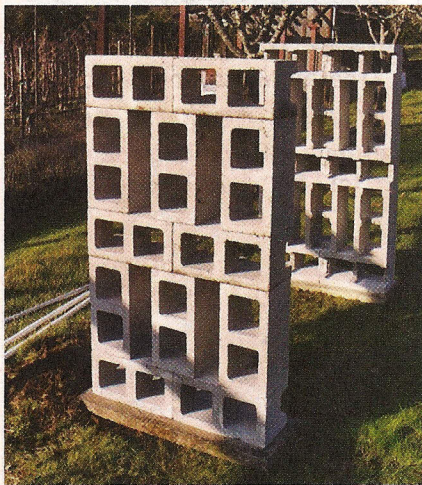


SUPER SUPER Storage Rack

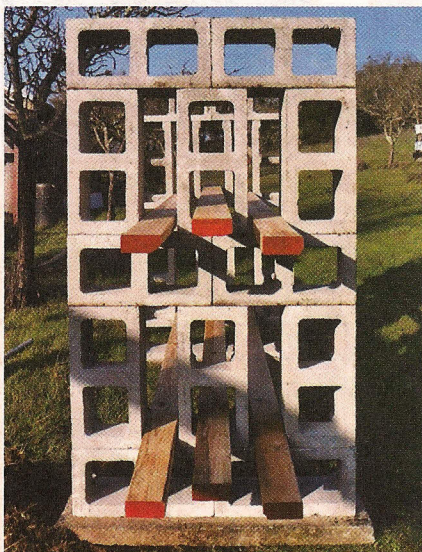
Serge Labesque



Easy to build, easy to use, easy to move.
What could be better?



The storage rack main structure: two stacks of concrete blocks.



The structure is ready to receive the corrugated sheet metal roofing.

Summer is just about over. Now that you have harvested and extracted the last surplus honey of the year, the beekeeping season is winding down. The excitement beekeepers experience when the honeyflows materialize, with Spring and Summer beehive management, and just when watching the tremendous activity displayed by strong colonies, they are all behind you now. As the size of the hives become less intimidating and less impressive, the stack of supers that accumulates in your yard grows into a challenging problem: What are you going to do with all this equipment until next season? You do not want to leave it exposed to the rain or snow, in piles that can get toppled by the Winter winds. Furthermore, you know that if you neglect the supers for any length of time, *wax moths will invade and destroy the combs, turning them into an ugly mess.*

Until last September, storing supers and frames during the Winters was not a problem for me. I kept my beekeeping equipment in a small, wide-open garden shed. Well-ventilated and well lit, the shed could contain my modest stock. In it, the boxes were stacked in such a way that the wind could easily and freely circulate through the frames. *Stored out of the rain, the combs also remained undamaged by wax moths.*

