

*Poster*

**RAPID MULTIPLICATION METHOD FOR LOCAL HONEY BEE  
(*APISCERANAINDICA*) COLONIES, REARED IN BEE HIVES.**

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**ABSTRACT**

Bee colonies are multiplied in its own by dividing into two groups (swarming) during the growth period of the colony. Natural division is not sufficient to increase the number of colonies to meet the demand of bee keepers. Hence, the objective of this study was to develop a rapid multiplication method of bee colonies. This study was conducted at Bee Keeping unit, Bindunuwewa during April - August synchronizing with natural swarming period of the Up Country Intermediate zone. Bulk of verging queens was reared in different colony by artificially made queen cells method as first step of the study. A single colony divided in to eight groups containing single brood comb with about 2,000 workers and was placed in a small hive (mating box). Then a verging queen was introduced to each group. This process was replicated in to four colonies and continued for 3 years (2013-2015). Colony establishment was evaluated by examining the egg laying status of the queen and comb building. Queens were started to lay eggs within 7 - 10 days and building of new combs also noted in all hives. The mean success rate of this method is 70%, which was not significantly different compared to previous years. This study confirms that the above procedure can be adopted to multiply the bee colonies in Up Country Intermediate zone. It is recommended to repeat the study covering rest of the agro- climatic zones of the country before making an Island – wide recommendation.

**Key words:** Swarming, Brood box, honey super, verging queen, queen rearing, Mating Box