

FLYING INSECTS



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BEEES

Physical Identification

Bees vary in size from the world's largest species (thought to be the Indonesian resin bee) whose females can attain a length of 39 millimetres, to the smallest species (probably the dwarf stingless bee) whose workers are less than 2 millimetres in length.

Feeding

The most obvious characteristics of bees is that they collect pollen to provide provisions for their young, and have the necessary adaptations to do this. A few species of bee scavenge from carcasses to feed their offspring.

Lifecycle

The three types of honey bees in a hive are: queens (egg-producers), workers (non-reproducing females), and drones (males whose main duty is to find and mate with a queen). Honey bees hatch from eggs in three to four days. They are then fed by worker bees and develop through several stages in the cells. Development from egg to emerging bee varies among queens, workers, and drones. Queens emerge from their cells in 15–16 days, workers in 21 days, and drones in 24 days.

Harbourage

Honey bees live in colonies.

The life of a honey bee colony is perennial and a colony may typically consist of tens of thousands of individuals.

While some colonies live in hives provided by humans, so-called "wild" colonies (although all honey bees remain wild, even when cultivated and managed by humans) typically prefer a nest site that is clean, dry, protected from the weather, about 20 liters in volume with a 4- to 6-cm² entrance about 3 m above the ground, and preferably facing south or south-east (in the Northern Hemisphere) or north or north-east (in the Southern Hemisphere).

Health Risk

Bees and wasps are beneficial insects, but their ability to sting and disrupt outdoor activities makes them real pests!



Honey Bee



Carpenter Bee



African Killer Bee

WASPS

Physical Identification

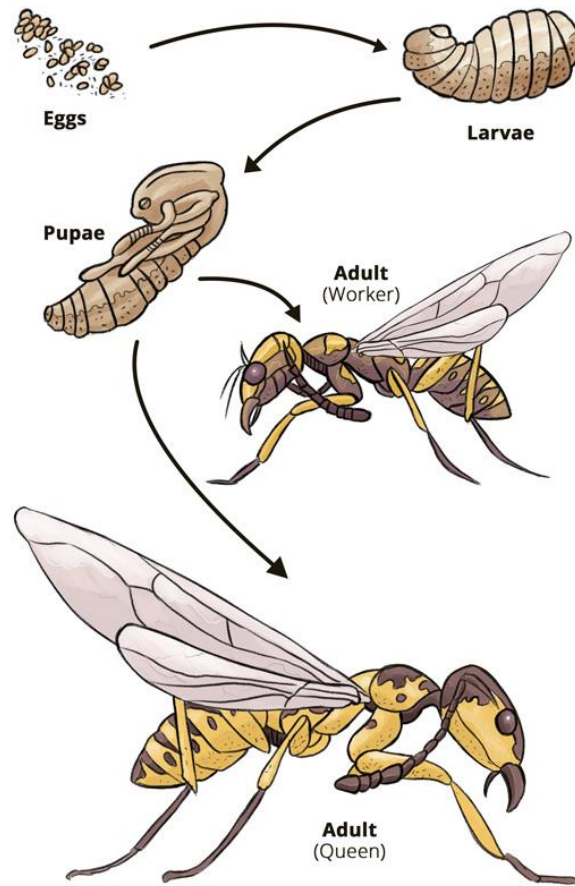
Adult paper wasps grow to be 16-20 mm long and tend to have a brownish coloring with yellow markings (although a few paper wasp species have red markings). While their appearance can vary slightly by species, paper wasps have distinctive long legs unlike bees or yellow jackets that have shorter legs.

Feeding

They hunt a wide variety of prey, mainly other insects (including other Hymenoptera), both larvae and adults. The Pompilidae specialize in catching spiders to provision their nests. Some social wasps are omnivorous, feeding on fallen fruit, nectar, and carrion such as dead insects.

Lifecycle

The wasp queen lays all the eggs, whilst worker wasps tend to the nest and colony duties, such as caring for eggs and larvae, nest building, foraging for food and defending the nest from attack, however, the queen must do the work in the early stages of establishing her colony.



Harbourage

Wasps normally have locations where they can seek shelter from weather extremes like rain and heavy sunlight. This includes: roof crevices, hollowed out trees, cracks in walls, cardboard boxes, piles of clothing and basically any other place where pests can hide, take up shelter and reproduce. Removing any clutter can help manage pest populations.

Preexisting burrows or former residences of small rodents or other tiny mammals can also attract wasps. Wasps prefer to build nests either underground or in shrubs, trees, or bushes. Many species of wasps assume homes or nests already burrowed out or created by other wasp or bee colonies or smaller mammals, as mentioned before. Sandy or bare soils prove likely to host wasp colonies. Voids in walls encased with soft materials like drywall or in abandoned vehicles also sometimes suit the needs of wasps for building nests. Large holes in trees typically represent another common location for wasps in Southern Africa.

Health Risk

Around 3% of adults and only slightly fewer children suffer extreme and potentially life-threatening systemic reactions to wasp stings. While deaths are extremely rare and usually occur in older people, discomfort, often severe, is experienced by anybody unlucky enough to be stung by wasps.

Adults can be made aware of the threat posed by wasps and are more able to keep clear or remove a wasp without getting stung themselves. However, accidents still occur readily.



European Wasp



Potter Wasp



Paper Wasp



Mud Dauber Wasp