

Paper Wasps

Paper wasps are slender, narrow-waisted wasps with smoky black wings that are folded lengthwise when the wasps is at rest.



Paper wasps are somewhat social insects and colonies contain three class system: workers, queens and males.

Nests are built from wood fiber collected from posts and occasionally from live plant stems, causing some minor plant damage. Once collected, the fiber is chewed and formed into a single paper-like comb of hexagonal cells. The nests are oriented downward and are suspended by a single filament. Mature nests contain up to 200 cells, and have 20 to 30 adults. Paper wasps can be beneficial, preying on garden pests such as caterpillars, flies and beetle larvae.



Most paper wasps nests occur around the home underneath eaves, in or on structures, and plants. Wasps only attack when the nests are being disturbed and wasps can sting repeatedly. Stings typically cause localized pain and swelling, but in sensitive individuals or when stung multiple times, severe allergic reactions can occur.

Control:

Paper wasps can be controlled using commercially available “jet spray” insecticide formulated for wasps (available at most home improvement stores). Be sure to read the label for proper usage instructions.