

Honeybee Management

The year's work in the apiary and how this is dependent upon the annual colony cycle and the timing of local bee forage;

January

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oxalic acid treatment (if Beekeeper plans to)• Check for stores and feed if necessary.• Check for damage to hives.• Repair/replace woodwork for next season• Reposition hives in apiary• Check entrance free of dead bees/debris• Attend Winter Association meetings/briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check for stores and feed if necessary.• Check for damage to hives.• Repair/replace woodwork for next season• Reposition hives in apiary• Check entrance free of dead bees/debris Attend Winter Association meetings/briefings• In cluster• Flying on warm days for toilet and water• No brood• Utilising stores	None

February

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check for hive damage• Check for stores and feed if necessary• Repair/replace woodwork for next season• Check entrance free of dead bees/debris• Attend Winter Association meetings/briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cluster starting to break up• Queen may start to lay if warm enough• Utilising stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hazel• Snowdrop

March

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quick check of colony to see if bees present• Check adequate stores present, feed if necessary• Monitor varroa• Remove Mouse Guards• Mark and clip queens• Check entrance free of dead bees/debris• Give additional feed if over winter OSR in area• Cleanse Hive (clean floor) if good weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cluster broken up• Queen laying• Bees starting to forage for pollen and nectar• Utilising stores• Winter bees dying	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hazel• Snowdrop• Crocus• Salix (willow)• Pears• Plum

April

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start regular checks of brood box• Full check for brood diseases• Add supers• Carry out comb change e.g. shook swarm, or Bailey• Cleanse hive (clean Floor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queen laying strongly if good nectar flow• Colony increasing in size• Drones being laid• Queen cells produced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oil seed rape• Apples• Cherry• Dandelion• Ribes• Mahonia• Hawthorn

May

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular checks• Swarm control• Artificial swarms for increase• Drone brood culling• Collect swarms• Add supers• Honey harvest if spring crop• New queen raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queen laying strongly• Colony increasing in size• Drones being hatched• Queen cells produced• Virgin queens on mating flights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oil seed rape• Apples• Cherry• Dandelion• Ribes• Mahonia• Horse chestnut• Sycamore• Holly• Field bean• Dead nettle• Raspberry

June

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular checks• Swarm control• Artificial swarms for increase• Drone brood culling• Monitor for varroa• Collect swarms• Add supers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queen continues to lay, rate dependent on flow rate• May produce queen cells• Virgin queens on mating flights• Colony size at maximum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• White clover• Blackberry• Lime• Holly• Borage• Dandelion• Dead nettle• Privot• Ragwort• Oil seed rape• Sunflower

July

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage	Forage
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check for queen cells• Add supers or honey harvest• Unite colonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queen still laying worker brood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Old mans beard• Dandelion• Dead nettle• Heathers• Cotoneaster• Privot• Michaelmas daisies• Ragwort• Rosebay willow herb	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Borage• White clover• Hebe• Sunflower• Blackberry• Dandelion• Dead nettle• Heathers• Lavender

August

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage	Forage
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Honey harvest• Return extracted supers to hives for cleaning• Full check for brood diseases• Monitor varroa• Treat with Apiguard• Replace queens as necessary• Unite colonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Colony starting to contract• No new drone brood• Queens rate of laying slows, may stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Red clover• Blackberry• Heather• Borage• Michaelmas daisies• Dandelion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dead nettle• Lavender• Privot• Ragwort• Roseabay• willow herb• Sunflower

September

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treat with Apiguard• Replace queens as necessary• Start feeding• Allow Supersedure if it occurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drone ejected from hive• Queen rate of laying slows	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Michaelmas daisies• Ivy

October

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feed• Put on Mouse Guards• Protect against woodpeckers• Monitor for varroa• Increase air flow• Remove queen excluder• Attend Winter Association meetings/briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cluster starting to form• Bees will fly for water and toilet on warm days• Very little brood• Utilising stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ivy

November

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check adequate stores by hefting• Start to prepare frames etc. for next season• Check entrance free of dead bees/debris• Attend Winter Association meetings/briefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In cluster• Flying on warm days for water and toilet• Very little brood• Utilising stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ivy

December

Month	Work by Beekeeper	State of Colony	Forage
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check adequate stores• Check for damage• Repair/replace woodwork for next season• Oxalic acid treatment• Reposition hives in apiary• Check entrance free of dead bees/debris	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cluster• No brood• Flying on warm days for water and toilet• Utilising stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None