



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 - ROME

Cables: FOODAGRI ROME

Telex: 610181 FAO I

Telephone: 5797

AGP Division

Locusts, other migratory pests and emergency operations group

**DESERT LOCUST SITUATION  
SUMMARY AND FORECAST**

No. 6 February 1979

SUMMARY

Swarms produced in the Horn of Africa have moved out with winds from directions between south-east and north-east. Some of the swarms, moving towards the north-west, have reached and bred in the Awash valley and Danakil areas of Ethiopia, where any escapes may be expected to begin fledging in mid-March. Other swarms have moved south-westwards across Somalia, but have not been reported nearer than 200 km to the Kenya border, now unlikely to be reached; some, after moving westwards, are probably now in the south-eastern highlands of Ethiopia, and likely to remain there until late April.

Control operations have continued against hopper infestations around the Tokar delta in the Sudan, and on the Saudi Tihamah, where a further thousand hopper bands were attacked during February, and escapes are likely to move inland. There have been no further swarm reports since December from Iran, where swarms may be seasonally immobilised by low temperatures. Elsewhere only scattered locusts have been reported.

./.

DESERT LOCUST SITUATION - FEBRUARY

WEST AFRICA

After the unusual rains of January, METEOSAT imagery showed February as almost completely dry, and the Desert Locust situation throughout the OCLALAV region was reported very calm.

NORTH-WEST AFRICA

There has been practically no rain south of 30°N during February. No Desert Locusts were reported or observed in LIBYA during the month; there have been no reports from ALGERIA, MOROCCO or TUNISIA.

EASTERN AFRICA

Weather

There was some further moderate rain in the Awash valley, and light rains on parts of coasts of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

SUDAN

Control operations on a reduced scale continued during February around the Tokar delta, where four sites totalling 570 hectares were infested with small hopper bands, and scattered adults were reported at twelve sites totalling 1165 hectares. Seven tons of bait and 100 kg BHC dust were applied during the month.

ETHIOPIA

Swarms have continued to reach the Railway Area. On 2 February a dense swarm of mixed maturity, covering about 4 square kilometres, was sprayed by aircraft at Diredawa, using 390 litres of 96% fenitrothion and 200 litres of 96% malathion. On 8 February a further 90 litres of fenitrothion were applied to a thin swarm at Scenele, 10 km north of Diredawa. Following laying in neighbouring areas of Danakil, the first hatching was reported on 12 February some 40-50 km north of Diredawa. During the second week of February swarms were also reported in the Awash valley, where laying will have occurred in late January; 55 second and third instar hopper bands were reported on 21 February over an area of about a square kilometre, and further hatching was expected.

SOMALIA

On 5 February an immature swarmlet was seen at Bur Acaba, and on 10 February a small immature swarm was reported 45 km south-west of Ischia Baidoa. Numerous scattered maturing locusts were seen in early February on the northern Somali coast.

DJIBOUTI, KENYA, TANZANIA and UGANDA remained clear of Desert Locust swarms.

NEAR EAST

Weather

There was some scattered rain early in the month.

SAUDI ARABIA

Vegetation on the Tihamah remains green, with conditions still suitable for breeding, and control has continued against hoppers of all instars, with some fledglings, over a distance of some 400 km from the Mecca area in the north to wadi Hali in the south, and up to 100 km inland, with further bands coming out of the foothills. Hopper bands have ranged in size from less than a hundred to several thousand square metres, and approximately a further thousand bands were reported to have been controlled during the month. Ground teams have used 2.6% gamma BHC dust, and two spraying aircraft have applied dieldrin and malathion from bases at Jeddah and in the Qunfidah area. During the last week of February, only a few bands of late instar hoppers were controlled, in the wadi Fatima and wadi Sa'diyah areas.

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

A few scattered adult locusts and hoppers have been found in areas of the Tihamah bordering Saudi Arabia, where conditions are still suitable for breeding.

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Conditions are becoming increasingly dry, with little effect remaining from the moderate rains of late January, and only stray adult locusts have been recorded; surveys have been made of the eastern coastal plains and adjoining valleys.

JORDAN

Surveys were made during late January and early February in southern and south-eastern Jordan; no locust activity was recorded during February.

The UNITED ARAB EMIRATES and the SULTANATE OF OMAN are reported free from locust activity, without rainfall and with vegetation dry. KUWAIT was reported free of Desert Locusts during January. There have been no reports from BAHRAIN, EGYPT, IRAQ, LEBANON, QATAR or SYRIA.

SOUTH-WEST ASIA

PAKISTAN

Widespread rains were recorded in Baluchistan during the second and third weeks of February, but the locust situation is reported calm throughout Pakistan, with only a few stray adults recorded along the coast.

INDIA

No swarm movement nor gregarious breeding was recorded during February, with a maximum population density of 1125 scattered locusts per square kilometre in one area of Jaisalmer district.

No locust activity was reported during February in any part of AFGHANISTAN; there has been no report from IRAN.

FORECAST FOR LATE MARCH-APRIL 1979

In Eastern Africa breeding is likely to continue in the Awash valley and Danakil depression of Ethiopia, with fledging from mid-March onwards; breeding may extend into Djibouti and neighbouring areas of the northern coast of Somalia. Swarms which have moved into the southern highlands of Ethiopia during January and February are likely to reappear with the onset of the south-west monsoon in late April and early May, as in 1961, and to move on to the Horn of Africa together with escapes from further north.

