



**Our upcoming meeting will be  
Tuesday, March 1st, 6:30-8:30pm  
3220 Platt Springs Road  
West Columbia, SC 29170**

**March Speaker: Kevin Cullis**

**Topic: Pros & Cons of the Top Bar Hive  
Compared to the Langstroth**



photo: one of Kevin Cullis' beautifully built hives

### Speaker Bio

I've been keeping bees for six years. I'm a real estate broker and own TurnKey Realty. I build all of my own bee hives and also build custom top bar hives. Click here to view my website: [www.customcedarbeehives.com](http://www.customcedarbeehives.com).  
I will be bringing one of my top bar hives to the meeting.

I enjoy doing the community services projects for the club and especially enjoy presenting to the school age kids. If you are interested in helping me with outreach services, please click here to email me directly:  
[kevin@turnkeyrealty.biz](mailto:kevin@turnkeyrealty.biz)

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**Midlands Beekeeping Calendar for March**  
by Red Maple



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## Splitting Colonies: Second Edition

by David E. MacFawn



Splitting colonies is one method to control swarming or make a colony increase. Walkaway splits (where you make sure each split half contains less than three-day-old larvae, honey, and pollen and let the queenless split raise another queen), or installing queen cells or a mated queen are all ways to split a colony for a colony number increase. Demaree is another technique to simulate a split but keep all the worker bees in the same hive. If you are looking for the queen, she is usually found on a frame with freshly laid eggs.

In the Columbia, South Carolina, area colonies can often be split at the end of February/ early March at the earliest. Adding empty supers with frames will not relieve the congestion in the brood nest that usually causes swarming. Frames with brood and bees need to be removed in the congested brood nest. If colonies are fed sugar syrup mid to the end of January, most colonies will be ready to split from the end of February to the first of March at the earliest (approximately two brood cycles). Usually, only healthy colonies that are well provisioned with honey and pollen build up sufficiently to split. The maples bloom end of January to the first of February in the Columbia area. The maples are considered a major pollen source and a minor nectar source. The nectar flow usually starts around the first of April and continues through the first part of June in this region.

Colonies can be split consistently in South Carolina as early as the end of February if fed starting the second half to the end of January. The colony should be split when it starts warming consistently into the upper 30°F to lower 40°F. (2°C. to 8°C.) at night. The split needs enough worker bees to cover the brood. When splitting, each split half should have eggs/less than three-day old larvae, honey, and pollen. Each split-half should be fed.

The rule of thumb is a colony can be split when there are purple-eyed drone pupa.

Fifteen-day old purple eye drone pupa or nine days left of the 24-day development time + 14 to 16 days to sexually mature equals approximately 23 to 25 days (or about three to three and a half weeks) to sexually mature.<sup>1</sup>

#### Queens

Sixteen-day development from egg plus four to seven days to sexually mature equals 20 to 23 days or about three weeks.

<sup>1</sup> ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture, 42nd edition, 2020, ISBN 0-936028-51-3 p 460.

David MacFawn is an Eastern Apiculture Society Master Beekeeper and a North Carolina Master Craftsman beekeeper living in the Columbia, South Carolina, area. His third book, Applied Beekeeping in the United States is available at Outskirts Press.

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## Splits- Pushing for Colony Reproduction

by E. Z. Beez

We want to building strong colonies but for what purpose? To catch the nectar flow? To make splits?, nucs?, or early pollination purposes? Each goal has a different start date.

Much of what we do with our bees involves looking forward. Last year I wrote a piece on when we should start the push towards building them up for purposes of capturing the nectar flow, i.e. make honey. Today, I'd like to think through another planning exercise for the beekeeper wanting to make strong splits from overwintered colonies.



I like bee math!

An experienced mentor and bee buddy of mine called me recently to ask if I wanted to order some early season queens. He caught me off guard just a bit because I really had not done my math homework for the coming splits season. Well, I'd better get hopping and decide if I'm going to order queens or make queenless splits.

And if I'm going to make splits, when do I need to get busy?

We know from prior swarm seasons and winners of the "Golden Hive Tool Award" (given to the first captured swarm of each season) that swarming in the Midlands starts as soon as late, late February but typically early, early March and will remain strong for a month to six weeks into April then taper with an occasional spurts and sputters along the way.

We know that nature provides natural pollen and nectar for buildup in the Midlands around early to mid February (give or take). Some people see some earlier and this is climate and location dependent. So in nature we see feed for the bees a ~ month or so before swarming.

We know that the climate is still a bit dicey March 1st with occasional surprise freezes which could impact the survival of splits. I'm not sure I want to tempt Midlands weather.

Continued... Read full article [HERE](#).

## Put on your calendars -- March 19th!

The last beginning beekeeping "class" will be hands-on instruction and will be held Saturday, March 19th, at Danny Cannon's beeyard:

1437 Jessamine Road, Lexington, SC, 29073.

Beginning folks, please expect to be there from 9am-1pm.

Packages and queen pick up will also March 19th at Danny's from 9am-10am. There will be coffee + doughnuts available from 8-9am to everyone who would like to swing by and have breakfast. ***Beginning Beekeepers and those picking up bees are strongly encouraged to come!*** This is a great opportunity to fellowship within our group!



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## In the Blink of an Eye

by Bee Exponential



I had one of my bee buddies call me yesterday. He was headed out of town for a few days. He wanted to tell me how well his colonies were doing on the lower Congaree River. Booming! He had just come from inspecting them and said they were dripping out when he lifted the inner cover. He said he rotated boxes and placed a super.

My question to him was, “How much capped brood did you see?” He replied that there were multiple, multiple frames of deep frames with capped brood.

