**October Tips.**

October is a transition month from autumn to winter... Generally, the weather is relatively benign for the first two or three weeks, and then winter arrives in earnest by Halloween, or so. This is our last opportunity to feed syrup and finalize winter preparation before dormancy

Continue to check for light hives. Heft hives (lift one side up). They should be notably heavy. If not, feed a saturated sugar solution (60% sugar; balance water by weight). Feed early enough to allow syrup to ripen.

* Keep hives exposed to the sun with entrances faced away from prevailing winds.
* Tilt hives so water drains away from the entrance. Ensure proper ventilation and that lids do not leak.
* Add entrance reducers/mouse guards. Nothing worse than coming to your hives in spring only to see all your hard work in autumn destroyed by mice getting into the hive and destroying everything.
* All superfluous items within the hive, e.g., *Varroa* treatments, queen excluders, and extra rims, should be removed by now.
* . Place all unused equipment in storage.
* Protect frames. Acetic Acid is typically used for this purpose.

Stack supers (or brood boxes), and put the acid solution on an Eck on the bottom of the stack. Put on a piece of paper on top of every 5th super, or so. Then place a lid on top. Vapours’ kill moths and larvae, but not eggs. Freezing is an option and will kill eggs. Also, wax moth activity is suppressed if supers (and the frames within) are left open and exposed to light.

* If hives are opened/lids lifted late in the active season (or past), the propolis seals have been broken. Take care to secure the lids to keep them from being blown off during winter winds.
* Now is the time when you can begin to start and make and repair some of your equipment. I will tell you more details over the November, December and January tips.
* Make sure that the hives are on open mesh floors so that air can percolate through the hives and not allow any damp to enter the hives. Also take off the crown boards towards the end of October, again to allow more ventilation. Damp will kill your bees, cold wont. In parts of American where the temperature drops well below zero, the bees still get through the winters. All this about putting quilts on and wrapping up the hives is, in my opinion a load of rubbish. I have kept bees since 1997 and have never lost bees through cold weather. Mild winters yes, where in my younger days I did not have the experience to feed them as I should have done and also let them get dampness inside.
* Later on in the month, when the bees stop flying, you will be able to move your hives and re-arrange your apiary if you want as this is the only time of the year, along with November, December and January you can do this unless you move the bees over 3 miles away.