

BASIC HIVE INSPECTION

Dewey M. Caron, March 24, 2012



IDENTIFY WITH APPROPRIATE LETTER: Capped Brood; Drone Brood; Honey;
Nectar; Pollen (likely position); Eggs (or where to look); Queen Cups/Cells.
IS COLONY QUEENRIGHT & BROOD PATTERN OK? IS BROOD HEALTHY?

What if there are NO EGGS present (on frame above)?

- no queen present
- new virgin/newly mated queen present – not laying eggs yet
- look on another frame – this one filled with cells of mostly capped brood
- end of season or drought conditions or pollen resources no longer available
- bees preparing to abscond (or swarm)

What if no pollen evident (on frame above)?

- no young brood to stimulate pollen foraging
- numbers of cells filled with fresh nectar
- no space – look on another frame especially frame at edge of brood sphere
- pollen dearth or drought or heat spell
- bees preparing to abscond (or swarm)

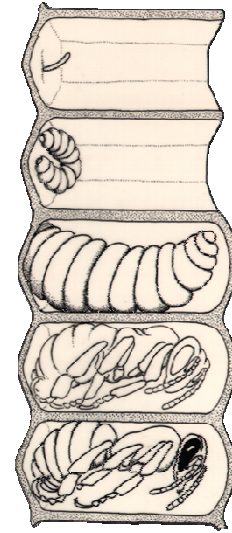
What if there is no drone brood (or queen cells) on any frames?

- end of foraging season
- pollen dearth or drought or heat spell
- look on another frame – no space here
- look again at margins of frames and at comb between boxes
- not rearing queens (cup presence OK) because _____

LOOKING FOR EVIDENCE OF QUEEN

Do you need to see the queen?

- yes Yes Because _____
- no Why Not? _____
- What is “test” if unsure queen present or not? _____



If you do not see the queen, you should...

- see capped brood
- see open larval brood
- see eggs (should be 1/cell, rarely 2)
- see developing queen cells
- evaluate the brood pattern/healthfulness
- determine if environmental conditions are poor
- transfer frame of open brood from another hive

What else should you read on the frame?

- Area being reserved for brood (cleaned & ready or not)
- nectar filled cells in brood area or area to top and sides of brood sphere
- fresh pollen in cells vs stored (glazed) pollen cells; moldy pollen
- queen cups** or queen cells (i.e. occupied with eggs/brood or capped)
- condition/age of drawn cells, amount of drone brood cells
- overall brood pattern (is pattern ‘shotgun’/scattered/many “missed” cells)
- placement of eggs in cells with eggs
- drones in worker cells (**drone layer; laying workers**); high drone numbers
- normal looking cappings over brood & honey; drone cells with raised cappings
- dead brood (disease, chilling, pesticide kill, genetic issues)
- mites present?
- evidence of pests (mice; SHB; wax moth; other _____)

OK - so what else do you do for BASIC HIVE INSPECTION?

1. Examine apiary – colony entrance – placement of colonies
2. Smoker management – ‘comfortable’ hive attire
3. Opening technique – removal of top box & 1st frame
4. Management of colony following your CSI “findings”
5. Closing the colony and recording information