

Locust Bulletin

ISSN 2204-9851

GENERAL SITUATION IN SEPTEMBER AND OUTLOOK TO DECEMBER 2026

Australian Plague Locust

Chortoicetes terminifera

Widespread low-medium density nymphs presented in the southern part of inland eastern Australia with frequent small bands identified in early spring. This nymphal population resulted from markedly increased autumn adults developed after record rainfall over the arid interior during February and March, and favourable habitat conditions produced from above average rainfall during late autumn and winter.

The redistribution of autumn adults in a large scale produced this widespread spring nymphal population. Locust swarms were first observed in the Flinders district of South Australia in late April. This population then migrated south-eastwards into the Riverland, and eastwards into the Mallee of Victoria, the northern Riverina and Central West of New South Wales within one week. Several egg-beds were discovered in the Flinders by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA) and in the Mallee by Agriculture Victoria. Large numbers of nymphs commenced hatching in the south of these regions from late September onwards, while some adults had already emerged from overwintering nymphs in the far southwest of Queensland. Numerous small bands were reported by the public from these regions and confirmed by ground survey conducted by PIRSA, the Local Land Services (LLS) of NSW, Agriculture Victoria and APLC. However, the aerial survey conducted by both APLC and LLS did not detect any large-scale bands that would warrant an aerial control campaign over the Flinders and Riverland of SA, the Mallee of Victoria, and the Western and Central West districts of NSW in past two weeks. Early instars in lower-density banding and dense vegetation impeded the band visibility from the air in most locations. Nevertheless, PIRSA conducted aerial control over 200 km² in the Flinders with the assistance of ground marking in early October, and NSW LLS had supplied pesticides to the properties where locust bands were confirmed for ground control.

Although rainfall totals for September were nil over much of the arid interior, 10 – 25 mm of rainfall (still at below average to very much below average levels) was received in much of the Riverland, Mallee and Riverina areas, and habitat conditions had remained favourable for locust breeding from previous good rains. Warmer temperatures at above average to very much above average levels during autumn and winter enabled prolonged adult activity and improved survival rates of overwintering adults and nymphs. Despite a strongest El Niño is currently underway since 1950s, with a likely positive Indian Ocean Dipole and neutral Southern Annular Mode index, the forecast for average October rainfall and above average rainfall for November and December by the Bureau of Meteorology should produce some favourable habitats for summer generation of locust breeding in the arid interior.

The overall outlook is for some medium-high density nymphs developing in the southern part of inland eastern Australia with bands to form under warm weather throughout October. Swarms are likely to develop from late-October onwards and migrations under suitable weather systems can begin from early November. If migrating swarms find suitable areas of high rainfall there will be an increased probability of a large summer generation developing in inland eastern Australia.

