



Summary annual report

Date: 16th November 2020

Asian Hornet Strategy: annual review 2020 - the status of the Asian hornet (*Vespa velutina*) on Guernsey, and neighbouring islands

What are the population trends on Guernsey?

The occurrence of Asian hornet sightings and number of nests destroyed in 2020 across the Bailiwick of Guernsey were down significantly compared to previous years - see Figure 1 for details.

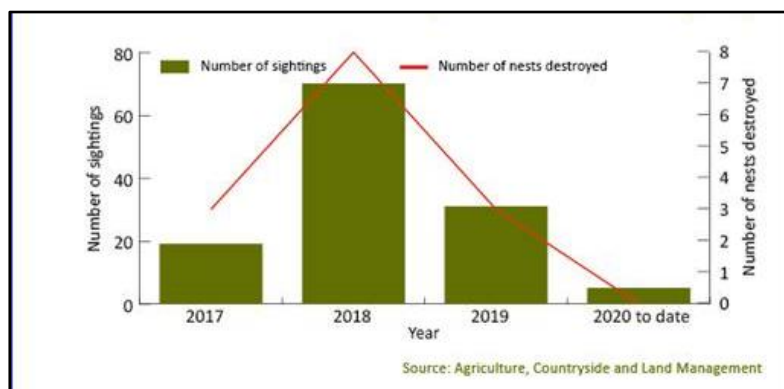


Figure 1. Asian hornet sightings and nest destruction on Guernsey: 2017-2020

Is the Asian hornet strategy working?

The notable decrease in the number of detected nests in 2020 provides evidence that the effective tracking and destruction of all nests in 2018 and 2019 had a significant impact on subsequent years.

The summer/autumn control is augmented by a coordinated “spring queening” trapping programme which aims to eliminate emerging queens. During 2020, no nests were detected on Guernsey, Sark or Herm. A single nest was found and destroyed in Alderney (Sept. 30th); Evidence suggests the strategy is having the desired positive impact - see Figure 2 for data.

Guernsey	2017	2018	2019	2020 (% change cf. 2019)
Possible sightings reported by the public	258	302	218	171 (-22%)
Confirmed positive sightings of hornets	20	70	15	6 (-60%)
Queens caught	0	4	10	3 (-70%)
Total nests - found & destroyed	2	8	3	0
Primary nests	0	0	1	0
Secondary nests	2	8	2	0

Figure 2. Confirmed sightings of Asian hornets, trapped queens and nest destruction

“Spring queening” – strategic trapping of emergent/invading queens

Island wide trapping (with 270 traps on Guernsey, spaced every 500m) was implemented across the Bailiwick for a second year running during April-May. In 2020, a combined total of queen hornets 20 were caught: Guernsey – 3, Sark – 4, Herm – 0, Alderney – 13).

The annual fluctuations in numbers of emergent queens arriving on our islands is down to a combination of biological and environmental factors.

The importance of keeping the public engaged

Despite the best efforts, the risk of Asian hornets establishing on Guernsey will remain ever present. It is likely that Asian hornets are generally under-reported, particularly in remote areas. This greatly increases the risk that undetected nests will succeed in producing new queens in the autumn.

Across our parishes and on neighbouring islands the Asian Hornet Team are continually working to engage with the public and raise awareness of the threats posed by this highly invasive pest. Maintaining the vigilance and cooperation of the islands populations in noticing, photographing and reporting potential sightings is the most vital aspect of our Asian hornet control programme.

Thank you to everyone who supported us this year.

Photographs:



Asian hornet, final sighting of the year, Pembroke café (03/10/20).



Asian hornet captured in a greenhouse, Castel (18/05/20).



Asian hornet nest treated and removed on Alderney (01/10/20).



Worker hornet attracted to a ‘wicking’ style, baited tracking station that led to discovery of the first secondary nest last year (04/09/19). These kits were deployed island wide throughout the summer-autumn of 2020 as part of a strategic approach to locate undetected nests.