



Together with the Govern Balear, the Formentera Council (CiF) is behind a new push to curb the spread of the pine processionary caterpillar on Formentera. Councillor Daisee Aguilera, who oversees the CiF department of environment, noted that starting yesterday, January 13th, Council crews began to look for nests of the insect in the area it is most common: Es Cap de Barbaria.

Manual or mechanical drives

«We've contracted two forest service specialists who will be on the island for the next two weeks to attend to the problems the species is causing. What's more», Aguilera continued, «the Council is coordinating a volunteer group that will remove the insects' nests by hand (in lower branches) and machine (in high branches)». Aguilera's office has also enlisted the Es Cap hunters' club to shoot at nests located in the high top branches of pine trees. The office of the environment has purchased 2,500 cartridges at a cost of €600 and intends to begin that phase of the process between this week and next, depending on weather. The councillor added: «If anyone else wants to join either volunteer group, or if other residents have affected pine trees on their property, please contact the department of environment for assistance».

IBANAT's work

For its part, the Balearic Nature Institute (IBANAT for its acronym in Catalan), a branch of the regional ministry of environment, agriculture and fishing of the Govern Balear, has coordinated several different actions on Formentera to attack flare-ups in caterpillar numbers.

Since Tuesday January 12th and for another two weeks, IBANAT personnel will provide technical advising to CiF staff, cutting down and burning the nests they find in the Es Cap area. Council officials said the partnership can later be extended beyond two weeks if need be.