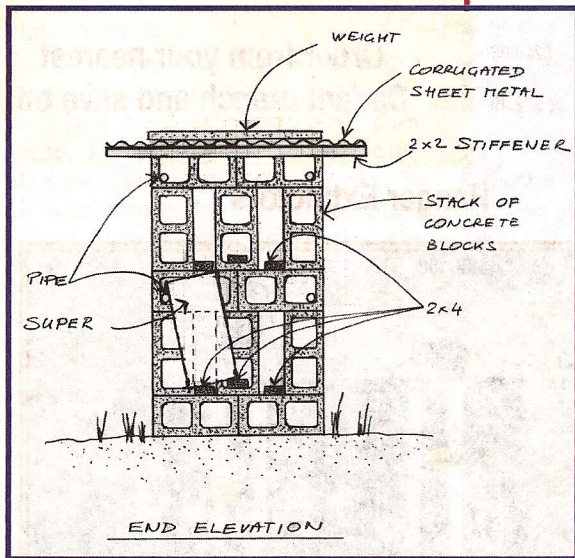
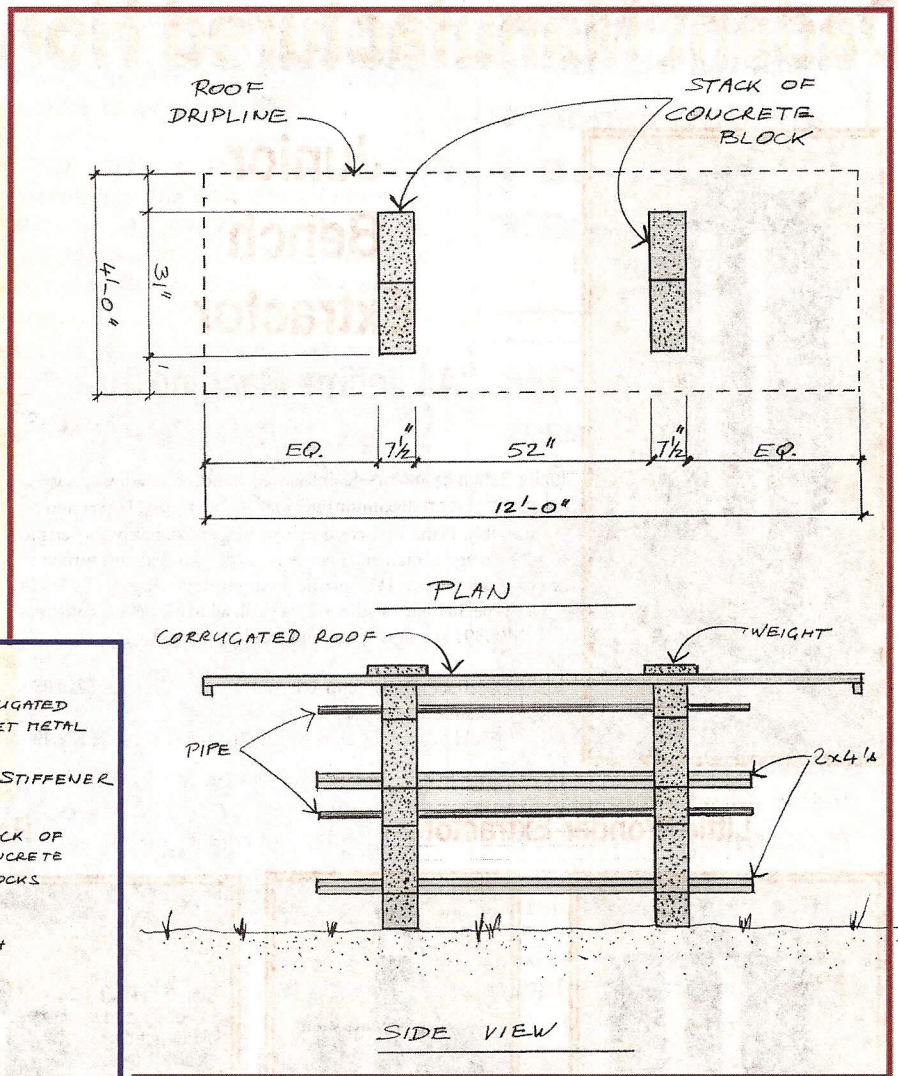
But during this past season, I increased my apiaries so much that the garden shed was not going to suffice anymore. I had to find another place to store the additional supers and frames. This had to be done quickly, and without resorting to a costly and time-consuming construction project. I happened to have a few concrete blocks and some sheets of corrugated steel (actually the original roof of our house). With these ingredients as givens, I drew a few sketches to figure out how to arrange the materials to house the supers. Then, the new storage structure was assembled in no time, and it was immediately put to use.

Winter came, winds and rains hit the storage rack, putting it to their test. I am happy to report that the supers have remained in excellent condition. The frames stayed dry, and most importantly, *there was not a hint of wax moth damage.*

There are a few other, very practical advantages to this storage rack: For one, the materials and the location where you build it are not committed forever. You can easily get any of them back if you want or need to; and you can move this simple structure or tear it down in no time. As a matter of fact, my original storage rack has already been relocated once. This took my son and me less than half an hour (teardown, moving of the components and supers 50 yards away, and re-construction included). Also, its roof is a good place to keep other materials off the ground.



End view showing the placement of the supers.



Construction of the storage rack

Here is an explanation on how to proceed, should you decide to assemble a similar storage rack, which, by the way, can accommodate 20 supers, deeps or mediums.

First you need to make two stacks of concrete blocks. Each of the two stacks, which are separated by a distance of approximately 52 inches, contains twelve of those 16" x 8" x 8" concrete masonry units.

Prepare the ground by removing rocks and grass, so that the stacks of concrete blocks can be set on a reasonably flat area. The two stacks do not need to be exactly at the same height, but you want them to be stable.

Arrange the blocks as shown in the drawing (I did not use any con-

crete or mortar, but I guess you could make it a more permanent piece of work by bonding the blocks, if you wanted to).

Then, slide the six 2 x 4's through the openings of the blocks, keeping about equal lengths outside of the stacks of blocks.

Two sheets of corrugated sheet metal are then set on top of the stacks. They are held in place by some heavy "stuff." This is a good place to store garden stakes and other materials out of the grass.

Fasten a piece of 2" x 2" such as an old garden stake along each end of the corrugated metal to rigidify the roof and to prevent rainwater from running along the underside of the roof. I painted these 2 x 2's with some white paint to make the edge of the roof more obvious and less dangerous (I have the tendency to bump my head into anything).

Four pipes are used to keep the supers in place. Slide them out of the way if necessary to place or remove hive bodies.

Conclusion

Well, this storage rack has been in use since last September. The supers have been kept out of the rain, and have not suffered any moth damage. So, it seems to be doing its job. What else could I ask from it? **BC**

Serge Labesque is a hobby beekeeper and ingenious designer who contributes to our pages not nearly often enough.