Artificial Swarming

If Queen cells are found when inspecting your colonies then you need to carry out some form of swarm control. One of the easiest to under take is the Pagden Method. It should be noted that you will need a complete spare hive and its associated parts along with a frames fitted with foundation.

Day 1.

- Move the colony approximately half a metre to one side with the entrance facing 90^0 away from its original orientation. Call this the Parent colony.
- Place a clean brood chamber complete with frames and foundation on a clean floor on the original hive site. Call this colony the Swarm.

Swarm.
Find the Queen in the parent colony and transfer her along with a frame of brood in all stages of development in the centre of the swarm box. MAKE sure there are no queen cells on the frame. Also shake some nurse bees in to look after the developing brood. Cover the brood box with a crown board and feed with syrup if there is not a nectar flow on so the bees can draw out the foundation. Finally add the roof. Note the flying bees will return to the original site and form the artificial swarm.

Parent.
Go through the colony and destroy any sealed queen cells but leave open queen cells. Close up the frames and replace the missing frame with a frame of foundation. If there were supers on the hive then these should be placed on the parent hive. Finally add a crown board and roof.

Day 4.

Parent.
Move this colony to the opposite side of the swarm colony again by half a metre face the entrance 90^0 away from the swarm. The flying bees will be bled back to the swarm and decrease the number of adult bees in the in the parent colony. The supers should now be placed on the swarm colony.

Swarm.
Check supers as they are added to the swarm colony and if more space is needed add an extra super.

Day 6

Parent.
Move the colony behind the swarm box by half a meter and face the entrance 180^0 from the swarm entrance. This move will again bled adult bees from the parent colony to the swarm and in doing so will cause the bees to tare down all but one of the queen cells which will hatch and become the new queen to head the colony. NOTE this move must be completed by day 7 to ensure that no queen can emerge and fly before this last move is made.

Swarm.
This should be collecting nectar in the normal way and should be checked for super space as part of the routine hive inspection.

Parent
Leave the parent colony in the position behind the swarm until the queen is mated and laying. Check the brood and temper of the colony.

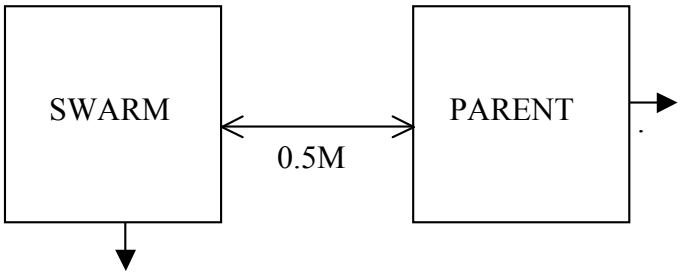
If you want to increase the number of colonies you have then simply move the parent hive to the new location in the apiary. (Remember you can only move the hive a maximum of three feet at a time.)

If you do not want to increase hive numbers then select the poorest queen and remove her. (usually the oldest queen) and then unit the colonies.

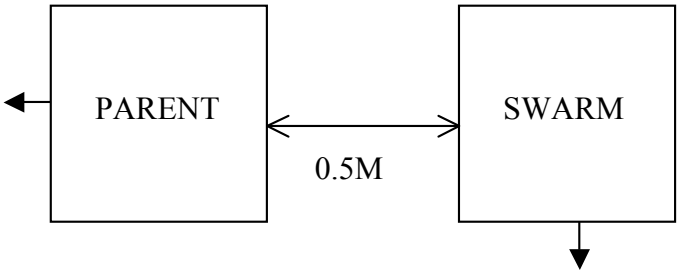
The simplest way to unite the colonies is to use the ‘newspaper method.’

Place the parent colony on a floor on the original site, cover the brood nest with a sheet of newspaper and make a few slits with the hive tool. Now place the swarm brood on top of the paper. Now the Queen excluder and supers, crown board and roof. The bees will remove the paper and in doing so their scents will mix and there will be no fighting. Re-examine the hive in a weeks time and rearrange the brood frames to one brood chamber keeping new comb where possible. Remove the spare brood chamber and extra frames.

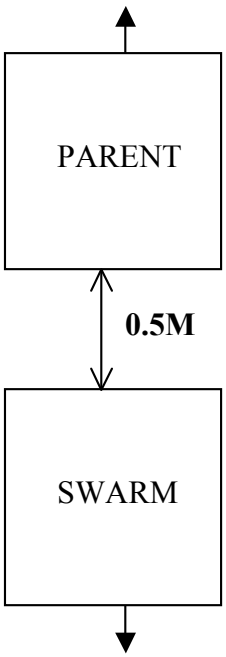
DAY 1



DAY 4



DAY 6



= Entrance.