

KNOW Before You GO WASPS & Hornets

What are hornets and wasps?

Our most common “hornet,” the Yellowjacket, is actually a wasp! There are three types of wasps: parasitic, solitary hunting & social. It’s the social wasps with the bad rap as stingers. Stings occur most often in late summer since wasps are protecting their nests and their population numbers are highest. Unlike honeybees who can only sting once, wasps can sting multiple times.



What are they good for?

A gardener’s best friend! Wasps and “hornets” are great pest eaters. Natural scavengers, they eat flies and caterpillars that attack other plants, as well as clean up our habitats by scavenging on dead animals and insects.

Prepare Yourself

- Avoid wasps & hornets by recognizing and steering clear of their nests (see photo below).
- Keep an eye out for groups of wasps - it may indicate a nest is nearby, possibly in a tree or in the ground.
- Stay calm and don’t swat. Wasps sting when they feel threatened.



I’ve been stung. Now what?

- Remove any stingers remaining in the skin with tweezers or the edge of a credit card.
- Apply an ice pack to help reduce pain and swelling.
- For a natural remedy, use Common Plantain (weed in any yard) as a poultice. Baking soda works well, too.

Most insect stings require no additional medical care, but do keep an eye out for unusual swelling, especially anywhere not directly around the sting.

***Allergic reactions may require prompt medical treatment.**

Mythbusters

Contrary to popular belief, wasps are not innately aggressive. Social wasps respond aggressively if they sense a threat to their nest. Parasitic and hunting wasps don’t have you on the menu either. If no threat is present, neither a wasp, bee, nor a hornet are likely to sting.



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