

A close-up photograph of a bee on a purple flower. The bee is positioned in the center-left, facing left, with its head near the flower's stamens. The flower is a dense cluster of small purple blossoms. The background is a soft, out-of-focus yellow-green.

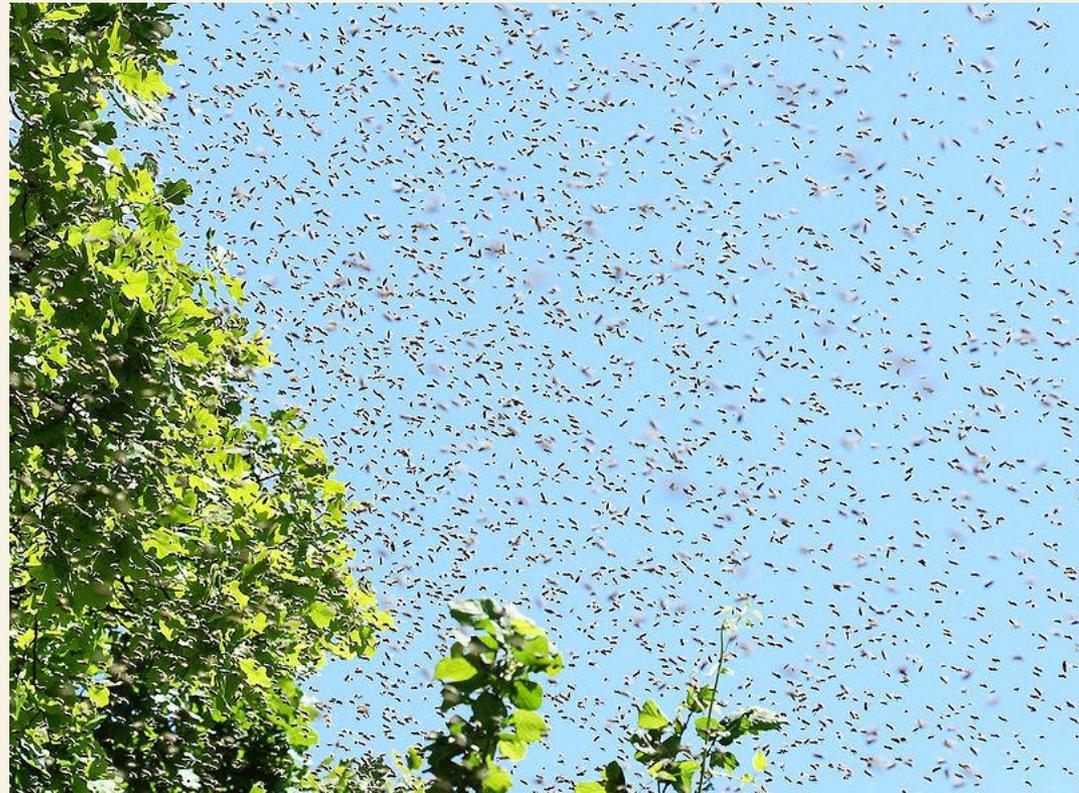
HOW TO OPERATE „BORT“ HIVES AND LOG HIVES

Some principles

André Wermelinger
Date: 26.12.2013

How to start with the bees

- Normally, we opt for spontaneous natural swarms!
- The Polish tree beekeepers had up to 50% of their tree hives occupied within the first 2 years!
- If you cannot wait, try with a natural swarm or an artificial swarm.
- What counts is starting very early in the year for having enough nectar to create a new brood nest (most places in Switzerland until end of May).



According to the FreeTheBees methodology, tree beekeeping is a natural method of keeping bees

	Natural Colonies	Natural Beekeeping	Extensive Honey Production	Intensive Honey Production
Hive and changes in volume	Fixed volume, e.g. hollowed out tree trunk	Volume increase beneath the brood nest (nading)	Volume increase above the brood nest (honey chamber)	Volume increase above the brood nest (honey chamber)
Reproduction	Natural swarm	Natural swarm	Natural prime swarm Afterswarms possibly pre-empted by dividing into nucs	Nucs, artificial swarms, queen rearing
Feeding	X	In extremis to avoid colony losses. Honey/Sugar mix	Honey/Sugar mix	Sugar
Comb Building	Natural comb, fixed comb	Natural comb, fixed comb	Natural comb, possibly using frames but no foundation comb	Removable frames with foundation comb
Varroa Treatment	X	Natural (e.g. essential oils)	Essential oils, possibly oxalic acid	Formic acid, oxalic acid, acaricides
Yield	Natural swarms, maybe some honey after several years	Natural swarms , small amounts of honey for personal use	Natural swarms, Nucs, Honey	Honey, Nucs , occasionally a natural swarm

Empty hives are normally left open

- In order to avoid moisture, uninhabited hives are left open for the rest of the year.



