

East Lancs BKA Weekly Hive Opening Report January 8th 2019

A Happy New Year from the Apiary!

Today I carried out the first of three visits to vapo the hives in the apiary.

These will be carried out at 5 day intervals to catch as many of the Varroa mites as possible. Last year, this treatment kept the Varroa levels so low that the Bee Unit's Sentinel Check in May reported negative for Varroa.

I have explained the process in earlier reports but, just to remind you, for each hive:

1. The Varroa board is removed (see note D below)
2. The entrance is sealed.
3. The Vaporiser board is inserted where the Varroa board was.
4. The Vaporiser is charged with 1 gram of Oxalic Acid and inserted into the board and the gaps in the board are sealed.
5. The Vaporiser is connected to a 12v car battery.

The Vaporiser melts the Oxalic Acid and the fumes rise up through the hive and eventually condense in the hive.

After about 10 minutes, the battery is disconnected. After a further 10 minutes the Vaporiser can be removed and allowed to cool. If fumes are still escaping at this point, the seals are left in place until it is judged that the fumes have settled. Then the board and the seals can be removed and the Varroa board replaced.

Some points to note:

- A. Check the food before you vapo the hive as you don't want to be removing the roof after vapoing the hive.
- B. Remove the mouse guard so that you can seal the entrance with a foam block.



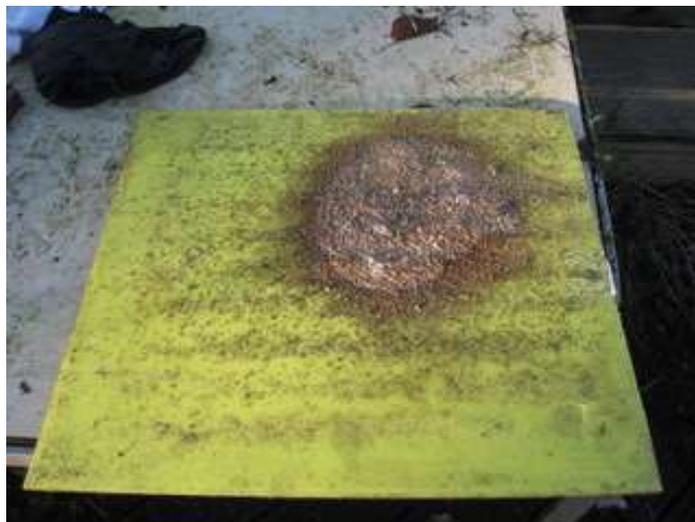
Foam block in place on the poly hive

C. It's a good idea to check that the entrance is clear of dead bees. The J-type hive tool is excellent for doing this.

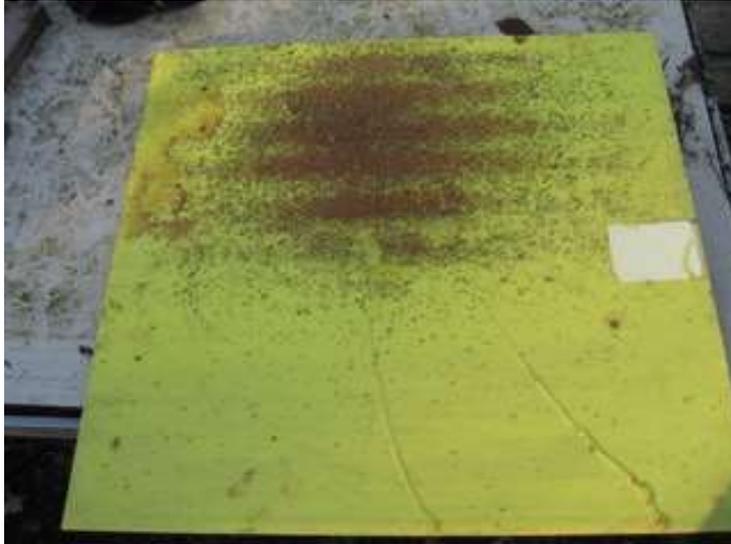


J-tool being used to clear the entrance

D. When you remove the Varroa board at the start, note where the cappings lie on the board as this will tell you where the bees are clustered (and that they've been raiding their stores). You can then clean off the board and replace it after the vapping so you can check the mite drop at the next vapping exercise.



This colony is clustered near the front of the hive to the right of the entrance (viewing from the back)



This colony is more centrally clustered right behind the entrance (again viewed from the back)

E. Don't forget to put the mouse guard back on!

The next vapping exercise will be carried out on Sunday January 13th and the final one on Friday January 18th.

*Dave Parker
Apiary Manager*