

Asian Hornet (*Vespa velutina*) Management Plan, 2019

Aim

To maintain, develop and deliver this action plan (the Plan) by provision of an Asian Hornet Coordinator (AHC) in order to protect, as far as possible, the public, biodiversity and honey bee populations from the impact of the Asian Hornet *Vespa velutina*.

The AHC will be employed mid-March to end October 2019. The plan will be implemented from start April to end October 2019

Calls regarding suspected Asian Hornet (AH) outside of these dates will be passed to the Jersey Asian Hornet Group (JAHG).

Objectives

These will form the basis of the work for 2019 but given the unknown rate of AH population development, objectives can be reviewed at any time.

1. Work collaboratively with relevant partners to, in order of preference:

- a. Eradicate if possible, or;
 - b. Slow the rate of spread, and;
 - c. Establish long term management methods of AH
2. Support the efforts and material costs (within budgetary constraints and to agreed levels of funding) of JAHG in the safe tracking of Hornets and location of nests and insure JAHG individuals under corporate policies.
3. Fund the destruction of nests (within budgetary constraints) by professional pest controllers and provide the specialist equipment, materials, training and advice required to do so safely, until such time as the number of destructions required exceed budgetary constraints, when this objective will be reviewed.

4. Use the SoJ Communication Unit, local and social media and existing material to raise awareness of the issue and ensure;

- a. People are aware of Asian Hornets and the risks they pose.
- b. People can safely attempt to identify primary and secondary nests.

c. People can safely attempt to identify adult Asian Hornets.

d. People are aware of the reporting mechanisms and control measures available.

e. Professions/trades that may come into with Hornets are advised on the risks they may face (land managers, tree surgeons, gardeners etc.).

f. Medical and emergency services have been alerted to the threat and have the opportunity to plan, equip and supply accordingly.

5. Provide an Asian Hornet Coordinator (AHC) (mid-March – end October) to act as a single contact point, to record and disseminate information and coordinate collaborative working between all parties to ensure a robust, efficient and consistent response to Asian Hornet.

6. Develop effective and accessible data capture methods to be used by all partners (and perhaps the public) to record reporting, tracking, location and destruction activities, on a shared data platform.

7. Support relevant research and training (within budgetary constraints) to allow the further development of partners skills, methods and techniques to support the plan.

8. Maintain and develop relationships with external Government, NGOs and academic institutions to facilitate knowledge exchange and partnership working to support t

Justification

The potential for this invasive insect to create economic, ecological and human wellbeing impacts is well known and so will not be documented here.

For details visit:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asian_giant_hornet

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/alerts/index.cfm?id=4>

<http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm>

<http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?sectionid=117>

<https://aphascience.blog.gov.uk/2017/11/27/safeguarding-with-science-responding-to-an-asian-hornet-outbreak/>

Geographical Range, Risk Assessment and Rate of Establishment.

The Asian Hornet is native to parts of eastern Asia and was accidentally introduced to south-west France in 2004.

The GB Non-Native Species Programme Board (NNSPB) commissioned the National Bee Unit (NBU) to undertake a Non-Native Organism Risk Assessment for the Asian hornet for the UK which is summarised as follows.

- Entry: very likely
- Establishment: very likely
- Spread: rapid
- Impacts: moderate
- Conclusion: medium risk

The NNSPB concluded that it was unlikely that methods could be deployed to reduce the risk of entry to the UK and recommended that measures be put in place to initially intercept and prevent establishment, moving to longer term management if this is no longer possible – a similar approach as being taken in Jersey.

Asian Hornet reached the Channel Islands/UK in 2016. The rapid rise in nest findings 2016 – 2018 indicates a rapid rate of establishment and 2019 will likely see a further increase in numbers.

Direct re-colonisation of Jersey and other Channel Islands from the adjacent French Cotentin Peninsula may compromise eradication and/or management measures unless successful management is achieved in mainland France and wider Europe.

