

Wasp Nests

Wasps are a family of insects that includes hornets, yellowjackets, and solitary wasps.

Wasps build nests by using their own secretion and different materials they gather, like wood fibers or mud.

Most wasp nests are made of chewed-up wood stuck together with saliva, making them look and feel like paper. The size and shape vary.

Wasps Are Not Bees

Wasps often get mistaken for bees, due to some similarities in appearance and the fact that they both can sting.

Bees are much more hairy, and have rounder bodies with flat, wide legs.

Bees do not build their nests out of wood pulp or mud, but instead have wax-producing glands.

Wasps are not pollinators, but eat other insects and can be a gardener's best friend. They feed their young numerous insects that ordinarily damage shade trees and crops. They also kill countless houseflies and blow flies.

Yellowjacket

Bombman356/wikicommons

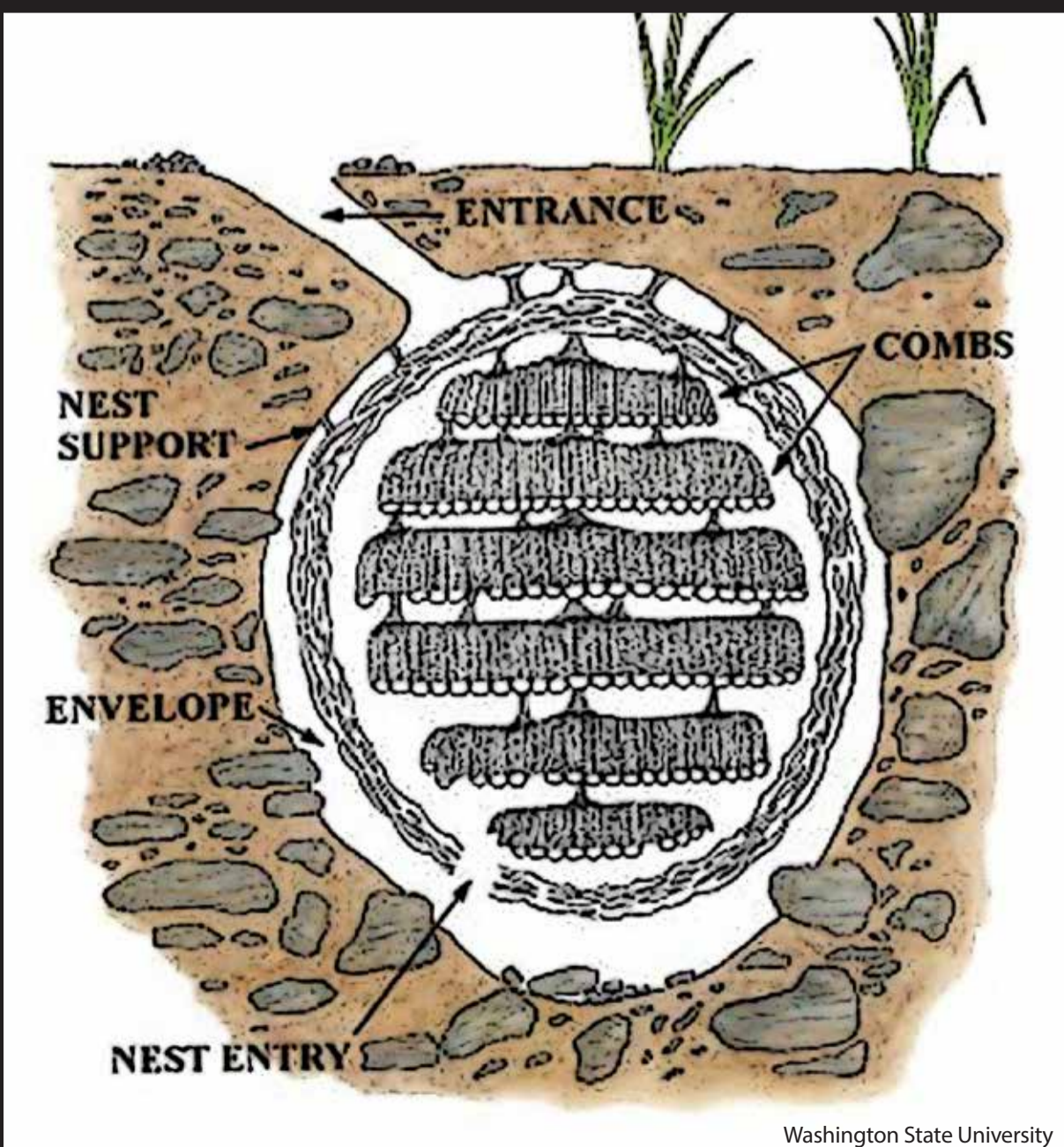


Yellowjackets have black antennae, and bodies marked by yellow and black stripes and patterning, similar to the paper

wasp. However, yellowjackets have a robust, compact body and fly rapidly with their legs tucked underneath, making them appear more bee-like.

Yellowjackets build nests underground in old rodent burrows, in empty spaces in walls or bushes, and in low-hanging shrubs. Nests may be more than a foot across by September and contain over a thousand wasps.

Because yellowjackets are extremely aggressive, take extra caution around their nests.



Bald-Faced Hornet



Bald-faced hornets are not true hornets but are actually a type of yellowjacket.

Recognizable by their black-and-white markings, bald-faced hornets have entirely smooth bodies that are rounder and larger than other wasp species.

They build large, circular, covered nests high in trees or under porch roofs.

The nests usually start small, then grow bigger with each generation. If undisturbed, they can easily reach enormous sizes up to 24 inches in length and contain as many as 700 workers.



Paper Wasp



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Paper wasps usually have yellow antennae, and their body has yellow and black stripes and patterning but are slender compared to

hornets and yellowjackets. They have long legs that hang in flight. Paper wasps are not aggressive unless provoked.

Nests are begun by the queen in March or April and consist of a single layer of open-faced papery comb that is not enclosed. Nests can grow to be oblong or round in shape, up to six inches wide, and may contain up to about 75 workers, in addition to the queen.



Mud Dauber



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Mud daubers are solitary wasps (one queen, no workers). They are mostly dark with some yellow in their midsection and legs. They have a very

long, slender body, an obvious threadlike waist, and long legs that hang in flight. Our local mud daubers are extremely unlikely to sting, in spite of their aggressive appearance.



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Kevin Talbert/wikicommons

Did You Know?

As the female mud dauber constructs each chamber in her nest, she also has to provision it with spiders for her young to feed on. She stings the spiders to paralyze them and stuffs three to nine live spiders into each cell.

After she lays an egg in each provisioned cell, she applies mud to seal that cell and then begins on the next cell in the tube.