

Yellowjacket Control

In the summer months foraging yellowjackets may become a nuisance in parks, campgrounds and other recreational areas. Yellowjacket populations have been managed by:

Sanitation

This is the most effective method of controlling foraging adults. Tightly covering all waste food sources and moving garbage receptacles away from eating areas reduces food available to foraging workers. Eliminating standing water sources helps to reduce the water available for cooling the nest and drinking.

Depletion Trapping

This is not an effective method of controlling yellowjacket populations. Commercially available traps use a chemical lure to attract foraging workers into a container with a one way passage. Once inside, the insect cannot escape and dies. Traps should be placed in areas away from food and people.

Nest Control

Homeowners should **not attempt to control** a yellowjacket nest because special clothing is required to protect yourself from stinging. Call a private pest control company or the local vector control agency.

Similar Stinging Insects



Paper wasp: Large insect, brownish-red with yellow markings and amber wings. Builds circular nest with a single horizontal comb on building eaves.

Mud dauber: Medium-sized insect, black or brown with yellow markings. Builds nest from soil on building eaves.

If you discover a yellowjacket nest

AVOID THE AREA

Keep children and pets away from the nest

NOTIFY

A pest control company or governmental authorities

If you are attacked by yellowjackets

LEAVE AREA QUICKLY

Attack could last until victim vacates the area

COVER FACE

Use clothes to protect eyes and mouth from yellowjackets

First aid for yellowjacket stings

For **any** sting:

- Wash with soap and cold water

For **allergic** reactions:

- As soon as possible seek professional medical care
- Watch for breathing difficulties

For **multiple stings or hypersensitive individuals:**

- Immediately get professional medical care
- Do not wait for symptoms to develop

For more information call:

SHASTA MOSQUITO & VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

(530) 365-3768

shastamosquito.org

contact@shastamosquito.org



YELLOWJACKETS

OF

CALIFORNIA



wiseGEEK

General Information

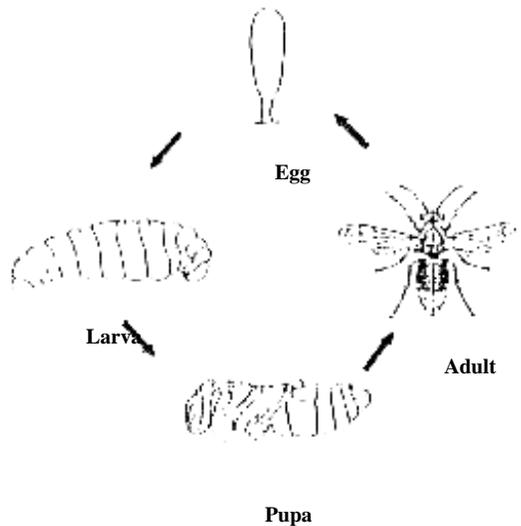
Yellowjackets are social insects that live in a nest. They are medium sized black wasps with yellow or white markings. Depending on the type of yellowjacket, they build aerial or subterranean nests. Aerial nests are built in trees, on utility poles, or house eaves. Subterranean nests are constructed in rodent burrows, tree cavities or ground holes.

When a nest is disturbed yellowjackets can inflict multiple stings that are painful and may be life threatening to individuals hypersensitive to the venom.

In late summer months when yellowjacket populations increase they can create a nuisance in parks by scavenging for food from picnic areas. They can cause structural damage to a home when they construct nests in walls or attics. Adults of some species are beneficial to man because they prey on flies and other insects.

Life Cycle

Yellowjackets have four life stages:



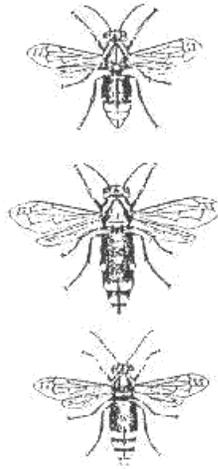
Yellowjacket Nests

Yellowjackets use vegetable fibers from trees and shrubs to produce a paper-like material for nest construction. Inside the nest is a series of suspended combs that contain cells where young are reared. The combs are enclosed inside one or more layers of a paper envelope. The surface of the envelope is gray with tan and yellow stripes and has a scalloped texture.



Yellowjacket Castes

Nests contain three types of yellowjackets:



Worker: forages for food, feeds young, and constructs the nest

Queen: establishes the nest and lays eggs

Male: reproductive role

Common California Yellowjackets

Western Yellowjacket (*Vespula pensylvanica*)

This yellowjacket is a major pest species in California. It is primarily a scavenger and in the summer months adults are common around garbage receptacles in picnic areas. Nests are usually constructed in abandoned rodent burrows or in house walls and attics. Nests contain 500 to 5,000 workers and start to decline in late September to October.

Common Yellowjacket (*Vespula vulgaris*)

This yellowjacket can be a pest because adults are attracted to protein or sugar sources. This species is also considered a beneficial organism because workers prey on caterpillars and other insects. Nests are mostly subterranean but can be constructed inside house walls or in aerial locations. Nests are large and contain 500 to 5,000 workers. Nests remain active until September to December.

German yellowjacket (*Vespula germanica*)

This yellowjacket is not a species native to California, but has become established in some areas. Adults are scavengers and predators of other insects. It builds nests in hollow walls, attics or aerial nests. Nests constructed inside walls can cause damage to the interior of a home and can result in adult yellowjackets inside the house. Nests contain 500 to 5,000 workers and start to decline in late September to December.

Prairie yellowjacket (*Vespula atropilosa*)

This yellowjacket is not a pest. It feeds on live insects, helping to control flies or caterpillars. Nests are constructed in the ground in open areas like grasslands or golf courses. Nests contain 75 to 400 workers and start to decline in late August to September.

Aerial yellowjacket (*Dolichovespula arenaria*)

This yellowjacket is a beneficial organism. Workers prey on flies and caterpillars and rarely scavenge. They build small aerial nests that contain 100 to 700 workers. Nests begin to decline in July to September.