

Locust Bulletin

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GENERAL SITUATION IN FEBRUARY AND OUTLOOK TO MAY 2025

Australian Plague Locust

Chortoicetes terminifera

The overall locust population likely remained at low to medium levels across inland eastern Australia with a moderate decrease in the Central West district of New South Wales but slight increase likely in some parts of inland in February. Surveys conducted from mid-February identified frequent medium-density adults remained in the Quambone-Coonamble-Baradine-Gulargambone-Collie areas with occasional nymphs detected. The decrease of adult population may be partially attributed to westward migration and dispersal. Some medium-density adults were identified in Urana, Tibooburra, and Broken Hill areas of NSW with only low-density nymphs observed. Several medium-density adults were also identified in the Burra-Hawker areas of South Australia. NSW Local Land Services received and assessed a half-dozen reports of locust nymph and adult activity from the Central West district in February with some landowner ground control undertaken. No locust captures were recorded by any light traps in Dulkaninna of South Australia, Fowlers Gap and White Cliffs of NSW, and Thargomindah of Queensland for February. The UNSW insect monitoring radar in Hay was still not accessible due to the disruption of Telstra mobile network upgrade. No surveys were conducted in other parts of the inland eastern Australia, nor any locust reports received.

Most habitats in the arid/semi-arid interior of eastern Australia, where nil–10 mm of rainfall was received, remained unfavourable for locust breeding and became even drier during February. The northeastern part of inland in Queensland recorded 50–250 mm of rainfall. February rainfall totals were from very much below average to average levels over much of the inland with the northeastern part at above average to very much above levels. February temperatures were above average to very much above average levels (1–4 degrees warmer) over much of arid interior with the northeastern part below average levels (1–2 degrees cooler). With the forecast for above average rainfall for March and April and warmer temperatures, localised breeding is likely to continue under favourable habitat conditions, and a moderate increase of locust populations is possible in some parts of inland eastern Australia. However, some eggs may enter diapause for overwintering.

The overall outlook is for low-medium density populations across inland eastern Australia, with localised high densities of nymphs developing possibly in parts of central west NSW and inland Queensland. Migration may occur under favourable weather conditions resulting a general spread of the locust population further into the arid/semi-arid interior. It is likely that some small locust bands will develop from untreated populations or aggregated populations after migration/dispersal into favourable inland areas that received heavy rainfall from early March onwards.

There is a low likelihood of widespread infestations developing during autumn.

12 March 2025

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

The overall population likely remained at low levels across inland eastern Australia with some localised medium-density populations in parts that received heavy rainfall. Surveys conducted since mid-February identified some Isolated-Numerous density adults in northern New South Wales with occasional Present-density nymphs detected. Some Isolated-Scattered density adults were also detected in South Australia. No capture in February was recorded by any of light traps in Thargomindah of Queensland, White Cliffs and Fowlers Gap of New South Wales, and Dulkaninna of South Australia. With heavy rainfall in some parts of Queensland and the forecast for above average rainfall for March and April, habitat conditions should improve, and breeding is likely to continue under favourable habitat conditions. Localised high-density nymph populations may develop in some areas of Central West and North West Queensland.

There is a low risk of a widespread infestation. Though, a general increase in numbers is likely to continue with forecast rainfall in favourable habitats during autumn.