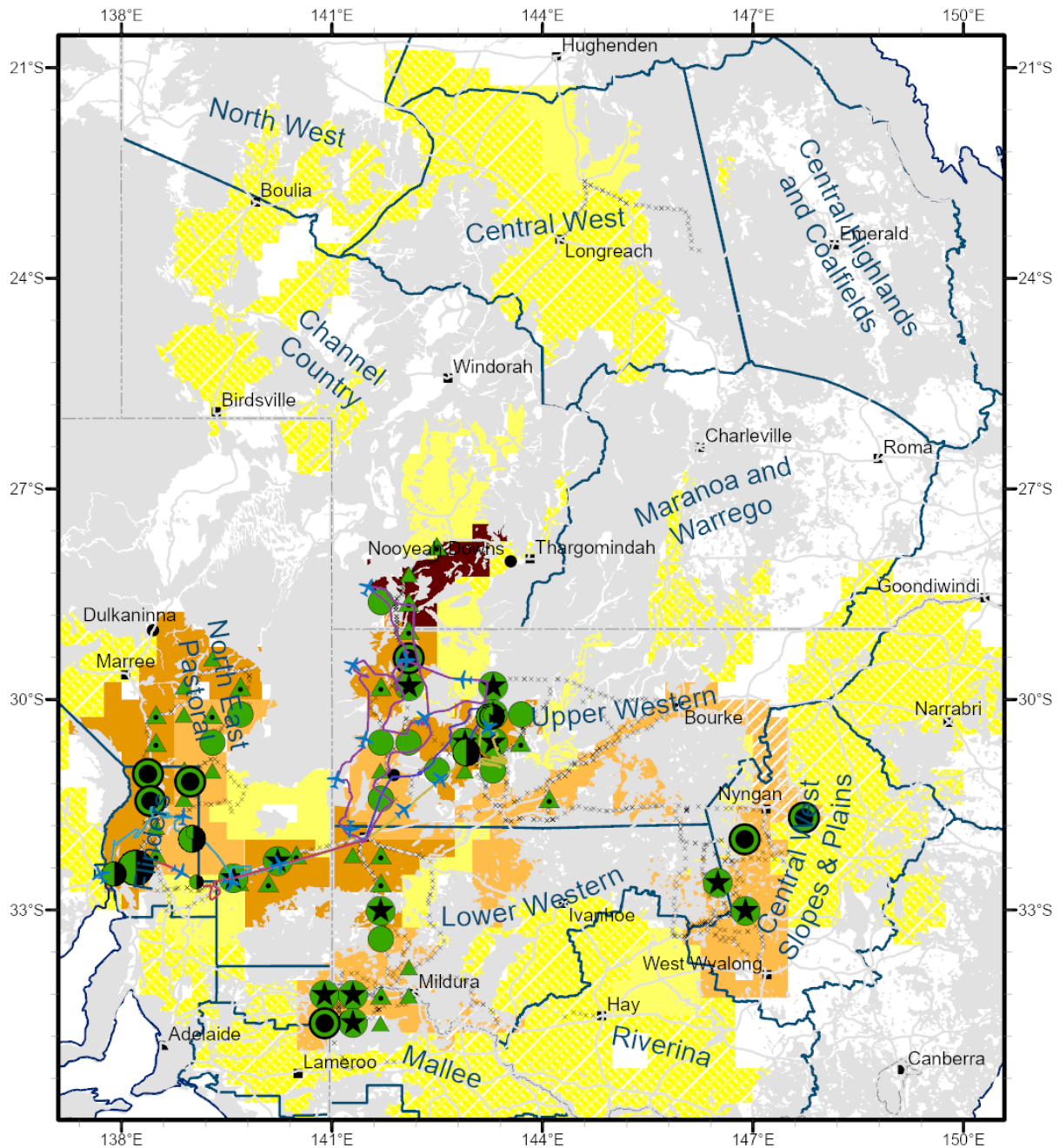
There is a moderate-high likelihood of a widespread infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

12 October 2026

Locust distribution map—*Chortoicetes terminifera*

Australian Plague Locust Distribution

12 August – 09 October 2026



Locust Habitat: Grey - unsuitable

Adult densities mapped in solid colour are based on actual surveys and observations during the month.

Adult densities mapped in hatched colour are estimated based on previous observations and forecasts.

● Band identified by aerial survey

x: Location of ground survey conducted

Projection: GDA2020

Nymph Density (/m²)

- ▲ Present <5
- ▲ Numerous 5 – 30
- Sub-band 30 – 80
- ★ Band 80 – 500
- Dense Band >500
- APLC light trap

Adult Density (/ha)

- Isolated <200
- Scattered 200 – 1000
- Numerous 1000 – 5000
- Concentration 5000 – 30,000
- Swarm >30,000
- BoM Forecast Districts

Spur-throated Locust***Austracris guttulosa***

The overall population likely remained at low-medium levels across inland eastern Australia with higher numbers in the Central West district of Queensland. Survey identified consistent adults at Scattered and Numerous densities with occasional Concentration density detected in the Central West district in mid-August, and frequent Scattered-density with occasional Numerous-density adults in the southern part of the Channel Country in late August. Occasional Isolated or Scattered-density adults were also identified in the Northeast and Flinders districts of South Australia, and the Upper Western district of New South Wales by surveys conducted in September. No captures were recorded by any light trap in White Cliffs or Dulkaninna. Although nil rainfall was received in much of inland eastern Australia in September in addition to below average to very much below average winter rainfall in the north-eastern part, with the forecast for above average rainfall for the remainder of spring and December, overwintering adult population should have favourable habitat conditions for survival and breeding.

There is a moderate risk of a regional infestation in Central West Queensland. However, a widespread infestation is less likely to occur for the remainder of spring.

Migratory Locust***Locusta migratoria***

The overall population likely remained at a low level in Queensland. Survey had not identified any locust in the Central West and Channel Country of Qld since mid-August, and no locust reports had been received from previously infested areas. Nil rainfall was received in the north-eastern part of inland eastern Australia in September in addition to below average to very much below average winter rainfall. However, with the forecast for above average rainfall for the remainder of spring and December, habitat conditions should improve for locust survival and breeding with possible localised medium-density populations in sub-tropical Queensland.

