A NEW METHOD FOR STARTING BUMBLEBEE COLONIES

A number of scientists, e.g., Sladen and Lindhard, in 1912, Plath in 1923 and Frison in 1927, have tried to start bumblebee colonies by artificial methods. The methods employed have proved to be too complicated and too expensive for practical purposes, however.

After several years of experimentation I have worked out a comparatively simple method which has proved to be successful in Sweden for certain species and by which large-scale projects may be carried out at a reasonable cost. From a series of 30 artificial nests I succeeded in making 26, or approximately 87%, accepted by queen bumblebees. The queens were Bombus terrestris L., B. hypnorum and B. lapidarius L.

The method may be described as follows: Hibernated bumblebee queens are caught early in the spring and kept in a refrigerator (in match-boxes) until the proper time for nest-building seems to have come. Each queen is then placed in a pair of boxes (figure 1), one of which is closed and the other covered with glass. The boxes...

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**Fig. 1.**—The two boxes and their contents as set up for the queens indoors. (1) Moss litter; (2) "cellstoff"; (3) lump of pollen-dough; (4) feeding cup; (5) glass plate.