

**How to set up a queen  
rearing group from  
scratch?**

# How?

- Someone needs to take responsibility for starting up the group and structuring group activities. A group will not spontaneously start up so the group will need a proactive leader to get going. This will involve a lot of work between May and August.
- The group needs to establish rules, and decide upon a venue for the project.
- There will be some start up costs to acquire basic queen rearing equipment. It is suggested that each group member purchases and manages their own Apideas whereas all group members could chip in £10-£20 to buy cell cups, introduction cages and other basic equipment. Giving away equipment is a bad idea as this will attract the people who want something for nothing.



# How?

- set up a mailing list, establishing regular communication with group members. Someone needs to coordinate this especially with regard to group activities and the availability of queen cells. Apideas need to be brought to the site the day before cells are ready to insert.



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## How?

- -establish a regular timetable of meetings. The Belfast group meets every Monday evening. The Dromore group meets every Saturday morning. The Killinchy group meets on Friday evenings.
- Grafting runs on a 12 day cycle with queens emerging on the 12<sup>th</sup> day after the grafts are done. One person should be able to graft enough cells for 30 group members.



# Rearing Queen Honey Bees in a Queenright Colony

by DAVID WILKINSON and MIKE A. BROWN

## How?

- set up cell raiser colonies, either queenright systems such as the Ben Harden system, or queenless starter colonies. The Cloake board method is also an option used by some.

A colony which has just swarmed makes a good cell raiser once you remove all the queen cells from it