There is a low-moderate risk of a regional infestation developing in the Central West and a low risk over much of inland eastern Australia in the remainder of spring.

It is important that any locust activity be reported as soon as possible to your local biosecurity authority or to the Commission. A toll-free call to the Commission can be made on 1800 635 962. An answering machine is attached to this locust hotline for after-hours calls. Reports can also be emailed to the Commission at locust.report@agriculture.gov.au or sent through the web page at https://www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/locusts/landholders/reporting_locusts.

Australian Plague Locust**(*Chortoicetes terminifera*)****SITUATION IN SEPTEMBER AND OUTLOOK TO DECEMBER 2026****NEW SOUTH WALES****NORTH WEST SLOPES & PLAINS****Northwest Local Land Services****Locusts and conditions**

- No surveys were conducted in this district in early spring.
- No locust reports were received from this district in early spring.
- September rainfall totals were less than 10 mm (at very much below average levels) over much of this district after continuous dry conditions in autumn and winter. Habitats would have not been favourable for locust breeding.

Forecast

- Limited numbers of spring nymphs may have hatched from eggs laid in suitable habitats to establish some localised low-density populations. However, with the forecast of above average rainfall for October to December, habitat conditions should improve for locust breeding.
- There is a low probability of any large bands/swarms developing or significant migrations occurring for the remainder of spring.
- The general population density is expected to be at low levels for the remainder of spring with possible localised higher densities developing under favourable habitat conditions.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

CENTRAL WEST SLOPES & PLAINS**Central West Local Land Services****Locusts and conditions**

- Surveys conducted in the western part of this district identified Isolated-density adults with occasional Scattered-density adults detected in mid-September. Occasional mid-instar nymphs of Present-density were detected with a 100-m long Band confirmed in early October.
- LLS had followed up a dozen reports received from this district since mid-September, and some bands were visible by aerial survey conducted by LLS with 13 bands detected in early October. LLS had supplied pesticides for ground control of these confirmed bands.
- Much of this district received less than 5 mm of rainfall in September. The September rainfall was at very much below average to lowest on record levels. Most habitats became unsuitable for locust breeding even after the average amount of winter rainfall.

Forecast

- Locust breeding is possible if sufficient rainfall is received, resulting in some localised high densities.
- Nymphs hatched since mid-September may emerge into adults from mid-November onwards.
- There is a moderate-high probability of some localised bands/swarms developing or significant migrations occurring for the remainder of spring.
- The general population is expected to be at low-medium levels with likely localised bands and swarms developing for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a moderate risk of regional infestations developing for the remainder of spring.

RIVERINA

Riverina, Murray Local Land Services

Locusts and conditions

- Limited surveys conducted in the north-eastern part of this district identified some Isolated-density adults with no nymphs detected in early October.
- Several reports of locust activities were received from this district in September but were identified as other grasshoppers by LLS staff.
- The UNSW insect monitoring radar in Hay detected no locusts.
- This district received 5 – 25 mm of rainfall in September, generally at below average to very much below average levels. Habitats became unfavourable for locust breeding even with slightly above average autumn and winter rainfall.

Forecast

- Some sporadic breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions.
- There is a low probability of any large bands/swarms developing for the remainder of spring, but some immigrations may occur from adjacent districts from late mid-November onwards.
- The overall population is likely to be at low levels for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a low-moderate risk of regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

UPPER and LOWER WESTERN

Western Local Land Services

Locusts and conditions

- Surveys conducted from late August identified frequent Isolated to Scattered density adults with some Numerous densities detected. Frequent Sub-Band and Band density nymphs were identified in the western part of Upper Western district and some in the Lower Western district. Aerial survey conducted by APLC during 31 September – 01 October and 08 – 09 October respectively only detected several small very dense bands, indicating that most nymphal bands throughout these districts were at lower densities. Very dense drying off vegetation cover across the regions also made aerial detection difficult.
- The light trap in White Cliffs caught a single adult on the night of 13 September. The light trap in Fowlers Gap was not in operation due to flood damage in March.
- More than a dozen reports of locust banding had been received from these two districts since early September and most of them were assessed and confirmed by either LLS or APLC.
- Nil rainfall was received in the Upper Western district in September, while 5 – 20 mm of rainfall was received in the southern part of Lower Western district. September rainfall totals were at below average to very much below average levels for these two districts. Some habitats remained favourable for locust breeding due to good autumn and winter rains over the western part of these two districts.

