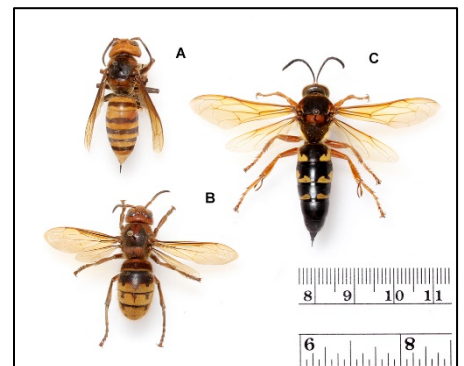


Over the weekend, the media alarm was sounded to warn the public about “murder hornets” and get them on the lookout. The Arkansas Department of Agriculture (Department) has received several calls and emails from concerned citizens this week. Here’s what you need to know about this pest:

- **Asian Giant Hornet (*Vespa mandarinia*) has not been detected in Arkansas.** This hornet is native to many parts of Asia. It is not known how this population came to the US. It primarily feeds on honeybee larvae, and a group of these hornets will decapitate large numbers of adult honeybees in order to bring them back to their colony to feed their young. **Arkansas beekeepers click here for more info:** <https://www.uaex.edu/farm-ranch/special-programs/beekeeping/uabeeblog/posts/asianhornet2020.aspx>
- The USDA confirmed the detection of a single AGH in Washington State in December of 2019. The Washington State Department of Agriculture is currently surveying their State for the pest. Should WSDA locate any AGH nests, they will respond quickly to eradicate them. **This species has not been detected in the US outside of Washington State.**
- **AGH does not attack people unless it feels threatened.** They are known to attack and kill other bees in the late summer when developing males and future queens need extra protein to complete their life cycle. They do not attack and kill bees at other times. **If you see hornets attacking a beehive, stay at least 10 feet away and call (501) 225-1598 immediately.**
- Although there are a number of unconfirmed AGH sightings from the public, neither USDA nor WSDA has any evidence that AGH populations are established in Washington or anywhere else in the United States. **Look-alike hornet species known to occur in the United States** may account for these unconfirmed sightings.
  - **Several species of hornets and wasps are currently emerging in Arkansas.** The species most likely to be confused with AGH here is the European hornet. EH queens are currently searching for new nesting sites. Queen EH can be up to 2 inches long; EH workers are just over 1 inch long and will be more prevalent later in the year. The other wasp, likely to be confused for AGH is the cicada killer, which emerges in late summer to hunt cicadas. For more information on these species, click here: <http://ncsupdicblog.blogspot.com/2015/08/are-asian-or-japanese-giant-hornets-in.html>
  - A) Asian giant hornet (*Vespa mandarinia*) are orange and black only with relatively straight stripes, with a completely orange face; B) European hornet (*Vespa crabro*) have yellow and black abdomens, and the stripes form “teardrops”. Their faces are both red on the margins and yellow in the center; C) cicada killers (*Sphecius speciosus*) also have a mostly black abdomen with yellow or whitish markings. Note that different individuals of each of these wasps can vary in size. Photo by Matt Bertone, courtesy of NCSU – PIDC.



**The Department takes reports of Suspect AGH seriously.** However, as native hornets and wasps are also emerging this time of year, we cannot confirm an infestation without a specimen. You should also be mindful of your own safety when it comes to dealing with potentially harmful insects. If you come

across a specimen or see hornets attacking a honey bee hive, please let us know by calling (501) 225-1598 or emailing a picture to [caps@agriculture.arkansas.gov](mailto:caps@agriculture.arkansas.gov).

In the meantime, here are some **helpful hints to for homeowners** to reduce interactions with hornets of all types:

- Shorten the amount of time that food or sugary drinks are left out
- Completely cover trash bins
- Move hummingbird feeders farther from entryways
- Identify places where pests may be entering the dwelling (i.e., gaps in window screen, door sweeps, or attics) and excluding those entry points.

This last step may require a building inspection from a licensed pest control company. The most up-to-date list is available at <https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/commercial-pest-control>.

**If you have more questions about Asian giant hornet, please visit WSDA's [website](#) for information.**