Action plan

Spring Trapping

- Spring Trapping is not supported within this plan because;
- The latest advice from the NBU indicates that:
 - Natural mortality of emerging spring queens is very high.
 - Spring trapping effort has no effect on population suppression.
 - Current trap designs create unacceptable by-catch levels.
 - Effort is better spent preparing for the identification of nest location later in the season.
- Of the 250+ plastic traps deployed into the environment in 2018, fewer than 30 were returned.
 - This high rate of lost traps may contribute to plastic pollution.
 - Legacy 'ghost trapping' may occur as environmental moisture keeps the decaying contents of ghost traps attractive to non-target species who enter, become trapped and continue the cycle.

Detection and Safety Through Awareness

- The Asian Hornet issue has received considerable media coverage since 2016 and by 2018 the level of public and political awareness achieved was high, with the States of Jersey Chief Minister awarding extra funding to support the campaign.
- Maintenance and development of this awareness to aid detection of hornets and protect the public will be a key role of the AHC in 2019.
- The AHC will be the key individual

coordinating this task and all AH media releases should flow through the AHC.

- The AHC will have access to States of Jersey web pages and Facebook accounts, local print media, TV and Radio.
- There is a wide range of informative material already prepared by NE, NBU and DEFRA etc.
- The AHC will have access to the States of Jersey Communications Unit to assist in this aspect of the campaign.
- All media coverage should be agreed by the AHC and SoJ CU, and media training will be provided to JAHG and the AHC if needed.
- The AHC will ensure Health and Safety risk assessment provided by NE is understood and adhered to.
- JAHG Tem Leaders also have a responsibility to ensure team members observe health and safety measures
- The AHC will provide information and guidance to schools and develop actions with individual schools as required. We must keep students, parents and teachers safe from the risks associated to Asian hornets.
 - All primary and secondary schools were issued with traps, posters, instructions and guidance to report sightings in 2018.
 - All of the above will be reissued as required this year.
 - The AHC will work closely with the Education Department will to collaboratively reduce risks posed by Asian Hornets in 2019.

Reporting and Recording

- The efficient reporting and recording of Asian Hornets is key to the efficient operation of the 2019 campaign. In previous years reports emanated from many sources and arrived at many destinations leading to confusion and delay.

- In 2019 the AHC will be the only point of contact to receive reports. The post holder will be provided with a mobile phone, a desk phone with answering facility and a SoJ email account asianhornet@gov.je
- Early PR and media work will inform all parties and the public that and all reports must be sent to the AHC who will be expected to verify, record and triage reports as they arrive.
- SoJ IT and GIS staff are currently working on an IT solution using Apps, GIS and linked data bases to act as a reporting and mapping solution for AH.
- Any reports received in other parts of the Department will be re-directed to the AHC.
- AH reports out of hours can either be left on the AHC answerphone or if the situation is urgent a rotating JAHG duty phone system will operate with this extra number listed on the answerphone.
- The AHC is free to decide whether calls are taken at weekends or recorded and dealt with in the following week.
- Consideration should be given as to what reports will be taken.
 - A single visual sighting with no photo is not very useful, however a cluster of such reports in an area could indicate the presence of a nest.
 - A verifiable photo with GPS coordinates embedded in the meta data is the most valuable type of report.
- Once verified, a report of hornet activity will be passed to the relevant JAHG team for investigation as a 'New Case' or incorporated into an existing case.
- The AHC will organise verified Hornet reports based on location and pass to the relevant JAHG Team.
- Microsoft CRM and training will be provided to the AHC for use as a case management system if required.

Tracking and Nest Location by JAHG.

Costs

- The JAHG will be supported materially by the SoJ NE.
- A mobile phone will be provided to each JAHG tracking team to allow smooth communication between the AHC and teams, and reduce costs to volunteers.
- The AHC will be responsible for equipment and PPE inventory, stock and consumables control and reordering these ordinary materials to ensure the JAHG remain operational.
- Extraordinary material purchases must be agreed with NE.
- JAHG members will be reimbursed for ordinary minor costs used in hornet location activities (within budgetary constraints), on production of receipts
- Acceptable expenditure includes petrol, drinking water, sun protection products and food.
- A mileage sheet will be provided and must be completed to recoup petrol expenditure.
- Food will be limited to £10.00/day.
- Itemised receipts for expenditure must be retained by JAHG members and passed to the AHC for recording, collation and reimbursement.
- Reimbursement to individual JAHG members will occur periodically when the amount due reaches £100.00 and will be finalised at the end of the season.
- Should any extraordinary expenditure be required in the process of tracking and location of nests, other than items listed above, this is subject to agreement by a Senior NE Officer

Method

- The NE will not stipulate tracking and location methods. The JAHG have huge experience and skill and are fully competent in these methods.

