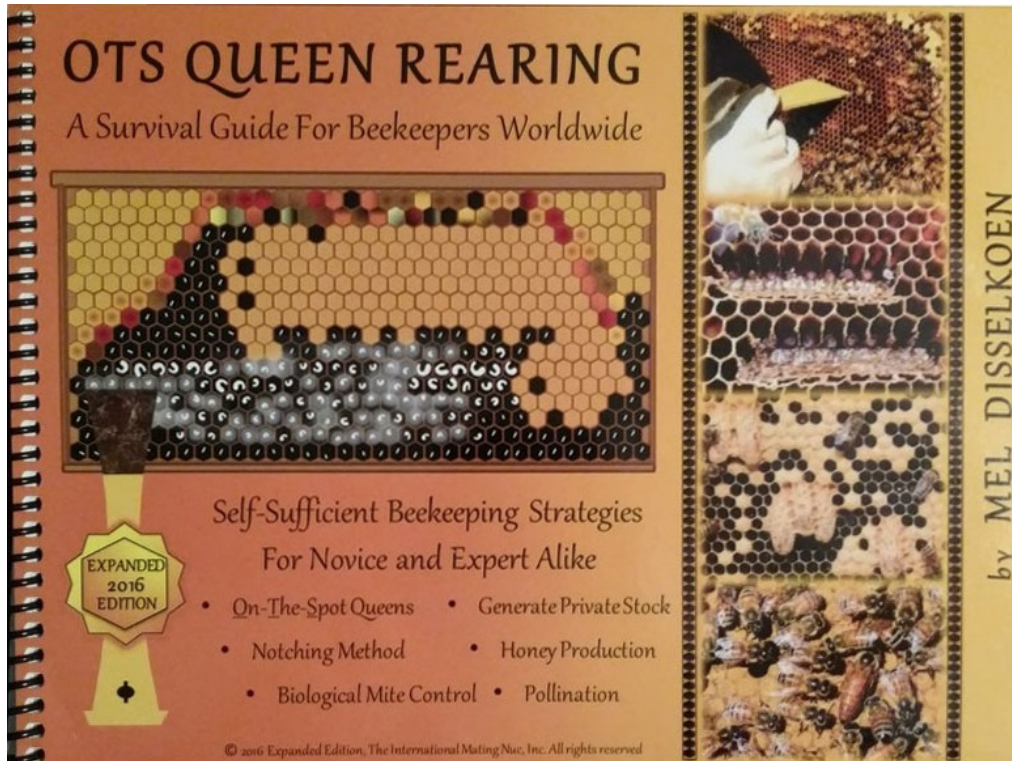


# Dave Clark version of OTS, a variation on Mel Disselkoen's technique



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# OTS Maryland Style

- Based on Mel Disselkoen's work
- His book is excellent, but only available through his website <http://www.mdasplitter.com>
- This has been adjusted for our Maryland honey flow, and nectar timing



# Who is your best Queen?

- Hive packed with bees during spring inspection? This technique keeps the hive from swarming. It knocks down the hive size
- Best honey producers
- Calmest bees





# Timing

- You must have hatched drones, and drone cells present. No drones = no mated queens





# Preparation

- Have a clean and ready nuc box with five empty frames, drawn if possible



Find candidate mother queen and isolate her in your queen catcher cage. This lets you work the hive without damaging her





Catch the Queen. I use a one handed  
TEAL queen catcher (\$25)





# Build your nuc

- Find honey and pollen. One frame of each
- Place in position 1 and 5 in nuc box
- Find 2 frames of capped brood, loaded with nurse bees. Place in positions 2 and 4
- Frame 3 (center position) is left out for 24 hours in order for the queen pheromones to dissipate from the nucleus colony box
- Put mother queen back into the full size hive

