

Entomology Weekly Review - August 23, 2023

Indiana Department of Natural Resources sent this bulletin at 08/23/2023 09:10 AM EDT



Weekly Review for August 23, 2023

This informal report by the Division of Entomology & Plant Pathology is a commentary on insects, diseases, and curiosities division staff encounter on a week-to-week basis. Comments and questions about this report are welcome and can be sent to your respective Inspector.

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Jared Spokowsky (Nursery Inspector & Compliance Officer) - Jspokowsky@dnr.IN.gov

Unfortunately, I have some bad news for beekeepers. A lot of folks have already heard but for those that haven't, the yellow legged hornet (*Vespa velutina*) has been found in Georgia.

This is one of several species of giant hornets that live in eastern Asia. It is of concern for beekeepers due to the yellow legged hornets' taste for honeybees and bee brood. The hornets will mass attack a bee colony similar to the northern giant hornet and can completely kill a colony.

The yellow legged hornet was found in France in 2004, after which it spread into many other European countries. It's too early to say if it will come to Indiana, but I think it is almost certain it will be able to survive in the southeastern U.S., which has similar climates to where it has established in Europe and its native range.

Below is a climate model prediction of where else it may be able to establish. [North Carolina Extension](#) has more information as well as good photos of the two main look alike we have here in Indiana, the European hornet and the eastern cicada killer.



Photo 1 - The yellow legged hornet (Allen Smith-Pardo USDA)

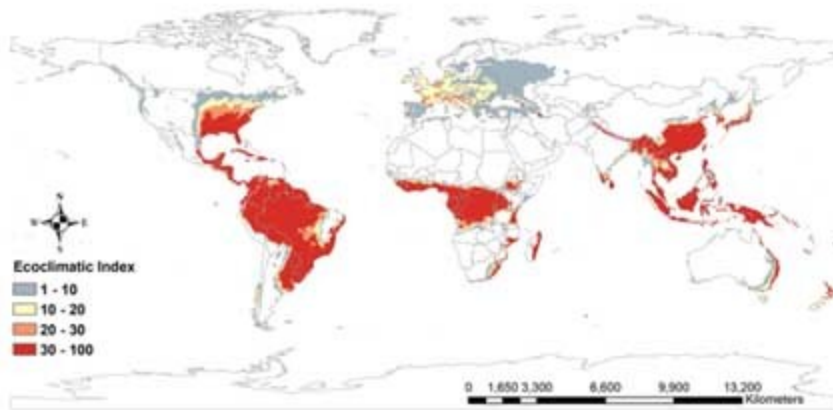


Photo 2 - Climate suitability map for possible yellow legged hornet establishment

Will Drews (Nursery Inspector & Compliance Officer) - WDrews@dnr.IN.gov

As I hinted at last week, a lot of my time recently has been focused on kudzu control and I wanted to go into more detail about that program.

As some of you may know, kudzu (*Pueraria montana* var. *lobata*) is an invasive woody vine that can now be found throughout the state of Indiana. It is referred to colloquially as “the vine that ate the south,” and if you took a drive through some southern states (e.g. Tennessee, Georgia, the Carolinas, etc.) right now, you’d see why. Kudzu has tremendous growth potential, sometimes as much as 1 foot per day. Some vines reach lengths of up to 100 feet. Because of this it is a detriment to Indiana’s natural resources and has been listed as a prohibited invasive plant under the DNR’s Administrative Code as per 312 IAC 18-3-16.

While part of the language includes that the landowner “must take efforts to eliminate this species in such a manner as is consistent with federal and state law,” the Division of Entomology & Plant Pathology has been leading a state funded control program where sites are treated on a rotating, priority basis to eradicate or suppress further spread with no cost to the landowner. Over the course of the next couple weeks, close to 50 sites around the state will be treated.

If you think you have seen a new kudzu population, please send me that information (photos and GPS

coordinates or address) at my above email address. Together, hopefully we can combat this invasive vine across Indiana and protect our natural resources!



Photo 3 – Kudzu treatments in Greene County, 2018

No reports this week

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