

Spring & Summer Asian Hornet Trapping

Instructions 2025

Queen hornets hibernate through the winter. As the weather warms, they become more active and search for food. Having fed they will then disperse, as far as 60km+ and establish a new nest.

Our aim is to set-up as many traps as possible across the Canterbury Beekeepers area to catch them as look for food. In so doing, we will reduce the number of nests, bee losses and the impact on our fellow beekeepers further in-land.

Thank you for helping. **And remember**even catching NO HORNETS is a positive outcome. Finding no hornets locally all adds to the bigger picture

Choosing your trap site.

To best protect your hives and maximise the area trapped, locate 4 traps at the corners of a 1 km x 1 km square, ideally centered over your apiary. Use Google Maps (satellite view) to find 4 safe, legally & easily accessible locations, ...all my locations are on dog walks. Left click the location of your apiary. Right click the same location, select "measure distance" and left click a possible trap location. Drag this point to optimize distance & position.

To further maximise the trapped area, don't select a grid that overlaps a neighbour's grid. Agree the biggest practical trap pattern between you.

A step-by-step guide to setting up & maintaining a trap

Please follow these guidelines, which will make sure this trap has the best chance of trapping an Asian hornet. Read Health & Safety advice on the back of this sheet before starting.

Since the trap will be monitored for several months, it worth taking sometime to select/create an effective location/mount:

Location: sunny, 1 – 1.5m above ground (chest height). The permission of the landowner must be obtained on private land and always be mindful of the public and livestock which may access that land in the future. Where possible, best kept away from prying eyes in my experience.

Mount: ideally fixed to a post or to a small tree in such a way as not to be able to swing and so you can easily remove the lid & get your hand into the pot. Attach using trellis wire is my advice. Be prepared to create a "Vaseline" ring around your post to keep ants out; they will consume the bait in days if they find the trap.

Fill the mini-pot 2/3rds full and firmly clip the lid in place. By under filling, the liquid is less likely to spill out as the pot swings in the wind.

Do not use any other attractant. The pheromone bait has been selected as it does not attract bumble bees and hoverflies. Do not dilute it. **Important:** lastly, spread/spray a little liquid bait over the lid/roof to help the hornets find the trap: this trick is widely used by the National Bee Unit (NBU) team to improve catch efficiency.

Check your traps as often as you can, but at least once a week. Re-mix the Trappit bait each time with a twig; it settles out. If you have trapped a hornet, **DO NOT RELEASE IT** and **DO NOT** attempt to move it into another container; you risk being stung. Seal the entrance, put the trap in a bag and place it in a freezer.

Immediately notify the NBU using the Asian Hornet Watch App and let the Canterbury AH coordinator know.

If there are other insects in the trap and no hornets, try to release them. Be prepared...European hornets will often buzz around once released, geolocating themselves & making a heck of a racket. They won't sting you but are intimidating.

Timing

Please consider spring 2025 trapping for queens as a “voluntary” exercise; there are simply not expected to be many out there. Trap through April & May in easily reached “local locations.”

Remove the traps at the end of May once all the queens have come out of hibernation and will be establishing primary nests.

In August, we will put out our traps again, BUT FOR ONLY 3 WEEKS. Now we want to trap worker hornets, out foraging from large secondary nests. With many more mouths to feed, the workers will be actively foraging across a wider area. ***Important:*** to reduce summer by-catch, reduce the CanTrap nozzle hole diameters to 7 mm using the “clip-on” plastic hole restrictors. This should stop worker European hornets getting into the traps (not small ones, though).

Trapping for 3 weeks should ensure workers from nests within the 1 km² area around each trap will be caught. If done thoroughly this will pick up any queens we may have missed or any which have migrated into our area.

Why not continue to monitor all the time?

Members may wish to continue to monitor, but it is important for us to have a respite; as long as any nests are located and destroyed before mid-September, then we will be no worse off.

Insurance & Health & Safety info

All BBKA members are covered by their BBKA 3rd party liability insurance for activities related to Asian Hornet monitoring and trapping, as long as common sense is used.

You are **not** licensed to release Asian hornets or currently covered for Track & Trace activities; if you trap a hornet, upload details using the Asian Hornet Watch App; seal the entrance, bag the trap and place in a freezer. Do not attempt to move the hornet to another container.

Non-members are not covered

If asking a non-member to monitor a trap, it is advised that a BBKA member sets up, empties by-catch, replenishes liquid and takes down the trap. The non-member can observe and notify if-and-when something needs to be done, but at no point should be in contact with an open trap.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

1. Avoid spilling liquid bait on yourself; it is highly attractive to wasps and hornets
2. Always seek the landowner's permission to set up a trap on private land. They may be willing to monitor it for you
3. Traps should **not** be placed more than 1.5 m (5') above the ground, a safe working height
4. When emptying a trap wear a veil; hornets and wasps often fly towards you on release, as they re-orientate themselves. This can be frightening; they can get caught in hair and clothing
5. Consider keeping anti-histamines with you just in case of being stung
6. Take due care for the safety of the public and livestock. When placing traps on public or private land consider not only the current use of that space, but also what it may be used for in the future. For example, an empty field may in the future be used for grazing.
7. When storing bait keep in marked containers, out of the reach of children. For more information about the bait refer to the QR code on the trap label
8. Always have due consideration for your own safety, be it parking to access a public area, choice of footwear and wearing gloves and a veil when opening a trap or handling bait. If it feels unsafe—then don't do it!!

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