

WEEK OF
OCT 4-10
2026

VOL. 1
ISSUE 001

THE EVERYDAY
BEE KEEPER'S
→ WEEKLY REPORT ←

YOUR HIVES, YOUR SUCCESS

SMITHS FARM
PUTNEY • SOUTHWEST GEORGIA

INSIDE THIS WEEK

THIS WEEK'S MISSION

Compare colony strength, brood coverage, food stores and available space. Record the differences.

CURRENT WEATHER

Storm chances require a final forecast check; stronger wind may reduce safe open-hive time.

HEALTH WATCH

Give extra attention to uneven colony strength, brood consistency.

LOCAL FORAGE

In bloom near you: Goldenrod, Asters and Ragweed. More on the forage page.

PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE FOR HEALTHY HIVES

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BLAIRSVILLE
BLAIRSVILLE • GA

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PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE FOR HEALTHY HIVES

WEEKLY BRIEFING

Your Week Ahead

TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON
10/6	10/7	10/8	10/9	10/10	10/11	10/12
16%	1%	6%	29%	74%	69%	33%
78/63°	82/59°	82/60°	81/62°	77/65°	81/65°	83/63°
Good morning	Good morning	Best day	Storm risk	Storm risk	Observe only	Storm risk

Best work windows

- Best Thursday 10 AM–1 PM 68–76°F · Partly Sunny · 2% rain, wind 10 mph
- Alternate Wednesday 9 AM–1 PM 65–76°F · Mostly Sunny · 0% rain, wind 15 mph
- Alternate Friday 10 AM–1 PM 68–76°F · Partly Sunny · 13% rain, wind 10 mph

Near-term outlook: Storm chances require a final forecast check; stronger wind may reduce safe open-hive time.

This week's mission: Compare colony strength, brood coverage, food stores and available space. Record the differences before changing equipment or feeding.

This Week's Priority Tasks

Your last 4 weeks (Albany SW Georgia Regional Airport, 7 miles away): 2°F warmer than normal, rain 69% of normal, 17 days of 90°F or more. Source: NOAA.

- Check for mites. This is the most important job of the fall. Check colonies more often in the fall; about every three weeks, weather permitting. (lesson 55)
- Make sure they have enough food for winter. Colonies should weigh at least 100 pounds by late fall. (lesson 39)
- Set the hive up for winter. Crowd the bees by giving them only one or two honey supers, so they store honey in the brood nest. (lesson 52)
- Fix queen problems now. Late summer and early fall is the time to sort out any queen problems in the apiary. (lessons 42–45)

South Georgia & coast: colonies stay active longer and keep some brood; check weight more often.

Question about your weather or work days? [Email us](#)

WEEKLY BRIEFING

Your Week Ahead

TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON
10/6	10/7	10/8	10/9	10/10	10/11	10/12
0%	0%	0%	1%	44%	78%	26%
75/48°	78/51°	81/53°	80/53°	72/53°	70/54°	75/53°
Good morning	Best day	Good morning	Good morning	Morning only	Storm risk	Morning only

Best work windows

- Best Wednesday 11 AM–1 PM 68–72°F · Sunny · 0% rain, wind 0 mph
- Alternate Thursday 11 AM–1 PM 70–74°F · Sunny · 0% rain, wind 0 mph
- Alternate Friday 10 AM–1 PM 65–75°F · Mostly Sunny · 0% rain, wind 0 mph

Near-term outlook: Storm chances require a final forecast check; stronger wind may reduce safe open-hive time.

This week's mission: Compare colony strength, brood coverage, food stores and available space. Record the differences before changing equipment or feeding.

This Week's Priority Tasks

Your last 4 weeks (Cleveland, 23 miles away): 4°F warmer than normal, rain 88% of normal, 4 days of 90°F or more. Source: NOAA.

- Running 4°F warmer than normal: the bees stay busy and eat through stores faster. Lift the back of the hive to check its weight (lesson 52).
- Check for mites. This is the most important job of the fall. Check colonies more often in the fall; about every three weeks, weather permitting. (lesson 55)
- Make sure they have enough food for winter. Colonies should weigh at least 100 pounds by late fall. (lesson 39)
- Set the hive up for winter. Crowd the bees by giving them only one or two honey supers, so they store honey in the brood nest. (lesson 52)

North Georgia mountains: winter comes earliest; finish winter setup and feeding early in the month.

Question about your weather or work days? [Email us](#)

HIVE TO-DO

Your Hive To-Do List

What each hive needs this week, most important first. How to do each job is at the bottom.

 Hive 2 (yellow)

• Act now

-  **1 Do a mite count** 4 per 100
-  **2 Confirm the queen** Not confirmed
-  **3 Look at the brood pattern** Spotty brood pattern (Oct 1)

Do a mite count

Why: Varroa mites are the biggest threat to a colony. A count tells you whether the bees need help before winter.

How: Scoop about ½ cup of bees (about 300) from a brood frame. Do an alcohol wash or sugar roll and count the mites. Mites ÷ 3 = mites per 100 bees. Reply to your weekly email with the number.
Read more: Lesson 55 · Lesson 56

Confirm the queen

Why: Eggs mean a queen was laying in the last 3 days, so you don't have to find her.

How: Hold a frame from the middle of the brood nest with the sun behind you. Look for single eggs standing in the bottom of cells.
Read more: Lesson 36 · Lesson 42

Look at the brood pattern

Why: Solid capped brood shows a good queen and a healthy colony. A spotty pattern can mean queen trouble or disease.

How: Check one or two middle frames. Mostly solid capped brood with few empty cells is good. Note what you see.
Read more: Lesson 34 · Lesson 42

HIVE TO-DO

Your Hive To-Do List

What each hive needs this week, most important first. How to do each job is at the bottom.

