

TYPES OF BEES



EUROPEAN HONEY BEES

Honey bees are about one inch long and are brown with black encircling their abdomen, giving them a subtle striped appearance. Africanized honey bees are slightly smaller than European honey bees, but it's impossible to tell them apart on appearance alone.



BUMBLE BEES

Bumble bees are large furry looking black and yellow bees. They are social and generally build their nests underground. Bumble bees are important pollinators of certain crops and ornamental plants. They will sting aggressively when their nest is disturbed.



CARPENTER BEES

These very large black bees are often seen hovering around flowers or near buildings. The hovering bees are usually males, which cannot sting and are harmless. Carpenter bees build burrows in exposed dry wood but generally cause little damage.

INSECTS RESEMBLING BEES



PAPER WASPS

These social wasps build relatively small, umbrella-like nests under the eaves of houses, attic rafters, etc. They feed on many species of pest insects and are therefore beneficial. They will sting if provoked.



MUD DAUBERS

These solitary wasps make tube-like nests out of mud, often attached to walls or overhangs. They feed on spiders and are not particularly aggressive.



DIGGER WASPS/SAND WASPS

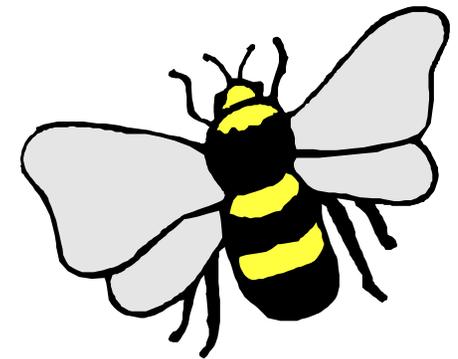
These non-aggressive wasps closely resemble yellowjackets and build their nests in sandy soil. There is only one wasp per nest. They feed on beetle grubs, which are lawn pests. Spraying these wasps could cause higher grub populations, damaging the lawn and attracting skunks and raccoons which feed on the grubs.



YELLOWJACKETS

These wasps, commonly seen around picnics, build nests both above ground and in the ground. The aerial species are non-aggressive and eat many insects. The ground nesting type will attack to defend their nests. CCMVCD treats ground nesting yellowjackets only.

Bees: Facts, Habits, and Lookalikes



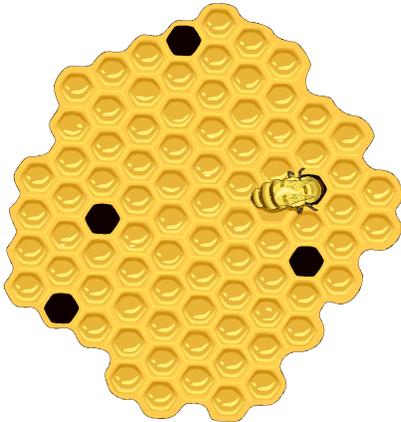
CONTRA COSTA MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT



155 Mason Circle
Concord, CA 94520
(925) 685-9301
www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us

HONEY BEE FACTS

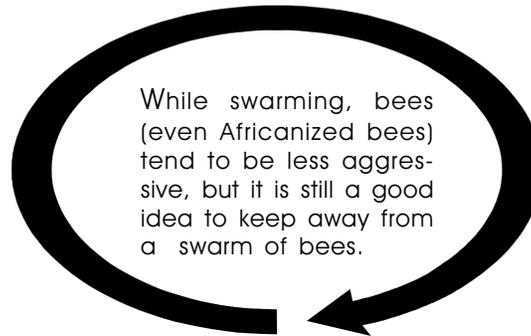
Honey bees were first domesticated by humans many centuries ago. Since then, they have been imported to all regions of the world to make honey and beeswax, and to pollinate crops and flowers. Without honey bees, many of our food crops would be unavailable or extremely expensive since they would have to be hand pollinated, flower by flower. Bees are beneficial insects.



In nature honey bees build their hives in enclosed spaces like hollow trees or stumps. Inside the hive, they build a wax honeycomb, store honey, and raise new bees. There are three types of bees: queen, worker, and drone. The queen lays all the eggs. The workers are all sterile females that produce honey and protect the queen. The drones are males that fertilize the eggs.

SWARMING

Swarming is the way a bee hive deals with overcrowding. The queen and some of the workers leave the hive to look for a new place to live. While they are searching, the workers cluster around the queen and send out scouts to look for a good location. A swarm looks like a ball of bees and can range from the size of a baseball to the size of a basketball. Swarms often rest on exposed surfaces like tree branches, telephone poles, or the side of a house. Most swarms leave the area in a day or so when they find a new hive site.



While swarming, bees (even Africanized bees) tend to be less aggressive, but it is still a good idea to keep away from a swarm of bees.

If you encounter a swarm of bees:

- Keep your distance!
- Do not attempt to spray a swarm of bees yourself with water or a pesticide; a serious stinging attack could result.
- Call a private pest control company.

STINGING

Bees sting to defend their hive. Bees generally do not sting without provocation, since worker bees die after stinging. Africanized honey bees are more aggressive when defending their hive. They will sting with less provocation, in greater numbers, and are more persistent, therefore making them a greater public health concern.

If you are attacked by bees...

- Leave the area quickly. An attack can last until the victim vacates the area.
- Cover your face. Use clothing to protect your eyes and mouth from bees.
- Seek shelter inside enclosures where bees can not enter such as a car or house.

FIRST AID FOR BEE STINGS

- Remove stinger quickly by scraping with a fingernail or edge of a dull thin object.
- Clean the sting with soap and water.
- Apply an ice pack to the wound.
- Monitor the sting for any unusual swelling or systemic reaction. If you are allergic to bee stings, or experience breathing difficulties, seek professional medical care immediately!