

Bugs & Blights

Target the Pest, Protect the Rest.

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HONEYBEES ARE LIGHT OR DARK BROWN AND ONLY COLLECT POLLEN AND NECTAR.



WASPS INCLUDE THESE YELLOWJACKETS, (IN TRAP). THESE ARE THE MOST AGGRESSIVE IN DEFENDING THEIR NESTS.



HONEYBEES ENTERING NEST BEHIND WALL. ELONGATED SHADOWS ARE INCOMING BEES. VIBRATION OR WALL THUMPING BRINGS OUT THE DEFENDERS.



PAPER WRAPPING AROUND A BALD-FACE HORNET NEST IN RHODODENDRON. THIS PROTECTIVE WRAP IS FOUND ALSO IN GROUND NESTS AND NESTS IN CAVITIES.



MUD DAUBERS MAKE MUD BLOBS; INSIDE THEY PROVISION IT WITH CATERpillARS, SPIDERS OR OTHER INSECTS AND LAY AN EGG: ONE EGG PER MUD GLOB.



BUMBLEBEES ARE BIG FUZZY BEES. THEY CAN BE GOLDEN, OR BLACK WITH YELLOW, WHITE OR REDDISH MARKINGS. THEY ARE THE ONLY BEES THAT CAN POLLINATE SOME CROPS.

(RIGHT) PAPER WASPS MAKE AN OPEN COMB NEST. A NEW PAPER WASP IN OUR AREA, MAKES SMALLER AND MORE NUMEROUS OPEN COMB NESTS.



A BEE by any other name, is a WASP

“It is against state and federal law to apply insecticides to blooming plants”. Killing an individual bee in the field is not the issue. The real danger to pollinators is the potential for the bees to take the pesticide back to the nest, where all the bees are killed.

Bees and wasps are not the same. Both bees and wasps sting with a stinger that has a venom supply. Their main homeland defense is that stinger and your fear. When not defending their social nest of workers and offspring, they are out searching for food for those workers and larvae. When they are foraging for nectar or prey they are not aggressive at all. Bees may circle you to determine if you are a flower; wasps may come to check out the shadow areas (collar, shirtsleeve) where an insect might lurk.

Both bees and wasps have social nests, which they will defend vigorously. There are also solitary bees or wasps that use holes in the ground or old insect tunnels in wood. While the latter can sting they don't have a nest to defend and their periods of nesting activity is often limited. You have to work to make a solitary bee mad enough to sting. <http://www.thebeekeeper.ca/stingers.html>

August and September are wasp months. Wasps have the maximum number of larvae and workers to feed and become annoying scavengers at picnic feasts, garbage cans and water sources such as a faucets, swimming pools or beach. As the season closes, the wasps may switch to fruit and become more aggressive. Honeybees and bumblebees continue to forage peacefully through the season, posing no threat to the gardener. Foraging bees and wasps usually appear to be wandering around the garden in random patterns.

Bees and wasps returning to their social nests do so in a “beeline” much like planes coming and going in to and from the airport. They fly directly to the nest opening and may have to circle when looking for prey under bark flaps, in rockpiles or any dark shadow-line where a dinner item may be living. They are not defensive when foraging. Usually you can go right up to them.

Bees – social and solitary

Most bees are gatherers of nectar and pollen. However, some will cut leaf edges in ovals or circles to line their nest tubes; others like orchard mason bees will use mud to line old beetle galleries.

Wasps – social and solitary

Wasps are predators but will visit flowers for pollen and nectar or to find prey. Nests of the paper wasps are open with cells visible and yellowjackets are covered in a multilayered paper envelope.