 Hive 1 (long)

• Act now

-  **1 Watch the pests** Wax moth, a few larvae in the follower board

 Hive 2 (green)

• Check soon

-  **1 Do a mite count** 2.7 per 100
-  **2 Watch the pests** Varroa, 2 bees with deformed wings
-  **3 Note the bees' temperament** Defensive

 Hive 3 (blue)

• Check soon

-  **1 Look at the brood pattern** Small patch of young brood...
-  **2 Check food stores** Light stores (Sep 30)
-  **3 Check colony strength** Small, 5 frames covered with...

Do a mite count

Why: Varroa mites are the biggest threat to a colony. A count tells you whether the bees need help before winter.

How: Scoop about ½ cup of bees (about 300) from a brood frame. Do an alcohol wash or sugar roll and count the mites. Mites ÷ 3 = mites per 100 bees. Reply to your weekly email with the number.
Read more: Lesson 55 · Lesson 56

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Read more: Lesson 34 · Lesson 42

HIVE TO-DO

Your Hive To-Do List (continued)

Check food stores

Why: A colony needs plenty of capped honey to get through winter.
How: Lift the back of the hive to feel its weight, or look for frames of capped honey. If it's light, feed sugar syrup (lesson 39).
Read more: Lesson 39 · Lesson 52

Watch the pests

Why: Pests like small hive beetles take over weak colonies.
How: Keep the colony strong, use beetle traps, and don't give the bees more space than they can guard.
Read more: Lesson 64 · Lesson 53

Check colony strength

Why: Weak colonies have a harder time in winter and are easier for robbers and pests.
How: Count the frames covered with bees and compare with last time. Narrow the entrance on a weak colony.
Read more: Lesson 47 · Lesson 52

Note the bees' temperament

Why: A sudden change in mood can mean the colony lost its queen, is being robbed, or was disturbed.
How: Work calmly in good weather and write down how the bees act on each visit.
Read more: Lesson 31 · Lesson 43

'Your Hive To-Do List' is shorter on this side.
It ended on the page before.

WEATHER + FORAGE

Local Forage Outlook

Likely blooming near your apiary this week.

Goldenrod

September to October
Provides pollen and nectar. Mid-to-late August into early October (Clemson); heavy, sticky pollen suited to insects.

Asters

Fall
Provides pollen and nectar. With goldenrod, the fall flow that feeds colonies before winter.

Ragweed

Blooms with goldenrod
Provides pollen. Wind-pollinated (the hay-fever plant), but bees do gather some of its pollen in fall.

Also in bloom nearby

Mexican Clover, Primrose Willow, Smart Weed, Spanish Needle, Spotted Mint, Wild Mustard, Carolina Doll's-daisy, Narrowleaf Sunflower, Savanna Sunflower, Elegant Blazing-star, Narrow-leaved Silkgrass. Includes North Florida's bloom calendar, the closest published month-by-month calendar for your area.

What to watch at the hive

Confirm actual colony use through incoming pollen colors, flight direction, fresh nectar, stored food and hive-weight change. Each plant's pollen usually has its own color, so a new color on the bees' legs at the entrance usually means they have found a new source (Clemson HGIC 1740). Local forage remains site-specific, so the condition inside each hive must guide feeding and space decisions.

Nectar & feeding

- In bloom near you: Goldenrod, Asters and Ragweed.
- This month: Make sure they have enough food for winter. (lesson 39)
From the forage calendars, this week's forecast and the Seasonal Guide.

Sources: UGA Extension Bulletin 1045, Honey Bees and Beekeeping, Table 2; Clemson HGIC 2326 Goldenrod & Ragweed (2021); Clemson HGIC 1740 Honey Bee Pollen Timing Chart (2021); UF/IFAS Extension, Florida Honey Bee Plants (ENY-171/IN1223); USDA ARS, Pollens to Fit a Honey Bee's Every Season (2021); Pollinator Partnership / NAPPC, Selecting Plants for Pollinators: Outer Coastal Plain Mixed Forest

WEATHER + FORAGE

Local Forage Outlook

Likely blooming near your apiary this week.

Goldenrod

Mid-to-late August into early October (Clemson)
Provides pollen and nectar. Heavy, sticky pollen suited to insects.

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Fall
Provides pollen and nectar. With goldenrod, the fall flow that feeds colonies before winter.

Ragweed

Blooms with goldenrod
Provides pollen. Wind-pollinated (the hay-fever plant), but bees do gather some of its pollen in fall.

Also in bloom nearby

Eastern Aquweed, Green-headed Coneflower.

What to watch at the hive

Confirm actual colony use through incoming pollen colors, flight direction, fresh nectar, stored food and hive-weight change. Each plant's pollen usually has its own color, so a new color on the bees' legs at the entrance usually means they have found a new source (Clemson HGIC 1740). Local forage remains site-specific, so the condition inside each hive must guide feeding and space decisions.

Nectar & feeding

- In bloom near you: Goldenrod, Asters and Ragweed.
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HIVE REPORT

Your Hives This Week

Smiths Farm · 2 hives · from your report of Oct 1

Good Watch Act now Not checked yet Recorded

Dates show when it was last seen

☐ **Hive 1** (white) · checked Oct 1 • All good

Mites 1 per 100 Oct 1	Queen Queen seen Oct 1	Brood Solid capped brood (Oct 1) Oct 1	Stores Plenty of capped honey (Oct 1) Oct 1
Colony Strong, 8 frames covered... Oct 1	Pests No pests seen Oct 1	Temperament Calm Oct 1	Feeding Not feeding Oct 1

→ **Do this first:** Keep up your regular checks and send in what you see.