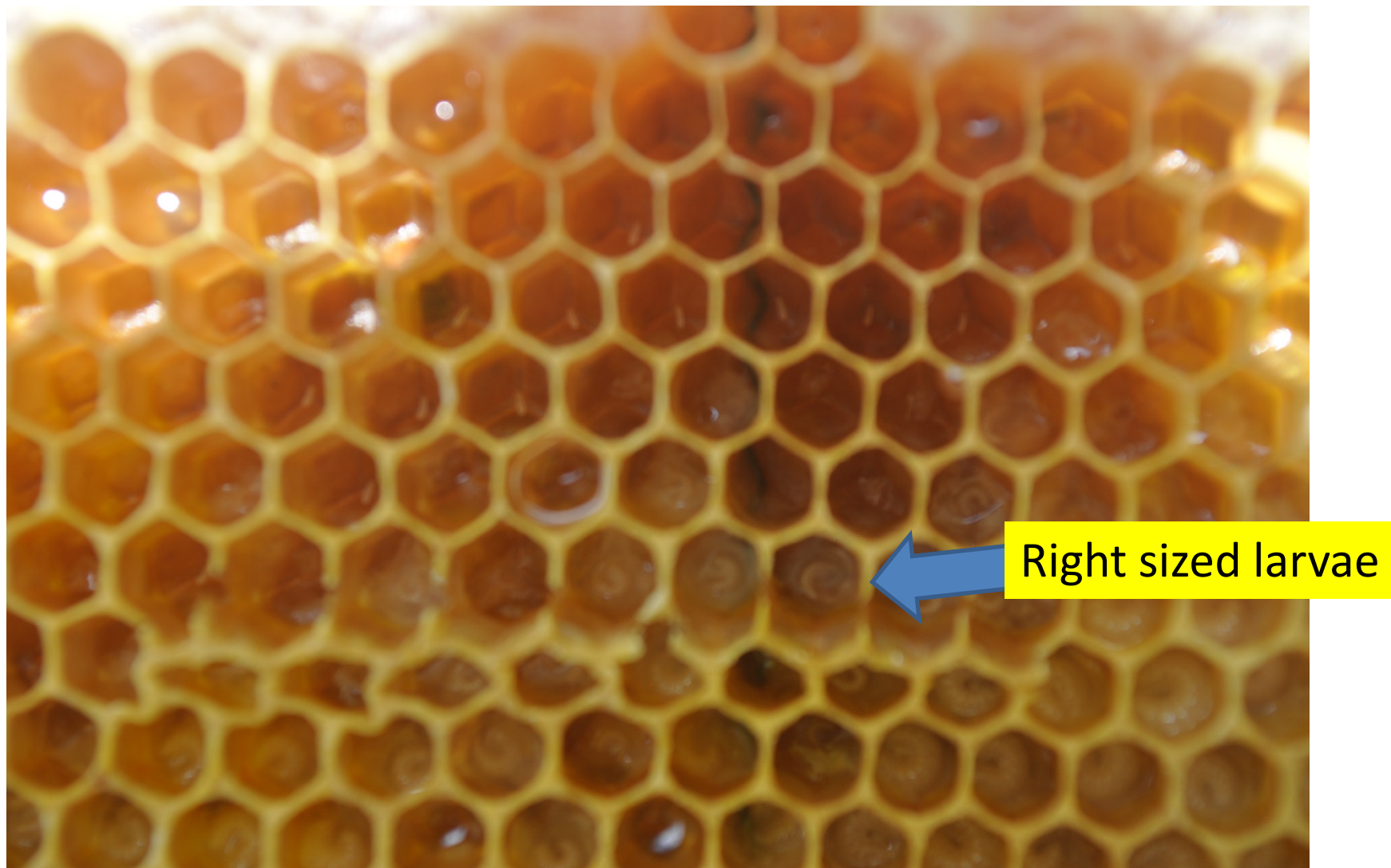


# That Magic Moment

- The next morning, go into the large hive and gather a frame that has uncapped larvae. This larvae is too big







Lightly nick with hive tool next to correct sized larvae



Prepare frame 5 by spraying with sugar water,  
and removing nurse bees with bee brush







