

FIRST ACTIONS AGAINST THE ASIAN HORNET, *VESPA VELUTINA NIGRITHORAX* (HYMENOPTERA: VESPIDAE), IN THE PROVINCE OF BARCELONA, SPAIN

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Abstract The Asian hornet (*Vespa velutina nigrithorax*) has been spreading across all the coastal northern regions of the Iberian Peninsula, since it was firstly spotted in Amaiur (Navarra) in August 2010. This invasive species has also penetrated across inland territories. Colonizing not only forests and rural environments, but also urban and peri-urban areas. Causing negative impacts on the entomofauna (principally bees) and the security of people living or frequenting surrounding habitats. In the province of Barcelona (Catalonia; Spain), during the years 2018-2019, Laboratorios Lokímica, in collaboration with the public administration of several municipalities affected by this invasive species, has been managing and monitoring the colonies (primary and secondary nests) of this exotic hornet. Detected nests were found in completely different settlements, due to their environment and location, in the municipalities previously mentioned. In the cases in which the management of the nest has been carried out by staff of Laboratorios Lokímica, and as a consequence of the aforementioned heterogeneity, the adopted procedures have also been diverse. The variety of vital strategies and adaptability exhibited by the Asian hornet during the last years proves a plasticity that notably conditions control and vigilance tasks. The different procedures of management carried out in several municipalities, as well as the security measures required in each action, will be exposed. With special mention to the biological and phenological particularities of the species and how they conditioned management strategies.

Key words Invasive species, urban pest management, entomofauna