Swarm Control

With a Nuc Box

To be used when you are certain the hive has not swarmed

Remember the 3 essentials for a Swarm

Move the Queen on a frame to the Nuc having removed all Queen cells from this frame

Add two brood frames with brood, honey but no queen cells to the Nuc

Add bees from the main colony as necessary

Close the Nuc

The Original Hive has no queen so cannot swarm

Remove all Queen Cells except 1 in which you can see a larva.

Add brood frames to fill the gaps

Close up, after 7 days examine

The Queen cell should be closed but not emerged as it must be less than day 16

The Original Hive after 7 days

Hopefully there is just the one Queen cell you left

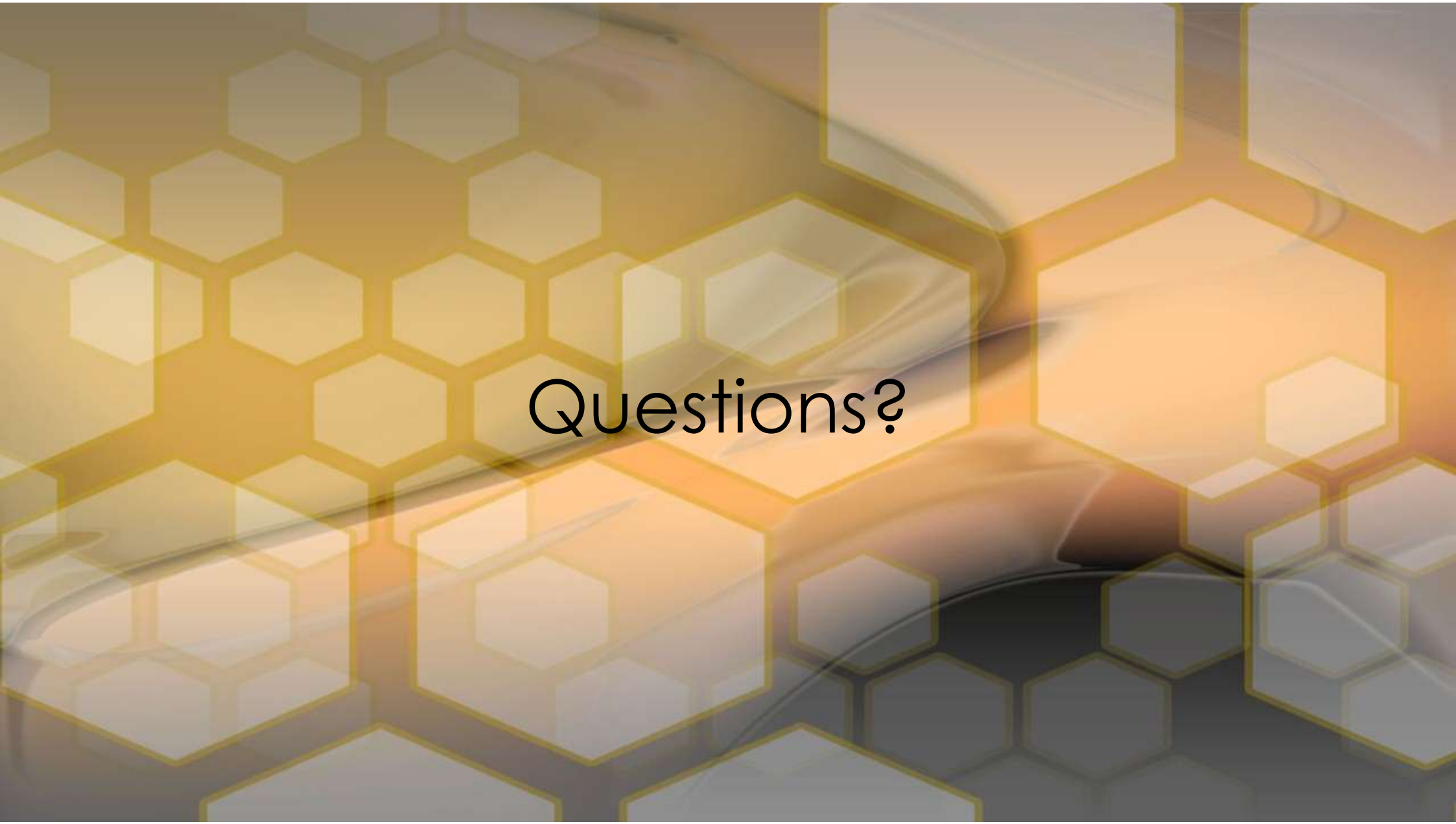
If more – remove the others

Close the Hive – Leave for 3 weeks

The Nucleus after 7 days

Examine as you would a full hive

If crowded, needs a new hive or other action


Questions?

Artificial Swarm (?) Method

To avoid confusion I will show the method then explain then show again

A video description of the process

With thanks to North Herts BKA

Remove Roof

Do not remove the Crownboard

Remove all the supers with the crownboard still on and place on the upturned roof

Remove the Queen excluder carefully and place on the supers

Move Hive 1 metre to the side – some beekeepers also turn it 90 degrees

The animation does not show the biggest problem which is the thousands of bees likely to be in the air around you.

Put a new floor and broodbox with 9 frames on the original site – gap in the centre

If you have drawn foundation use it - close to the central gap

Consider placing a Queen excluder between brood box and floor

If there is not much brood there is a risk the bees will abscond but if the Queen can't get out they won't

From the original hive remove one frame with brood and the Queen

Are there any Queen Cells on this Frame?

If Yes – Are there other good Queen Cells in the hive?