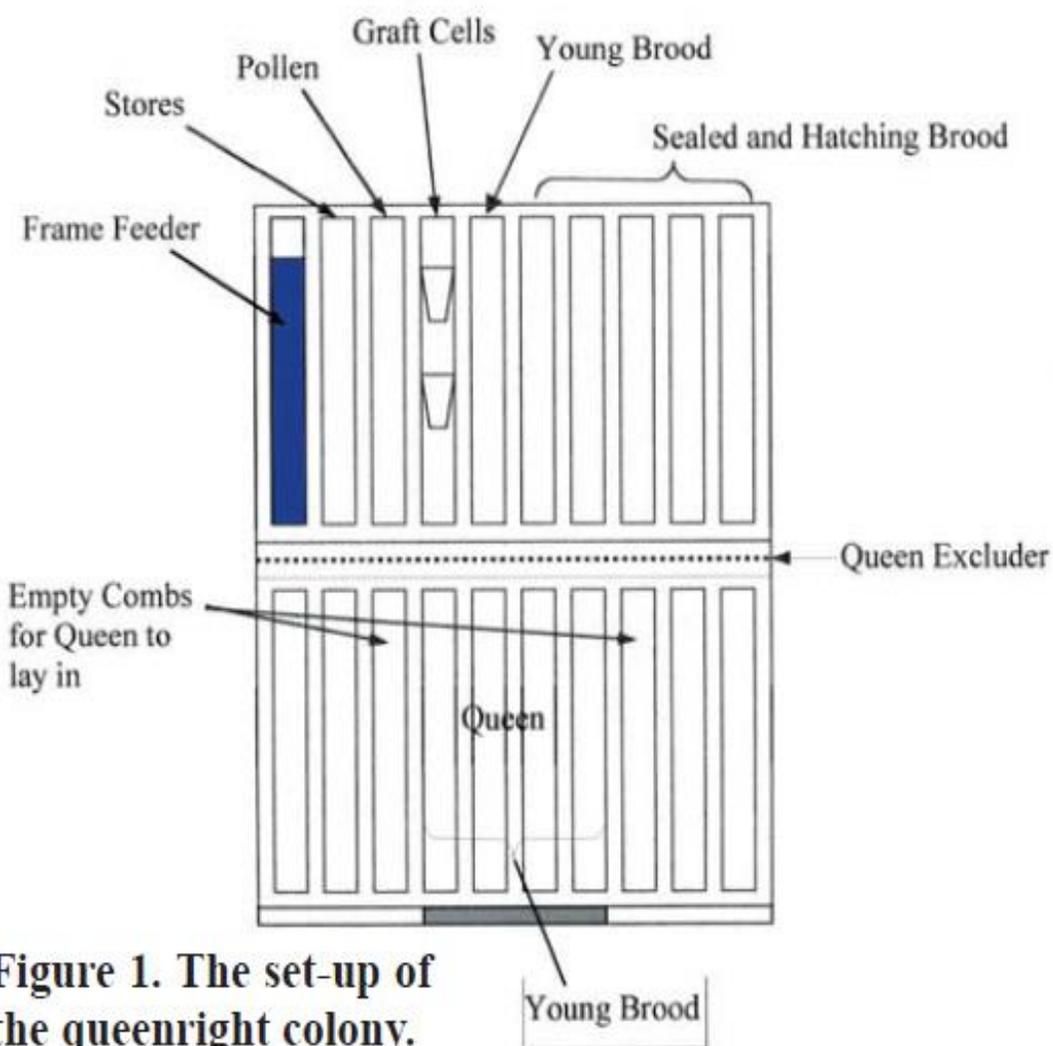


Figure 1. The set-up of the queenright colony.



# How?

Find a site for the cell raiser colonies and the drone producing colonies. You will probably need several cell raiser colonies and ideally 10 or 12 drone producing colonies each of which contain 2 or 3 drone combs. Drones will not be sexually mature until 40 days after the queen lays in the drone comb so plan well ahead.



# How?

Find a suitable mating apiary site for the Apideas close to the drone colonies. The Apideas need shade and in an ideal world there will not be other beekeepers in the area keeping mongrel colonies or other sub-species of honeybee. In practice a site like this will be difficult to find.



# How?

Get access to an indoor venue near the project site for theory sessions, grafting or during wash-out weather. Some groups use a large shed.

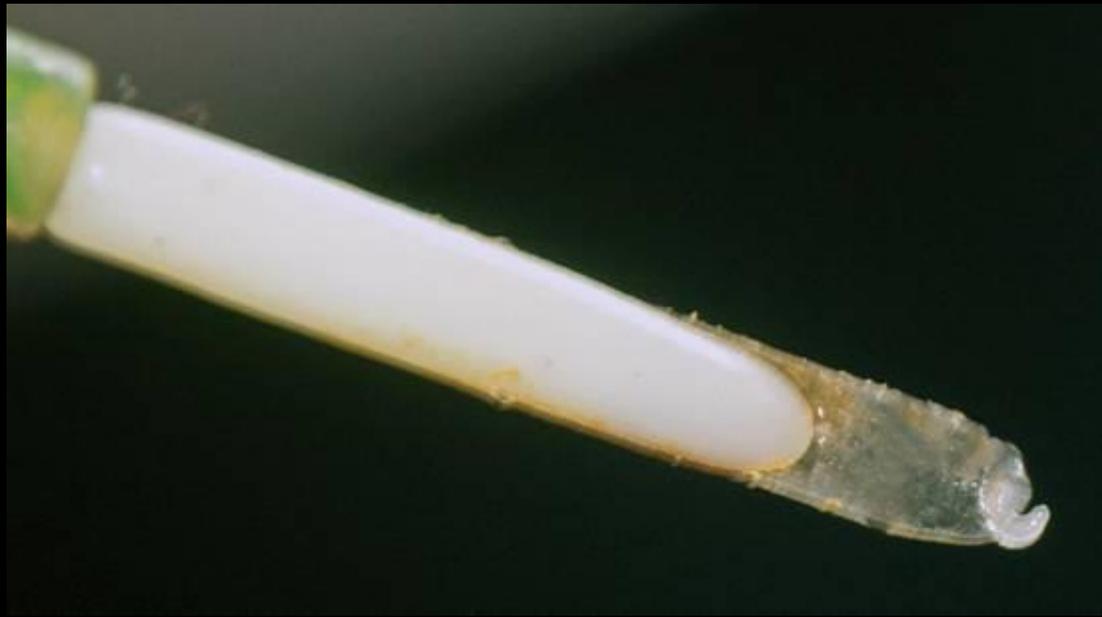


# Equipment

## Equipment

- Mating nucs. There are several on the market, or home made equipment can be used. Apideas have the best build quality and have the least number of drawbacks. Some mating nucs do not have inner covers or removable feeders. Apideas can be purchased for around £20. One mated queen will cover the cost of purchase of the Apidea and it is possible to get 2 or 3 queens from a single apidea over the summer.





## Basic equipment

- grafting stuff



## 'Equipment'

- A quality Queen to graft from. Your drone producing colonies should be headed by the daughters of a pure AMM queen. You will need at least one other unrelated queen to graft from.

