

SUCCESSFUL BEEKEEPING

By Bill Ruzicka. Inventor of **MiteGone®**
Commercial Bee Breeder in British Columbia.

REQUEENING in AUGUST USING QUEENS REARED IN JUNE IN PARALLEL COLONY. This will provide swarm control, increased production, and a new queen for the winter. Stop relying on imported queens! Requeen all queens two years and older.



THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL WINTERING IS A NEW

QUEEN. Not the one you buy in September, but the one you buy or rear in June that has been tested over the summer. This method also stops your hives from swarming and increases production. You can increase the number of colonies you have.

THE TIME TO PREPARE AND START IS NOW.

Talk to a local reputable bee breeder and find out what queens will be available and when. For our prices and availability in year email: billruzicka@mitegone.com or call 250-762-8156. Or click on: <http://www.mitegone.com/pdfpages/BHF%200000%20BLANK.pdf>
Book your time and come to see how it is done on instruction days.

HOW TO: The best way to do this is to establish splits with queens reared in June. Leave the old queen to work in one box creating brood and have those bees work to producing honey and comb over the summer. Set up 20% more splits and queens as you want to have for the winter. You can always sell them later. In late August or early September when you treat with MiteGone, you replace the old queen with proven June queen from your splits by putting her box on top of old one. Spray tops of both boxes with 10% sugar sirup, and gently spray them with Glade Unscented Deodorant by JOHNSON. The deodorant removes the queen's pheromones and the bees accept the new queen.

You can requeen in August with our summer tested queens. These queens have been laying in our nukes from June.

If you are for rearing your own queens, the most important thing to remember is to rear your own drones. It takes 35 days for a drone to reach maturity and mate with the queen. The queen needs to mate with 12-15 drones. Therefore, in the spring when the Saskatoon bloom, install drone producing frames in your best hives. When you no longer need the drones in mid-June, move the drone comb into escape boxes. Place these boxes on top of a queen excluder as the top box of the hive. When the comb is empty of brood, put the drone comb into storage.

REQUEENING BY RUNNING A PARALLEL COLONY FROM LATE MAY UNTIL AUGUST.

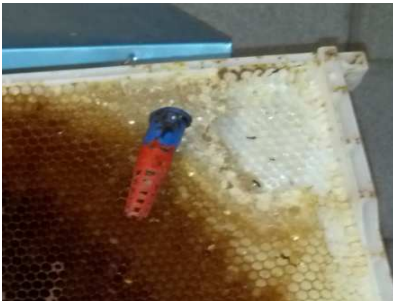
Four days before the cells or caged virgins are available to you, put a queen excluder between the two boxes of each of your hives. Four days later, split your hive in two and move each box off the bottom board and place each on a separate support box. It is easy to then quickly find which box has eggs and therefore has the queen. Place a clean empty box on the bottom board where the hive was. Find the queen and put it with the frame she is on in middle of that box. Place the frames and bees around the queen as follows:

- Frame of honey against wall of the box.
- A frame of frame of pollen against it.
- Move the frame with queen against the pollen comb.

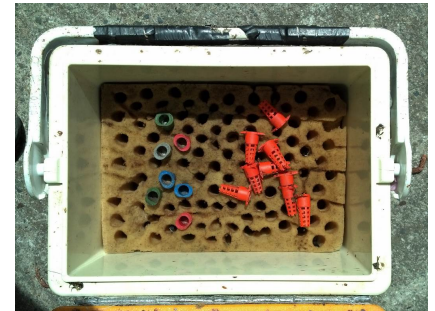
- Then find five combs of emerging and capped brood and put those beside the frame with the queen. These brood frames will be in the middle of the hive
- Fill the last two spaces with a pollen and honey comb. The honey comb is placed against the wall of the box.

Put a queen excluder on top of this box (that is now filled with 10 frames) and place a honey box on top of the queen excluder. Alternately, this is a great way to draw out foundation if you do not use a queen excluder. Divide the remaining frames of bees and brood evenly into 2 expandable mating nukes (see picture page 3). Starting at entrance wall of the box put all the combs with bees. You should have one comb of honey, one comb of pollen, two combs with brood, closure comb, then a feeder or cardboard divider. The box will be empty on the other side of the divider.

So all of your bees don't return to their hives it is important to SCREEN the entrance on the bottom board. Staple a carpet inner cover to the box and put on a top cover. Make sure the bees can't escape. Leave screened splits in same yard, **DONOT TAKE THE SPLITS AWAY** as the **DRONES ARE IN YOUR YARD** and you will need those drones to mate with your queens. Remove the screens (in a few days) when you are going through your nukes checking to make sure your queens have emerged from their cells or cages.



