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YELLOW-LEGGED LEDGER

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • TYLER HARPER, COMMISSIONER

On August 13, 2024, the Georgia Department of Agriculture's Plant Protection Division (PPD) successfully found and eradicated four yellow-legged hornet nests in the Savannah area. The following day, August 14, 2024, the team discovered and removed an additional nest. While most nests were found in pine trees, two were located in live oaks, one in a pecan tree, and one in a shed. In total, all five nests were located and removed within the Savannah, GA area.



(Pictured: Left: YLH nest found & eradicated from a shed on August 13, 2024. Right: Yates-Astro Termite and Pest Control & Herrington Tree Service team treating & removing a YLH nest from a pecan tree on August 13, 2024 in the Savannah area.)

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(Pictured: Left: PPD’s Briton Gill and Cade Houston, with nests found on August 13, 2024, in the Savannah area, two of our dedicated inspectors who are actively working to track, trap, and eradicate yellow-legged hornets from Georgia. Right: PPD supervisor Chris Adams and manager David Williams, engaging with Savannah residents to raise awareness about yellow-legged hornets and their nests. PPDs efforts in educating and involving the community have been instrumental in our success in locating multiple nests in recent weeks.)



(Pictured: Left: We are currently awaiting confirmation on whether the two nests highlighted in

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blue and red circles are primary or secondary yellow-legged hornet nests. Notably, the PPD team has observed that yellow-legged hornets frequently establish secondary nests near their abandoned primary ones. Right: A small YLH secondary nest, eradicated on August 13, 2024, in the Savannah area.)

This week, Jay Jones and Nick Vassy, editor and office manager of the Farmers and Consumers Market Bulletin, have joined the PPD team in Savannah as they work on an upcoming three-part series about yellow-legged hornets. Look for these articles in the Market Bulletin soon. If you haven't subscribed yet, you can do so by visiting <https://agr.georgia.gov/market-bulletin>.



(Pictured: Photos by Market Bulletin, showcasing an upcoming three-part series on the GDA's efforts to eradicate the Yellow-legged Hornet in Georgia.)

The PPD team, is working hard to find as many nests as quickly as possible. We believe this is the best method to reach our goal of full eradication in Georgia. To do this PPD, has been aggressively tracking and trapping yellow-legged hornets since early 2024.

YLH Control Efforts in Georgia

Flight Patterns Studied:

Understanding their behavior to improve tracking methods.

Winter Trap Maintenance:

Keeping traps active through the colder months.

22+ YLH Queens Captured:

Successes in the spring of 2024, helping to manage their spread.



On August 12, 2024, PPD manager Chris Adams delivered a presentation on yellow-legged hornets to the Coastal Empire Beekeepers Association. The PPD team is always eager to engage in such events, as we believe that Georgians—whether community members, beekeepers, or pest management professionals—are our greatest allies in the fight against these invasive hornets. Our mission is to educate the public on the importance of eradicating yellow-legged hornets from the state, and we greatly value their support. As the hornets' nests grow larger, they become more noticeable this time of year, increasing the chances of sightings. We encourage residents to report any suspected nests or hornet sightings immediately. The most effective way to contact the Plant Protection Division is by emailing yellow.legged.hornet@agr.georgia.gov.

UPDATE BY THE NUMBERS

New Traps Deployed: 54

Total traps deployed (August 2023 – August 14, 2024): 1,073

Hornets found (August 1- August 16, 2024): 328 workers

Nests found & eradicated (August 1 – August 16, 2024): 5

Total nests found & eradicated (August 2023 – August 16, 2024):

- January 2024 – August 16, 2024: **18 total**
 - 4 embryo nests ; 3 primary nests ; 11 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.
- **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.

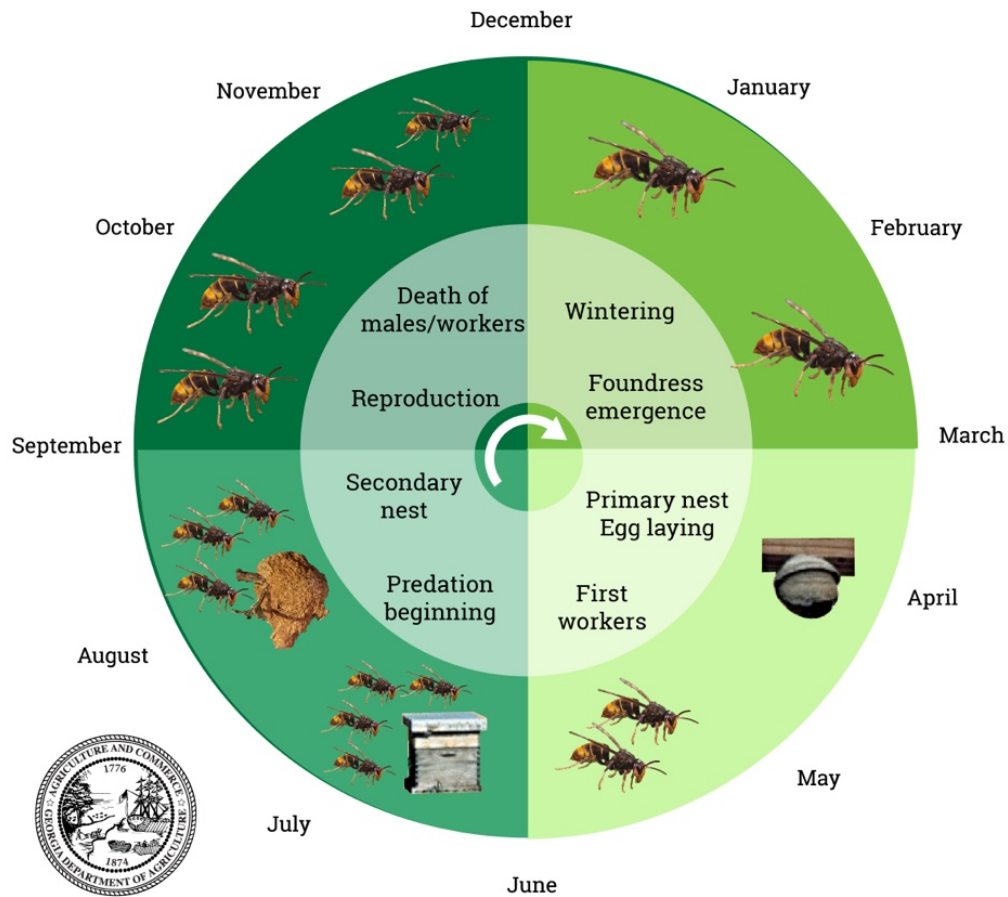
How to Report Sightings and Nests:

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:

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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 & Thierry, 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>.