☐ **Hive 2** (yellow) · checked Oct 1 • Act now

Mites 4 per 100 Oct 1	Queen Not confirmed Oct 1	Brood Spotty brood pattern (Oct 1) Oct 1	Stores Light stores (Oct 1) Oct 1
Colony Weak, 4 frames covered with... Oct 1	Pests Beetles, a few under the lid Oct 1	Temperament Defensive Oct 1	Feeding Not feeding Oct 1

→ **Do this first:** Treat for mites now, using one of this week's treatments, and count again after (lesson 56), then look for eggs to confirm the queen (lessons 42–45).

HIVE REPORT

Your Hives This Week

Blairsville · 3 hives · from your report of Sep 30

Good Watch Act now Not checked yet Recorded

Dates show when it was last seen

☐ **Hive 1** (long) · long Langstroth · checked Sep 30 • Act now

Mites 0.3 per 100 Oct 1	Queen Queen seen Sep 30	Brood Good pattern Sep 30	Stores Heavy Sep 30
Colony Medium, 6 frames covered... Sep 30	Pests Wax moth, a few larvae in the follower board Sep 30	Temperament Calm Sep 30	Feeding Not feeding Sep 30

→ **Do this first:** Deal with the pests you found (lesson 50).

☐ **Hive 2** (green) · vertical Langstroth · checked Sep 30 • Check soon

Mites 2.7 per 100 Oct 1	Queen Queen seen Sep 30	Brood Solid brood (Sep 30) Sep 30	Stores Medium stores (Sep 30) Sep 30
Colony Strong, 9 frames covered... Sep 30	Pests Varroa, 2 bees with deformed wings Sep 30	Temperament Defensive Sep 30	Feeding Feeding syrup Sep 30

→ **Do this first:** Do a mite wash and reply with the number (lesson 55).

HIVE REPORT

Your Hives This Week (continued)

 **Mites per 100 bees** Good · under 2 Action · 2-3 Danger · 3+

Hive 1 (white)
■ Sep 10: 0.7
■ Oct 1: 1
— **Good:** a healthy level; check again in a few weeks (under 2 per 100 in summer and fall)
Hive 2 (yellow)
■ Sep 10: 2
■ Oct 1: 4
— **Danger:** treat now (3 or more per 100 bees, USDA Agricultural Research Service)
Action level for summer and fall: Honey Bee Health Coalition; danger at 3: USDA ARS.

 **How Your Hives Are Doing:** your whole year, week by week, updated with every report. [Open it ►](#)

HIVE REPORT

Your Hives This Week (continued)

 **Hive 3** (blue) · vertical Langstroth · checked Sep 30 • Check soon

 Mites 0.7 per 100 Oct 1	 Queen New queen Sep 30	 Brood Small patch of young brood... Sep 30	 Stores Light stores (Sep 30) Sep 30
 Colony Small, 5 frames covered with... Sep 30	 Pests Robbing, fighting at the entrance Sep 30	 Temperament Defensive Sep 30	 Feeding Feeding Sep 30

→ **Do this first:** Heft the hive to check winter stores (lesson 39).

 **Mites per 100 bees** Good · under 2 Action · 2-3 Danger · 3+

Hive 1 (long)
■ Sep 10: 0.3
■ Oct 1: 0.3
— **Good:** a healthy level; check again in a few weeks (under 2 per 100 in summer and fall)
Hive 2 (green)
■ Sep 10: 1.3
■ Oct 1: 2.7
— **Action level:** plan a treatment (2 or more per 100 in summer and fall, Honey Bee Health Coalition)
Hive 3 (blue)
■ Sep 10: 1.7
■ Oct 1: 0.7
— **Good:** a healthy level; check again in a few weeks (under 2 per 100 in summer and fall)
Action level for summer and fall: Honey Bee Health Coalition; danger at 3: USDA ARS.

 **How Your Hives Are Doing:** your whole year, week by week, updated with every report. [Open it ►](#)

HIVE REPORT

Your Hives This Week (continued)

 Mite treatments that fit this week

Hive 2: the last mite count is at or above the action level. These labels allow this week's daytime highs (77–83°F):

- **Formic Pro** (formic acid): Use when outside day temperature 50-85°F (10-29.5°C). Honey supers: Can use with honey supers.
- **Formic Acid 65% (Vita Bee Health)** (formic acid): Use when outside temperatures are between 50 to 86 °F (10°C to 30°C) and leave hive entrances fully open. Honey supers: Do not use when colonies are supered for honey.
- **Apiguard** (thymol): Between 60°F and 105°F (15 to 40°C); do not apply when the colony activity is very low. Honey supers: Do not use when colonies are supered for honey.
- **Thymovar** (thymol): Between 60°F and 85°F (15 to 30°C) Honey supers: Do not use when colonies are supered for honey.
- **ApiLife Var** (thymol, eucalyptol, menthol, camphor): 64-95°F (18-35°C); lower efficacy if average daily temperatures are below 54°F (12°C) degrees. Honey supers: Do not use when colonies are supered for honey; remove treatment at least 1 month before harvesting honey.
- **HopGuard 3** (hops beta acids): Above 55°F (13°C) and under 100°F (38°C). Honey supers: Can use with honey supers; honey or wax may only be harvested from honey supers, not the treated brood chambers.
- **Apivar** (amitraz): no temperature limit listed. Lesson 56 notes documented mite resistance: check that it's working.

Oxalic acid works best with little or no brood (lesson 56). Follow the label exactly: it's the law (lesson 57). Count again after treating.

Source: Honey Bee Health Coalition, Tools for Varroa Management (9th ed., 2026), product pages 20-33. Label wording quoted; no product is recommended over another.

