



WASPS

Seattle 206-407-3268 ♦ South King 253-239-2833 ♦ Eastside 425-738-0499 ♦ Toll Free 888-441-9607

Wasps are any insect that belong to the order of Hymenoptera and includes the Paper wasp, Yellow Jacket, Bald-Face Hornet, and Mud Dauber; all are common to the North West. Their colors range from black to combinations of black with yellow, white or brown markings and their body is often smooth and shiny. Wasps are considered beneficial insect because they feed on fresh fruit and nectar, and feed their young (larvae) nuisance insects, such as flies and spiders. Similar to bees, they also help pollinated flowering plants.

Young queens emerge from hibernation during early spring, and begin to search for suitable nesting sites. The queens will collect their nesting material from plant fiber and other cellulose material and mix it with saliva to construct the nest. [*This varies from species to species, as not all wasps live in paper nests*]. The new wasp colonies will consist of queens (fertile females), workers (sterile female), and males, and though they will use the nest for only one season the nest will contain as many as 10,000 to 30,000 individuals by late summer. From late summer into fall the queens and males mate; when the weather turns cold, the males and female workers will die off and the new fertilized queens will over winter underneath loose bark, in attics, woodpiles and other protected areas, waiting to start the nesting cycle all over again the following spring.

Wasp nests are often located in a wall void, a tree (aerial nest) or under the ground and will sting with little provocation. In autumn, they switch from collecting arthropods and nectar to scavenging for other food sources which increases their contact with people. Unlike honey bees, which sting only once, because their barbed stinger remains in the victim's skin, wasps do not have barbs on their stingers and can sting and withdraw the stinger several times. A wasp sting, aside from being very painful can grow to be serious and sometimes fatal. If you suspect a reaction to a wasp sting, you should seek immediate medical attention.

The best method to control wasps would be to eliminate the nest however; most wasps forage about one mile from their nest so finding the actual nest itself can be difficult to impossible. However, when wasp nests are found in or near the home, they can be at the very least a nuisance and at times a serious threat since there is always the danger of anaphylactic shock from their venom. By mid summer most nests are too large and difficult to approach, especially in attics, crawlspaces or within the walls of a house. Therefore, the safest procedure would be to hire a pest control professional to eliminate the colony. Adept Pest Solutions guarantees all wasp treatments.



Paper Wasp / Polistes

Semi-Social

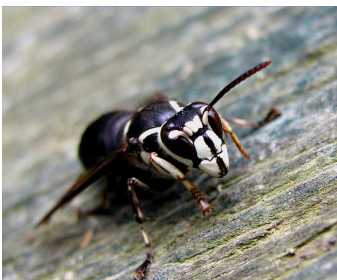
Paper wasps are sometimes called umbrella wasps, due to the distinctive design of their nests. Paper wasps are longer, thinner, and more smooth and shiny than other wasps. Nests commonly occur around the home underneath eaves, in or on structures and plants; Paper wasps will attack when the nest is disturbed and each can sting repeatedly. Paper wasps commonly feed on insects, including caterpillars, and are considered to be beneficial insects by many gardeners.



Yellow Jacket

Social

Yellow Jackets will sting with little provocation, and can be major pests during late summer when scavenging for meat and sweets, especially around picnics and campgrounds. Yellow Jackets usually create exposed aerial nests but also build concealed nests under ground, in wall voids or crawlspaces.



Bald-Face Hornet

Social

Bald-Face Hornets have a unique white and black design which is different from the usual yellow and black colors of most wasps. They are larger than most wasps and are extremely protective of their nests; they will sting repeatedly if disturbed. Their nests are usually located in shrubs or trees but occasionally can be located on roof overhangs, attics and occasionally in crawlspaces. The Bald-Face Hornet is an aggressive wasp and has a very strong sting.

Reference:

Peter J. Landolt and Arthur L. Antonelli
College of Agriculture and Home Economics
Copyright 2003 Washington State University
Published May 2003. D. Subject code 352. EB0643



Mud Daubers

Solitary wasp species

Mud Daubers are long, slender wasps with thread-like waists. They are not aggressive and do not defend their nests. They are highly unlikely to sting unless handled and are considered to be beneficial to those who do not like spiders around the home. Mud Daubers nests are long cylindrical tubes made up of mud molded by the female's wasp's mandibles. The small mud nests have one to several cells, containing larva and paralyzed spiders for the larva to feed on. The small nests are usually placed under overhangs like eaves of buildings or in attics. If control is desired, all that is needed is to knock down the mud nest.



Typical Aerial Social Wasp Nest

AVOIDING YELLOWJACKET PROBLEMS

- ✓ Cover trash containers and keep containers away from eating areas.
- ✓ Remain clam in the presence of wasps.
- ✓ Eliminate water sources like dripping outdoor faucets or standing pools of water.
- ✓ Do not leave food uncovered.
- ✓ Do not swat at wasps. They are more likely to sting when aggravated.
- ✓ Do not crush wasps. Wasps give off an alarm pheromone and can alert others to attack.
- ✓ Do not wear perfume, scented hair gels or lotions when going outdoors. Wasps are attracted to these smells.
- ✓ Always call a professional pest control company to remove a wasp nest.