which we placed the two troublesome hives. After a few minutes and with the torches switched off we removed the foam and ran away.

The idea of this manipulation is to get all the older foragers to leave their nasty Queens and join the new well tempered colonies (these new colonies standing virtually on the same site as that which had been occupied by the troublesome bees before we had removed them to another part of the woodland). Remember it is the older foragers that sting, and so by removing them from the colony it is then possible to go through the frames, find the queen and bump her off!

After about two days (that day I was doing a honey extraction with the beginners at Deborah's house) I went back and opened up the

troublesome hives that had been moved. Almost immediately in each colony I was able to find the queen and I smudged her out! Although feisty there were no foragers so I was able to carry out this manipulation fairly easily (by the way don't ever leave it a whole week before going back to kill the Queen you dislike, because she will have stopped laying and if she has stopped laying she will not be on the brood nest and you'll have a devil's own job finding her!!!! I speak from experience.).

It was now about the seventh or eighth of August and this forced those troublesome bees to start building queen cells. I did the calculation of when those queen cells would be sealed and when it would be impossible for the bees to make a new queen from their own larvae. We were absolutely determined that this strain needed to be changed completely. Eight days would be perfect – six days and they might still be able to make a new queen from one of their own larvae, 10 days and probably a queen cell would have hatched and the manipulation would not work. You really do need to understand bee biology to get this one right!

So, after eight days it was now Deborah's turn and she went into these troublesome hives and killed all the queen cells. This involved shaking the bees off every frame and smudging out the queen cells. You can bet your bottom dollar they weren't pleased, but you can afford to be quite rough as you really don't care about this strain of bee and it doesn't matter if there are some that are squashed or die because of your heavy-handedness.

Instructed by me she had ordered two new Queens from Paynes. Unfortunately she was only able to get Buckfast Queens, so I do hope we don't get a similar scenario in another couple of years. These Queens were introduced in Queen

introduction cages a few days later and both were accepted. After a week one could see pollen flowing into the hives. If you ever have to do this manipulation my advice to you would be to leave this hive well alone for five weeks. If you fiddle, your original strain of bee is likely to kill the Queen you have introduced and try and raise a new Queen from one of her eggs. And the cross may not be to your liking!

Leaving the colonies alone also applied to the ones headed by Queens purchased from Heather Hawkes. So many foragers had gone back to their original site that they were virtually swamping the small nuclei that had been brought in from Crowborough. As the dynamic in this scenario was tipping in favour of the troublesome foragers I wanted Deborah to leave the hives well alone.

The manipulation has worked as Deborah has seen pollen going into all four hives this March. I am sending her this article and after she has done her first inspection in April she will write something about the temperament of the colonies in 2019. Those new Queens should definitely be surrounded by their own progeny by now and hopefully are delightful to handle.

Beekeepers always tell you to requeen nasty colonies, but actually changing the strain completely is not a five-minute job. Timings are crucial, for instance, when knowing when to dig out Queen cells. And that only can be calculated if you understand a bit about bee biology.

**Malcolm Wilkie**

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**Making up a nucleus in order to requeen a nasty colony**

or

**Buying in queens and changing the temperament of a nasty colony**

I have a colony of bees labelled "Triple muddle" and another called "Catastrophe 1" ... oh yes, and "Catastrophe 2". With this evidence of a rather flat learning curve, you may wonder at my temerity to write an article sharing my knowledge of bee keeping.

The answer lies with Malcolm - he very kindly offered to help me requeen some very savage hives on the condition that I share what I have learned, which I am of course delighted to do in some detail below. Between us we decided to make up two nuclei. One nucleus would be taken from a nice calm hive, the other from the "Triple Muddle". And boy do those bees let you know who is boss! In other words, no one wants a "Triple Muddle".

In this article I will tell you how we made up a nucleus from this nasty colony.

Our first problem was that we had an unmarked queen in the "Triple Muddle" colony. So, first of all we needed to mark her, otherwise making up a nucleus from this colony would be impossible.

Malcolm came over and opened up the hive. They were their usual nasty selves, ping-pong off our veils, running around the comb and generally being disagreeable. It was late afternoon and the hive was in shade and he complained he could not see eggs in the dark frames. After having been through the brood box twice and thoroughly pissed off the bees (miraculously despite thin gloves he had not been stung) he started taking each frame a metre a way into the sunshine. 45 minutes had passed by now and this exercise looked hopeless but then he found HER. He picked her up and marked her (bees dive bombing his hands),

called for scissors and clipped both wings! She was then returned to her colony and only then did Malcolm get stung.