HIVE REPORT

Your Hives This Week (continued)

 Mite treatments that fit this week

Hive 2: the last mite count is at or above the action level. These labels allow this week's daytime highs (70–81°F):

- **Formic Pro** (formic acid): Use when outside day temperature 50-85°F (10-29.5°C). Honey supers: Can use with honey supers.
- **Formic Acid 65% (Vita Bee Health)** (formic acid): Use when outside temperatures are between 50 to 86 °F (10°C to 30°C) and leave hive entrances fully open. Honey supers: Do not use when colonies are supered for honey.
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- **Thymovar** (thymol): Between 60°F and 85°F (15 to 30°C) Honey supers: Do not use when colonies are supered for honey.
- **ApiLife Var** (thymol, eucalyptol, menthol, camphor): 64-95°F (18-35°C); lower efficacy if average daily temperatures are below 54°F (12°C) degrees. Honey supers: Do not use when colonies are supered for honey; remove treatment at least 1 month before harvesting honey.
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HIVE REPORT

Your Hives This Week (continued)

❄️ Winter-Readiness Check

This month's job	Hive 1	Hive 2
Check for mites. This is the most important job of the fall. (55)	● 1 per 100 on Oct 1.	● 4 per 100 on Oct 1.
Make sure they have enough food for winter. (39)	● Plenty of capped honey	● Light stores
Fix queen problems now. (42–45)	● Queen seen, eggs and young larvae present.	● Queen not seen.
Combine weak colonies. (47)	● Strong, 8 frames covered with bees	● Weak, 4 frames covered with bees

Jobs from the Seasonal Guide, October (UGA Bee Program and others); status from your own reports.

✉️ Following up on what you sent

Thanks for the Hive 1 mite count on Oct 1: 1 per 100 (alcohol wash). It's in the trend below.

Thanks for the Hive 2 mite count on Oct 1: 4 per 100 (alcohol wash). It's in the trend below.

Your report from Oct 1 is included in this issue's hive notes and checks.

📅 What's normal in October

Brood production and honey production are dropping as the season winds down. Mites matter most now: colonies with high mite loads in the fall are more likely to crash and potentially die during the winter.

From the Seasonal Guide.

✉️ Send in your inspection report or mite count: [Email us ▶](#)

HIVE REPORT

Your Hives This Week (continued)

❄️ Winter-Readiness Check

This month's job	Hive 1	Hive 2	Hive 3
Check for mites. This is the most important job of the fall. (55)	● 0.3 per 100 on Oct 1.	● 2.7 per 100 on Oct 1.	● 0.7 per 100 on Oct 1.
Make sure they have enough food for winter. (39)	● Heavy, honey arch over the brood	● Medium stores	● Light stores
Fix queen problems now. (42–45)	● Queen seen, eggs present.	● Queen seen, eggs and larvae present.	● New queen, laying started.
Combine weak colonies. (47)	● Medium, 6 frames covered with bees	● Strong, 9 frames covered with bees	● Small, 5 frames covered with bees

Jobs from the Seasonal Guide, October (UGA Bee Program and others); status from your own reports.

✉️ Following up on what you sent

Thanks for the Hive 1 mite count on Oct 1: 0.3 per 100 (alcohol wash). It's in the trend below.

Thanks for the Hive 2 mite count on Oct 1: 2.7 per 100 (alcohol wash). It's in the trend below.

Thanks for the Hive 3 mite count on Oct 1: 0.7 per 100 (alcohol wash). It's in the trend below.

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Brood production and honey production are dropping as the season winds down. Mites matter most now: colonies with high mite loads in the fall are more likely to crash and potentially die during the winter.

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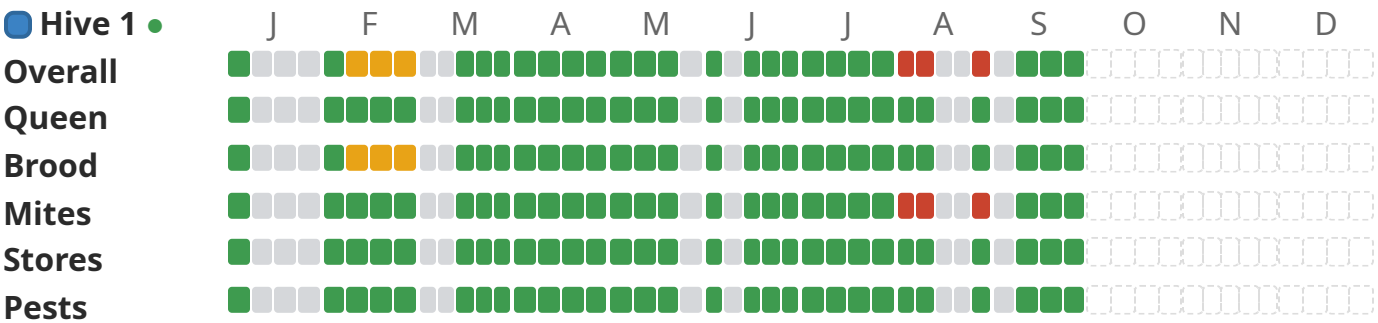
YOUR YEAR

