

More about the Golden Hive

The background

Over the past few years Matt Somerville of BeeKindHives has developed a hive that encourages minimal interference by the beekeeper, allows the bees to draw their own comb and provides them with an environment that is closer to the natural bees nest.

During 2018, Peter Lead of Stroudbeekeepers and Stroud BuzzClub was working with Leyhill prison chaplaincy to reintroduce beekeeping into their grounds.

Matt was very busy making and siting log hives, freedom hives and running courses. He would be too busy to make enough Golden Hives. This led to the opportunity for Leyhill carpentry workshop to produce these hives under licence. It took a few meetings before both Matt, Peter and Leyhill carpenters were totally satisfied with the hive that is now for sale.

How to use the Hive

When siting the hive consideration should be given to how it is orientated so the bees do not fly across the paths of humans or animals. Ideally the flight holes should receive early morning and afternoon sun.

Inspection of the bees can be carried out from below the hive by releasing the bottom panels and looking up in order to see the growth of the comb. Keeping the panels level will also allow an inspection for mite drop and other debris.

The size of the brood can be monitored from above, by feeling the warmth under the shavings in the quilt box.

Below the quilt box is fitted a hessian cloth cover.

It is only ever necessary to open the hive and remove frames if there is a concern over the bee's health or if you wish to share some honey.

Honey should only be extracted when all the frames are full and then only remove 2 or 3 frames of honey leaving the rest for the bee.

Monitoring the bees

Monitoring the growth of the colony and its health can be achieved without opening up the hive. By placing your hand inside the quilt you can feel the warmth of the brood through the hessian without disturbing the bees.

This allows you to monitor the size of the brood throughout the year. Sliding the quilt box away from the stores end of the hive and over the brood, allows access inside the hive. You can then peel away the hessian cloth to gently remove frames with stores and see the edge of the brood without losing heat or disturbing the queen.

Further inspection for swarm cells, varroa and capping droppings can be achieved by removing one or both bottom plates.

The Price

The price of this softwood Golden Hive with frames, hessian cloth and quilt is £375 collected.

All profit goes to Bees for Development Ghana BuzzClub. A charity set up in 2016 to help educate young children in the farming areas of Ghana. Little is known about pollination and beekeeping and how best to care for their environment. The BuzzClubs aim to provide this knowledge in primary and junior high schools. Currently there are 6 schools with 10 children in each club but our aim is that by September 2020 we will have 11 schools with 30 children in each club.

The hive can be collected from Woodchester GL5 5HR or delivered at cost.

Contact Peter Lead 07768881950 or peterdawnlead@aol.com