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YELLOW-LEGGED LEDGER

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • TYLER HARPER, COMMISSIONER

Special Edition

The Department's Plant Protection Division team has been hard at work - finding and swiftly eradicating 3 Yellow-legged hornet's nests over a 24-hour period between Wednesday and Thursday of last week in the Savannah area. The PPD team was assisted by Pest Management Professionals from Yates Astro Termite & Pest Control and Herrington Tree Service. All nests were eradicated successfully and without incident within hours of their discovery.



On July 17, 2024, PPD Field Agents discovered and promptly eradicated a nest atop a pine tree approximately 60 feet high in the Savannah area.

Issue 11: July 4, 2024 – July 19, 2024



Also, on July 17, 2024, another nest was found atop an oak tree, about 60 feet above ground, and eradicated on July 18, 2024, in the Savannah area.





On July 18, 2024, a third nest, similarly perched atop an oak tree at a height of approximately 60 feet, was located in the Savannah area and eradicated swiftly.





Additionally, a primary nest (approx. softball size) was reported through the department's website last week, but the nest had been abandoned. The nest was in an area of Savannah where several queens had been captured, so we are unsure if the nest relocated or if it is possible we captured the queen.



We believe the yellow-legged hornets may be entering their final developmental stage for the year. So far this year, nests are notably smaller than those discovered in 2023, with most captured hornets smaller than those observed in August, September, and October last year. Identifying them earlier in their growth cycle has prevented worker hornets from growing the nests to previous sizes.



(Pictured: Nest 4, eradicated on October 18, 2023)

Our dedicated team is actively surveying Savannah and the Georgia coast to locate and eradicate any nests that may have established. We continue to encourage citizens, especially beekeepers, to promptly report any sightings of yellow-legged hornets or nests to the Department.

It is crucial that we eliminate the yellow-legged hornet from Georgia to safeguard our state's No.1 industry – agriculture.

Update by the Numbers:

Issue 11: July 4, 2024 – July 19, 2024

New Traps Deployed: 40

Total traps deployed (August 2023 - July 2024): 1,029

Hornets found (July 4, 2024 - July 18, 2024): 53 workers

Nests found & eradicated (July 4 - July 19, 2024): 4

Total nests found & eradicated (August 2023 - July 2024):

- August 2023 - December 2023: 5 secondary nests
- January 2024 - July 2024: 4 embryo nests ; 4 primary nests ; 3 secondary nests

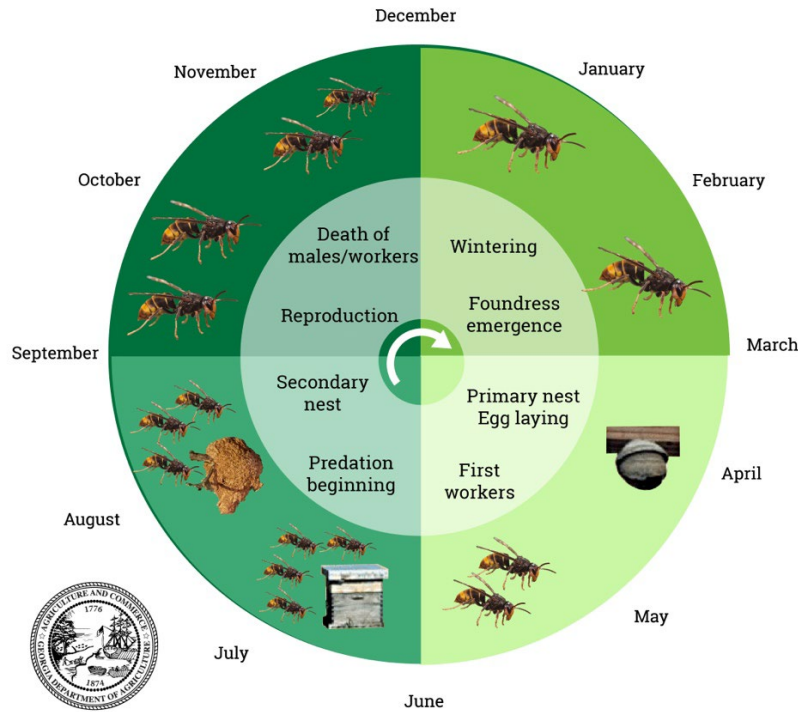
Helpful Resources:

Terms to Know:

- **Embryo Nests** are built by queens so that they can begin forming a colony and often are the size of a tennis ball. Embryo nests are usually found in early spring.
- **Primary Nests** are nests built by worker hornets once they emerge from embryo nests. They can be the size of a grapefruit. Primary nests are usually found in early summer.
- **Secondary Nests**, the final stage of a hornet colony, are much larger than embryo and primary nests. These nests, often found atop trees and larger than a basketball, were successfully eradicated from the Savannah area in 2023. They typically appear from late summer to fall.

Yellow-legged Hornet Life Cycle:

Here is a diagram illustrating the life cycle of the yellow-legged hornet. Currently, they are progressing as expected and starting to construct secondary nests.



Source: Monceau, Karine & Thiery, Denis. (2016). *Vespa velutina*: current situation and perspectives. *Atti della academia nazionale Italiana di Entomologia*.

How to Report Sightings and Nests:

If you come across a yellow-legged hornet nest, please take a photo and report it using the online [YLH reporting form](#) or by emailing yellow.legged.hornet@agr.georgia.gov. It's crucial to ensure that the queen is eliminated if you remove a nest to prevent her from establishing another nest elsewhere. If you're unsure about removing a nest, please contact the GDA for assistance.

We appreciate your assistance in helping us eradicate this serious threat to Georgia's agriculture, our state's number one industry. For more information, visit GDA's Dedicated Yellow-legged Hornet webpage: <https://agr.georgia.gov/yellow-legged-hornet>.

Issue 11: July 4, 2024 – July 19, 2024