NEWSLETTER OBSERVATORY OF HIGH-STAKE SPECIES FOR HUMAN HEALTH

OBSERVATOIRE DES ESPECES A ENJEUX POUR LA SANTE HUMAINE

In this issue

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Science

CITIZEN SCIENCE TO TACKLE *AMBROSIA ARTEMISIIFOLIA* POPULATIONS AND PREVENT FUTURE INVASION

"Let's talk about *Ambrosia*!" are regular short online conferences organised by the International Ragweed Society that aim to share knowledge about all aspects of vital ragweed functions, its impact and means of control.

The first session presented by Pr **Arnaud Monty** from the University of Liège, Belgium dealt with "Citizen science to tackle *Ambrosia artemisiifolia* populations and prevent future invasion ?".

In his presentation, the researcher specifies the **advantages and disadvantages of citizen participation** in collecting scientific information: inexpensive (volunteering), large sample, evolution of the citizen/science relationship, increase in collective consciousness around environmental issues, etc.

On the contrary, oversimplified protocols, fairly long harvest time, biases (i.e better coverage of areas with more people, "preferred" species, etc.) are disadvantages in the use of this method.

In view of the small number of outbreaks detected in the south of Belgium, the Walloon Ragweed Observatory counts on citizen mobilization to report observations and implement a strategy of eradication.

LET'S TALK ABOUT Ambrosia !

Short conferences online organised by the International Ragweed Society

internationalragweedsociety.org

Citizen science ?

Any method of producing scientific knowledge in which non-professional actors contribute actively and deliberately.

The whole conference can be watched again on https://youtu.be/BFY6IaPvhe8

All welcome to the next session : October 26, 1 to 2 pm !

Title : "Pollen-food syndrome caused by *Ambrosia*." By Pr. Victoria Rodinkova, Vinnytsia Medical University (Ukraine).

If you want to participate, please complete the following form to receive the link : https://forms.gle/ANVQsJ2zgRrbt9HC7

The first three *Ambrosia* talks will be open to everyone! All information on internationalragweedsociety.org.

The following will be reserved for IRS members. To become a member of IRS, please go to the link: https://internationalragweedsociety.org/2023-2024-irs-membership/

You can be a speaker too! If you would like to present your ragweed-related work or project to the community, please contact: **irs.ragweed@gmail.com** with a short summary of your presentation proposal.

News

OPHRAELLA COMMUNA FINALLY DISCOVERED IN FRANCE !

Accidentally introduced into Northern Italy in 2013, the ragweed beetle (*Ophraella communa*) had, until then, never been detected in France... Today, things have changed!

Adult of Ophraella communa on Ambrosia artemisiifolia - Ragweed Observatory FREDON France

At the end of summer, the ragweed beetle has been reported through naturalist websites two times in **areas in Lyon**. On October 2, **the French Ragweed Observatory went on field to prospect and confirm its presence.**

Indeed, the observatory found **several populations of the insect** on *Ambrosia artemisiifolia* plants in different locations of the city. Furthermore, the beetle was detected at **different stages** of its life cycle (eggs, larvae, adults).

Like its host plant, the ragweed beetle is native to North America. It has since settled in many countries around the world. For example, China has been using it for some time now as a **biological control agent** against ragweed.

The presence of the insect in France may represent a **real turning point** in the fight against these plants with allergenic pollen. Indeed, in its collective expert report published in 2019, Anses assessed the effectiveness of the beetle as a biological control agent[1]. Their findings are promising.

Herbivory marks caused by Ophraella communa on Ambrosia artemisiifolia - Ragweed Observatory FREDON France

In Northern Italy, the incidence of attacks on ragweed populations by ragweed beetles is **between 90% and 100%**. Attacked plants often showed **complete defoliation** at the end of the season. Consequence: a reduction in the production of pollen grains and seeds. In many cases, this results in a decline in ragweed population density. In the Milan region, pollen emissions **fell by 80%**.

By applying the same factors, Anses estimated that an introduction into the Rhône-Alpes region in France could lead to a reduction of **more than 50% of the allergic risk**. This would result in a **75% to 85% reduction** in associated healthcare costs.

News

HIGH-STAKE SPECIES FOR HUMAN HEALTH IN FRANCE: A LEGAL RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

At the initiative of FREDON France and for the benefit of the Ministry responsible for health and prevention, Yanis BOUARFA, trainee lawyer specializing in environmental law, was integrated into the Observatory team for 6 months.

The legal capacities of the different protagonists contributing to the management of high-stake species for human health in France **need clarification**. The objective is to carry out a research focusing on which **legal tools** can be used by everyone in a situation implying those species if needed. This work will lead to the production of a **legal guide** for these different stakeholders.

Depending on the conclusions, this guide could serve as a basis for the **evolution of management practices** for these species, but also for proposals of legislative and regulatory changes that may be necessary.

This project, supervised by Olivier PECHAMAT, director of legal affairs, will be carried out within a project group made up of professionals confronted with these legal questions, including regional health agency and public health inspectors (from municipalities).

SHORT NOTICE

- **Let's talk about Ambrosia! October 26, 13:00-14:00 :** Pollen-food syndrome caused by *Ambrosia*. By Pr. Victoria Rodinkova, Vinnytsia Medical University (Ukraine) If you want to participate, please complete this form to receive the link.

SOURCES

1. Effectiveness of the *Ophraella communa* beetle used as a biological control agent against ragweed, ANSES collective expert report (2019). https://www.anses.fr/fr/system/files/SANTVEG2015SA0078Ra.pdf

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Follow all the Observatory actions on social medias:

Former Ragweed Obervatory letters can be consulted here