

## A Year in the Life of a Beekeeper

Month	What are bees doing?	What should we be doing?
Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bees will cluster and eat to stay warm</li> <li>• Temperature at center of cluster is between 68 and 96 degrees</li> <li>• About 50% of bees will die over the winter</li> <li>• One of many interesting articles <a href="https://www.beeculture.com/winter-management/">https://www.beeculture.com/winter-management/</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading about bees and beekeeping</li> <li>• Ordering equipment</li> <li>• Ordering package(s) or nuc(s)</li> <li>• Assembling and painting equipment</li> <li>• DO NOT OPEN HIVES IN WINTER</li> <li>• On days warmer than ~ 47 degrees, look to see if bees are flying</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At ~ 47 degrees bees are out for cleansing flights.</li> <li>• Bees out for foraging if warmer than ~55 degrees</li> <li>• Pollen sources: willow, crocus, birch, maple</li> <li>• Making baby bees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick frame count if &gt;55 degree</li> <li>• Clean bottom board, throw dead bees in garbage.</li> <li>• NEVER pull out a frame unless warm outside. Risk of brood chill</li> <li>• Feed sugar syrup or give back honey frames from previous season</li> <li>• <b>Crucial that you check your regularly.</b> Bees can starve to death quickly at this point! “Heft test”, for example</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bees are growing and emerging</li> <li>• Overwinter bees are dying off</li> <li>• Some drones will start showing up</li> <li>• Dandelion coming out with nectar and pollen</li> </ul>	<p>First FULL inspection. On a day with lots of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check for ALL stages of brood eggs, larvae, capped</li> <li>• Best time to see the Queen (fewer bees)</li> <li>• Full frame count - should be more than March</li> <li>• Keep feeding. They can't forage in the rain.</li> <li>• Can give them a pollen substitute.</li> <li>• Treat for mites as needed.</li> <li>• Set up new colonies</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population is growing</li> <li>• Swarm season begins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May rule: Prevent swarming and congestion; add a hive body or super</li> <li>• Weather and activity permitting, full inspection</li> <li>• If April wasn't warm enough, check for mites. Use sticky board test or alcohol wash. Treat/Monitor as needed.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honey supers after feeding and treatments for space</li> <li>• <b>Good time for splits</b></li> </ul>
<b>June/July</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bee population is growing even more</li> <li>• Honey production is ramping up</li> <li>• Lots of Drones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honey Super, add when 8 frames have been capped in first super.</li> <li>• Monitor for mites</li> <li>• Inspections (Quick and Full)</li> <li>• Quick - smell, look, listen</li> <li>• Full - all stages of brood, frame counts</li> <li>• Make splits, if applicable - June</li> </ul>
<b>August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population levels off</li> <li>• Drone laying will stop</li> <li>• Begin overwinter preparations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harvesting honey - Remove Supers - make sure bees will have 100# honey to make it through winter</li> <li>• Can store some honey to give back in the Spring</li> <li>• Quick and full inspections</li> <li>• Mite treatments, if applicable</li> <li>• Feed as needed</li> </ul>
<b>Sept</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population is decreasing</li> <li>• Mite population increasing</li> <li>• Drones are expelled and can't get back in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feed as needed</li> <li>• Mite treatments, if applicable</li> <li>• FINAL INSPECTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o All stages of brood</li> <li>o 10 frames of honey</li> <li>o Combine weak hive (less than 5 frames of bees) with strong hive</li> <li>o Combine resources if one hive has lots of extra honey</li> <li>o Reduce the entrance size</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Oct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winter bees are emerging</li> <li>• Begin to cluster at 41 deg F</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue feeding until it freezes, although not necessary if they have 100 lbs honey</li> <li>• If you insulate or wrap the hive, do not seal the hive completely!</li> </ul>