

ASIAN HORNET (VESPA VELUTINA) ACTION PLAN PDBKA

GUIDELINE

The information I present here is only a guideline. It's important to note that this is meant as a guide, and beekeepers should adapt the techniques to suit their specific apiaries.

I'm not going to judge what you do and how you do it but I would like to be involved with individuals' trap locations, techniques, bait used etc. That way we can learn new methods and grow as a collective.

Utilize the app to report sightings of Asian Hornets. If the app is unavailable, contact the Asian Hornet Coordinator or a member of the AHAT team, who will come and identify the possible trapped hornet.

In case of urgent situations when the NBU is busy, contact the AH Coordinator/verifiers for advice..

MONITORING TRAPS

I encourage everyone to put up some traps in and around their area. This way we'll eventually get full coverage of Portsmouth and its surrounding areas. It is suggested that a successful trapping programme to control Asian hornet populations would require a trap every 0.5km². But with Portsmouth having built up areas this will be a challenge, so I would recommend having traps located at hotspot sites like the dockyard. Also sites that have a fresh water source. One key location is the Paulsgrove chalk pits, which have overhanging cliffs for a nest site and a water source in the form of a freshwater pond. Baffins pond, the Hilsea bastions/foxes forest, Milton Common, will also be prime spots for Asian Hornet activity. Any gardens that also have a freshwater source, like a pond, will be attractive to Asian Hornets.

I also advise putting up traps/monitoring stations around your apiaries. But not too close, otherwise you could bring in many unwanted worker Hornets of your apiaries.

Please at some point can you send the locations of your traps to the Asian Hornet Coordinator so the area can be checked for coverage. An exact location isn't needed but just a rough idea of where your traps are would be ideal. So the coverage can be mapped.

Please check your traps daily, if possible, for Asian Hornet activity and to reduce and monitor bycatch.

CATCHING AN ASIAN HORNET

In the UK you're **not** allowed to trap and release a non native/invasive species. But you can use an open bait station, sneak up on a hornet and mark her thorax. (If you wish to monitor and get an idea of where the nest is). You can't physically trap an Asian Hornet and then release it without an official catch and release license from Natural England. But you can mark a busy/non trapped Hornet feeding and unaware of your intentions.

If you suspect you have caught an Asian Hornet please take a photo and send the photo via the app to the NBU. If you're unsure of what you have caught then please contact the AH Coordinator and I'll happily identify and advise of what has been caught.

If an Asian Hornet is caught, either contact the NBU via the app or request assistance from the AHAT team to report the capture. Once uploaded to the app, the NBU should be with you later that day or the following day. The NBU will use live hornets to locate the nest, so it's best to keep them alive and follow the NBU's advice.

Note that if an Asian Hornet is caught between February and April, it is likely a queen, and you are allowed to destroy her. Take a photo and report it to the NBU via the app, seeking advice on proper disposal.

CALENDAR

QUEEN CATCHING

February – April

Sweet/sugary bait – in a sunny location. Bait recommendations: form attached

I'd like to set up some traps in certain locations. Locations near to a water source. Early flowering plants. Garden centers/Dockyard – if any Queens enter in via imported goods from the EU.

Bait stations to be monitored by individual beekeepers on their own apiaries with any possible sighting/capturing being reported to the AHTC/liasing with the AHTC. AHTC will verify the catch as to if it is indeed a *Vespa Velutina* queen. The Queen is then sadly disposed of (seek advice from the NBU before doing this). The AHAT team will also monitor traps outside of apiaries.

Continue to monitor traps and keep the traps topped up with bait. Check for Bycatch and record what is being caught. AHATS will identify bycatch if the beekeeper is unable to identify.

WORKER MONITORING

May – August 2024

Protein based bait – in sunny locations. Unlikely to forage in the shadows. Bait recommendations: form attached

No more Queen trapping. Now the hornets entering our apiaries will be workers, feeding their forever hungry larva.

Traps act more as bait stations, having no bycatch as the plan isn't to capture and kill the worker but to use the worker to locate the main hive.

Marking a worker *You can't catch and release in the UK, but you can sneak up on an open bait station, mark and observe the worker this way. Timing her flights and direction.*

Beekeepers can also put-up traps to protect the apiaries, but they must try to keep bycatch down as best they can.

PROTECTING YOUR APIARY

September 2024

New queens will be actively mating and seeking places to hide for winter. Workers will still be active, hunting honeybees, and other prey. Set traps to protect apiaries, which may catch new queens stocking up before hibernation.

October-November 2024

Any nests located now will stop the workers. But the nest/colony of Asian Hornets will begin to collapse. The newly mated queens would have already left. The nest will slowly die as winter sets in.

December – January 2024/25

Use this time to reflect on the season and make improvements for the following year.

THE ASIAN HORNET TEAM AHATS

NAME	LOCATION	CONTACT DETAILS	NOTES
James Wheeldon	Hilsea West Bastion	07544374456	AHAT Coordinator

AHAT Verifiers

NAME	LOCATION	
Clive Good	-	
David Woods	Hilsea East Bastion	
Mark Page	Southsea/Elm Grove	
Martha Domley	-	
Mihai Serban	Southsea/Bransbury Park	
Mike Cotton	Hayling Island	
Sara Fitzgerald	-	
Wendy Gilbert	-	

James Wheeldon - AHAT Coordinator PDBKA