

# An Efficient Bee Escape

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**T**HIS article describes a bee escape used by many Canadian beekeepers and introduced to New Zealand by Mr G. Toogood, of Gore, who recently spent 2 years in Canada. Though some of the older beekeepers may remember bee escapes similar in design, the escape described here is simple to make and gives satisfactory service.

**T**HROUGHOUT the years that bee culture has been practised bee escapes of varying designs have been used. Some of them have been patented and widely advertised and others have remained almost unknown.

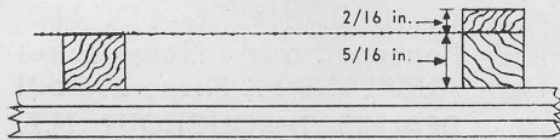
Some beekeepers have long discarded their bee escapes owing to their being unsatisfactory, mainly because they became clogged too easily.

The advantages this design has over others are that there is little if any chance of clogging and that the escape

can be made by any beekeeper fairly easily. Variations in construction may be considered an advantage, but if measurements from the drawing are followed, an efficient bee escape should result. Many such bee escapes have already been made in Southland and all reports of them are good.

## Materials

The material required for each is a sheet of three-ply 19 in. x 15 in.; two 19 in. lengths of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. x  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. pinus, and two 16 in. lengths of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. x  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. pinus for the outer surround; about 5 ft. of  $\frac{5}{16}$  in. square pinus for cleats; a piece of wire gauze; straps of pinus  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. x  $\frac{5}{16}$  in. to fasten the outer edges of the gauze.



Cleats and wire on the plywood.

## Construction

To make the bee escape first cut in the three-ply two holes  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. in diameter with centres  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in. apart as shown in the illustration below. Next cut in the pinus being used for the outer surround a groove the width of the three-ply and  $\frac{7}{16}$  in. deep. The  $\frac{5}{16}$  in. square cleats can then be tacked into place on the plywood as shown in the illustrations. The gaps at the four corners of the inner cleats and outer cleats should be  $\frac{5}{16}$  in. The gauze is fastened by the  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. x  $\frac{5}{16}$  in. straps around the outer edges and fastened to the inner cleats with wire staples of the type normally used by stationers as paper fasteners. It is advisable to leave the fastening of the surround until last so that the plywood will be flat on the workbench while the cleats are being attached. A dip in paraffin wax will aid the lasting quality of the finished bee escape.

The escape is placed on the hive with the plain side with the two  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. escape holes upward and the supers to be cleared of bees are stacked over it.

Bee escapes work best in late summer or autumn when nights are cold.

Experience by local beekeepers has shown that this escape will clear up to three supers of combs overnight provided no brood or the queen is placed above the escape.

▼ The assembled bee escape inverted, showing the construction. The escape holes are  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. in diameter with centres  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in. apart on the centre line.