Forecast

- Early hatchings from overwintering eggs may emerge into adults from mid-October onwards and produce some localised high numbers in favourable habitats.
- There is a moderate-high probability of significant bands/swarms developing in the western part of these two districts, and migrations occurring under suitable weather systems in remainder of spring.
- The overall population is likely at medium levels, with localised high-density populations developing for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a moderate-high risk of regional infestations developing for the remainder of spring.

All locust activity should be reported to your nearest [Local Land Services Biosecurity Officer](#) on 1300 795 299 or to the Commission. A toll-free call to the Commission can be made on 1800 635 962. An answering machine is attached to this phone for after-hours calls. Reports can also be emailed to the Commission at locust.report@agriculture.gov.au or sent through the web page at https://www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/locusts/landholders/reporting_locusts.

QUEENSLAND

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AND COALFIELDS**Isaac and Central Highlands Regional Councils; Banana Shire****Locusts and conditions**

- No surveys were conducted in this district in early spring.
- No reports of locust activity were received from this district in early spring.
- This district received less than 5 mm of rainfall in September generally at below average to very much below average levels, after similar winter rainfall levels. Limited habitats may have remained favourable for locust breeding.

Forecast

- Sporadic breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions if sufficient rainfall is received, but general population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a very low probability of any significant bands/swarms developing or migrations occurring for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a very low risk of a regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

DARLING DOWNS AND GRANITE BELT**Western Downs and Goondiwindi Regional Councils****Locusts and conditions**

- No surveys were conducted in this district in early spring.
- No report of locust activity was received from this district in early spring.
- Less than 5 mm of rainfall was received in some parts of this district in September, remaining at below average to very much below average levels as the past inter. Limited habitats may have remained favourable for locust breeding.

Forecast

- Sporadic breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions if sufficient rainfall is received, but any resulting population is likely to be at low levels.
- There is a low probability of any significant bands/swarms developing or migrations occurring for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

CENTRAL WEST**Barcaldine, Longreach, and Blackall-Tambo Regional Council; Flinders and Winton Shires****Locusts and conditions**

- Limited surveys conducted in the Longreach area only identified some occasional Isolated-density adults in mid-August.
- No reports of locust activities were received from this district in early spring.
- Much of district received nil rainfall in September at below average levels. Some habitats should become favourable for locust breeding if sufficient rainfall is received.

Forecast

- Limited breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions, but overall population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a low probability of any significant bands/swarms developing or migrations occurring for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

MARANOA AND WARREGO**Maranoa Regional Council; Murweh, Paroo, and Balonne Shires****Locusts and conditions**

- No surveys were conducted in this district in early spring.
- No locust reports were received from this district in early spring.
- Nearly nil rainfall was received in much of this district in September, ranging at below average to very much below average levels. Some habitats may remain favourable for locust breeding in the southwestern part.

Forecast

- Sporadic breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions if sufficient rainfall is received, but any resulting locust population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a low probability of any significant bands/swarms developing or migrations occurring for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

NORTH WEST**Mt Isa, Cloncurry, McKinlay, Boulia, and Winton Shires****Locusts and conditions**

- No surveys were conducted in this district in early spring.
- No locust reports were received from this district in early spring.
- Much of this district received nil rainfall in September, at average to below average levels. Some habitats may remain favourable for locust breeding after some winter rains and these along drainages.

Forecast

- Sporadic breeding is possible, but any resulting locust population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a low probability of any significant bands/swarms developing or migration/redistribution events occurring for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

CHANNEL COUNTRY**Boulia, Diamantina, Barcoo, Quilpie, and Bulloo Shires****Locusts and conditions**

- Surveys conducted in the southwestern part of this district identified frequent Scattered-density and some Numerous-density adults with consistent Numerous-density nymphs detected during 31 August and 01 September. Nymphs were seen at a wide range of instars from multiple egg-laying. On 09 October, two Low-Density-Swarms of fledglings were identified with Sub-Band density of old nymphs detected. Aerial survey conducted by APLC on 09 October did not identify any visible bands.
- The light trap in Thargomindah was not in operation due to lack of operator.
- No locust reports were received from this district in early spring.
- Nil rainfall was received in this district in September, which is below average levels. Some habitats especially these along drainages and in the southern part of this district may have remained favourable for locust breeding from above average to very much above average autumn and winter rainfall.