From my experience, if they have not yet started queen cells his efforts may work for a few days tops. By then they will probably start queen cells and swarm. Why? Because a deep frame of capped brood with clinging bees represents about 9000 bees (very close to a package worth). That’s 1000 of clinging bees on each side and ~3700 capped cells per side. Capped on day 9 and emerged on day 21 means within the next 12 days all of those capped cells will emerge (and all the ones on the other frames). That’s roughly 7000+ more bees in that brood nest *per capped frame* in a short period of time. One of the “events” leading to swarming is congestion of bees in the brood nest which can happen very fast this time of year. And my friend said he had multiple frames of capped brood.

Another way of thinking about this is simply that the queen is laying 1000- 1500 eggs a day. Therefore, every day 1000-1500 new bees will emerge. Probably a minimum of 7000 – 12000 per week – about a package worth of bees per week.

Continued. Read full article [HERE](#).

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## More Information & Resources

Since we started the Facebook Discussion Group, we've always maintained that members won't miss anything if they can't or don't want to join Facebook. That's still true. Facebook isn't our primary means of communicating with our membership. But if you want more bee talk and friendly advice from over one-thousand of your peers, it's available as another option to gather Midland's beekeeping information.

### **Facebook Discussion Groups:**

[SC Mid-State Beekeepers](#): **For general Midlands beekeeping discussion.**

[SC Mid-State Beekeeping Buy, Sell, Trade](#): **Midlands For Sale Beekeeping items, including bees, queens, woodenware, nucs. etc.**

[SC Mid-State Beekeepers Public Announcements Page](#): **General Announcements to the Public Page.**

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## **MSBA Monthly Newsletter**

If you received this newsletter from a friend, you can sign up below to receive it directly to your email inbox. Already on our list? Forward this newsletter to a friend. They can use the link below to sign up to receive the newsletter.

[Click Here to Subscribe to the Mid-State Beekeepers Newsletter](#)

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## **Pecan Honey Butter**





This honey pecan spread is perfect for any type of bread, let it be breakfast, dinner, or holiday meals. It works with everything, even as a snack! Try with warm cornbread.

### **Ingredients:**

- half of cup pecan halves
- 1 pound unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 cup honey

### **Instructions:**

- Preheat the oven to 350F. Place pecan halves on a baking sheet.
- Bake pecans inside the preheated oven until toasted, five to 8 mins. Let cool to room temperature then chop.
- Place chopped pecans and butter in a stand mixer equipped with the paddle attachment. Blend for three to five mins, stopping as had to scrape down the edges of the bowl with a spatula. Reduce velocity to low and upload honey. Blend until well combined. Transfer combination to a serving dish or bowl and refrigerate until ready to use.

Credit: [AllRecipes](#). See full recipe [HERE](#).

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### **For Sale and Things You Need to Know**

#### **Extraction Services:**

Member, **Danny Cannon**, located at 1437 Jessamine Rd in Lexington will extract honey for beekeepers for \$5 per box with a \$20 minimum. Call Danny to schedule when to bring your boxes to be extracted. 803.600.4576.

A checklist for every Beekeeper... especially newcomers

- a 2 gallon feed pail/bucket. we need to start feeding sugar syrup \$8-\$10 + shipping (Betterbee has them). I would get 2 buckets. This is a better solution than internal frame feeders or boardman feeders that fit into the hive entrance, especially in the winter.

- a metal smoker box about \$35 + shipping to put your lighted smoker in after use. You also need to get a cork (Lowes or Home Depot in their hardware drawers) or rag to plug the smoker so you will have charred pine straw that is easy to light (W.T. Kelley makes them)

- some folding veils (easy to store) with the long strings and helmets about \$25 for a veil + \$15 for the helmet. (Dadant carries them).
  
- some long sleeve bee gloves (Buck o has them for about \$12 a pair) of the correct size
  
- get a canvas/cloth large laundry bag (Wal Mart or on-line Amazon) to put pine straw that has been mowed/run over to make soft for your smoker fuel. This should be stored in a very dry place so it lights easy.
  
- a paint brush (2" or 3") and a double boiler or crock pot to melt beeswax and coat the frames after scraping in that dead out. We will need the frames and extra equipment end of Feb/2021 when I give you a split of bees. You need a double boiler or crock pot since beeswax is very flammable.
  
- some beeswax. I use about 2/3 pound of wax for 8 medium frames. You have deep and medium frames. about \$8/pound at Dadant
  
- some high quality paint to put on the dead-out and active hive. You only paint the outside and leave the inside for the bees to coat with propolis.
  
- Make sure everyone wears light colored clothing. Blue jeans are ok. White socks preferable; no dark fuzzy socks. Long sleeve shirts. Do we have veils and gloves for everyone?
  
- If the beekeeper wears blue jeans and a tan/light long sleeve shirt with a collar, white socks with covered toe shoes/boots, you will only need the veils/gloves. This is cheaper than the bee suits with attached veils.

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## MSBA Extractor Rental

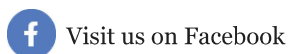
### Harvesting Honey?

Mid-State Beekeepers Association has a powered extractor for use by members.

Rental is \$5 per day with a two-day minimum. A \$50 refundable

cleaning and damage deposit is required on pickup. The additional honey this powered unit will extract from the comb more than pays its rental fee. A heated capping knife, and strainers are also available with the extractor if needed.

Members will need to obtain their own food grade buckets. We can direct you to these locally or you may be able to get them at local bakeries, food service establishments, etc. The quartermaster for the MSBA extractor is Jeannine and Neal Taylor-To reserve the extractor, you may click here to email them directly: [nealtaylor@gmail.com](mailto:nealtaylor@gmail.com)



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