

Removing Bees from a house wall

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This is a grand old house in the district with beautiful gardens and a west-facing wall made a perfect home for bees. The owner had tried before to remove the bees from this wall using pest removal company who rely on chemicals.

An understanding of bee biology and behaviour and with time I believe that bees can be removed from any house cavity without the need of chemicals.

Step 1. Locating the colony, observing entry points.

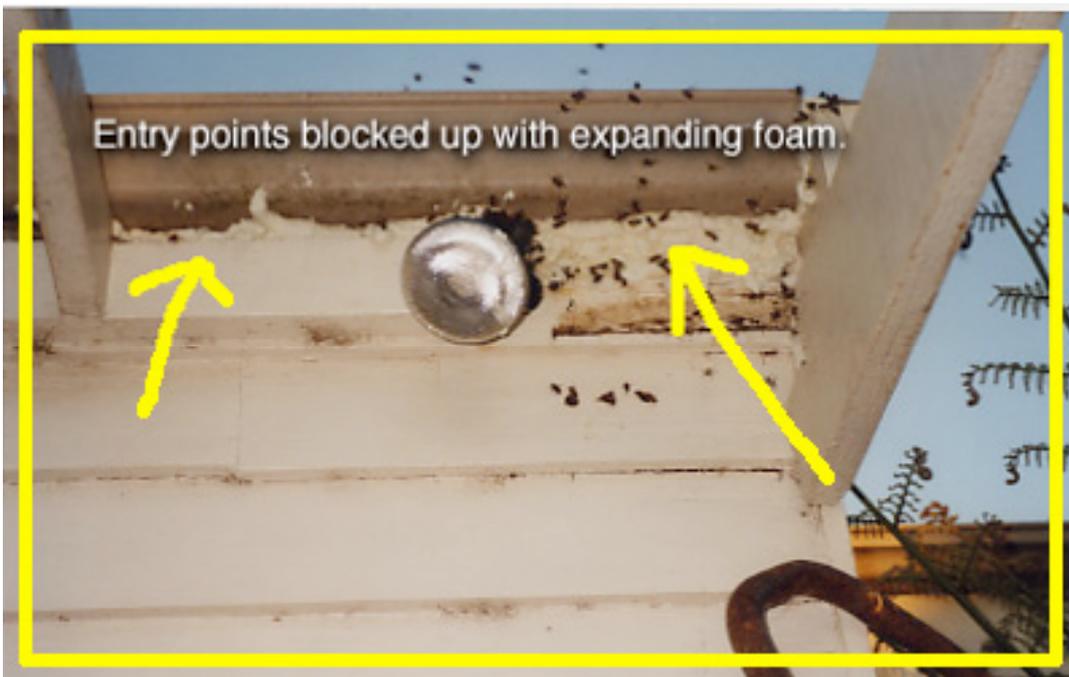


I visited this house several times to establish where the bees were located. I use a stethoscope to determine the extent to which the bees fill a wall cavity.

I removed these bees in early Spring 2003.

Figure 1. The colony is located

Step 2. Blocking up the entry points



Expanding foam was used here because it was easy at the time. I usually use insulating foil and staples.

Step 3. The trap is set...



This is a one way exit for the bees. They find their way out easy enough but can't get back in. You may need to make the exit hole bigger – you do want the bees to get out.

Step 4. The trap is working



Bees leave the wall cavity via the funnel. They mass near their old entry point. Gradually they give up on getting back to their queen and join the colony in the box placed ever so conveniently



Figure 3. Hive body in position to attract bees trapped outside of wall.

Step 5. Remove the comb, clean up and replace the boards



It will take at least 4 weeks for the bees to make a new home outside of the wall cavity. Make sure that there are no more bees exiting from the funnel.

When you open the cavity to remove the comb there may be a few remnant bees, newly hatched bees and a queen. It is important that if you see the queen you catch/and or kill her to ensure that bees do not settle somewhere else on the house.

Once all the comb is removed it is a good idea to scrape any residual comb and scrub it down with a mild sugar soap solution remove any of the bee odour which may attract other bees. (Chemical alternative is Bleach)

(You may notice the white powder in the adjoining cavity in the photo on the left, this was the work of the previous exterminator who had injected the insecticide into the wrong wall cavity.)

(left and below the comb removed)

