



YELLOW-LEGGED LEDGER

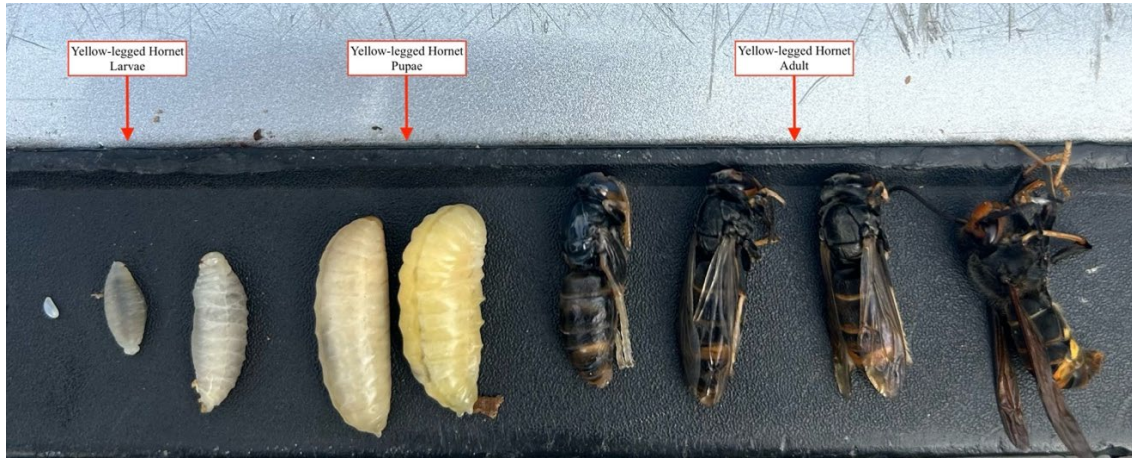
Over the past week, the Department's Plant Protection Division team has successfully located and eradicated three secondary nests, thanks to the invaluable assistance of Savannah's beekeepers and pest management professionals. As the number of yellow-legged hornets increases in each nest, their nests will become more visible during this time of year, increasing the likelihood of sightings. We urge residents to report any suspected nests or hornet sightings immediately. The most effective way to reach the Plant Protection Division is by emailing yellow.legged.hornet@agr.georgia.gov.



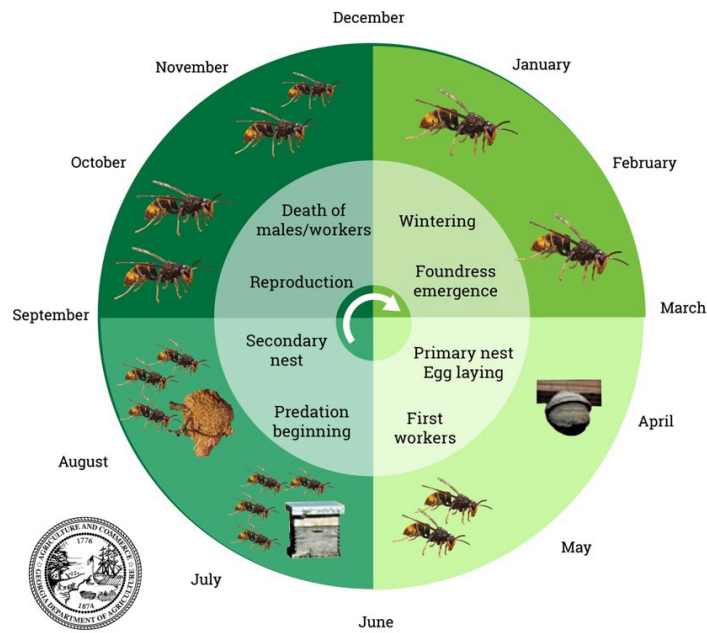
(Pictured: PPD team members Cole Wilson, Briton Gill, and Jonathan Nixon with Nest 4, discovered in Savannah on July 24, 2024.)

The yellow-legged hornets were first identified in Georgia a year ago, and since then, the Plant Protection Division team has gained unique insights into this invasive species. Their ability to adapt as new information comes to light has been instrumental in tracking, trapping, and eradicating these hornets. The team has made notable progress by studying flight patterns, maintaining traps through the winter, and successfully capturing over 22 YLH queens in the spring of the 2024

season. While it's likely that more secondary nests will be discovered before the season concludes, the early detection means they are smaller compared to those found in 2023, which were located later in the year and later in their development cycle. Our ultimate goal for this year is to keep the spread of yellow-legged hornets to other parts of the state at bay and work towards their complete eradication from Georgia. At this point, we believe we are on track to reach this goal.



(Pictured: The developmental stages of the yellow-legged hornet, from larvae to pupae to adult.)



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

(Pictured: A diagram illustrating the life cycle of the yellow-legged hornet.)



(Pictured: Video of Nest 6 before its eradication on July 31, 2024, viewed from inside the building where it was discovered.)

On Wednesday, July 24, 2024, beekeepers from the Savannah area reported YLH activity approximately 20 miles apart. Nest 4 was located about 100 feet off the ground, perched atop a tree on a private property, while Nest 5 was found around 80 feet up in a tree within a neighborhood. Both nests were successfully eradicated between July 24 and July 25, 2024. A third nest, Nest 6, was identified on Tuesday, July 30, 2024, by a pest management professional on the outside of a third-floor window of a building. This nest was eradicated the following day, July 31, 2024. The eradication of all three nests was carried out with the assistance of Yates-Astro Termite & Pest Control and Herrington Tree Services.



(Pictured: Left—Nest 4, discovered on July 24, 2024. Right—Nest 6, discovered on July 30, 2024.)

Update by the Numbers:

New Traps Deployed: 35

Total traps deployed (August 2023 – July 31, 2024): 1,066

Hornets found (July 19, 2024 - July 31, 2024): 104 workers

Nests found & eradicated (July 19 - July 31, 2024): 3

Total nests found & eradicated (August 2023 – July 31, 2024):

- August 2023 - December 2023: 5 secondary nests
- January 2024 - July 31, 2024: 4 embryo nests ; 2 primary nests ; 6 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

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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.

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>.