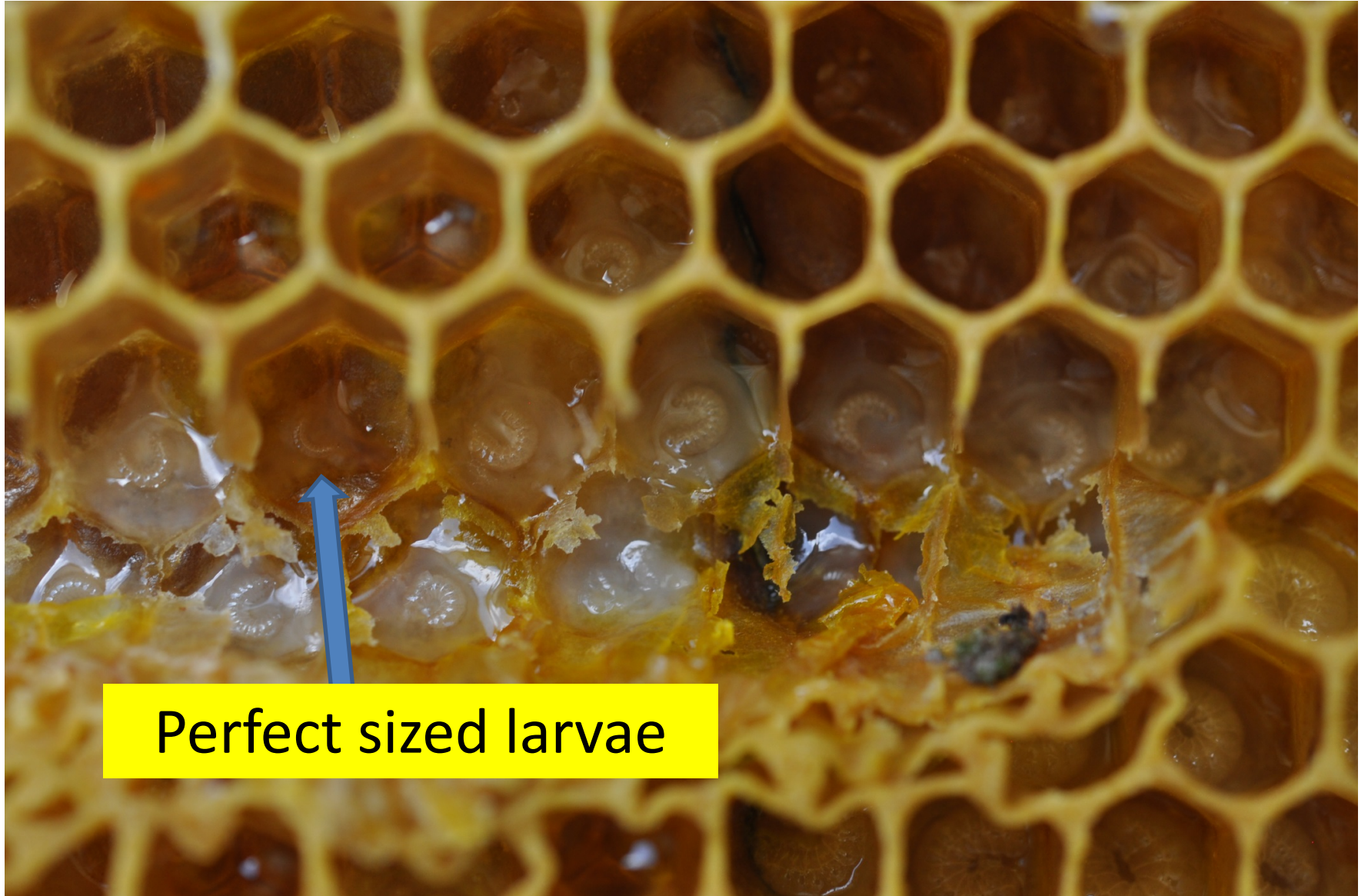






Using your hive tool, notch the bottom walls of the larvae down to the foundation





Perfect sized larvae



Place notched frame in center of nuc box. Use a pencil to mark where notch is located





## Nuc box

For Transportation, use a  
popsicle stick portion to keep  
frames from moving







Take Nuc Box to your  
mating location





After 7-10 days check your queen cells. Handle frame carefully, do not jostle or turn upside down





