



# Local Beekeepers Need Your HELP! Honey Bee Swarms Are Very Important

[www.mbbka.org.uk](http://www.mbbka.org.uk)

Following the long winter of 2017-2018 and the late Spring, colonies of honeybees are under tremendous stress. In the wild the survival chance of a honeybee swarm is about 20%. Collected, and housed in a hive by a beekeeper, the survival rate triples. The MBBKA needs the help of everyone in the area to ensure we collect as many swarms this year as possible. If you see a swarm of bees please contact the MBKA on the swarm-line number below. We will send a beekeeper to collect the swarm and provide it with a new home.

**Honey Bee Swarms:** Swarms such as the ones pictured are merely Colonies that are in transition. Normally these Swarms are found hanging from tree branch, fence post or any place where the swarm can gather around the Queen while scouts are sent out to look for a more permanent home. A swarm left alone will only be in place from just a few minutes to a few hours and occasionally a few days. Generally, these swarms are very docile and the swarming Bees usually will not sting. Before Honey Bees swarm they gorge themselves with honey before leaving the hive. This makes it very hard for them to double over and sting.



**What Causes Honey Bees to Swarm:** Honey Bees have a natural instinct to create new colonies by swarming. They may also swarm through overcrowding or because an old queen is thought to be failing and they wish to raise a new one. Honey Bees usually swarm in early spring just as the colony is building up numbers in anticipation of the upcoming honey flow but swarming can happen through to late summer

It is difficult to predict if weather conditions will lead to a large number of swarms in a particular year. MBBKA members attended nearly 100 calls to swarms last year and are on standby to collect throughout our area in 2018

**If You See a Swarm:** The collection of swarms an important part of the work of bee keepers. You should never interfere with a swarm and pest control companies will not kill a swarm unless absolutely necessary.

Please contact:

**MBBKA Swarm Hotline 07770370132**

**Brian Bush** – Mid Bucks Beekeepers and BBKA Swarm Officer

BBKA British Bee Keepers Association website

<http://www.bbka.org.uk>



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