

CITIZEN SCIENCE: A TOOL FOR ERADICATION PLAN OF VESPA VELUTINA IN MAJORCA

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Abstract The yellow-legged hornet, *Vespa velutina nigrithorax* Lepeletier 1836, is an Invasive Alien Species (IAS) which was accidentally introduced in Europe from Asia. The establishment of this IAS is a major concern because of its potential negative impact on pollinators and biodiversity. Here, we report the importance of the citizen science in the eradication plan in Majorca. An important community information task was carried out with leaflets, informational brochures and local media. Moreover, the general public had access to an emergency 24-hour phone number they could call or send a message (also Whatsapp) for notifications. A year after of first detection, a software called Vespapp was developed in order to the citizen people could send photos to detected individuals or nests. From 2016 Vespapp is available in web (<http://vespapp.uib.es/>) and free android app. A total of 2634 downloads and 940 pictures were reported by Vespapp; and 174 notifications were reported via phone, message or Whatsapp. It is important to note that 58% of the nests removed were detected based in a notification of a citizen. These results highlight the citizen science importance in this eradication plan.

Key words Alien Invasive Species; control; mobile app; Vespapp; islands