

## RESPONSE TO THE RECENT FIND OF *SIREX NOCTILIO* IN THE UNITED STATES

**Noel F. Schneeberger**

USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry, 11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200, Newtown Square, Pennsylvania 19073  
USA

[nschneeberger@fs.fed.us](mailto:nschneeberger@fs.fed.us)

More than 58 million hectares of potentially susceptible pine forests exist in the United States, and the risk of introduction and establishment of *Sirex noctilio* has been rated "Very High" in pest risk assessments. The insect has been intercepted by US Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspectors on several occasions since 1985; however it has not been collected in routine or targeted exotic species trapping surveys. That changed in February 2005 when a lone female specimen, taken from a trap in Fulton, New York the previous fall, was confirmed as *Sirex noctilio*.

In the spring of 2005 federal and state officials quickly mobilized to locate stressed pine stands and potential *S. noctilio* habitat around Fulton and Oswego NY. Thirteen areas were identified and infested trees were found in two sites in Oswego. A delimitation survey involving the use of more than 550 traps was subsequently implemented in July 2005 within a 200km (80 mi) radius of Oswego, NY. The trapping effort yielded 85 adult female *S. noctilio* from 55 sites in 5 counties. Delimitation surveys were expanded in 2006 covering most of New York and parts of Pennsylvania and Vermont. More than 2,000 traps were deployed within a 375 km (150 mi) radius from the known infestations. Traps were also deployed around high risk areas like ports and wood processing facilities. These efforts yielded 60 *S. noctilio* specimens in 25 counties in New York and 2 counties in northern Pennsylvania.

It is clear that *S. noctilio* is more widely established in the U.S. Plans are underway in 2007 to continue delimitation surveys beyond New York and into Ohio and Michigan, particularly along the Great Lakes. Targeted surveys around high risk ports and wood processing facilities will be increased as will routine trapping surveys in most of the states. Other work includes completion of a plan for the release of the nematode *Beddingia siricidicola*, evaluation of a 2006 controlled release of the nematode on 100 pine trees in New York, and further evaluations focusing on traps, lures, trap trees and non-target effects of biocontrol agents.



Noel spent the first half of his career as a field entomologist working with land managers on National Forests and on other federally-owned lands, and with forest health specialists in state forestry and agriculture agencies to plan and implement programs to monitor, manage, and control forest pests. Early in his career he worked on southern pine beetle in the southern U. S. and mountain pine beetle in the western U. S. Much of his career, however, he has spent in the eastern U. S. where he helped shape the current USDA cooperative approach to managing gypsy moth in the United States.

In his present position as the Forest Health Program Leader for the North-eastern Area State and Private Forestry he leads the development and implementation of the Forest Health Protection program on Federal, state, private and Tribal lands across a 20 state area. In recent years he has been instrumental in the planning and implementation of the Gypsy Moth Slow the Spread project and the hemlock woolly adelgid initiative; and currently leads the Forest Service's response in the north-eastern U.S. to Asian long horned beetle, emerald ash borer and *Sirex* woodwasp. His experience in working with diverse groups and agencies at all levels of government to address pest problems of common interest provides an excellent model upon which to develop and implement a coordinated and collaborative response to these new pest introductions.

A native of New Jersey, Noel holds a master's degree in forest entomology from Duke University (Durham, North Carolina) and a bachelor's degree from Wittenberg University (Springfield, Ohio). He now lives in Coatesville, Pennsylvania with his wife, Libby and teenage boys Grant and Wesley. When he isn't responding to the regular challenges posed by teenagers, Noel likes to fish and golf when he has time; and where a bad day at either is infinitely better than most other days.

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