Mite monitoring can be done in a number of ways. Looking for phoretic mites on adult bodies or percent of drone brood cells with developing mites is highly intrusive as we have to open the hive but it also is not very accurate. Another way to monitor mite population is by using a sticky board. This is less disruptive, especially if you have a screen top to kill the bees.

3. Place 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar onto bees (through screening). Alternately, add rubbing alcohol through mesh screen, fit snugly into the ring closure. Do this by moving wide bottom board or bottom that has a built-in screen top to kill the bees. Re‐30 seconds. Set aside for 30 seconds so sugar ends up coating bees (you do not want it to be sticky)‐30 seconds. Set aside for 30 seconds so sugar ends up coating bees (you do not want it to be sticky).

4. Invert and shake sugar and mites from jar onto white collecting paper or pan. If using alcohol pour liquid into a white pan. Mist spray to dissolve sugar if you used sugar.

5. Count the number of mites and calculate the percent infestation of adult workers: (# mites/#bees divided by 100). If 15 mites consider immediately using a mite reduction management chemical or dividing the colony into several smaller units (brood break).

7. If infestation is over 2% (i.e. more than 6 mites, assuming 300 adult bees) consider the hive at risk and if mite numbers are not reducing, consider the hive at risk. Look for signs of a mite infestation: yellowing or blackened bees, brood that is too dark, or dead bees with mite skeletons. Avoid removing the brood or Italianating a hive. Remove the affected frames and put them into a nuc or nucleus box to start a new hive. If you don’t have a nucleus box, divide the colony into two smaller colonies and put it in two nucs. If you don’t have a nucleus box or a division board, try using a sugar mix or a reduction chemical.

By the end of August, it is time to inspect the hives and prepare for the winter. This is a crucial time of year as the bees will have to overwinter. It is important to monitor the mite population and take steps to reduce the mite population before winter.

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