

Perone (Automatic) Hive Information January 2013.....

Brief Description

Perone (Automatic) Hives are very large vertical top bar hives that remain the same size all year, with a bee area below and bee keepers area above. As the hive volume is large, 280 litres, it is proposed that the bees can develop into a 'super-colony' which has different behaviour to those colonies in small hives. In theory, the bees area is never opened for manipulation of any kind and the bee keepers area is opened once per year, in late summer, any honey is harvested, and the hive then is reassembled back to its full height. The hives are designed with sufficient space for the bees to retain enough honey to overwinter, while allowing the bee keeper to harvest the surplus. There is a clearly designated bee area and bee keepers area. There are two main types of this hive.

History

In March 2010 Oscar Perone started this thread [Automatic hives because only open to harvest](#) on the Biobees Forum. He invited us to read his "Manual gratis de Apicultura Extensiva Natural, Colmenas que solo se abren para cosecharlas" (Free Manual of Extensive Natural Beekeeping, Beehives Only Opened to Harvest) which is in Spanish [here](#). Oscar Perone called this type of bee keeping, Perma-apiculture. By the summer of 2012 Oscar Perone had written an e-book in Spanish, then available from his website, with an English translation in progress, and had websites in Spanish and English. In September 2012, Oscar Perone closed his websites, with the current exception of <http://oscarperone.blogspot.co.uk/> and made a statement stating he was retiring and inviting 'us' to continue with his work, the translation of his last statement (now gone) is here on this thread, [Oscar Perone is retiring...?](#)

Despite Oscar's retirement and the closing of his websites there is still much information about his hives and bee keeping available. There is a blog from Chile in Spanish at <http://permapiculturachile.blogspot.co.uk/>

Here is the information about the two hive designs which we have called MK1 and MK2.

The Perone Automatic Hive MK1

This was the first design of hive Oscar Perone introduced in his Free Manual of Extensive Natural Beekeeping, the PDF 'Propuesta' accesses the Chapter 'La colmena que propongo' which gives the hive design and rationale. It was originally based on a tall stack of Langstroth brood boxes, to reuse existing equipment, but developed into a 'build it yourself' hive. The proportions of this hive were half for the bees and half for the bee keeper. This hive is about 2metres/6feet in height.

I built one, then myself and Hazel demonstrated it and explained the theory at the UK Natural Beekeeping Conference, 2011. Here is a video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q9uVzPgfnM4> This hive was stocked with a swarm of native black bees in the spring of 2011.

The Perone Automatic Hive MK 2

Following an earthquake in Chile, many of the tall MK1 hives were shaken apart and fell down. Oscar Perone then redesigned the hive and called it the Perone Golden Hive (MK2). It is half the height of the MK1 but the same volume, however the proportion of the bee area has increased to 5 parts to 3 part for the bee keeper. Again, this is a fairly straight forward build it yourself hive and there is a comprehensive plans and instructions in the PDF by Oscar Perone, Claire McHale and Alexis Torres, [here](#) . There is a video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7n3bEZgo6qU>

I built one of these hives and demonstrated it with Hazel at the UK Natural Beekeeping Conference 2012. Here is a video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcZWV2JtQuQ> . This hive is waiting for

a swarm in the spring of 2013.

Other interesting videos....

Development of a Swarm in a Perone hive in Argentina

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VpO0C-Nt6M>

Alfredo Cabrera shows his Perone hive in Oscar Perone's course

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K6X-Elmu5E>

Andy