INSECT PEST SPOTLIGHT

SPECIES
Vespa mandarinia

COMMON NAME
Asian Giant Hornet

PLANT HOSTS
Uses decaying wood, piles of straw, or rodent burrows for shelter

Feeds on flowers

DAMAGE
Stinger is longer than honey bees or wasps

Venom more toxic than other wasp and bees

CONTROL
Nest removal by pest control agents

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Alumni, Friends, Faculty, and Students:

The DPM Program has completed a very strong finish for the 2019-2020 academic calendar year! During Summer 2020, we were pleased to celebrate the graduation of four new Plant Doctors: Alex Gannon, Morgan Pinkerton, Sage Thompson, and Benjamin Waldo! By necessity, our celebration was virtual but genuine. We have also been working with alumni to plan our Second Annual Meeting of Plant Doctors and Plant Health Professionals, the second offering of the Agrios Scholarship, and a second annual public educational event-February Flora and Fauna Fest. These events are specifically scheduled for Saturday, February 27, 2020! Mark your calendars!

Throughout this edition of DPM News, you will find that our students have continued to press forward, professionally develop, and participate in hands-on field activities per new University of Florida COVID-19 research resumption plan guidelines. DPM students have been at the forefront of organizing virtual sessions in support of invasive species early detection and entomology, and virtual participation in national horticulture conferences have also occurred. Overall, our summer edition of DPM News is an excellent snapshot of our accomplishments during the summer. Nonetheless, I would encourage you to stay even more informed of our latest news and information through Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. You can link to our social media elements through our DPM website. We have specifically released and introductory program video, alumni videos, meet the student videos, student research talk videos, and alumni session videos through our expanded social media efforts that have occurred during the spring and summer of 2020. We’re not slowing down, and Plant Doctors are ready, more than ever, to help with agricultural plant health problems.

Thank you for your continued support! Stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

Dr. Amanda Hodges
Director, Doctor of Plant Medicine Program
**MAY**

- DPM student Alex Gannon presents job application and interview tips to other students in the UF Biosecurity Research and Extension Laboratory during quarantine.
- DPM students return to field work based on the UF Research Resumption Plan policies.

**JUNE**

- Dr. Hodges, Eleanor Phillips, Andy Jean-Louis, and Shannon McAmis volunteered at Grace Market place.

**JULY**

- Clayton Bania put together an ant scavenger hunt for a virtual UF Bug Fest activity.
- DPM Students created a public relations team during the pandemic, which features DPM students in action, alumni videos, meet the students and research talks.
- Benjamin Waldo and Shannon McAmis gave presentations and provided graduate leadership for the first ever virtual Florida First Detector Meeting.
- Alumni and program begin meeting routinely to plan for the 2nd annual meeting of Plant Doctors and February Flora and Fauna Fest.

**AUGUST**

- A virtual celebration was put on for our DPM graduates.
- Heather Kalaman presented her research at the virtual ASHS (American Society of Horticulture Science) Conference.
- A DEI committee was created in the ENY department with DPM representation.
DR. SAGE THOMPSON

My experience with DPM started when I first volunteered in the Biosecurity Research and Extension Lab at the University of Florida as an undergraduate. I realized in the BRE lab I loved entomology, and DPM made me excited to extend my horizon beyond insects. I received a fellowship from the United States Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, in plant biosecurity to complete the DPM program. In three years as a DPM student I completed a master’s in entomology, certificate in plant pest risk assessment and management, managed an outreach program, co-organized international events, coauthored grants, completed an international internship in Ecuador, presented at national entomological society meetings and interned in a plant disease clinic. I have collected a variety of experiences by working with my advisors and committee members to build a DPM program specific to me, and my future goals.

Because of my plant biosecurity fellowship my studies in entomology, plant pathology, and agronomy have all connected back to regulatory plant health. I am still in the process of applying for jobs and interviewing. With the DPM program I’ve been able to apply for a wide variety of positions that sound interesting and challenging. Wherever I end up working in the future I know my education and network at UF and in the DPM program will be indispensable.

DR. BENJAMIN WALDO

I am very excited to be completing my DPM degree at UF! I enrolled as a MS/DPM student in January 2016 and loved being in the program. In my time at UF, I specialized in nematology by completing a MS in Nematology and working for the Landscape Nematology Lab/Nematode Assay Lab almost my entire time in the program. Some of the highlights during my time in the program were attending conferences to present my research, traveling internationally on the first DPM trip to Ecuador, participating in university extension presentations and workshops, as well as serving as a DPMSO officer. I performed internships with the United States Golf Association, Bioverse Labs, Bayer, and several laboratories at UF. The DPM program has been a very rewarding experience that has prepared me for a variety of job opportunities. I am especially grateful to Dr. Billy Crow, Dr. Amanda Hodges, and Dr. Maria Mendes for their support in my time at UF. After graduation, I hope to continue employment with Bioverse Labs working in entomology.
We asked our graduates to share a few words on their time as a DPM student and their next steps.