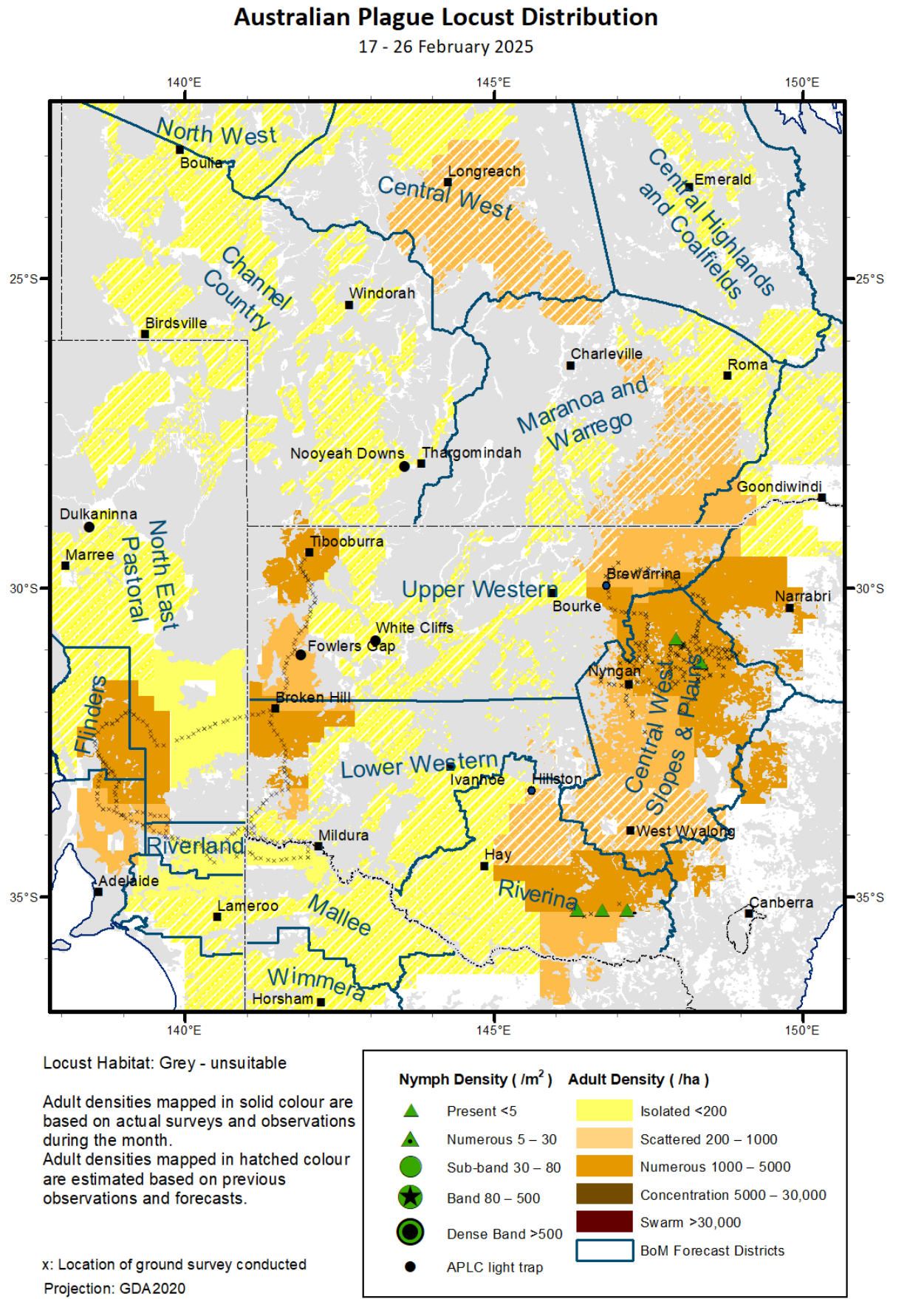
Migratory Locust***Locusta migratoria***

The overall population likely remained at very low levels across inland eastern Australia. Surveys conducted since mid-February did not identify any locusts in New South Wales or South Australia. With heavy rainfall during February over some parts of the traditional locust habitats in Queensland and NSW and the forecast above average rainfall for March and April, localised breeding is likely to continue under favourable habitats. High-density populations are unlikely to result from the current very low background population levels.

There is a very low risk of a widespread infestation developing during autumn.

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.

