

## **APIARY RECORDS**

*These notes are relevant to the record sheet that is printable from "Record Sheet" on this website.*

It makes sense to maintain colony records, especially with the queen problems we have had in recent years. It is handy to know if a queen goes off lay, disappears, or is unexpectedly superseded.

There are a large number of record cards and sheets available. Some can be found on Dave Cushman's website <http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/assessmentcriteria.html>, and many others. My complaint is they are usually far too complicated for the amateur beekeeper, which is why I have designed my own.

Record keeping can be done for a variety of reasons, and in a variety of ways, varying from the simplest details recorded in a notebook, to much more involved information recorded on purpose made cards. It is very simple to design your own to record the information you need, and if put on a spreadsheet the information can be recorded on computer.

The beekeeper will need to decide what to record. Do you keep records of a queen, a colony, or a location? There are problems with them all e.g. If you split a colony which half keeps the record? This sheet is designed to record the colony, and stay with it wherever it is moved to, as I have found that to be the easiest option for me.

Beekeepers will probably be encouraged to keep records if they are simple and meaningful, and that is the basis of this sheet. When at the hive there are a few simple things I need to know, and I have designed this sheet so I can quickly find the information.

### **How I use the sheet.**

- One sheet per colony per year. This stays with the hive wherever it is moved to. If the colony is split it stays with the queen if she is retained in one part.
- The date should only be the day and month.
- All columns with "Y/N" I find it easier to cross out the one not needed.
- In the "Queen Clip/mk" column I only make an entry if I see her, not just repeat the previous one. This tells me when I saw her last. When the "N" changes to a "Y" this is when the queen was clipped and marked, so there is no need to put anything in the "Comments" column. If you use different colours for marking queens you could put a blob of paint on the sheet so you know what colour she is marked.
- "Q/C's Present" doesn't mean empty cups, but when there are eggs or larvae in them. I may put "Eggs only" or "Sealed cells removed" etc, in the comments column.
- "QMP" is one of the Queen Mating Problems I list in <http://www.dave-cushman.net/bee/rogerpatterson.html> or <http://www.bbka.org.uk/news/news/queenspoor-mating-and-lay.shtml>. Whatever the problem is, e.g. "drones in worker cells" can be put in the comments column.
- "Sup Add" is only filled in when they are actually added, so you know when it was done. "Foundation" "Cut comb" etc can be put in the comments column.
- "SupTot" is only filled in when the previous column is filled in.
- "Temper" can be a tick, cross, or a score to suit yourself, but whatever you do you need to be consistent.

These records are kept in a plastic wallet on a clipboard and left under the hive roofs of my hives. I use pencil, not felt tip as these will smudge if they get damp.

The sheets can only be printed from the website, but the details can be used as a basis for your own, and modified to suit your own requirements.

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