- It is assumed that most tracking will be performed using catch and release, bait stations, feathering and line of sight
- Standard labels will be produced for traps, which should be numbered and location recorded. - NB – Catch and release is not permitted by the NBU in the UK.
- Due to cost, radio tracking will be seen as an exception to the points above and needs to be agreed on a case by case basis with NE via the AHC.
- It is expected that JAHG trackers will sign and observe a Risk Assessment developed by NE to cover tracking and nest location activities.

Organisation

- The AHC will meet the JAHG at the outset of the season to discuss how they intend to organise themselves with regard to teams, team leaders and Island coverage
- The AHC and JAHG will need to establish a relationship, set ground rules and adapt this plan with NE agreement to ensure efficient running of the plan.
- The JAHG and AHC should hold a weekly de-brief

Identification

- Identification of JAHG members is felt to be important and so the following will be provided.
 - Laminated car dashboard notices.
 - Laminated ID cards.
 - Trap labels as per the JAHG design
 - Public Warning Signs

Nest Destruction

- Once JAHG have located a nest, this should be notified to the AHC. The AHC will then notify this to the PCs.
- If possible, pesticide free methods of destruction should be employed before pesticide treatment is used.
- Only PCs trained in the use of long lance injection methods will be employed in nest destruction and removal.

- Air Adik long lance equipment and suitable pesticide will be provided by NE.
- It is expected that PCs will have their own up to date Risk Assessments for nest treatment and destruction and it will be assumed appropriate PPE including specifically provided AH suits will be worn
- It will be assumed the PCs will not work alone and will not undertake tree climbing.
- The use of a cherry-picker or similar is permitted but must be agreed and booked by the AHC.
- JAHG are happy to manually remove primary hornet nests, whilst it is expected that secondary nests would be treated and removed by PCs.
- Should JAHG members wish to remove nests for research reasons, this should be discussed and agreed with the AHC, and is at the JAHGs own risk.
- Pesticide free methods of destruction should be developed as possible.
- Nest removal/destruction in environmentally or public health sensitive situations should be discussed with the NE, AHC and JAHG prior to commencement.

Legislation and Access

- Currently there is no statutory requirement to report this species or control it.
- Nor is there any power to require control or to access land for monitoring or control.
- The Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2000 is being reviewed and updated to include Non Native Species control.
- It is therefore important that people are aware of the issue and watching for the occurrence of this species and for landowners to understand the necessity of providing or allowing monitoring and control.
- The JAHG should always try and seek permission to enter land when they can, but on the whole land owners are understanding regarding efforts to maintain Jersey's biosecurity.

Facilities

- The NE will provide a dedicated AH store accessible 24/7 to the JAHG and PCs
- The AHC will be responsible for general operation of the store and be accountable for the stores used.
- JAHG members must sign equipment in and out and are responsible for this equipment when in their possession.
- A large freezer for pesticide free nest killing will be provided.
- Any breakages, faults or losses must be reported to the AHC

External Relationships

- The NE has good external relationships with NBU, DEFRA, APHA, PHSI and CSL and others.
- These will be maintained and nurtured during the 2019 AH season with knowledge sharing and collaborative working.
- The Chief Plant Health Officer and NE plan to host NBU Bee inspectors in Jersey in 2019 to assist the JAHG whilst learning from them.
- The JAHG recommend late August – early September.
- NE will financially support this.
- In previous years NE has financially supported visits by UK beekeepers.
- This will not be the case in 2019 however they are free to attend Jersey at their own cost if hosted by the JAHG/JBKA - NB – catch and release of AH is not permitted in the UK.
- There should be liaison with Brittany, Aquitaine and La Manche to ensure up-to-date and effective methods.
- Information sharing and collaboration between the Channel Islands is also vital and so regular updates between the Bailiwicks should be scheduled into the AHCs work schedule.
- It is strongly recommended that close inter-island relationships are developed as re-invasion rates will be higher should Asian hornet establish at high populations

on other Channel Islands.

