

BEE & WASP

IDENTIFICATION CHART

Pollinators we protect. Nests we remove. Know which is which before you reach for the spray.

KC METRO

07 /10

2026 EDITION

PROTECTED, NOT EXTERMINATED

Honey bees

We don't kill honey bee colonies — swarms and hives go to local beekeepers for live removal.

STING SEASON

April - October

Yellowjacket and hornet colonies peak in August-September — that's when most stings happen.

J F M A M J J A S O N D

MOST AGGRESSIVE IN KC

Yellowjackets & hornets

Ground and aerial nests, multiple stings, and they chase. Don't DIY any yellowjacket or hornet nest, any size.

STRUCTURAL

Carpenter bees

Perfect 1/2" holes in fascia, decks and cedar siding. Treat and plug in spring before they tunnel.

POLLINATORS — WE PROTECT THESE

Gentle; sting only if trapped or pressed

1



HONEY BEE

1/2"

PROTECTED

- Golden-brown, fuzzy; stings once
- Swarms cluster on branches; wall hives need a beekeeper

2



BUMBLE BEE

3/4-1"

PROTECTED

- Large, fuzzy, black & yellow; gentle
- Small colonies in the ground or old burrows

3



SWEAT BEE

1/4-1/2"

HARMLESS

- Small, often metallic green; lands for salt
- Ground nester; mild sting only if pressed

4



MASON BEE

3/8-1/2"

HARMLESS

- Metallic blue-black; nests in wood holes
- Top fruit-tree pollinator; almost never stings



FOUND A NEST?

Text us a photo from a safe distance — we'll tell you if it's a bee to protect or a wasp nest to remove.

(913) 738-STAR
CALL OR TEXT · 7827

DEFENSIVE — WILL STING TO PROTECT THE NEST

Multiple stings; call for nests in the ground, walls or above a ladder

6



YELLOWJACKET

1/2"

AGGRESSIVE

- Bright yellow & black, hairless, narrow waist
- Ground, wall & attic nests — thousands by fall

7



PAPER WASP

3/4-1"

DEFENSIVE

- Slender; long legs dangle in flight
- Open umbrella comb under eaves, rails, grills

8



BALD-FACED HORNET

3/4"

AGGRESSIVE

- Black with a white face and markings
- Gray football paper nest in trees & eaves

9



EUROPEAN HORNET

1-1 1/4"

LARGE - DEFENSIVE

- KC's only true hornet; brown & yellow, reddish head
- Hollow trees, wall voids, barns; flies to lights at night

10



VELVET ANT (COW KILLER)

3/4"

PAINFUL STING

- Wingless female wasp: fuzzy red-orange & black
- Runs across lawns; intense sting — don't handle

SOLITARY — LOW RISK, MOSTLY BENEFICIAL

Rarely sting; hunt spiders and garden pests

11



BLACK & YELLOW MUD DAUBER

3/4-1"

BENEFICIAL

- Thread waist, yellow legs; mud tube nests
- Hunts spiders; rarely stings

12



ORGAN PIPE MUD DAUBER

1/2-3/4"

BENEFICIAL

- Shiny black; "pipe organ" mud tubes on walls
- Docile; stuffs tubes with spiders

13



BLUE MUD DAUBER

1/2-3/4"

BENEFICIAL

- Metallic blue; reuses other daubers' nests
- A black widow hunter — leave it be

14



CICADA KILLER

1 1/2-2"

LOW RISK

- Huge; burrows in bare soil & lawn edges
- Males dive-bomb but can't sting; females rarely do

15



CARPENTER BEE

3/4-1"

WOOD DAMAGE

- Bumble bee look-alike with a shiny black abdomen
- Drills 1/2" holes in wood; hovering males can't sting

STING FIRST AID

- ✓ Move away from the nest — alarm pheromone brings more stingers
- ✓ Scrape a honey bee stinger out sideways; wash, ice 10 minutes, antihistamine
- ✓ Hives, face or throat swelling, trouble breathing — epinephrine and 911
- ✓ Many stings, or a sting inside the mouth — go to the ER
- ✓ Walk away calmly and get indoors — don't swat, and don't jump in water
- ✓ Mark ground nests by day; nests are treated at dusk when the colony is home

BEE OR WASP?



BEE

- Fuzzy body; wide legs carrying pollen
- Calm at flowers; honey bee stings once



WASP

- Smooth, shiny body; narrow waist; legs dangle
- Stings repeatedly; drawn to meat & soda in late summer

A honey bee swarm on a branch is temporary and docile — call a beekeeper. A hive inside a wall needs removal, or the comb melts and draws ants and roaches.



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US A PEST
PHOTO

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licensed pro

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