Forecast

- Breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions, resulting in some localised high-density populations.
- There is a moderate-high probability of some bands/swarms developing or migrations occurring for the remainder of spring.
- The overall population likely remain at low-medium levels with localised high densities developing for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a moderate-high risk of a regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

All locust activity should be reported to [Department of Primary Industries](#) via the [Customer Service Centre](#) on 13 25 23, online reporting form at <https://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/contact/report-a-biosecurity-pest-or-disease?form=other-1554285>, email at locustreports@dpi.qld.gov.au, or to the Commission. A toll-free call to the Commission can be made on 1800 635 962. An answering machine is attached to this locust hotline for after-hours calls. Reports can also be sent to the Commission through the web page at https://www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/locusts/landholders/reporting_locusts or emailed at locust.report@agriculture.gov.au.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

NORTH EAST PASTORAL and FLINDERS

Locusts and conditions

- Surveys conducted in the Flinders and the southern part of North East identified frequent Isolated and Scattered-density adults with occasional Numerous-density adults detected in early spring. Frequent Present and Numerous-density nymphs were identified by survey with occasional Sub-Band density nymphs detected. With warm autumn and winter weather, asynchronous nymphal development occurred because of high overwintering survival rates and multiple egg-laying. Aerial survey conducted by APLC did not identify any bands in the southern part of North East district, but several small bands visible in the Flinders district on 01 October. Aerial survey was scheduled again for two weeks later, aiming at aerial spray in late October with the assistance of PIRSA on ground marking of any potential targets.
- The light-trap at Dulkaninna did not capture any locusts in early spring.
- Multiple locust reports of banding were received from these two districts in early October and PIRSA initiated extensive ground surveys in the Flinders district with large areas of small bands detected.
- Through early October PIRSA ground marked and began aerial spraying of locust bands over a total area of 200 km².
- Less than 5 mm of rainfall was received in the southwestern part of North East district, and 5 – 10 mm of rainfall was received in much of the Flinders district, at below average to very much below average levels. Nevertheless, most habitats remained favourable for locust breeding after record rainfall last February and March, and good rainfall at above average to highest on record levels afterwards.

Forecast

- Breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions, resulting in a medium-level population with some localised high-densities.
- Small bands may join to form large bands, and swarms may form under warm weather in these districts where no locust control is conducted from now on. Migrations and dispersals may occur under suitable weather systems.
- There is a high probability of some significant bands/swarms developing for the remainder of spring with swarm migration and dispersal occurring through November.

Risks

- There is a high risk of a regional infestation developing in the southern part of North East and Flinders for the remainder of spring.

RIVERLAND and MURRAYLANDS

Locusts and conditions

- Limited surveys conducted in the eastern part of Riverland district identified some Isolated-density adults with frequent nymphs from Present-density to Band-density in early October. No surveys were conducted in the Murraylands district in early spring.
- Several locust reports were received from these two districts and aerial surveys are scheduled by APLC.
- The Riverland received 2 – 10 mm of rainfall in September at below average to very much below average levels. Similar historic levels occurred in the Murraylands with 3 – 25 mm of rainfall for September. Some habitats remained in favour for locust breeding with some good winter rains.

Forecast

- Localised breeding is possible under favourable habitats if sufficient rainfall is received, likely resulting in some localised high densities.
- Large high-density bands may form through October, and swarms may develop from late November onwards if uncontrolled. Migrations and dispersals could occur under suitable weather systems.
- There is a high probability of some bands/swarms developing from now on or migrations occurring in late spring.

Risks

- There is a high risk of a regional infestation developing in these districts for the remainder of spring.

All locust activity should be reported to [Primary Industries and Regions South Australia](#) via the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881, online plant pest reporting form at <https://form.jotform.co/70732909804864>, or to the Commission. A toll-free call to the Commission can be made on 1800 635 962. An answering machine is attached to this locust hotline for after-hours calls. Reports can also be sent to the Commission through the web page at https://www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/locusts/landholders/reporting_locusts or email at locust.report@agriculture.gov.au.

VICTORIA

MALLEE**Mildura and Swan Hill Rural Cities; Yarriambiack and Buloke Shires****Locusts and conditions**

- Surveys conducted in the northwestern part of this district identified some Isolated-density adults with occasional Scattered-density adults detected in early October. Consistent Present-density nymphs were identified with localised small Band-density nymphs detected. Most nymphs were at first and second instar by 06 October, indicating hatching commenced from late September.
- Several reports of locust banding were received from the Mallee district in early spring, and both Agriculture Victoria and APLC had followed these reports and conducted intensive ground surveys in this district. Aerial surveys were scheduled for a week later to locate potential control targets.
- This district received 5 – 10 mm of rainfall in September, at below average to very much below average levels. With above average to very much above average rainfall for autumn and winter, some habitats remained favourable for locust breeding.

