

BEE BLOG

SPRING UPDATE: NEW BEES

May has brought a mixed bag of weather with plenty of beautiful sunshine but also a fair amount of rain. Whilst this affords great growing conditions for plants to grow and for bees to ultimately forage on, it can make finding a space for inspecting the hives tricky.

Our Henlow bees have been with us for two weeks now and they have settled really well. We have only been conducting brief inspections so far so as not to disturb them too much whilst they build the colonies. We simply look for 5 key things and once they are all seen we leave them to it.

So, what is it we look for during an inspection? The five key things are:

1. **Food** - can we see pollen and nectar? There may even be some capped honey.
2. **Space** - have they got enough space for the colony to grow into?
3. **Queen** - can we spot the Queen or can we see eggs to indicate she is there somewhere?
4. **Swarming** - are there any signs of a swarm instinct? We will look at this in more detail another time.
5. **Disease/Pests** - are there any signs of pests or disease?





SPOTLIGHT ON THE "POLLEN PANTS"

We then moved on to the second hive. When we inspected this hive the previous weekend, all was well and I would say appeared to be the stronger of the two colonies. This week was slightly different. We saw lots of pollen, nectar and some capped honey for the first time. There was a lot of capped brood (bee larvae pupating), there is still plenty of space for them to grow into and no signs of pests or disease. So what was missing?

We couldn't see the Queen, but they can be hard to spot so we search for eggs instead. Unfortunately there were no eggs to be seen and sadly we concluded we may have lost the Queen. This was a really sad moment but unfortunately it happens for a variety of reasons.

The question then is, what do you do next to ensure the survival of the colony?

This is why it is good to have two colonies. The first hive had plenty of eggs and we physically saw the queen so we knew all was well. To save our Queenless colony, we donated a frame of eggs from the first hive. The workers in the Queenless hive should now create an 'emergency Queen cell' to resolve the situation. We will have a quick look mid week just to check that they have started this process. If they have, we will leave them alone to raise their new Queen.

We will add a little update later in the week, hopefully with news that the bees are sorting it out for themselves.

IF YOU WOULD
LIKE TO KNOW
MORE ABOUT
HENLOW'S BEES
PLEASE
CONTACT
MRS EVANS



ON SATURDAY, WE INSPECTED BOTH HIVES. THE FIRST MOST DEFINITELY SATISFIED ALL OF THE FIVE KEY AREAS AND WE WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO SPOT THE QUEEN. CAN YOU SEE HER IN THE PICTURE BELOW?