

Treatment free beekeeping
(Reducing varroa without miticides)

Information sheet 5

Comb baiting

- Comb baiting is a very effective way of trapping and removing varroa without recourse to chemical treatments.
- It takes advantage of the varroa mites' need to reproduce in brood cells, entering those cells just before they are sealed. Once the frame is sealed, remove it along with a significant part of the mite population. *Dont let this brood hatch as mite numbers triple, spreading the viruses they carry. Also, the larvae & pupae that mites have been feeding on are in poor shape and contribute little to the colony.*
- The beekeeper can use as a "Bait Comb" either:-
 - A frame of open broodor
 - A frame of drawn comb
- Which to use depends on the circumstances. For example;-
 - Captured swarms – frame of drawn comb among foundation
 - Varroa shook swarm – frame of open brood among foundation
 - Queen Frame Trap – frame of drawn comb
 - Pagden artificial swarm (both parts) :-
 - >in PARENT colony (Queen cells, nurse bees and brood), take out the first sealed frame of brood after the new Queen starts laying (it will be full of varroa)
 - >in SWARM colony (existing Queen, foragers and foundation), use a frame of drawn comb among the foundation