If Yes – remove all Queen Cells from the Frame with the Queen

If No – Move the Queen to a different Frame with brood

You are now holding a frame with the Queen, brood and worker bees

Place the frame in the centre of the frames of foundation in the new hive on the original site

If there are few workers on the frame with the Queen shake or brush some more from frames in the old brood box

Replace the last frame of foundation to make 11 Frames in the new hive?

Is there honey in the Supers of the original Hive or are there no supers?

If No honey - either

Take a brood frame with honey from the old brood box and put it next to the frame with brood in the new hive.

Or – Put a rapid feeder with at least 2 litres of 1 to 1 syrup on the new brood box.

You could do both

The Original Brood box – New Site

Find one Queen cells in which you can see the larva

This should be in a position where it is unlikely to be damaged by your manipulations.

Remove the other Queen Cells

The Original Brood box – New Site

Is there much honey on the brood frames?

If Not – Feed with a rapid feeder

The Final Arrangement

The Flying Bees from the Old Box will forage and return to the Original Site

The Original Brood box – New Site

These bees are Queenless – and just have one Queen cell

They may make new emergency Queen cells

They have few flying bees so should Not swarm - but

The Original Brood box

Either

After 6 or 7 days move this hive to the opposite side of the new hive on the original site.
This is so that more flying bees are removed to reduce the risk of swarming.

Otherwise – After three or four days go through the brood box and remove any emergency cells. Leave the original Queen cell.


Questions?

Can’t Find the Queen

Move the Original Hive 1 Metre to the Side

Put a new Floor and Brood box with Frames on the original Site

Select a Frame with brood from Old hive - No Queen Cells

Replace 1 frame in the new Brood box with this frame of brood covered with bees

Put an empty super on top of the new brood box to make space

Take Frames from the old brood box brush bees into the new box

Put each frame without bees aside – In a cardboard? box

Brush bees from the empty old Brood box and old Floor into the new

The purpose of these actions is to put all the bees in the new box

All this puts lots of bees in the air and easier said than done

The Queen must now be in the new box

Remove the super you put above the new Brood box and put on a Queen excluder

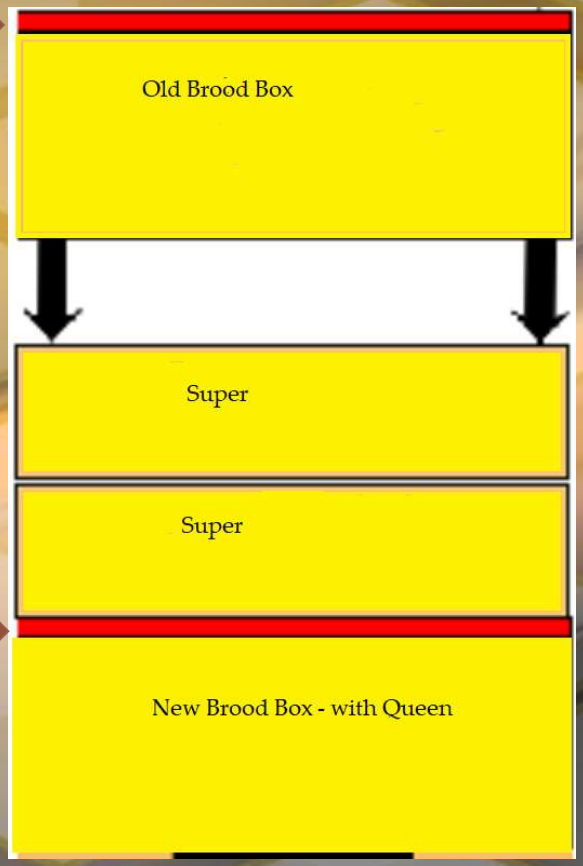
Put the original supers back on

Put frames from the cardboard box back into the original brood box reducing the number of Queen cells to just one good one – you could easily have damaged some putting them aside

Put the old Brood box with the frames, brood and Queen cell on top of the new set-up

What you have now

Crown board



Queen excluder

Wait a couple of hours or up to a day

Nurse bees will have climbed up through the supers to the brood in the old Brood box

The Old Floor is on the New site

Take the Original Brood box off the New set-up and put on the Old Floor

Close up both hives

Wait 3 or 4 days

Check both hives for Queen cells

In the Old hive in the New location

In the New Hive in the Original location

Leave the Queen cell you started with and remove any others

If there are Queen Cells assess the situation.
Are they swarm cells or emergency cells?

What to do next in all cases

Continue to examine the hive with the Queen as normal – do not think that the colony will not try to swarm again.

Do not examine the hive with the Queen cell for about 20 days. After this time if all has gone well you may be able to see new brood. Before this time you may disturb the new Queen and lose her

Artificial Swam Method

A repeat of the animation

A video description of the process

With thanks to North Herts BKA


Questions?

The Colony has already Swarmed

A sealed Queen cell often means the colony has swarmed

An “emerged” Queen cell usually means the colony has swarmed

Ragged opening, hinged lid

Hinged lid not always present

Are there eggs in Worker Cells

If there are multiple eggs in cells you have a problem that can probably not be rectified

No – the colony has swarmed

Yes – The colony may not have swarmed

Are there Unsealed Queen Cells

Recheck for Queen

If Yes –Remove the sealed cells –after 7 days reduce the (now sealed) cells to one

If No –Reduce the number of Sealed cells to one and hope for the best.

If not found proceed as for Queen not found swarm control

Finally

There are many ways to control swarming

All depend on the rule that three factors must be present for a swarm

A Queen

Brood

Flying Bees

Completely remove any one and the colony will not swarm

You have to understand what you are doing and not just follow a set of instructions

You must have the lifecycle of the Queen in mind at all times