Feeding

The easy way to feed!
Don't forget: Feeding means
interacting with the natural
selection!



Treating

If a treatment is necessary, this might be done either from the top (for example thymol), or from the ground (for example oxalic acid).

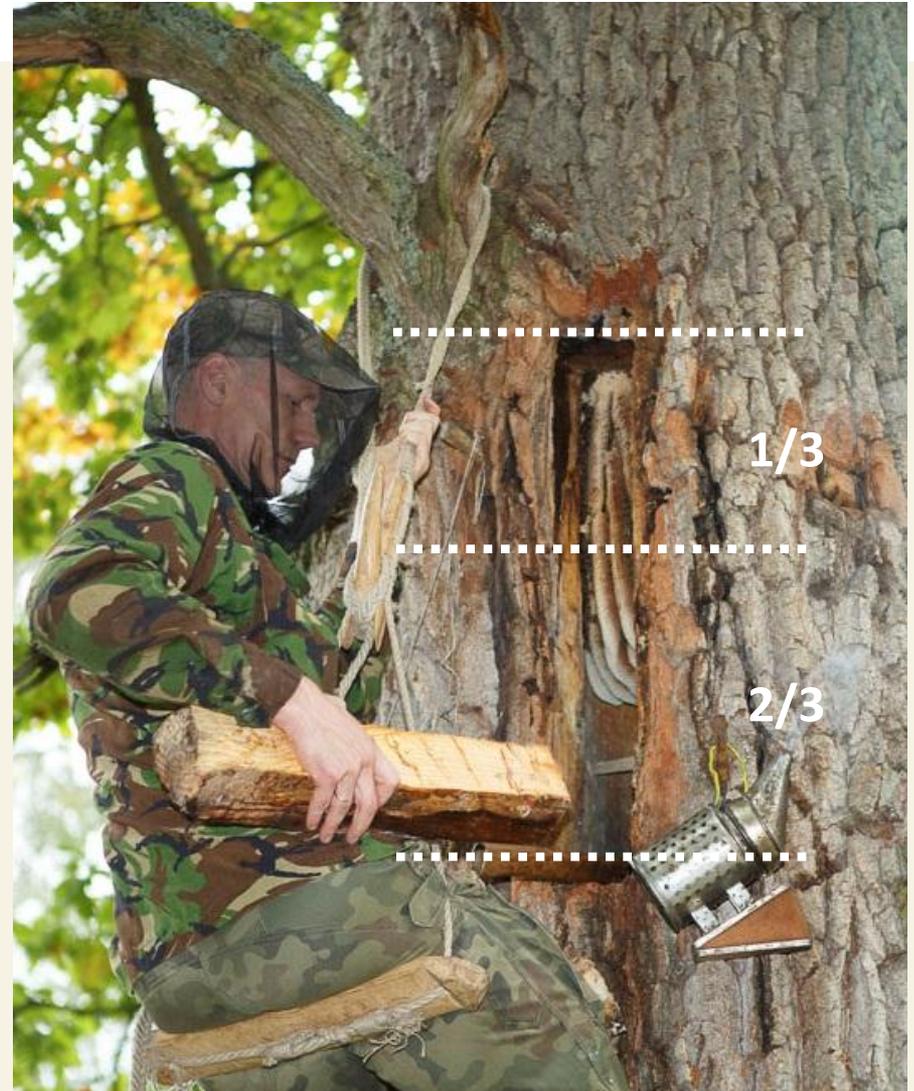
Don't forget: Anything that opposes the mite just delays the arrival of co-adaptation (citation of David Heaf)



Harvesting

The brood nest is cut in three parts. The upper third is food for the bees. The lower two thirds may be harvested by the beekeeper.

In Poland harvesting is done by the end of September. According to their experience, there is no brood underneath at this time. Wax is cut every year underneath up to $1/3$. If there is some honey, it's yours!



What Nicol Jacobus experienced in 1568..

Log hive

- 3 to 5 years of development of the bee colony without any harvest!
- Afterwards harvesting every year.

Natural cycles

- Longer cycles than one year...
- Like an apple tree that we plant.
Harvesting only after some years...?

Is that still possible? Who tried it so far?
Who knows..???



Don't forget about our new responsibility!

For centuries we have known:

For producing honey, you need to influence the natural swarming

But:

Formerly there existed a feral bee population!

Feral bee colonies	Beekeeper
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adaptation to the climatic changes• Locally adapted races• Survival of the species Natural evolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Honey• Pollination• Productive races

Natural selection

Selection made by man