How Your Hives Are Doing

 **EXAMPLE:** a made-up year of reports. Yours fills in from your own.

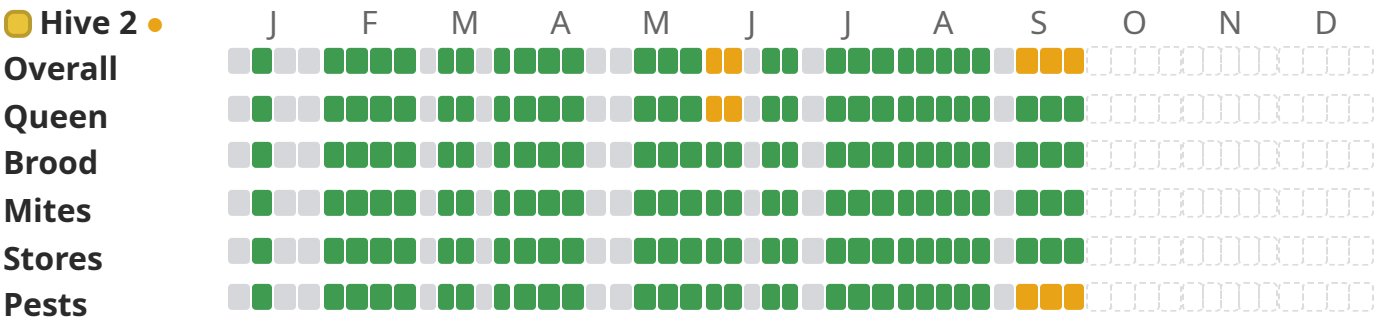
Good Watch Problem No report

Each bar is one week; every report fills one in · See it any time ▶



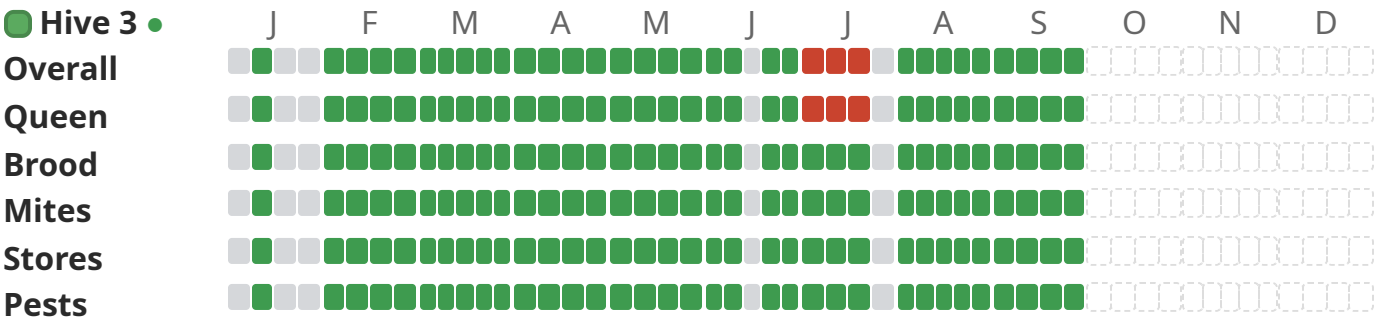
Problems this year:

Aug 8 Mites 3.3 per 100 bees **Fixed Sep 19** Feb 14 Spotty brood pattern **Fixed Mar 21**



Problems this year:

Sep 19 Small hive beetle present **Watch** Jun 6 Queen cells present **Fixed Jun 27**



Problems this year: Jul 11 Queen not found, no eggs **Fixed Aug 8**

 Send in your inspection report or mite count: [Email us ▶](#)

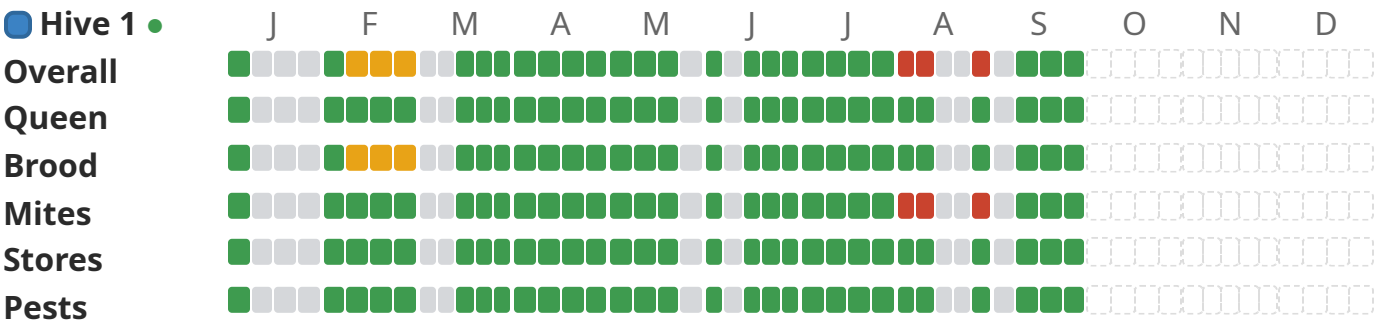
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How Your Hives Are Doing