**DR. MORGAN PINKERTON**

I arrived to the DPM program after working in the Biosecurity Research and Extension Laboratory at UF where I was rearing stink bugs for research. I co-enrolled in the DPM program and a Master’s in Entomology where I found my passion for insects, agriculture, and teaching. I completed a professional internship abroad at the Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral in Guayaquil, Ecuador where I worked on several projects in entomology, plant pathology, and soil science. In this internship, I gained hands-on experience within agriculture and also refined my Spanish communication skills. My second professional internship was with the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine in Tampa, FL where I enhanced my insect diagnostic abilities, learned about regulatory entomology, and gained experience performing taxonomic entomology research. During my time as a DPM student, I was also heavily involved in an invasive species youth outreach program, the Florida First Detector Program, GRACE Grows, the UF Entomology Games Team, and teaching undergraduate and graduate student classes.

Throughout my DPM program, I was drawn towards outreach and extension activities and took nearly every opportunity thrown my way to teach. In my last semester in the DPM program, I accepted a position as the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Extension Agent with UF/IFAS Extension Seminole County. I am now able to combine the skills I learned in the DPM program and my love of teaching to help address the needs of the agricultural community and the public in Seminole County.

**DR. ALEX GANNON**

Acquiring my Doctor of Plant Medicine degree has been one of the most rewarding accomplishments in my career so far. At the beginning of the program I knew I wanted to see a diversity of agricultural topics that would allow me to succeed in my future endeavors. All the experience I have gathered from the Plant Disease Clinic to having my two internships during the program has allowed me to see the bigger picture of agriculture rather than just a narrow topic approach. I will continuously use the knowledge learned during my 4-year period and be a mentor to the students going through the program.

As for the next phase of my life, I am currently employed at Grovin Farms to establish a commercial olive orchard in Florida. I plan to continue to learn more aspects of a farming career and apply that knowledge further into the industry or extension setting in Florida.
Congratulations to Sage Thompson, a dual MS Entomology/DPM student for obtaining her M.S. degree in Entomology.

Congratulations Sage!

Congratulations to Matt Borden, a dual MS Entomology/DPM student for obtaining his M.S. degree in Entomology.

Congratulations Matt!

Brianna Whitman started her fall semester internship with Dr. Silvana Paula-Moraes at our West Florida Research and Education Center in Jay, Florida.

Morgan Pinkerton

Congratulations to Morgan Pinkerton for winning the Kirby Hays award at the entomological society of America- southeastern branch (ESA-SEB) meeting.

Congrats Morgan!

Eleanor Philips

Congratulations to Eleanor Phillips for publishing her first peer reviewed article titled “Survey of Thysanoptera Using Colored Sticky Card Traps in Florida, USA, Olive Groves.”

Congrats Eleanor!

Andy Jean-Louis

Andy Jean-Louis, volunteered to translate UF-IFAS COVID-19 Critical Extension Information ‘Coronavirus Safety Fact Sheets in Agriculture’ into Creole for individuals living in Miami-Dade County.

Congratulations to MORGAN PINKERTON

Congratulations to MATT BORDEN

Congratulations to BRIANNA WHITMAN

Congratulations to ELEANOR PHILIPS

Congratulations to ANDY JEAN-LOUIS

Congratulations to SAGE THOMPSON

Congratulations to MORGAN PINKERTON

Congratulations to MATT BORDEN

Congratulations to BRIANNA WHITMAN

Congratulations to ELEANOR PHILIPS

Congratulations to ANDY JEAN-LOUIS

Congratulations to SAGE THOMPSON
Morgan Pinkerton recently started in her new role with UF/IFAS Seminole County Extension as the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Extension Agent in May 2020. In this position, she is working with growers and citizens to assess current needs of the community and provide educational training to increase sustainability of agriculture and commercial horticulture in Seminole County. She is involved in connecting citizens with food systems including the organization of an annual farm tour to allow the public to learn more about where their food comes from. She will teach courses focused on the food system for farmers and citizens and advise on how to use new technologies to improve local operations to achieve greater environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Additionally, she is responsible for teaching review courses for pesticide certifications and hosting examinations for individuals looking to receive licenses for applying pesticides. She will also be working with growers in the area to understand the impacts of covid-19 on the agriculture and horticulture communities and how UF/IFAS Extension can help navigate these impacts in the near future. The DPM degree has provided essential training for Morgan’s new position such as her training in diagnostics to help growers assess problems on their farms and advise on how best utilize integrated pest management strategies.
External Advisory Committee

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