

Invasive 'Dwarf Murder Hornet' Spreads Across Southeast, Threatening U.S. Pollinators

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EINPresswire.com/ -- A fast-spreading invasive Asian hornet is expanding across the southeastern United States and poses a serious, largely overlooked threat to pollinators, beekeepers, and American agriculture.

First discovered near the port of Savannah, Georgia, this hornet is smaller than the Asian giant hornet appeared in Washington State . Both hornets appeared in 2023. The giant version was quickly eradicated after drawing national attention. It's huge intimidating size and habit of invading honeybee hives made it a focal point of Entomologist, beekeepers and APHIS, and Media.

“

If we can figure out how to get ahead of this hornet as an industry, we could save a lot of pollinators and set a benchmark for handling invasive that are on the way.”

Charles Linder



Yellow Legged hornet resting

Its smaller cousin, however, was quietly ignored and has spread quietly through swamp and coastal regions. Unfortunately, the success of containing this one was not a quick victory, but a stunning setback. Just two short years later and the range is to a point, most research say it is out of control and beyond containment.

What is disturbing is this hornet is every bit as voracious as the giant hornet, but since it is smaller, it seldom invades a hive. This hornet hunts by “hawking,” capturing bees

midair as they leave to forage. The effect on honeybee colonies is severe. While European honeybees are its preferred prey, the hornet also attacks native bees, wasps, moths, and other pollinators. The hornet preys indiscriminately when honeybees are not handy. One researcher called honeybees a cute ball of protein with a sweet filling. This will have a devastating effect on our agricultural industry, who at the moment seem to be un-informed of the impending threat.

Europe offers a dire warning. Within five years of its arrival in France in the early 2004, some

regions are reporting honeybee losses of up to 80% and an overall pollinator decline near 30%. Nest densities have reached as high as 10 per square mile.

The risk to U.S. agriculture is significant. Georgia alone produces roughly one-third of the nation's queen and package bees, contributing more than \$40 million annually to the state economy. Pollination-dependent crops such as blueberries and watermelon represent over half of Georgia's billion-dollar fruit and nut industry.

Its rapid spread and high colony density (up to 10 per square mile) clearly shows this is going to be devastating to both the U.S. beekeeping industry and agriculture producers. The hornet is expected to invade most of the Southeast and upper northwest of the U.S.

So far the Governmental response has been completely underwhelming. While some great work is being done, there seems to be no urgency or accountability in play. Many in the industry are concerned this is a bellweather for another invasive which is also on the march towards the U.S.

One group, the [BeeCAUSE Alliance](#) is attempting to bring the national spotlight onto the problem by calling for immediate federal action and has launched a [online petition](#) urging Congress and the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to work with industry to address the growing threat.

Info

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Hornet eating a honeybee

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