Two GED Marshall Buckfast queens arrived in the post one week later.

**Forming the NUC on the day we received a new Queen in the post.**

This whole exercise is only possible if you have a sufficiently large colony or colonies from which to harvest the requirements outlined below.

On the day the Queens arrived Malcolm wanted to be sure of finding "Her Highness" in the "Triple Muddle" colony (he was concerned that despite having marked her the bees would not allow him to find her again). So, he asked us to move the colony 15 foot to a different part of the apiary the previous night. This was in order to lose the foragers from the "Triple Muddle" colony and make them more biddable. Thus giving us a greater chance of finding the Queen (this also would have been his strategy to find her and mark her if he hadn't been successful the previous week).

1. With a quarter of the bees no longer in the box we found and captured the queen in the "Triple Muddle" colony (easy peasy lemon squeezy) - this was so she was out of the way when we did the following steps as we needed to ensure that she was not inadvertently moved into the NUC. We put the queen clip with her inside in a food container along with a couple of worker bees and laid it safely to the side in the dark.
2. Next we placed the empty opened Nuc next to the "Triple Muddle" colony (now queen less)

3. From the “Triple Muddle” colony we removed the following and put them into the Nuc:
  - a. 2 frames of sealed brood with no eggs or grubs (this is very important as it ensures that there is no chance of them making another Queen) but with the bees attached.
  - b. 2 frames of stores
  - c. 2 frames of foundation.
  - d. Some additional candy just in case the weather is bad for foraging.
4. (Now most important of all) We then shook 2 further frames of bees into the NUC from frames of open, not sealed brood (very important). This makes sure that the NUC gets some of the youngest bees whose job is to feed grubs as this will become their task in the build-up of the new colony.
5. We put the new queen still in her cage into the Nuc between the 2 brood frames, hanging on a matchstick, and did not break the seal.
6. We then closed the NUC. Any older foraging bees transferred inadvertently to the Nuc would return to their original home, leaving just the queen and the nurse bees in the Nuc.
7. What did we forget!? The “Triple Muddle” Queen was still in the queen clip in the food box! So, we returned her to the brood box in her original home, replaced the missing brood frames with foundation and then closed it up so they could recover. We also carried the hive back to the original site where thousands of foragers

from the “Triple Muddle” colony were bearding on the hive stand (remember we had moved it 15ft the previous night). After a couple of hours, they all went back in no problem.

After 2 days, we observed the reaction of the bees in the Nuc to the new queen. Malcolm said that if they seem excited and ‘fluttery’, then break the tab to her cage to allow the bees to safely enable her release. If not showing great interest, leave for another day or so before release.

[Video – “fluttery” bees ready to accept a queen](#)

[Video - Withdrawing the introduction cage to snap the tab to release the GED Marshall Queen](#)

[Video - Bees seem excited by the prospect of a new Queen. Notice the wings fluttering](#)

After the new queen is released in the Nuc, do not open or look into the NUC for at least 2 weeks as this could prejudice the safety of the new queen. But observe regularly from the outside to see if pollen is being taken in... an encouraging sign that the new Queen has been accepted and is laying.

#### **After 2 weeks we had a look.**

There were bees between all the frames when viewed from above, so we decided to ‘hive the bees’ as follows.

1. We put a new hive next to the NUC and opened it up. Into the empty brood box, we put two new brood frames of foundation as well as a dummy board.
2. We then opened the Nuc and carefully lifted all the frames and put them into the new hive in the

same order, locating them at the front of the box. We could see 4 sides of capped brood (the new Queen was already expanding) as well as some newly drawn frames and stores. We did not check for a Queen, just wishing to safely move as many bees as possible to their new home and empty the Nuc.

3. We shook remaining bees out of Nuc and into the new brood box.
4. In the new box, we pushed the 2 new frames of foundation and dummy board, so they sat next to the used frames and it was cosy.
5. We closed the new box and reduced the size of the hive entrance as, with other hives around, we thought the new box might be vulnerable to attack... no idea if that is a risk but we don’t think it will do any harm.

This is as far as we have got, all thanks to Malcolm.

Now if the nucleus has worked and we successfully build it up, the next article will be about requeening “Triple Muddle” and I will reveal why this colony was given that name.

#### **Malcolm’s top tip for making up a nucleus**

(Process learnt from Helen)

To make up a nuc you need 2:2:2:2

2 stores, 2 frames sealed brood, 2 frames foundation, 2 frames of YOUNG bees

**John and Gayle Schumacher – June 2019**