

Honey Bees



Italian Honey Bee



Carniolan Honey Bee



Russian Honey Bee



German Bee

Honey bees collect pollen and nectar from a variety of flowering plants, including milkweed, dandelions, clover, goldenrod and a variety of fruit trees. Only workers forage for food, consuming as much nectar from each flower as they can. After foraging, worker honey bees return to the hive and pass the collected nectar to another worker. This worker holds the nectar on her tongue until the liquid evaporates, creating honey. The honey is then stored in a cell within the hive.

The distance that a honeybee will fly to forage depends on the availability of desirable food sources and the competition from other colonies. But studies have shown honeybees will fly as much as 6 miles to visit a nectar source and will readily travel 2 miles.



Honey bee collecting pollen



Honey bee drinking nectar through its proboscis



Swarm of honey bees:



Swarm of honeybees are very docile, they are a collection of bees and a queen that have left one hive in search of a new home, usually due to the original colony becoming too crowded. They are considered "lost bees," very docile and will not sting.

Please call the local police department, beekeeping association or county bee inspector to have a beekeeper come out to catch them and give them a new home. A swarm will stay in one area anywhere from 12 - 72 hours, until guard cells report back to the swarm that they have found a new home, and they will relocate.

Yellow Jackets



Yellow jackets are sometimes mistakenly called "bees" (as in "meat bees"), given that they are similar in size and appearance and both sting, but yellow jackets are actually wasps. Yellow jackets, in contrast to honey bees, are not covered with tan-brown dense hair on their bodies, they do not carry pollen, and do not have the flattened hairy hind legs used to carry it.

All wasps will defend their nests, but Yellow Jackets and hornets are the most aggressive. They can be distinguished from bees by their thin "waists." Bees are thick-waisted. Yellow jackets fold their wings lengthwise when at rest. Like all wasps, yellow jackets prey on a variety of insects and other arthropods. Yellow jackets will also forage on foods that people eat, especially sweets and meats. They are considered beneficial insects, because they eat other insects. They are a nuisance to people however, because they are aggressive and leave painful stings.

The diet of the adult yellow jacket consists primarily of items rich in sugars and carbohydrates, such as fruits, flower nectar, and tree sap. Larvae feed on proteins derived from insects, meats, and fish, which are collected by the adults, which chew and condition them before feeding them to the larvae. Many of the insects collected by the adults are considered pest species, making the yellow jacket beneficial to agriculture. In late summer, foraging workers pursue other food sources from meats to ripe fruits, or scavenge human garbage, sodas, picnics, etc., as additional sugar is needed to foster the next generation's queens.

The yellow jacket colony will remain active for only one summer, after which the queens will fly away to start more colonies. The remaining ones die at the end of the season, and the nest is not reused.

Yellow jacket traps are nontoxic and pesticide-free. These traps lure yellow jackets through the use of odor attractant and then trap them in jars, sticky surfaces or drown them. Some traps are available with a commercial attractant of heptyl butyrate, but it only attracts the western yellow jacket. Other lures may be used, such as a piece of meat, like fish, or sugary substance, like soda or juice. Some of these traps feature entrances that do not allow yellow jackets to exit.

Yellow jacket traps should be placed as far from human-occupied areas as possible, along areas where yellow jackets typically nest, such as forested areas or overgrown hedges. After captured wasps die, they can be removed from the trap. The trap may be placed in the freezer for a few hours prior to cleaning in order to kill surviving yellow jackets. Lures will need to be refreshed to keep the trap working.

Yellow jacket traps will prevent wasps from gathering in certain areas, but are not effective in treating entire colonies. Contact your local pest control professional to discuss extermination methods.



****All images and wording has been obtained from various websites on the internet, intended for educational purposes only.**

Honey bee stingers are barbed, causing them to tear out of the bee's abdomen when the target is stung, which also takes the bee's life.



In contrast, yellow jackets, like other members of the wasp family, have barbless stingers, allowing them to sting repeatedly without losing their stingers



