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YELLOW-LEGGED LEDGER

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • TYLER HARPER, COMMISSIONER

As we navigate the impacts and begin the recovery process from Hurricane Helene, our thoughts and prayers are with all Georgians and especially our farmers. Please stay safe and remain vigilant.

Since the last issue of the Yellow-legged Ledger, our team has successfully located and eradicated four yellow-legged hornet nests in the Savannah area and on nearby trees.



(Pictured: Two of the four nests located and eradicated by the PPD team. On the right, inspectors Cade Houston and Chase Williams stand beside one of the recently eradicated nests.)

In recent weeks, the PPD team has had some success using RFID trackers to locate

Issue 16: September 13, 2024 – September 26, 2024

yellow-legged hornet nests. This technology enables us to monitor the movement and behavior of these hornets by attaching RFID tags to the hornets, tracking their behavior and then finding the nests they fly back to.



(Pictured: An RFID tracker on a yellow-legged hornet)

Members of the PPD team attended the Georgia Beekeepers Association conference on September 21st and 22nd. This event provided an excellent opportunity to discuss GDA's eradication efforts with Georgia beekeepers, who have been instrumental in helping us locate nests in the Savannah area and prevent the spread of yellow-legged hornets. As always, we encourage all Georgians to report any hornet sightings or suspected nests by emailing us at yellow.legged.hornet@agr.georgia.gov or using our online reporting [form](#). Your vigilance is essential in helping us manage this situation effectively.



(Pictured: PPD team members Chris Adams, Mike Evans, and Jonathan Nixon spoke with attendees about yellow-legged hornets at the Georgia Beekeepers Association conference.)

The final installment of the Market Bulletin series, showcasing the GDA's strategies and efforts to eradicate yellow-legged hornets from Georgia, is now available. Additionally, the PPD team will have a booth at the Georgia National Fair from October 3 to 13. If you're in Perry during that time, we invite you to stop by the Georgia Grown building to chat with the team working on the front lines of GDA's yellow-legged hornet eradication efforts.





(Pictured: Top Left: Market Bulletin Editor Jay Jones speaks with a Savannahian about two nests found on her property between June and August 2024. Top Right: An eradicated yellow-legged hornet nest. Bottom: A yellow-legged hornet in its habitat.)

UPDATE BY THE NUMBERS

New Traps Deployed: 5

Total traps deployed (August 17, 2023 – September 26, 2024): 1,665

Hornets found (September 13 – September 26, 2024): 151

Nests found & eradicated (September 13 – September 26, 2024): 4

Total nests found & eradicated (August 2023 – September 12, 2024): **35**

- January 2024 – September 26, 2024: 4 embryo nests, 3 primary nests, 23 secondary nests
- August 2023 - December 2023: 5 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.

Issue 16: September 13, 2024 – September 26, 2024

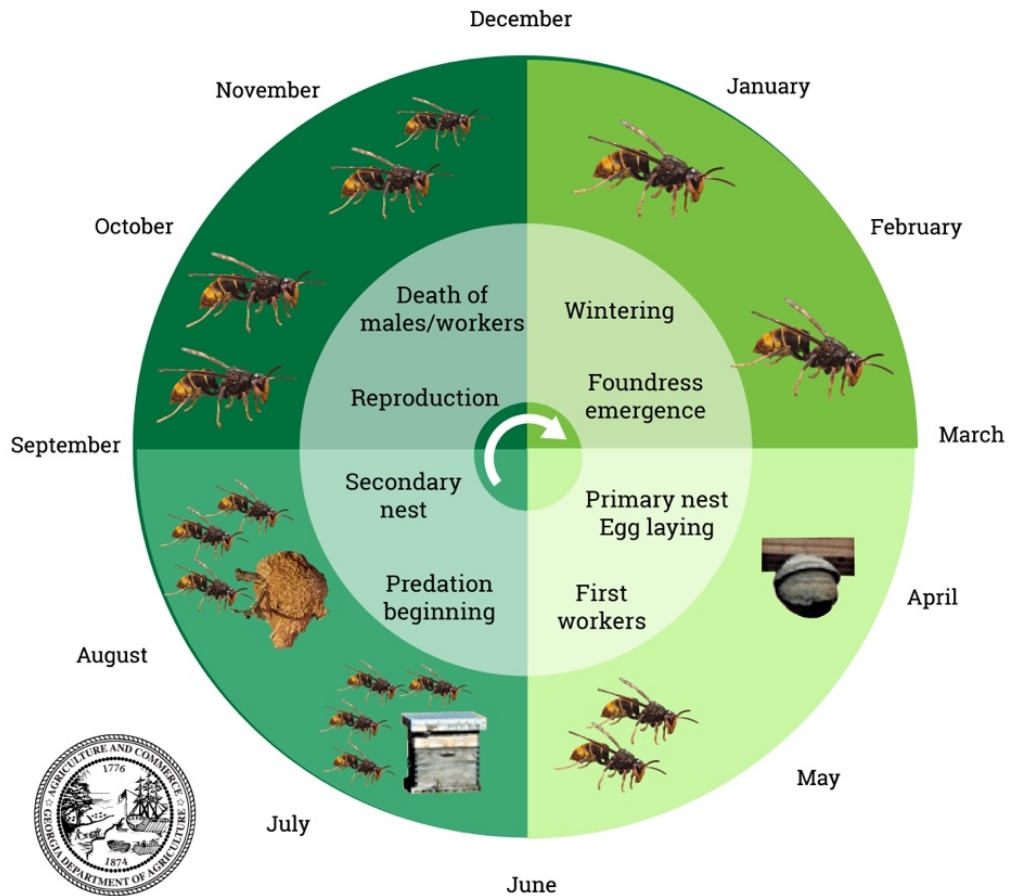
- **Primary Nests** are nests built by worker hornets once they emerge from embryo nests. They can be the size of a grapefruit. Primary nests are usually found in early summer.
- **Secondary Nests**, the final stage of a hornet colony, are much larger than embryo and primary nests. These nests, often 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.

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.

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 constructing secondary nests.



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

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>.