After 25 days from making split, Look for mated queen. Capture her



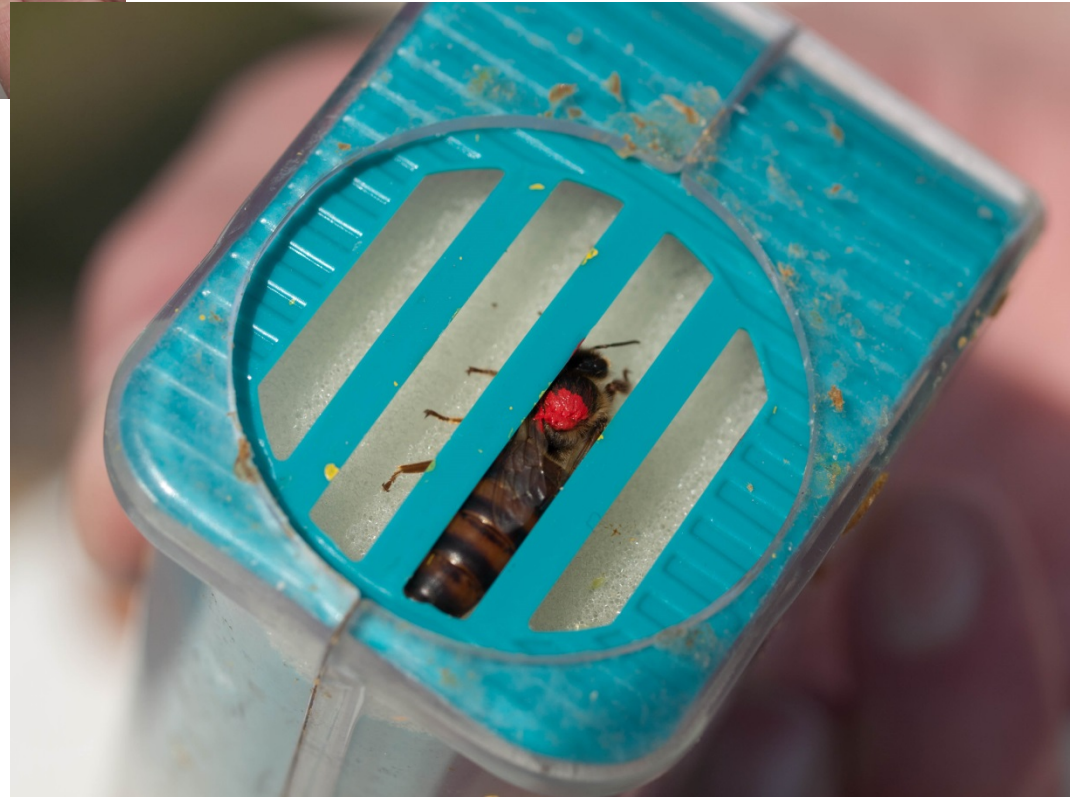


Mark your new queen



Let her paint dry in  
the cage for four  
minutes!

Not 3, not 5, but 4



Let her gently walk out





# Compare queens

Assess new queen in nuc, and mother queen in hive. If both are laying well, you now have four choices:

1. Make a new hive with this starter nuc
2. You can remove your old queen from the big hive, and newspaper combine in the new queen and her nuc That new queen should last two years.
3. You can switch queen positions, putting the older queen into the nuc, new queen into the large hive
4. You can sell the nuc to another beekeeper

# Common Mistakes

## Things that can go wrong

- Beekeepers do not wait the full 25 days before looking for the new queen. A disrupted new queen will fly off and not return
- Your queen may not successfully return from her mating flights (birds/dragonflies like to eat big queens) However if this happens you can immediately do another OTS without the hive producing laying workers. But this means you need to wait another 25 days. Patience Grasshopper
- Newly mated queen does not lay well, give her two weeks to settle down. Otherwise kill her off, and do OTS again from donor mother stock



# Benefits

- You made your own queen. Be proud.
- You have slowed down swarming by managing your booming hives
- You can increase your apiary size without purchasing packages or nucs Use the money to buy wood and start making wooden ware.
- You have increased your future honey production, by using your best honey makers as mother stock.
- You have an nuc to use as a backup for
  - Winter loss
  - Queen failure in another hive
- This is the first step to becoming a self sustaining apiary

**CONGRATULATIONS!**