

Bee Calendar of Beekeeper's Care

Lincoln Land Bee Keepers Association

January

Check out the bee catalogs, make an inventory of equipment, paint and repair any damage, anticipate the new year of bee keeping, and then enjoy the solitude.

The next 2 months are usually our most brutal weather

- Review last year's records to make any changes or additions
- Read, Research & Check out You-tube & especially the university web sites
- Make sure colonies have food. On near 50 degree windless days get in & out quickly. Do not remove any frames
- Check & clear hive openings so bees can get out for cleansing flights, especially after a snow fall
- Order equipment and place your order for new queens, packages or nucs
- Late in January brood rearing begins, so you may want to start feeding pollen patties w/ carbohydrates for energy and protein to in courage brood production.

February

- Early Feb. good time for oxalic acid vapor. Little or no brood
- Check dead outs, fine dead queen for swarm lure. Order new bees
- Begin both liquid & dry feeding outside hives on warmer days
- Queen is laying, brood is building up & food stores are used up more quickly to keep brood warm
- After winter solstice, pollen patties, dry pollen substitute w/ carbohydrates maybe fed
- Make new hive stands & locations

March

- Continue feeding pollen patties for brood production and your choice of winter supplemental food
- Check queens brood pattern, she is laying at almost full capacity
- Treat for Nosema. (Pro Health or Honey-B-Healthy) (Essential oils) (Fumagilin B)
- Order new bees
- Reverse hive bodies & clean bottom board
- Clean dead outs, freeze frames to control wax moths & search for & save dead queen for swarm traps
- In depth inspection, weather permitting (Call your Illinois State Bee inspector)

April

- Make artificial swarm 10 days before swarm season OTS (On The Spot queen rearing)
- Feed sugar solution 1:1 or 2:1 and pollen substitute if you haven't already
- Reverse hive bodies & clean bottom board
- Install new bees
- In depth inspection (Call you Illinois State Bee inspector) great learning experience
- Check for queen, eggs, brood pattern & for capped brood
- Look for swarm cells. Swarm season begins
- Check honey supers & add if necessary
- Treat for Nosema (Pro Health or Honey-B-Healthy) (Essential oils) (Fumigilin B)
- Treat for Small Hive Beetles (traps, essential oil,)
- Treat for Tracheal mites (grease patties, menthol)
- Check & treat for Varroa mites (Ether roll) (Drone comb) (Fogging) (Essential oils mix)
- Split strong colonies
- Re-Queen
- Heaviest nectar flow begins in late April & continues for about 2 months

May

- Hive splits are best done in May & June
- Install new bees
- In depth inspection
- Check for queen, brood pattern ,eggs, larva & for capped brood
- Look for swarm cells
- Check honey supers & add if necessary
- Check & treat for Varroa mites (Either roll) (Drone comb) (Essential oil mix)
- Treat for small hive beetles (traps, essential oil mix)
- Treat for tracheal mites (grease patties, menthol)
- Re-Queen

June

- Split strong colonies
- Install new bees
- Queens hatched after the summer solstice will continue laying through October
- Check for queen, eggs, brood pattern & for capped brood
- Check honey supers & harvest honey
- Check ventilation
- Continue checking for Hive beetles, Varroa & Tracheal mites

July

- Usually after July 4th the honey flow slows down. Let bees build up food stores
- Check for eggs & queen
- Check capped brood & brood pattern
- Look for swarm cells
- Check honey supers & harvest honey
- Check ventilation
- Continue checking for Small Hive Beetles, Varroa & Tracheal mites

August

- Check for eggs, brood, brood pattern, capped brood & queen
- Check that frames are not honey bound. Interspace drawn frames w/ honey frames in preparation for winter bees. Reverse hive bodies & clean bottom board
- Look for swarm cells
- Check honey supers, harvest honey, & remove all honey supers
- Check ventilation
- Check & treat for Varroa mites (either roll) (Drone comb) (Fogging) (Essential oil)
- Treat for Small Hive Beetle (Trap) (Essential oil) (Grease patty)
- Nectar dearth is more prominent in August, be alert for robbing, & reduce to smallest entrance opening

September

- Check food reserves, continue feeding, especially weak hives
- Check for eggs, brood pattern capped brood & queen
- Look for swarm cells
- Check honey supers, if possible harvest honey. Need 60-75 lbs. of honey for winter
- Full deep frame of honey weighs 8 to 9 lbs.---Full medium frame weigh 7 lbs.
- Treat for Nosema. (Pro Health or Honey-B-Healthy) (Essential oils) (Fumagilin B)
- Check & treat for Varroa mites, Tracheal mites & Small Hive Beetles
- Add mouse guards
- Last chance to re-queen
- Prepare hives for winter

October

- Check food reserves, continue feeding, especially weak hives
- Check for eggs, brood & queen
- Check ventilation & plan your winter ventilation strategy
- Treat for Nosema. (Pro Health or Honey-B-Healthy) (Essential oils) (Fumigilin B)
- Treat for Small Hive Beetles (Traps) (Essential oil)
- Treat for Tracheal mites (Grease patties) (Menthol)
- Check & treat for Varroa mites (Either roll) (Drone com) (Fogging)
- Add mouse guards
- When day time temperatures drop below 50 degrees, discontinue liquid feeding

November

- Check ventilation & plan to deal with moisture control
- Decide when to begin winter supplemental feed
- Decide if & when you are going to wrap your hives
- Late Nov. start Pro Winter pollen patties for food energy

December

Not much to do in your bee yard, however, a few reminders:

- A new season means renewing you annual Apiary Registration with the:
Illinois Department of Agriculture
Apiary Inspection Section
P. O. Box 19281 – Fairgrounds
Springfield, IL 62794-9281
 - Check your hives occasionally for wind and varmint damage
 - On warmer windless days check colonies, every 2 or 3 weeks for supplemental feeding.
 - With healthy colonies you can hold off putting on the winter supplemental feed until mid to late December (candy board, fondant, sugar brick, krabby patty, commercial winter low protein pollen patties, etc.)
 - Some beekeepers don't wrap their hives & others wrap them in late December or January trying to produce a stronger hardier colony. Remove wrapping when temperatures get into the 50's & 60's
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