Locust distribution map—*Chortoicetes terminifera*



Australian Plague Locust**(*Chortoicetes terminifera*)****SITUATION IN FEBRUARY AND OUTLOOK TO MAY 2025****NEW SOUTH WALES****NORTH WEST SLOPES & PLAINS****Northwest Local Land Services****Locusts and conditions**

- Limited surveys conducted in mid-February identified Scattered-Low Numerous density adults in the Walgett area without nymphs detected.
- Only one report of adult activities was received from the east of Walgett in late February.
- In February variable 20 – 100 mm of rainfall was received by this district, generally at average levels. Some habitats should remain favourable for locust breeding.

Forecast

- Breeding is likely to continue under favourable habitat conditions, and a moderate increase may result from currently low background population.
- Some eggs may entry diapause and remain in dormancy for overwintering.
- There is a low probability of any significant migrations during autumn.
- The general population density is expected to remain at low-medium levels during autumn with possible localised small bands developing under favourable habitat conditions.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

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

- Surveys conducted since mid-February identified consistent Numerous-density adults remained in the Quambone-Coonamble-Baradine-Gulargambone-Collie areas with occasional nymphs detected. Adult population was noticeably less than previous observed. Grasshopper activities were increased noticeably in this district.
- About a half-dozen reports were received from this district since mid-February and some locusts confirmed by Local Land Services staff required landowner control.
- The sudden appearance of locust swarm in the northwest of Nyngan and the decrease of locust adults in the Tottenham area in mid-February indicates nocturnal migration was encouraged by favourable weather conditions.
- Evidence of locust sightings and abundance indicates some migration activities had occurred and resulted in a spread of the locust population further into the Western districts.
- 20 – 50 mm of rainfall were received by much of this district in February, generally at average levels.

Forecast

- Localised bands of autumn generation may develop under favourable habitat conditions from residual adult population.
- Some eggs may enter diapause for overwintering.
- Some migration/redistribution is likely to continue under favourable weather conditions.
- The general population is expected to remain at low-medium levels with possibly localised high densities developing during autumn.

Risks

- There is a low-moderate risk of regional infestations developing during autumn.

RIVERINA

Riverina, Murray Local Land Services

Locusts and conditions

- Limited surveys conducted in late February identified Scattered-Low Numerous density adults in the southeastern part of this district with occasional Present-density nymphs detected.
- No reports of locust activities were received from this district in February.
- The UNSW insect monitoring radar in Hay was still not accessible due to the disruption of Telstra mobile network upgrade.
- 5–10 mm of rainfall was received by much of this district in February, ranging from below average to average levels.

Forecast

- Only sporadic breeding is possible under favourable habitats, but any resulting populations will remain at low levels.
- Some diapause eggs may be laid for overwintering.
- There is a low probability of any significant migration events during autumn.
- The population is likely to remain at low levels for March and April.

Risks

- There is a low risk of regional infestation developing during autumn.

UPPER and LOWER WESTERN

Western Local Land Services

Locusts and conditions

- Isolated to Numerous-density adults were identified in western parts of these two districts by February survey. No nymphs were detected by survey.
- Light traps at White Cliffs and Fowlers Gap did not capture any locusts in February.
- No locust reports were received from these two districts in February.
- Nearly nil to 10 mm of rainfall was received by much of these two districts in February, generally at very below average to average levels.

Forecast

- Sporadic breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions from localised storms.
- There is a low-moderate probability of migration/dispersal events during autumn.
- The overall population is likely to remain at low levels with possible localised medium-density populations developing during autumn.

Risks

- There is a low risk of regional infestations developing during autumn.

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.

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

- No surveys were conducted in this district in February.
- No reports of locust activity were received from this district in February.
- February rainfall totals were from 25 mm to 300 mm over this district from south to north, ranging from average to above average levels.

Forecast

- Localised breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions, but general population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a very low probability of any significant migration events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a very low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

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

- No surveys were conducted in this district in February.
- No report of locust activity was received this district in February.
- 25 – 50 mm of rainfall was received by much of this district in February, ranging from below average to average levels.