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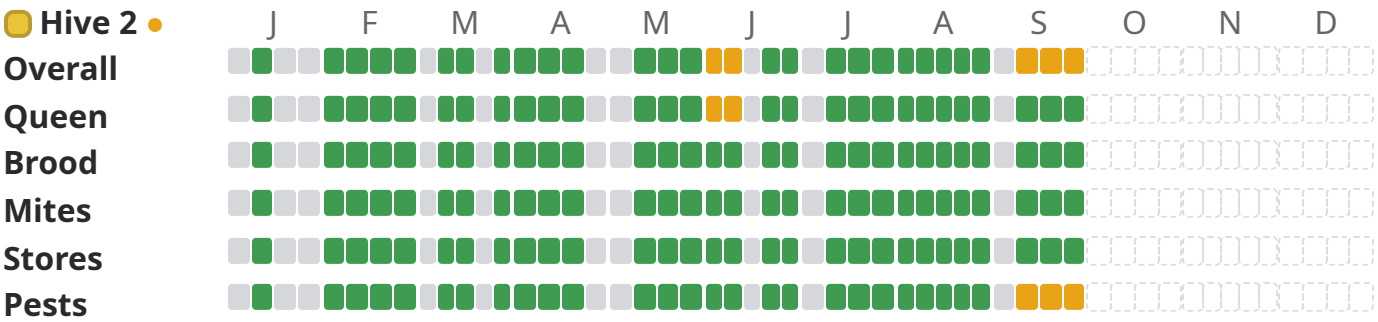
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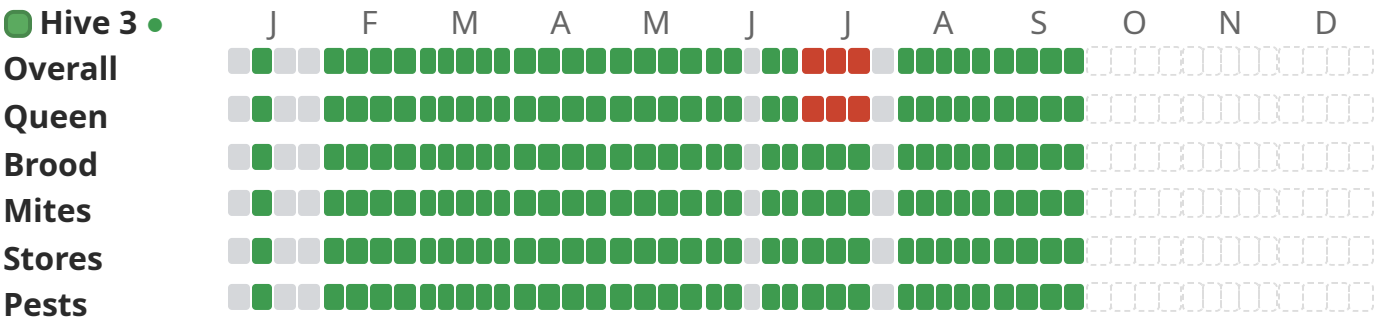
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Sep 19 Small hive beetle present **Watch** Jun 6 Queen cells present **Fixed Jun 27**



Problems this year: Jul 11 Queen not found, no eggs **Fixed Aug 8**

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HEALTH WATCH

Fall Health Watch

Varroa, Winter Stores and Robbing

Record any big change in brood, population or temper and compare it at the next inspection.

Varroa

Look for: You can't judge mites by eye. By the time bees with deformed wings show up, mite levels are already high.
Why it matters: Mites weaken bees and spread viruses. The mite level going into fall decides whether a colony survives the winter.
What to do: Wash or shake ½ cup of bees from a brood frame and count. Act at 2 mites per 100 bees in summer and fall (1 per 100 in winter and spring). (lesson 54–56)

Robbing

Look for: Fighting at the entrance, wax flakes on the landing board, frantic zig-zag flight, bees probing cracks.
Why it matters: When nectar is scarce, strong colonies rob weak ones, and robbing spreads mites and disease between hives.
What to do: Reduce entrances on weak colonies, feed inside the hive only, never spill syrup, and don't open hives while robbing is going on. (lesson 50)

Winter Stores

Look for: A hive that feels light when you lift one end, few frames of capped honey, bees clustered away from their food.
Why it matters: Starvation is one of the leading causes of colony death over winter, and colonies eat faster once brood rearing starts again.
What to do: Feed heavy 2:1 syrup inside the hive in fall if light; in winter, emergency dry sugar or a syrup bag right over the cluster. (lesson 39, 52, 67)

Small Hive Beetles

Look for: Small dark beetles running from the light under the lid and in corners; slimy, fermenting comb in bad cases.
Why it matters: Beetle larvae ruin comb and turn honey to slime, especially in weak colonies and honey supers waiting to be extracted.
What to do: Keep colonies strong, don't give them more room than they can guard, use traps, and extract honey promptly. (lesson 64)

HEALTH WATCH

Fall Health Watch

Varroa, Wax Moths and Yellowjackets and Hornets

Record any big change in brood, population or temper and compare it at the next inspection.

Varroa

Look for: You can't judge mites by eye. By the time bees with deformed wings show up, mite levels are already high.
Why it matters: Mites weaken bees and spread viruses. The mite level going into fall decides whether a colony survives the winter.
What to do: Wash or shake ½ cup of bees from a brood frame and count. Act at 2 mites per 100 bees in summer and fall (1 per 100 in winter and spring). (lesson 54–56)

Yellowjackets & Hornets

Look for: Wasps and hornets hovering at the entrance, snatching bees or slipping inside weak hives.
Why it matters: Late-season wasps raid weak colonies for bees, brood and honey.
What to do: Reduce entrances so weak colonies can defend themselves. Report any yellow-legged hornet to your state department of agriculture. (lesson 66, 69)

Wax Moths

Look for: Silk webbing, tunnels through comb, and dark droppings, mostly in weak colonies and stored comb.
Why it matters: In warm weather, wax moth larvae can destroy stored comb in a couple of weeks.
What to do: Keep colonies strong; freeze drawn comb for 72 hours before storing it sealed, or store it in light and moving air. (lesson 65)

Queen Problems

Look for: No eggs or young larvae, a spotty brood pattern, or bullet-shaped drone cappings in worker comb.
Why it matters: Without a good laying queen the colony dwindles, and laying workers can take over.
What to do: Look for eggs standing in cells; if there are none for two weeks or the pattern is poor, requeen. (lesson 42–44)

Quick health checks

- ✓ High mite loads and deformed wings going into winter.
- ✓ Robbing when you feed: feed inside the hive and don't spill syrup.
- ✓ Yellowjackets and hornets at weak colonies, and report any yellow-legged hornet.
- ✓ Mice looking for winter shelter as nights cool.

