

# Bees: the *capensis* problem

The invasion of Cape honeybees into African bee colonies in the Northern Province, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, the Free State, North West Province and Northern Cape is of great concern. It is referred to as the *capensis* problem.

NB: According to law all colonies infested with *capensis* must be destroyed immediately.

It is the beekeeper's responsibility to detect a *capensis* infestation. He should therefore be on the lookout for the following signs outside and inside the hive:

## Outside the hive

- Reduced colony defensiveness
- Reduced foraging by the colony
- Bees fighting at the hive entrance or dead bees at the entrance
- Distinctly different colour contrast among the workers at the hive entrance

## Inside the hive

- Worker bees fighting on the comb
- Worker bees of different colour
- Queenlessness
- A scattered worker brood pattern, with brood unevenly aged
- Multiple eggs in the worker cells or eggs on the side of worker cells
- Multiple eggs on pollen and in queen cell cups
- Workers with typically laying worker behaviour, namely with distended abdomens, shiny in appearance, very skittish and walking with a characteristic "wings out" posture
- Destroyed queen cells or unusual-looking queen cells



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