

UNITED STATES *SIREX* WOODWASP PROGRAM UPDATE

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ABSTRACT

On February 19, 2005, an exotic woodwasp was found in a sample collected as part of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS). The identity of the suspect woodwasp was confirmed by the Systematic Entomology Laboratory in Beltsville, MD, 4 days later as a female *Sirex noctilio* Fabricius. This specimen was originally collected on September 7, 2004, from a Lindgren funnel trap placed among mixed hardwoods and pine just inside a forest edge adjacent to a recreational field located in Fulton, NY (Oswego County).

As a followup to the detection of *S. noctilio*, extensive delimiting surveys were conducted in 2005-2007 in New York, in surrounding Northeastern States, and in nearby Great Lakes States. Additional detection surveys were conducted at U.S. ports-of-entry and in numerous states via CAPS and U.S. Forest Service surveys. To date, *S. noctilio* has been detected in 2 Michigan counties, 29 New York counties, 6 Pennsylvania counties, and 1 Vermont county. In 2008, APHIS plans to continue surveys in high risk areas of the Northeast and in Great Lakes States, as well as throughout the U.S. via cooperative surveys.

Sirex noctilio is a pest of *Pinus* spp. that is of regulatory concern to the U.S. Based on the findings of a Pest Risk Assessment, an economic analysis by the Forest Service, and the recommendations of the USDA *Sirex* Science Panel, APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) is developing domestic and international regulations to slow the spread of *S. noctilio*. The movement of untreated pine commodities that originate in *S. noctilio*-infested areas will be regulated.

APHIS PPQ is investigating a promising biological control agent, *Beddingia siricidicola*, which is currently used in several other countries for effective control of *S. noctilio*. Three pilot studies using the *Sirex* biocontrol nematode have been conducted in two different states. Until all required environmental documentation is complete, experimental logs inoculated with the biocontrol nematode will be safeguarded and removed from the field before *Sirex* emergence.

For further information, refer to the APHIS *Sirex* web page at: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/sirex/background.shtml