On the day when you get the cells, you need to prepare a small cooler with a hot water bottle in it to keep the cells at 30 degrees Celsius. Place a piece of foam above the hot water bottle with 1/2" holes in it. Place the cells in the foam for safe transport. If you only have a few cells, you can place the cells against your body to



keep them warm. Be careful not to crush the cells.

When installing the cells in the hive, place the cells in a cell protector, on a brood comb, on the brood where superseding cells would normally be. You can install the cells at the same time you are making the splits. Bees cannot damage the cell if it is in a cell protector. Make sure to leave your splits SCREENED until you come back a few days later to check if the queen has emerged from the cell.

When you pick up your cells, you will be given the date of emergence. On that day, go back to your splits and remove the screens from the entrances. Also, find the cell in its' protector and look inside to see if the queen emerged from the cell. You will see a nice round cap removed if she successfully emerged. If she has not emerged, you will be able to replace the cell with a caged virgin of same age in metal case with marshmallow plug.

Virgins queens have 20 days to mate if attended by bees in splits. Record mating days on your calendar. Watch for days with warm calm weather. 7-10 days after that day, your queen will start laying. Do not rush her. It is best to wait 36 days from the grafting date to check on your queen. If she is not mated and laying by then she is stale. If a queen is not laying, join that split with a mated one to salvage the bees and remaining brood. See:

<http://www.mitegone.com/pdfpages/Breeder's%20Circle%20Proposal.pdf>

WE CANNOT SHIP CELLS BUT CAN SHIP CAGED VIRGINS:

We ship caged virgins by mail in JZBZ cages in boxes of 20. Or if you pick up your queens in person, you can order any amount and get them in wire cages with a fed plug. For pickup, bring a virgin bank with you. Use a nuke box or a box with bees and open honey comb. Up to 30 cages can fit on a honey comb. These caged virgins must be introduced to your splits in the same way as mated queens within a week of receiving them.

HOW EXPANDABLE MATING NUKES WERE CREATED:

I use a standard box on a standard bottom board with a feeder in the middle. Place a strip of carpet under the feeder to keep the bees from crawling under the feeder. This process will allow you to make two – four frame mating nukes. Please note that the feeder has two compartments joined by ½” gap under centre divider. The higher sides and center divider form the letter “S” so when carpet is put on the top, the two nukes are sealed separately with own feeder

We would have 550 of these, providing 1100 mating units to ensure our new generation was all new queens. If one of the two queens did not mate, we just moved the feeder to one side and made an 8-frame colony. If both sides mated, we caught and sold one queen and then made an 8-frame colony out of the two nukes. It worked well in a large mating yard.

Here you see the Expandable nuke and feeder as we currently use it. The feeder can be moved to any position creating anything from a four-frame mating nuke to an eight-frame wintering unit. Please note the screened entrance is on the long side and is only 2” x 3/8”. My old inner covers made a perfect bottom board. I modified them by increasing the rim to 3/8” and cutting an entrance on the wide side. The same thing can be accomplished with a plastic inner feeder and some foamy sticky tape or by using a cardboard divider and a carpet inner cover.



DO NOT TAKE YOUR SPLITS OUT OF YOUR DRONE YARD. LEAVE THEM SCREENED FOR 3-4 DAYS. VIRGIN QUEENS NEED DRONES TO MATE.

If only one of the two nukes mate, simply join the bees into one 8 frame colony and you have a new queen for the winter. If BOTH nukes mate and you want increase the number of hives you have, move the feeder to one side of the hive and fill the space in the expandable nuke with 4 more frames. Cover this new colony with a queen excluder and place a honey super on top of that. By the end of August, you will have a strong colony and some honey. Place one of these colonies on top of a hive with an old queen. I recommend killing the old queen. If you cannot find her, join the two colonies with a spray of Glade Deodorant between the boxes. Put the queen excluder and honey super on top of both Brood cambers. The young queen will always win if the two queens’ fight. Winter the other split as an eight-frame colony with feeder on the top of standard two box high colonies. This will help keep the 8-frame colony warm over the winter. If you do not want increase your hive numbers you can always sell your extra mated queens.

MY LAST BIT OF ADVICE IS: IF YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW OLD YOUR QUEENS ARE, YOU NEED TO REQUEEN.