Forecast

- Locust breeding is possible in favourable habitats, resulting in some high-density populations.
- Large bands may form under warm weather, and swarms may develop from uncontrolled bands from late November onwards. Migrations and dispersals may occur under suitable weather systems.
- There is a moderate-high probability of some bands/swarms developing and migrations occurring for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a high risk of a regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

WIMMERA**Hindmarsh and West Wimmera Shires****Locusts and conditions**

- No surveys were conducted in this district in early spring.
- A few locust reports were received from this district and Agriculture Victoria followed up in early spring.
- This district received 10 – 40 mm of rainfall in September, still at below average to very much below average levels historically. Some habitats may remain favourable for locust breeding.

Forecast

- Limited locust breeding is possible in favourable habitats, resulting in some localised low-medium densities.
- Small bands/swarms may form under warm weather and migrations/dispersal under suitable weather systems is possible.
- There is a low-moderate probability of some small bands/swarms developing for the remainder of spring.

Risks

- There is a low-moderate risk of a regional infestation developing for the remainder of spring.

All locust activity should be reported to [Agriculture Victoria](https://forms.bio.vic.gov.au/locusts) via the [Customer Contact Centre](https://forms.bio.vic.gov.au/locusts) on 136 186, online form at <https://forms.bio.vic.gov.au/locusts>, or to the Commission. A toll-free call to the Commission can be made on 1800 635 962. An answering machine is attached to this locust hotline for after-hours calls. Reports can also be sent to the Commission through the web page at https://www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/locusts/landholders/reporting_locusts, or emailed at locust.report@agriculture.gov.au.

Glossary of locust terms and density categories used in the Locust Bulletin

Term	Definition
adult	A fully developed, sexually mature locust capable of flight and reproduction
band	Dense congregation of nymphs (hopper band), usually marching together
diapause	Period of dormancy induced in anticipation of unfavourable environmental conditions
dispersal	Spreading of individuals away from others (adaptation)
egg bed	An area of soil containing many egg pods (usually hundreds per square metre)
fledge	Final instar moulting to a soft-bodied adult (fledgling) incapable of long-distance flight
hatch	A young nymph (hatchling) emerging from an egg
instar	A discrete stage of nymphal development after hatch/moult
laying	Female locusts depositing clutches of 20–60 eggs into the ground in froth-lined egg pods
migration	Seasonal collective movements from one place to another (behaviour)
nymph	An immature locust (hopper) having the same morphological appearance as the adult
quiescence	Cessation of growth and reduction of metabolic activity under unfavourable conditions
swarm	Dense congregation of adults, milling at the same spot or flying closely together

Locust density categories

Where higher densities occur, a large proportion of the regional population is concentrated in very small areas with lower densities elsewhere, so the higher densities cannot be extrapolated over the area of an entire region. A range of density classes is usually found within a surveyed region.

Nymph Densities	Number per m ²		
Present	1	–	5
Numerous	6	–	30
Sub-band	31	–	80
Band	81	–	500
Dense Band	>500		

Adult Densities	Number per m ²			Number per 250 m ²		
Isolated	<	0.02		1	–	5
Scattered	0.024	–	0.1	6	–	25
Numerous	0.104	–	0.5	26	–	125
Concentration	0.504	–	3	126	–	750
Low Density Swarm	4	–	10	751	–	2,500
Medium Density Swarm	11	–	50	2,501	–	12,500
High Density Swarm	>50			>12,500		

General density classes	Nymph densities			Adult densities		
very low, occasional	Nil	–	Present	Nil	–	Isolated
low	Present	–	Numerous	Isolated	–	Scattered
medium	Numerous	–	Sub-band	Scattered	–	Numerous
high	Bands			Concentration	–	Swarms

Reporting locust infestations

It is important that all locust activity be reported as soon as possible to your nearest state biosecurity agency office or to the Australian Plague Locust Commission.

State	Authority for reporting locusts
New South Wales	Local Land Services (LLS)
Queensland	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
South Australia	Department of Primary Industries and Regions
Victoria	Agriculture Victoria

Reports to the **Australian Plague Locust Commission** can be made by:

Free call (Canberra): 1800 635 962 (24 hours)

Email: locust.report@agriculture.gov.au

Website: https://www.agriculture.gov.au/pests-diseases-weeds/locusts/landholders/reporting_locusts