✉ Seeing something worrying at the hive? [Email us ►](#)

HEALTH WATCH

Fall Health Watch (continued)

✔ Quick health checks

- ✔ High mite loads and deformed wings going into winter.
- ✔ Robbing when you feed: feed inside the hive and don't spill syrup.
- ✔ Yellowjackets and hornets at weak colonies, and report any yellow-legged hornet.
- ✔ Mice looking for winter shelter as nights cool.

'Fall Health Watch' is shorter on this side.
It ended on the page before.

HEALTH SPOTLIGHT

Spot It: Deformed Wing Virus



Photo: Xolani90, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Look for young bees with shriveled, crumpled wings crawling on the landing board or the comb. That's deformed wing virus, and it's spread and made worse by varroa mites. A few can appear in any colony, but more than a handful means mites are high.

Don't wait: do a mite count this week, and if you're over the threshold, treat with a registered product by its label. Deformed wings are the mites' calling card.

More in Course Book lesson 62.

✉ Seeing something worrying at the hive?

Email us ►

HEALTH SPOTLIGHT

How To: A Quick Mite Count



Photo: Jürg Vollmer, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Flickr

Take a frame of open brood with plenty of bees, make sure the queen isn't on it, and scoop about ½ cup of bees (roughly 300). Shake them with powdered sugar or wash them in alcohol, then count the mites that come off. Divide by three for mites per 100 bees. In summer and fall, 2 or more per 100 means it's time to act. Write the number down so you can compare next time.

More in Course Book lesson 55.

✉ Seeing something worrying at the hive?

Email us ►

QUICK GUIDANCE

Questions & Plan Ahead

YOUR NEXT LESSON · 1 OF 87
What Keeping Bees Involves

Start Lesson 1 ▶

? Question of the Week

Which colony goes on top when uniting a laying-worker colony with a queenright one?

Answer: The laying-worker colony goes on top.

Course Book lesson 47: Uniting Two Colonies

📅 Plan Ahead: November

Finish winter setup. The quiet time begins.

- Finish winter setup. (lesson 52)
- Check winter stores. (lesson 39)
- Last mite check of the year. (lesson 56)

From the Seasonal Guide.

Questions, Photos & Your Next Report

Click **Email us** and your email opens with the subject filled in. Questions are answered by email, from approved beekeeping sources.

💬 Any beekeeping question [Email us ▶](#)

📷 Photos of your bees (2–4 clear shots) [Email us ▶](#)

📝 Inspection report or mite count [Email us ▶](#)

📄 Subscription help [Email us ▶](#)

📷 Good photos include

The whole hive or frame, where the concern is, a close view, and one wider view. Tell us the hive, the date, what changed, and what you've already tried.

Reading a printed copy? Write to curtis@myforgeguides.com

QUICK GUIDANCE

Questions & Plan Ahead

YOUR NEXT LESSON · 31 OF 87
Before You Open: Weather, Time of Day, Staying Calm

Start Lesson 31 ▶

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THIS MONTH

Helping All Pollinators

Honey bees are just one of many pollinators. How beekeepers and gardeners can help them all



Photo: Judy Gallagher, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Honey bees are one of thousands of pollinators; most native bees are solitary and nest in the ground or in stems.

Declines come from many causes together: habitat loss, pesticides, parasites and disease, poor nutrition.

Help: plant diverse flowers for every season, leave bare soil and stems (trim stems in their first winter, leave 12–24-inch stubble), provide water, and cut pesticide use.

What helps native pollinators helps your honey bees too.

 **Feeding bees near you now:** Goldenrod, Asters, Ragweed, Mexican Clover, Primrose Willow, Smart Weed, Spanish Needle and Spotted Mint.

The full lesson is Course Book lesson 82.

THIS MONTH

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YOUR NEXT LESSON

What Keeping Bees Involves



COURSE BOOK · LESSON 1 OF 87 · CHAPTER 1: WELCOME TO BEES
What you're signing up for, before you buy anything

What you'll learn

- Most beekeepers are hobbyists with a few hives, and it's an enjoyable hobby, but it takes time and effort to learn, especially about pests and diseases.
- Start preparing the autumn or winter before your bees arrive: gear, equipment and learning.
- Expect to spend hundreds of dollars on equipment; make a budget first.

[Click here to start Lesson 1 ►](#)



learn.myforgeguides.com/lessons/lesson-001.html

Reading a printed copy?

Point your phone's camera at the square code and tap the link. On the Course Book website, the arrows step one lesson at a time, chapter numbers 1 to 10 jump to any chapter, and the Course Index shows every lesson. Read ahead as much as you like. Next week's issue brings Lesson 2.

[Question about this lesson?](#) [Email us ►](#)

YOUR NEXT LESSON

Before You Open: Weather, Time of Day, Staying Calm



COURSE BOOK · LESSON 31 OF 87 · CHAPTER 5: WORKING YOUR BEES
Picking the right time, getting ready, and reading the hive from the outside

What you'll learn

- Inspect on a warm, sunny, calm day, ideally mid-day, when foragers are out.
- Gear on, smoker lit, tools and notebook ready, and a goal in mind.
- No strong scents; move slowly and smoothly; work from the side or back.

[Click here to start Lesson 31 ►](#)



learn.myforgeguides.com/lessons/lesson-031.html

Reading a printed copy?

Point your phone's camera at the square code and tap the link. On the Course Book website, the arrows step one lesson at a time, chapter numbers 1 to 10 jump to any chapter, and the Course Index shows every lesson. Read ahead as much as you like. Next week's issue brings Lesson 32.

