

HFNC BEEAR STATE FOREST NEST BOX OCCUPATION Report 7 May 2013
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The details of nest box installation and past performance may be found in the report of 20 Nov 2012.

Site 2.

Road stop – 1.2 km from Bear SF sign on Hallams Tk (GPS Aust84, 37-22-31.4/142-02-27.3)

Nest box site – @ **37-22-34.9/142-02-24.5 [Waypoint 003 BSF NBox 1&2]**.

Habitat – dense *E. baxteri* forest with *X. minor* understorey (unburned >560 years). A few obvious hollows.

Report – as in Nov 2012, bees were in the large box but not in the small box. The bees were sprayed and the box removed with difficulty, the nail holding the base of the box to the tree holding tight. The box was dropped and lid hinge damaged. The box was repaired after scraping and washing to remove insecticide, wax and honey residues. Carpet was stapled under the lid and the upper 150 mm section of walls to try and stop bees attaching the honey comb (see Photo 1). The box was replaced on site the next day.

Site 3.

Road stop – 2.7 km from Bear SF sign on Hallams Tk (GPS Aust84, 37-21-47.4/142-02-06.0) in a drainage flat with Silver Banksia and Prickly Tea-tree and a large roadside log on east side.

Nest box site – @ **37-21-45.8/142-02-2.1 [Waypoint 005 BSF NBox 3&4]**.

Habitat – *E. leucoxylo*, *E. melliodora*, *E. viminalis*, *E. baxteri*, *B. marginata*.

Report – as in Nov 2012, no bees in either box. Carpet was stapled under the lid of the large box.

Site 5.

Road stop – Dam on track to McAdams Rd (GPS Aust84, 37-21-21.6/142-01-34.3) in a drainage flat with Silver Banksia, Black Wattle, Yellow Box, Brown Stringybark, Messmate Stringybark and many logs.

Nest box site – @ **37-21-20.0/142-01-30.2 [Waypoint 008 BSF NBox 5&6]**, 100 m west of dam.

Habitat – *E. melliodora*, *E. baxteri*, *B. marginata*, *A. mearnsii* and *X. minor*.

Report – as in Nov 2012, bees were in the large box and honeycomb and honey occupied almost all of the box, suspended from the lid, walls and sitting on the floor (see Photos 3 & 4) but not in the small box.

The bees and honey comb was mostly cleaned out of the large box by scraping and application of some hot water. Carpet was stapled under the lid and a 50 mm circular, black-painted sheep ear tag was loosely attached inside the box on a screw, over the 40 mm entry hole, to deter bees from entering. Small holes have been drilled in the centre of the tag to admit light to the box. A ring of sponge glued to the side of the tag facing into the box may allow an animal in the box to grip or push the tag to expose the exit hole (Photo 2).

Site 6.

Road stop – 0.9 km along the 2011 Burn Tk from jn 2011 Burn Tk/McAdams Tk in an area partly burned. Go 80 m NNE of a huge Yellow Gum that is 80 m east of the track. (GPS Aust84, 37-20-54.5/142-01-38.8).

Nest box site – @ **37-20-51.2/142-01-40.1 [Waypoint 010 BSF NBox 7&8]**.

Habitat – *E. leucoxylo* & *E. baxteri* and *X. minor* in an area partially burned in 2011.

Report – as in Nov 2012, bees were in large box but not in the small box. The large box was filled nearly to capacity with honeycomb and there was plenty of honey in the comb (see Photo 5).

The honeycomb and honey was removed and the box roughly scraped and sparingly washed with hot water to remove most residues. Carpet was stapled under the lid and a flap fitted over the hole (as in Site 5).

Site 10.

Road stop – 0.7 km N on Hallams Tk from its jn with McAdams Tk (GPS Aust84, 37-20-49.3/142-02-17.8)

Nest box site – @ **37-20-49.9/142-02-12.4 [Waypoint 015 BSF NBox 9&10]**.

Habitat – *E. leucoxylo*, *E. melliodora*, *E. viminalis* & *B. marginata* open woodland with *X. minor*.

Report – as in Nov 2012, no bees in either box. Carpet was stapled under the lid of the large box, as in Site 3

The next inspection will indicate if the carpet alone (2 methods) or in combination with an internal flap, will prevent bees from occupying the large boxes. So far, the bees have ignored the small boxes.



Photo 1 – Site 2.
Detail of carpet stapled to lid and all internal upper walls (15 cm depth) of the repaired & re-fitted nest box.

Photo 2.
Bee excluder flaps to cover the box entry hole – front (outside) and back (inside) of the tags.

Photo 3 – Site 5.
John Cayley with nest box and honeycomb.

Photo 4 – Site 5.
Honeycomb in the nest box.

Photo 5 – Site 6.
Honeycomb in the nest box.

