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YELLOW-LEGGED LEDGER

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • TYLER HARPER, COMMISSIONER

The Plant Protection team remains vigilant in monitoring hawking activity around beehives. Since our last update, they uncovered an active YLH nest concealed within a birdhouse. After carefully securing the structure with a plastic bag, the team safely removed and eradicated the nest.



An active YLH nest was found inside a bird house, which was covered with plastic to remove. (Photo by GDA)

The team has also been testing electronic tracking devices to help locate YLH nests. This method presents unique challenges, as even the smallest trackers can sometimes be too heavy for smaller spring foragers to carry effectively back to their nests. To prepare a hornet for tracking, hornets are carefully captured and briefly chilled on ice to anesthetize them for approximately 10–20 minutes. A lightweight tracker is then attached to the hornet's waist using Kevlar thread, which is durable enough to withstand the hornets' powerful mandibles. Before release, each hornet is provided with a small amount of honey to replenish its energy. Although the team has seen only limited success with this technique so far, they continue to refine the process and improve its effectiveness as a tool for locating active nests.



Travis Whitley and David Williams tracking a hornet using radio tracking equipment. (Photo by GDA)



Left: YLH team attaching a radio tracker to a hornet. Right: YLH held for tagging with a radio tracker.
(Photos by GDA)

Important reminders:

- If you suspect you have identified a Yellow-legged Hornet nest or notice hawking behavior around your hives, please contact the Plant Protection team at yellow.legged.hornet@agr.georgia.gov.
- Monitoring beehives should be ongoing throughout the entire year.
- While hawking can happen at any time, it tends to peak before noon and again after 5 PM.

Update by the Numbers:

New Traps Deployed (Since January 2026): 1,112

Total traps deployed (August 17, 2023 – June 22, 2026): 3,223

Hornets found (May 27, 2026 – June 22, 2026): 67

Nests found & eradicated (May 27, 2026 – June 22, 2026): 3

Total nests found & eradicated (August 2023 – June 22, 2026): 161

- 2026: 1 (2025 secondary nest) | 34 embryo nests found | 3 primary nest
 - 2025: 4 embryo nests | 5 primary nests | 53 secondary nests
 - 2024: 4 embryo nests | 3 primary nests | 40 secondary nests
 - 2023: 5 secondary nests
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Issue 46: May 27, 2026 – June 22, 2026

See a Nest? Report It to Yellow.legged.hornet@agr.georgia.gov

We encourage all Georgians to remain vigilant. If you spot an embryo nest like the one pictured, please report it immediately to yellow.legged.hornet@agr.georgia.gov.

 **BOLO** 
YELLOW-LEGGED HORNET



Embryo Nest



Primary Nest



Secondary Nest



SCAN TO REPORT

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>