



## Asian Hornet Identification



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

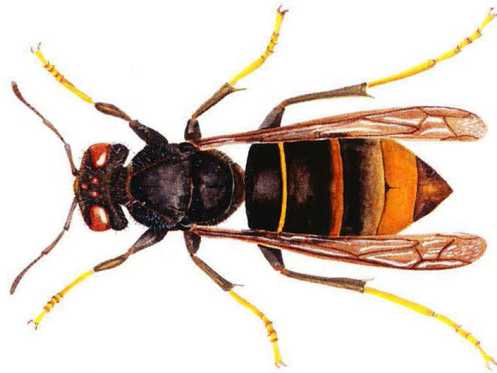


Illustration by Sarah Bunker

**Non Native Species of the UK**

## The **yellow** legged hornet

1. Entirely black and velvety thorax and orange head;
2. Abdomen black bordered with a fine yellow band and a yellow 4th segment;
3. Legs are brown with characteristic yellow ends.

**Yellow legged hornet**  
abdominal colouration



**European hornet**  
abdominal colouration



1. Head yellow from above and from the front. Thorax black and brown;
2. Yellow abdomen marked with brown on the upper part;
3. Legs are entirely brown.

Report sightings of the yellow legged hornet to [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk). You can also download the '**Asian Hornet Watch app**,' which is available on most smart phones and handheld devices.

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# What to look for

The weather will affect exact timing of the monthly cycle – for example a cold spring may delay queens emerging from hibernation or a warm spring may encourage an early start.

## January, February

- Observation – use binoculars to find nests high in trees or low down in hedges and bushes more easily seen now leaves have fallen. Sycamore, birch, apple
- Hibernating queens – sheds, garages, roof of bee hive, leaf litter, soil

## March, April, May

- Emerging queens looking for food
- Queens starting nest – sheds, garages, low hedges, bushes
- May be seen on wood collecting scrapings to build nest
- Queens searching for carbohydrate (sugar) rich nectar, tree sap and resin – camellia, oak tree bark
- Make an observational bait station to attract Asian Hornet – shallow saucers with pads of tissues soaked in sugar rich ‘sweet’ bait placed on a colourful surface - an upturned yellow or orange plastic bucket. Place in direct sight line – outside a kitchen window - observe throughout day. Queens will return to food source so keep bait regularly refreshed.

## June, July, August

- Queen now confined to nest
- Workers searching for protein rich foods to feed larvae – insects including honeybees, meat, fish - open air food markets and stalls, picnic areas, rubbish bins, outdoor café etc
- Hawking hornets outside bee colonies – observe flight paths to track back to nests
- Bait station - change to protein - for example cat food or tuna – observe throughout day to monitor worker hornets. Refresh bait regularly
- Workers may also be seen feeding from oak tree sap/resin, nectar rich shallow flowers – for example umbellifers and cotoneaster, ripe fruits, banana
- Nest size increasing – observe tall trees, low bushes and hedges

## September, October

- Queen mating
- Workers and queens feeding on carbohydrate rich foods – ivy, rotting apples, pears, grapes
- Bait station – change back to sugar rich ‘sweet’ bait and continue to monitor daily

## October, November

- Queens looking for hibernating sites – sheds, garages, leaf litter, soil
- Dead larvae ejected from nests – may be seen on ground below nest
- Workers and drones dying off – collect samples

## December

- Observation – use binoculars to find nests high in trees or low down in hedges and bushes more easily seen now leaves have fallen. Sycamore, birch, apple
- Hibernating queens – sheds, garages, roof of bee hive, leaf litter, soil