

Current Locust Situation

GENERAL SITUATION IN SPRING AND OUTLOOK TO SUMMER

Australian plague locust

Chortoicetes terminifera

The locust population level generally remained low in much of inland eastern Australia with moderate to high numbers of adults regularly identified in the south-eastern sector of the inland. Fledging, aggregation, and possible short-distance redistribution have been continuing since September. Most of the population identified was located in New South Wales.

There was moderate to heavy rainfall (25-50 mm) in the Longreach-Quilpie-Tambo areas on the 9th November and widespread light rainfall (<15 mm) during 11-14th November. Rainfall for the remainder of November is forecast to be about average in much of the inland, but the summer is expected to be much wetter. Pasture vegetation remained suitable in much of the locust habitat to support locust breeding.

In New South Wales, Low-density Swarms of young adults were identified in the Nyngan-Cobar areas since late October, while Concentration density adults were found in the Coonamble district and the Cobar-Wilcannia-Ivanhoe-Hillston areas. Reports of egg-bearing females have also been received from the Ivanhoe and Moree areas.

In Queensland, Numerous to Concentration density adults were identified in the Injune-Mitchell-Roma areas, while other parts of Queensland remained at low levels. Latest surveys identified only low fat accumulation in the majority adults and no signs of eggs or egg-laying.

No surveys were conducted in Victoria, with most locust sightings reported since 10th November. Vic Agriculture officers confirmed some adults present containing fat and developed eggs.

Surveys in South Australia identified very low numbers of locusts.

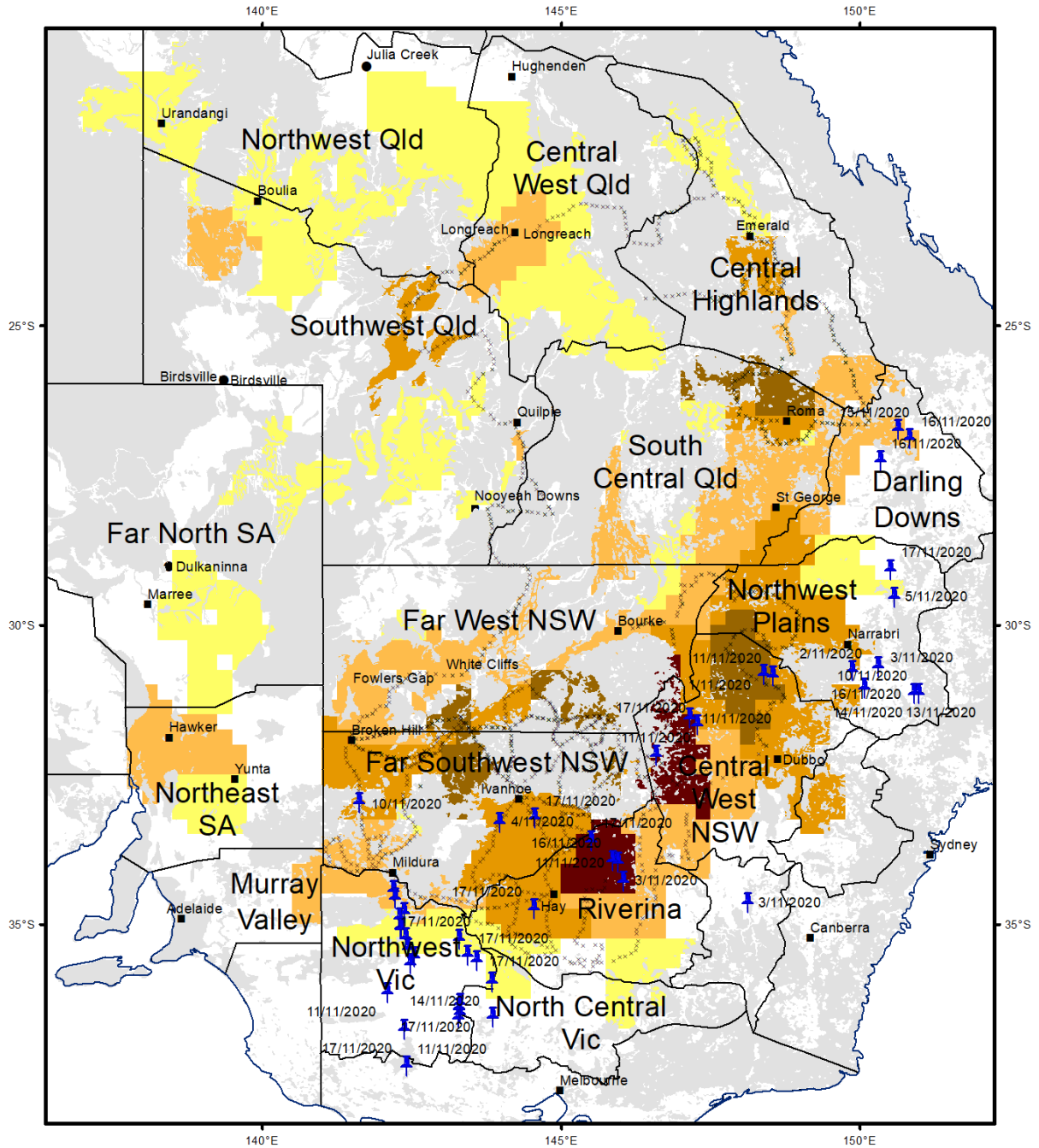
More locust reports were received recently, as the mobile, flying adults are much more visible than nymphs. Aggregation and short-distance movement may have also resulted from storms and disturbed weather patterns. The cold fronts on the nights of 7th, 17th, 24th, 30th of October, and 3rd, 11th and 15th of November, and the troughs on the nights of 16th, 20th, 21st, 23rd, 27th of October, and 3rd, 9th, 10th, 12th of November would have influenced the aggregation and short-distance movement of the major spring population.

Although consistent populations of young adults continue to be identified along roadsides during surveys, some earlier fledged adults might have dispersed from these initial locations and laid eggs already. Hatching and bands are expected to occur from late November through to mid-December with summer generation adults expected from late December. The summer population is likely to be moderate to high in much of New South Wales and possibly moderate in parts of Queensland and Victoria. Without significant immigrations of the spring generation from New South Wales, the summer population is expected to remain at a low level in South Australia.

As this season progresses, the summer rainfall is expected to be above average. Under the influence of the current La Niña event, much of the inland area will become more favourable to locusts. Any significant migration of the following summer locust population into the inland should initiate rapid population multiplication in the subsequent autumn generation.

Australian Plague Locust Adult Distribution

Spring Generation (31 August - 18 November 2020)



Locust Habitat: Grey - unsuitable

Densities estimated for areas of locust habitat, based on current surveys

Initial sighting dates labelled on reports

x: Location of ground survey conducted

Reference: unprojected geographical

Adults Reported		Adult Density Estimated (/ ha)	
⚡	November Reports	🟡	nil-Isolated <200
●	APLC light trap	🟠	Isolated-Scattered 200-1000
		🟤	Scat-Numerous 1000-5000
		🟢	Num-Concentration 5000-30,000
		🟣	Swarms present >30,000