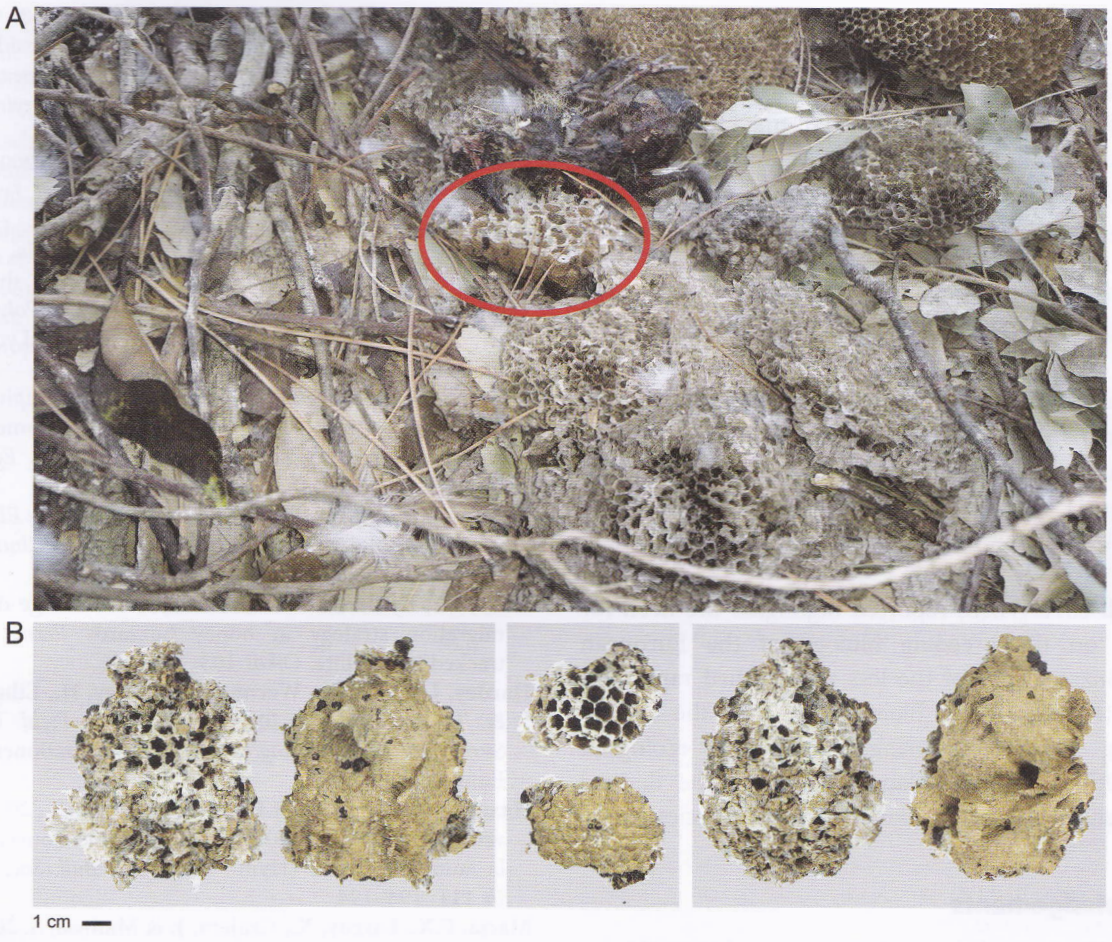

Figure 2. (A) Picture of the European Honey Buzzard nest interior at the moment of the collection (2nd August 2018). Nest remains of Vespidae are visible and the one of the Asian Hornet (with larger cells) is marked with a red circle. (B) The three Asian Hornet nest fragments analysed in the lab (scale bar represents 1 cm).

preferred food source of the European Honey Buzzard (Gamauf 1999). Thus, in principle, the species should easily detect the Asian Hornet secondary nests, which are spherical and large (up to 1×0.8 m), built preferentially in tree canopies (Villemant *et al.* 2010) and easier to find compared to other native species that nest in the ground or close to it (e.g. German Wasp and *Polistes* spp.). In this sense, taking advantage of the Asian Hornet may decrease the risk for the European Honey Buzzard to attacks from terrestrial or aerial predators (e.g. Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*, Voskamp 2000) while manipulating the nest and extracting the fragments suitable for transportation.

Taking into account the dates when samples in the nest of the European Honey Buzzard were collected, the transport of the Asian Hornet nest fragments was made between 20th July and 2nd August 2018, coinciding with the period of maximum activity of the invasive wasp colonies. The Asian Hornet builds secondary nests mainly from August and the production of individuals may be active until December (Rome *et al.* 2015). The European Honey Buzzard requires more food between mid-June and September, in order to provision the nestlings (Hardey *et al.* 2013), but also because fuel deposition in Europe is critical for post-nuptial migration (Hake *et al.* 2003). Thus, the Asian Hornet could be a particularly profitable resource due to the huge amounts of larvae available in the nests exactly at the time when the trophic needs of the raptor are greatest (Rome *et al.* 2015).

Additionally, this raptor could be considered as a potential biocontrol agent, because it is possibly the only European bird species capable of destroying active Asian Hornet nests (i.e. secondary aerial nests) during the period of maximum generation of individual insects. Predators near the top of the food chain are crucial in ecosystem processes and can structure the biological communities (Schmitz *et al.* 2000, Sergio