Forecast

- Breeding is likely to continue under favourable habitat conditions with possible localised medium-density nymphs developing.
- There is a low probability of migration events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

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

- No surveys were conducted in this district in February.
- No locust reports were received from this district in February.
- Heavy rainfall of 50 – 200 mm was received by this district in February, at above average levels over much of this district.

Forecast

- Breeding is likely under favourable habitat conditions resulting localised higher densities, but overall population is likely to remain at low-medium levels.
- There is a low probability of any significant migration events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

MARANOA AND WARREGO

Maranoa Regional Council; Murweh, Paroo, and Balonne Shires

Locusts and conditions

- No surveys were conducted in this district in February.
- No locust reports were received from this district in February.
- This district received variable amount of rainfall from nearly nil in its southwestern part to 25–50 mm over much of northeastern part in February, generally at average levels.

Forecast

- Breeding is likely under favourable habitat conditions resulting localised medium densities.
- There is a low-moderate probability of migration events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

NORTH WEST

Mt Isa, Cloncurry, McKinlay, Boulia, and Winton Shires

Locusts and conditions

- No surveys were conducted in this district in February.
- No locust reports were received from this district in February.
- This district received variable amount of rainfall from 25 to over 200 mm in February, but generally at average levels over much of this district.

Forecast

- Sporadic breeding is possible, but the locust population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a low probability of any significant migration/redistribution events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

CHANNEL COUNTRY

Boulia, Diamantina, Barcoo, Quilpie, and Bulloo Shires

Locusts and conditions

- No surveys were conducted in this district in February.
- No locust reports were received from this district in February.
- The light trap in Thargomindah did not capture any locusts in February.
- This district received variable amount of rainfall from nearly nil to 50 mm in February, but generally at average levels over much of this district with parts below average to very much below average levels.

Forecast

- Sporadic breeding is possible, but any resulting population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a low-moderate probability of migration/redistribution events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

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.daf.qld.gov.au/contact/report-a-biosecurity-pest-or-disease?form=other-1554285>, email at info@daf.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.

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| SOUTH AUSTRALIA |
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NORTH EAST PASTORAL and FLINDERS**Locusts and conditions**

- Surveys conducted in mid-February identified frequent Scattered to Numerous-density adults in the Flinders district with Isolated to Scattered-density adults in the southern part of North East district. No nymphs were detected by survey.
- The light-trap at Dulkaninna did not capture any locusts in February.
- No locust reports were received from these two districts in February.
- Less than 5 mm of rainfall was received by much of these two districts with parts of 5 – 15 mm, generally at average levels over much of these two districts.

Forecast

- Sporadic breeding is possible under favourable habitat conditions, but any resulting population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a low-moderate probability of migration/dispersal events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a very low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

RIVERLAND and MURRAYLANDS**Locusts and conditions**

- Surveys identified some Isolated-density adults in the Riverland district in mid-February without any nymphs detected. No surveys were conducted in the Murraylands district.
- No locust reports were received from these two districts in February.
- February rainfall totals were less than 5 mm over much of these two districts, generally at very much below average to below average levels.

Forecast

- Limited sporadic breeding is possible, but any resulting population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a low probability of migration/dispersal events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a very low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

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.

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

- Limited surveys conducted in mid-February identified some Isolated-density adults in the northwestern part of this district.
- No reports were received from this district in February.
- February rainfall totals were less than 10 mm over much of this district, generally at very much below average to below average levels.

Forecast

- Limited sporadic breeding is possible under suitable habitats, but any resulting population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a very low probability of any significant migration events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a very low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

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

- No surveys were conducted in this district in February.
- No locust reports were received from this district in February.
- February rainfall totals were less than 10 mm over this district, generally at below average levels.

Forecast

- Limited sporadic breeding is possible under suitable habitat conditions, but any resulting population is likely to remain at low levels.
- There is a very low probability of any significant migration events during autumn.

Risks

- There is a very low risk of a regional infestation developing during autumn.

All locust activity should be reported to [Agriculture Victoria](https://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au) via the [Customer Contact Centre](https://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/customer-contact-centre) 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