- An email list should be set up so that information can be exchanged in an informal setting and as often as required.

Health, Safety and Professional Awareness

- It is expected that JAHG trackers will sign and observe a Risk Assessment developed by NE to cover tracking and nest location activities.
- JAHG trackers must observe the provided lone worker policy when working alone.
- It is expected that PCs will have their own up to date Risk Assessments for nest treatment and destruction.
- It will be assumed appropriate PPE including specifically provided AH suits will be worn at all times when any JAHG or PC is within close proximity of a nest.
- NE are not responsible for PPE from other sources.
- There are several groups which are at an increased risk of interaction with Asian hornet nests, or for whom the early detection and removal of nests is particularly vital.
- Land managers, farmers, gardeners and tree surgeons who cut hedges or trees are at an increased risk of disturbing a nest.
- Targeted information should be issued by the AHC in order to reduce these risks; how to visually search for a nest, what to do in the event of finding a nest, disturbing a nest or being stung by a hornet.
- Sites with a prevalence of vulnerable users warrant more careful inspection
- for nests, for example, these may be schools, medical facilities or residential homes. In the event of a nest being discovered in such a location, its removal should be discussed by NE, AHC, PCs and JAHG prior to commencement.
- Medical or emergency services professionals who may be called to respond/deal with the disturbance of a hornets nest will be reminded that they may require appropriate PPE to reduce the risks to themselves, as well as appropriate equipment to enable effective treatment of victims.

- In order to effectively deal with a swarm there must be coordinated action plans developed which incorporate pest controllers, medical officials and emergency services. This need will be highlighted to the relevant contacts.

Long Term Management

- In the event of a decision by NE to change the AH response to long-term management, Government's role will be:
- To adapt this plan to reflect the new objective.
- To advise and provide information to all parties on how to safely identify and manage this species.
- To ensure sufficient trained operatives are available to provide a robust, efficient and consistent response to Asian Hornet.
- To ensure sufficient specialist equipment is available to those operatives.
- To devise decision tools to inform decisions on whether to treat individual nests or not.
- To ensure Jersey stays abreast of the latest control methods.
- To maintain external research links
- Beekeepers will not receive apiary management advice from Government as they are more expert than Government in this area.

Resource Allocation Recording

- Invasive Species as an expanding work stream, as recognised by a £25k revenue allocation for this work in 2017, however no specific officer time was allocated to Asian Hornet management. Unrecorded manpower and other 'undefined' resources deployed against AH in 2016, 2017 and early 2018 were absorbed into the wider work stream of the Environment Department.
- Resource allocation to AH in 2016 – 2018 was far greater than that allocated to other invasive species over the same period including: Japanese Knotweed, defoliating tree pests, statutory tree diseases and invasive marine species to name a few

- Asian Hornet work consumed the majority of the £25k Invasive Species budget in 2017 and the entire £25k 2018 budget, plus the majority of an additional £25k 2018 award
- To gain a true understanding of resource and effort expended against AH in 2019 the NE expenditure, JAHG volunteer and NE Officer hours will be recorded.

Resources

GB Non-native Species Secretariat website

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/alerts/index.cfm?id=4>

The Asian hornet alert page includes: identification and information sheets, UK records email, peer-reviewed risk assessment for non-native species, alert poster, England & Wales response plan.

National Bee Unit's BeeBase website

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/index.cfm?pagelid=208>

This will be a key source of information during Asian hornet control efforts in the UK, to disseminate information, and be updated when there are significant developments to report. It will include:

- the location of the outbreak area(s)
- advisory and technical information on the Asian hornet
- detection and control methods.
- general advice for interested parties, e.g. press.
- links to relevant websites for further technical information.

BWARS <http://www.bwars.com/>

Hymettus Ltd <http://hymettus.org.uk/> Joint information sheet BWARS/Hym/MNHN.

Contacts - Jersey

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