

LOGO

Swarm Control

Bee School 2017



What is a swarm?



When is swarm season?



- Usually between May 10 to July 1
- A process that healthy spring colonies go through to divide into two or more colonies.
- An amazing event that typically takes place in the spring when conditions are right.

When is swarm season?

- Each swarm will have a queen bee and up to half of the colony's worker bees as well as some of the male drones.
- They all take flight in order to establish new colonies in an effort of survival of the species.
- Instinctual for colony survival

My swarm



My swarm



LOGO

What do you do now?

- RUN LIKE HELL?



What do you do now?



- **When encountering a swarm, it is best to allow a knowledgeable beekeeper, comfortable with handling bees, to deal with the removal.**

- **Location of swarm**

Swarm Causes



- Strong spring build up
- Brood growing stronger
- Abundant foraging
- Needs more space
- Weather is improving / summer
- Queen cells start
- Less Eggs noticed

Swarm Indications



- Queen behavior
- Hive Inspection for Queen cells
 - Natural
 - Supersedure
 - Swarm
 - Numbers

Swarm Indications

Queen Cells

Supercedure cells are queen cells found along the center of a given frame.

Swarm cells are found clinging to the bottom of the brood frame and are used to rear a **SECOND QUEEN**



Supersedure Indications

- Hive Inspection
- Queen cell location
- Current queen emergency
 - Dead
 - Old
 - Diseased
- Current queen failing

Supersedure Indications

- Increase in drone brood
- Laying worker / low to no brood
- Fanning increase / noisy
- Increase defensiveness
- More bees in flying nearby
- Agitated

Swarm Indications



- Hive Inspection
- Queen cell location
- Inspection of queen cells
 - Eggs/larvae
- Queen reduces egg output

Swarm Indications



- Slims down
- Foragers stay home
- Queen larvae pupates
- Bees spill out

Swarm in Flight



Not to be confused



Bearding \neq Swarming

Bearding = Crowded / Hot

Crowded \Rightarrow Swarm



Swarm Prevention



- Strong overwintered hive
- Once prepared, inevitable
- Early prevention starts March/April
- 7 step process

Swarm Prevention



- Plan on early splits
- Reverse brood chambers
- Requeen
- Bee Breed tendencies
- Regular spring inspections

Swarm Prevention



- Monitor Mother Nature
- Give them space
- Add brood chamber early
- Checkerboard new frames
- Add supers
- Slotted bottom rack