



- Being a beekeeper is a responsibility. You want to keep striving to be a diligent keeper of bees—not just someone who has bees.
- Many times when you fear your colony is queenless—it is not. \*
- Keep studying bee biology to understand what's happening in your colony.
- Swarming is a normal bee behavior, but can be managed by splitting and providing plenty of supers to allow room for nectar flow. Taking care of space needs is vital - especially for northern bees.
- It's not your hive that's the problem - it's your expectations.
- Each colony is constantly assessing ratio of eggs, larvae, pupae, and young bees. Out of kilter ratios cue "need new queen" in the colony. Packages consistently have a high rate of supersedure.
- 2 1/2 hives are recommended - 2 regular colonies plus a nuc. A nuc is like a queen on a shelf that provides an emergency savings account.
- If a colony is truly without a queen, the nuc can be combined with that colony to keep it rolling. Or a frame with very young eggs can be moved into the queenless colony to produce a new queen.
- Best time to split a hive is spring or mid-July.
- Mite Away Quick Strips are a great option if you need to treat for varroa.
- Retire queen to a nuc box as insurance and provide the colony with a new queen for a healthy winter hive and a productive spring.
- Try to get better bees by splitting favorite colonies that have the best genetics.

**"You can't be a good beekeeper unless you're comfortable splitting and combining."** —Dr. Meghan Milbrath

Articles by Dr. Meghan Milbrath:

\* **Help! I Need a Queen!**

**Establishing a Honey Bee Colony**

**Planning For Varroa**

**Varroa Mite Monitoring**

Encouraging & Educating  
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