

Flatworm Watch

Engaging gardeners on biological invasions

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Invasive Alien Species
National Scientific Secretariat

Context

- **Biological invasions**, among most important drivers of **biodiversity loss**
- **EU Regulation** on Invasive Alien species
 - List of species of Union concern
 - Obligations of **Prevention, Early warning, Management**



Context

- **Flatworms**
 - Native and Non-native
 - **One Union list species**
 - Introduction via plants imports
 - Predators
 - Impact on soil fauna



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Objectives

1. Gain a better view on the issue of non-native flatworms in Belgium

- Species identity
- Distribution
- Pathways
- Genetics

2. Raise awareness on biological invasions

3. Evaluate the potential of citizen science for monitoring unknown species



Partez à la recherche
des vers plats dans votre jardin

FLATWORM WATCH

Ga op zoek naar platwormen
in je eigen tuin



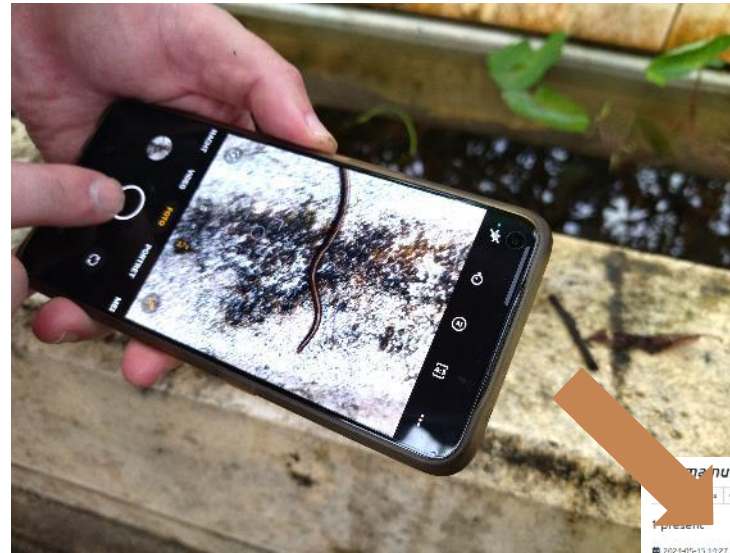
Protocol

We ask participants to:

- Search for flatworms
- Take pictures
- Try to identify them
- Encode their observations

The project team will:

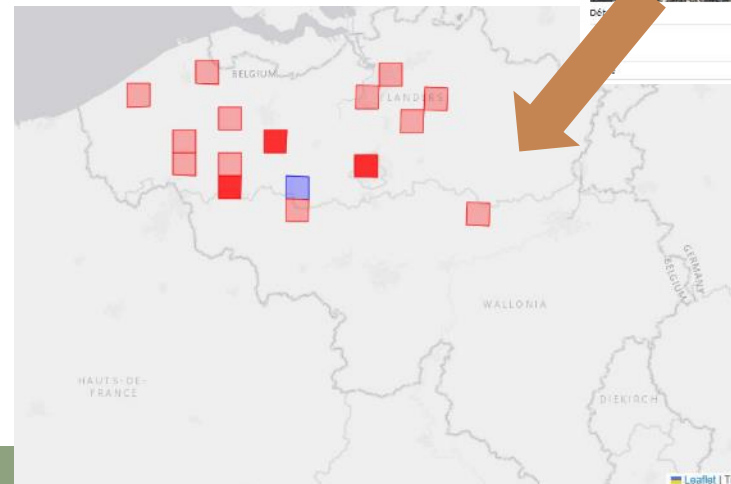
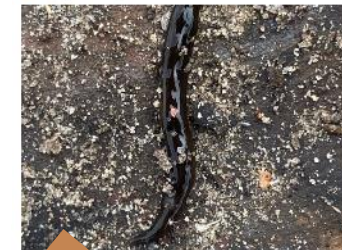
- Validate observations
- Provide feedbacks
- Takes samples if necessary
- Synthesize results



 Observations.be

 Waarnemingen.be


Jan Soors 2024-05-17 09:38
Halo
Als je een detail hebt van de kop en eventueel beter belichte foto's, dan geraken we misschien verder in de determinatie. Hoe groot was dit diertje?
Jan



Tools

- Portal for encoding observations
- Guidelines
- ID Key
- Feedback via Observations.be/Waggrnemingen.be

I HAVE SEEN A FLATWORM AND I HAVE IDENTIFIED IT

The most common non-native species:



Obama nungara



Caenoplana variegata



Bipalium kewense

Other less common non-native species:



Arthurdendylus triangulatus



Caenoplana coerulea



Caenoplana micholitzii



Diversibipalium multilineatum

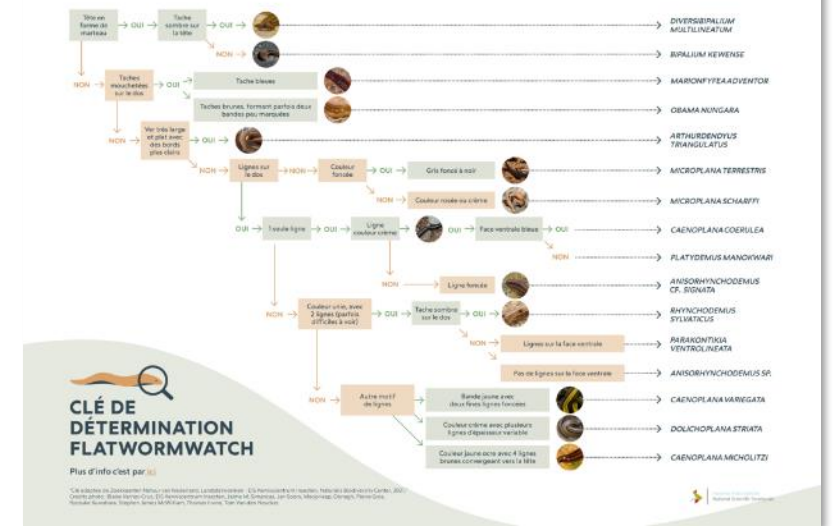


Dolichoplana striata



GUIDE DES FLATWORM-WATCHERS

CONSEILS PRATIQUES & FICHES D'IDENTIFICATION





Community

Target audience

- Gardeners
- Naturalists
- Terrarium hobbyists
- Visitors of botanic gardens

Mapping

- Questions on profile in registration form



Communication strategy

REACHING OUT

Social media and mailing

- **Naturalists:** RBINS, INBO, Natagora, Natuurpunt, CNB, Contrats Rivière, Botanic gardens,...
- **Citizen scientists:** Mijntuinlab, Scivil, Iedereen wetenschapper
- **Gardeners and terrarium:** Facebook groups, Federations, Magazines

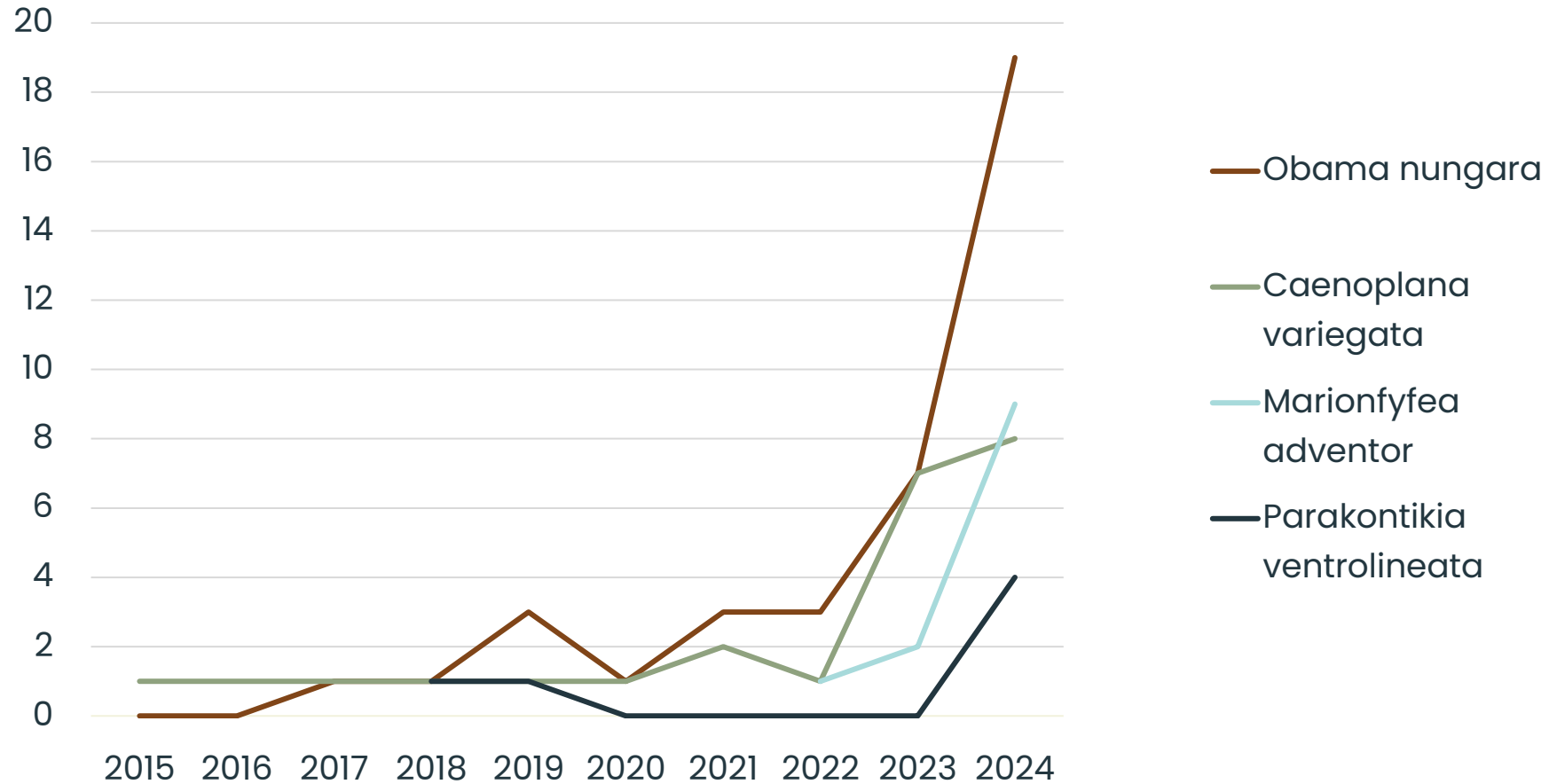
ENGAGING FLATWORMWATCHERS

- Newsletter
- Feedbacks on Waarnemingen.be
- Online training
- Visit at Botanic Garden
- Core group of ambassadors for sampling
- Results: Maps and highlights



First results

Observations of Non-native Terrestrial Flatworms in Belgium



— Obama nungara

— Caenoplana variegata

— Marionfyfea adventor

— Parakontikia ventrolineata



Challenges

- Sample collection
- Treatment of observations
- Keeping the community engaged
 - Rare species
- Limited support and interdisciplinarity



Pictures: Jan Soors, Tom Van den Neucker



Thank you for your attention !



Invasive Alien Species
National Scientific Secretariat

Partners

With the support of

[www.iasregulation.be/
flatwormwatch](http://www.iasregulation.be/flatwormwatch)



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