



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

DESERT LOCUST UPDATE

DESERT LOCUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Danger Level = Serious (Central Region)

16 SEPTEMBER 2021. BREEDING IN NORTHERN ETHIOPIA

OVERVIEW. New reports confirm that breeding is underway in at least four woredas of southeast Tigray in northern **Ethiopia** where hoppers are forming small bands. Reports were also received of early instar bands in adjacent areas of Afar and probably eastern Amhara regions. A few small immature swarms appeared in the past days near Ayasha along the railway area in eastern Ethiopia just south of Djibouti and on the plateau in northwest and northeast **Somalia**. These swarms are remnants from spring breeding rather than newly formed summer-bred swarms, which will not occur for another three weeks or so. In **Yemen**, more small immature swarms are forming from local breeding and hopper bands that are present in the southern interior. Elsewhere, the situation remains calm with only small-scale breeding in areas of recent rainfall in **Chad** and **Sudan**.

WHY IT MATTERS. Summer breeding in Ethiopia has extended beyond the Afar region into the highlands of southeast Tigray and eastern Amhara. Survey and control operations have been compromised in all areas due to insecurity and inaccessibility since July. It is hoped that safe access can be restored; otherwise, it will be difficult to treat current hopper band infestations and reduce the formation of swarms that is likely to commence in early October. Once vegetation dries out in the current breeding areas of northern and northeastern Ethiopia, the new swarms are expected to move northwards through the highlands to reach the Red Sea coastal plains in Eritrea and eastwards to the Somali region in eastern Ethiopia and adjacent areas of northern Somalia to join any remnant spring-bred swarms that may still be present. Rainfall during October and November would allow the swarms to mature and ecological conditions to be favourable for egg-laying, hatching and hopper band formation until the end of the year. In addition, any swarms that are not treated in the interior of Yemen are likely to move during October to the Red Sea coast of Yemen and perhaps across the Gulf of Aden to northern Somalia and eastern Ethiopia. Consequently, the current upsurge is likely to continue, albeit at a lower level than one year ago, during the remainder of this year.

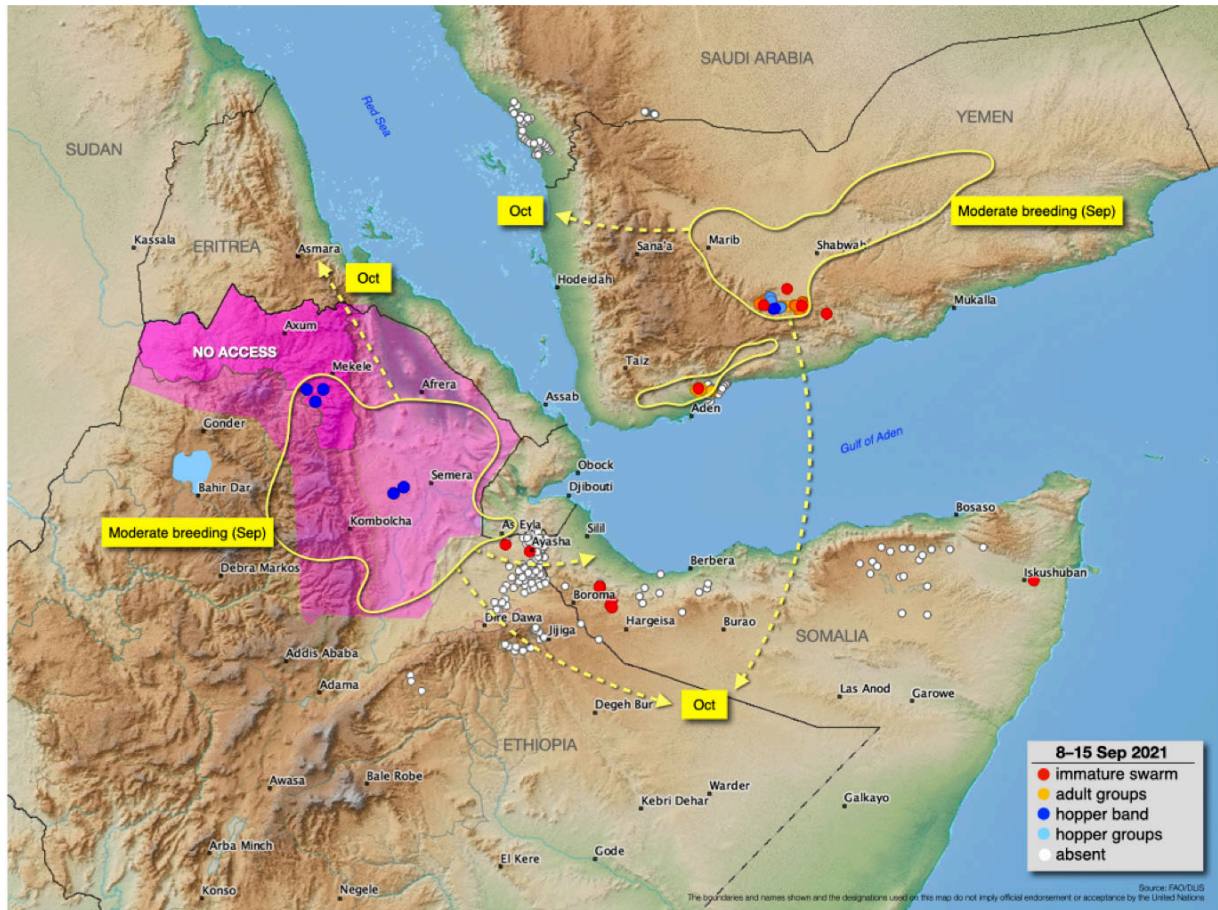
CONTEXT. Continued insecurity is prolonging the current upsurge in the Horn of Africa.

- **SOMALIA.** A few remnant immature swarms in the northwest and northeast.
- **ETHIOPIA.** Hopper bands in Afar (Mille zone) and SE Tigray; hatching in Afar and Amhara; immature swarm near Ayasha (Somali); only limited operations due to insecurity and New Year.
- **DJIBOUTI** and **ERITREA.** No surveys.
- **YEMEN.** Hopper bands and new swarms forming in the interior; limited control underway.
- **SUDAN.** Calm with low numbers of adults and small-scale breeding in the interior.
- **SAUDI ARABIA.** No locusts in the southwest; no invasions are expected.
- **W AFRICA.** Calm with low numbers of adults and small-scale breeding in Chad.
- **SW ASIA.** No locusts in Iran, Pakistan, and India.

TAKEAWAY. Current field operations in northern Somalia and eastern Ethiopia should be maintained while upscaling of surveys is needed in northern Ethiopia and southern Djibouti.

- **Central Region (SERIOUS)** – increase operations in Djibouti and northern Ethiopia
- **Eastern Region (CALM)** – continue summer surveys (Indo-Pakistan)
- **Western Region (CALM)** – continue summer surveys (northern Sahel)

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CURRENT SITUATION. Hopper bands are forming in northern and northeastern Ethiopia while a few remnant spring-bred immature swarms have been seen recently in northern Somalia and eastern Ethiopia. More swarms are forming in the summer breeding areas of the Yemen interior.