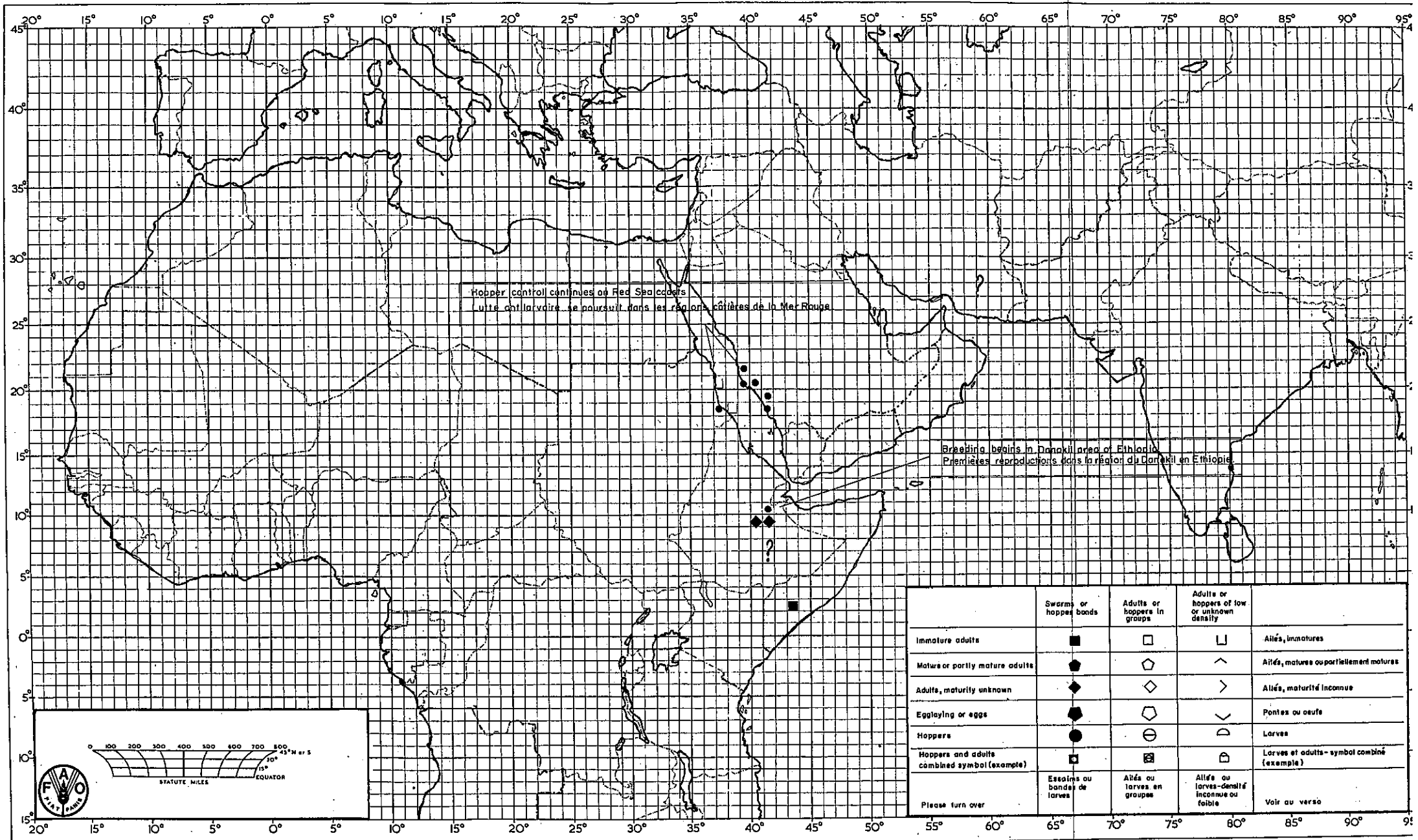
In the Near East, locusts escaping control on the Saudi Tihamah are likely to move northwards and north-eastwards during spells of warm southerly and south-westerly winds, and to breed in the interior of Saudi Arabia, as in 1968, with the longer egg-development periods (still up to 3 months in April) characteristic of this area and season. There may also be breeding in the highlands of the Asir and of the Yemens. It is possible that swarms may reach as far north as Jordan and Iraq, though in the past such movements have followed either breeding further north on the Tihamah than this year, or massive earlier movements from the Somali peninsula into Arabia as in 1952 and 1958 but not this year.

There may also be some eastward movement of swarms into Iran, in the South-West Asia region. In addition, there may already be swarms seasonally immobilised by cold in the interior of eastern Iran and neighbouring areas of Pakistan, and these may reappear and breed with rising temperatures in March and April, as in 1968.

In West and North-West Africa, risks of serious development depend on the possibility of invasion from the east later in the year.

- - - - -

NASA have undertaken to provide special LANDSAT satellite imagery for the assessment of present (mid-March) breeding conditions in the especially important areas of Danakil and northern Ethiopia.



	Swarms or hoppers bands	Adults or hoppers in groups	Adults or hoppers of low or unknown density	
Immature adults	■	□	◻	Alités, immatures
Mature or partly mature adults	●	◐	◑	Alités, matures ou partiellement matures
Adults, maturity unknown	◆	◊	◌	Alités, maturité inconnue
Egg-laying or eggs	◆	◐	◑	Pontes ou oeufs
Hoppers	●	◐	◑	Larves
Hoppers and adults combined symbol (example)	◐	◑	◒	Larves et adultes - symbol combiné (exemple)
Please turn over	Essaims ou bandes de larves	Alités ou larves en groupes	Alités ou larves - densité inconnue ou faible	Voir au verso