[Question about this lesson?](#) [Email us ►](#)

SEND IT IN

Weekly Hive Inspection Record

Apiary: Smiths Farm Date: _____ Hive: ☐ 1 ☐ 2

Visit: ☐ Outside only ☐ Inside ☐ Both ☐ Feeding ☐ Treatment

 Entrance

- ☐ Normal activity
- ☐ Heavy activity
- ☐ Low / none
- ☐ Robbing suspected

 Queen / Brood

- ☐ Queen seen
- ☐ Eggs present
- ☐ Queen cells
- ☐ Queen not found

 Brood pattern

- ☐ Strong / normal
- ☐ Spotty
- ☐ Reduced
- ☐ No brood seen

 Colony / Stores

- ☐ Strong / average / weak
- ☐ Good honey
- ☐ Low honey
- ☐ Low pollen

 Pests

- ☐ Varroa concern
- ☐ Hive beetles
- ☐ Wax moth
- ☐ Needs follow-up

 Mite check

- ☐ Alcohol wash
- ☐ Sugar roll
- ☐ Sticky board (24 h)
- ☐ Mites counted: ____

Keep your own notes and type them, your questions and your mite count in a reply to your weekly email. Photos welcome. Mite sample: ½ cup of bees (about 300).
OK to share my question in the magazine (first name and town)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

 Notes

Educational information from cited university and government sources. Check your local conditions and always follow product labels.

Don't want this magazine any more? **Unsubscribe** ► One tap, no questions.

 Send in your inspection report or mite count: [Email us ►](#)

SEND IT IN

Weekly Hive Inspection Record

Apiary: Blairsville Date: _____ Hive: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3

Visit: ☐ Outside only ☐ Inside ☐ Both ☐ Feeding ☐ Treatment

 Entrance

- ☐ Normal activity
- ☐ Heavy activity
- ☐ Low / none
- ☐ Robbing suspected

 Queen / Brood

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THE PEANUT GALLERY

The Best Tool in the Box



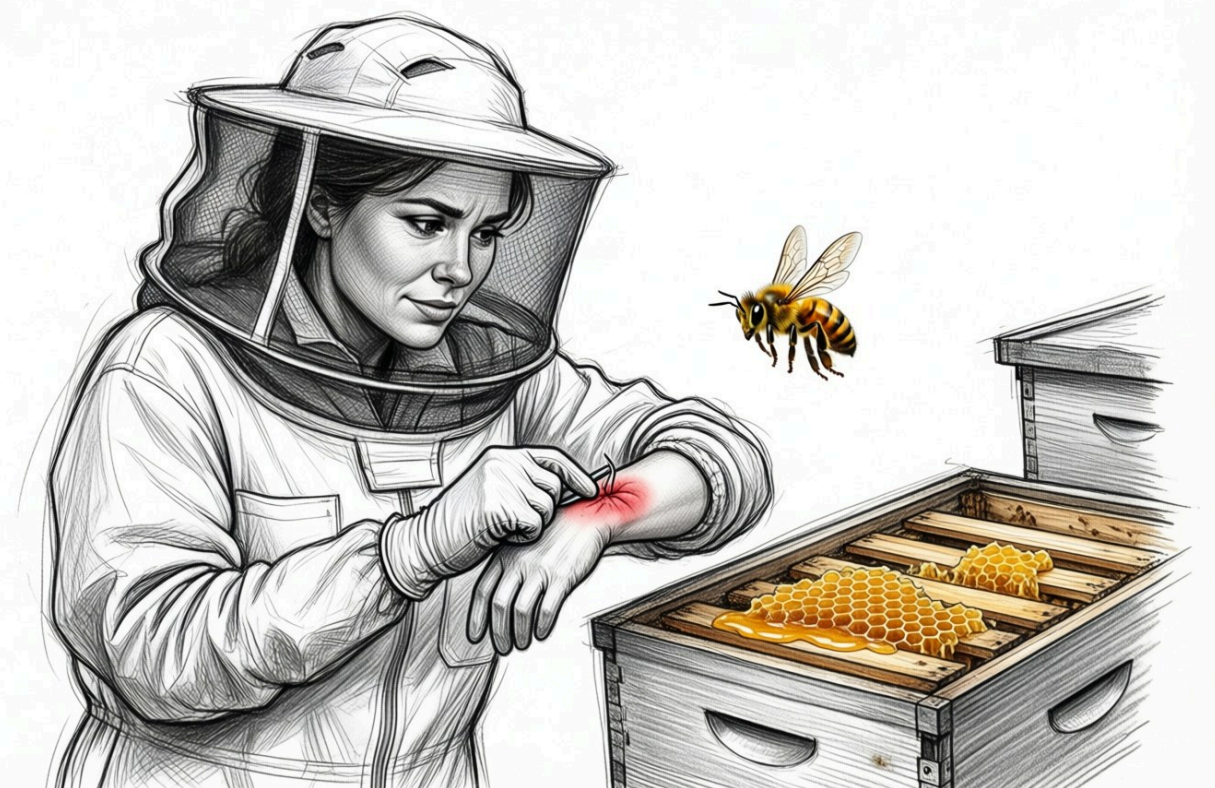
The new beekeeper had bought everything: the suit, the smoker, three kinds of hive tool, a book with 400 pages. The first time something looked wrong in the brood, none of it helped.

He called someone from the local bee club. She came over that evening, looked at one frame, and explained it in five minutes.

He still reads the book. But the most useful thing he owns now is a phone number, and the most useful thing he does each month is show up at the club meeting.

THE PEANUT GALLERY

The First Sting



Every beekeeper remembers the first one. Hers came on the back of the wrist, through a glove that was just a little too thin, on her third inspection.

It hurt, it swelled a bit, and it itched for a day. She scraped the stinger out with a fingernail, washed it, held something cold on it, and finished the inspection anyway.

Years later she tells new beekeepers the truth: stings happen, most are no worse than hers, and good gear, calm movements and a little smoke keep them rare. And she tells them the other truth: know the signs of a serious reaction, and never take those lightly.