

WASP INFORMATION SHEET.

Two highly invasive wasp species are expanding their range throughout the Western Cape. We urge all residents to take note and to remove these wasps from their homes and gardens.

The European paper wasp

The European paper wasp is a medium-sized wasp (20mm to 35mm) with wavy yellow and black markings on the abdomen and orange antennae. The wasp builds papery nests in wall cavities, under roof eaves and any gaps they can find.



The German wasp

The German wasp is also a medium-sized wasp (15 mm to 40 mm) with yellow and black markings on the abdomen, but it has black antennae. The German wasp is aggressive, especially if the nest or surrounding areas are disturbed. This wasp nests in the ground.



How To Keep Wasps At Bay. The early treatment of a wasp nest is essential to make sure you keep your family and pets safe from wasp stings.

Prevention first: Prevention is always the first step in keeping wasps out of your home and garden; because natural structures are so limited, wasps will use man-made structures for their nests.

- As they feed on nectar anything sweet may attract wasps, keeping sweet foods such as fruit in the refrigerator and all garbage bins covered will prevent them being attracted by these to your home. Keep in mind that some perfumes and lotions may also attract wasps.
- It is important to maintain the structure of your home and its fixtures by checking for any areas that need repair, broken siding or panels, or any other types of crevices, make ideal places for wasps to nest.
- Check around your garden too, look for holes and potential burrows in the soil that could be used by the german wasps. Simply filling the hole with dirt will stop them using it.
- Prevent wasps from entering your home by keeping windows and doors closed, or fit fly screens in front of windows and doors.
- Grow wasp repelling plants: By removing flowers that attract wasps from frequently used areas, and adding plants like spearmint, thyme, citronella, and wormwood can be a great way to deter wasps, as these all serve as natural wasp deterrents.
- Mint oils can also be used as a spray onto areas where wasps may make nests. If this is done early in spring and followed up with further sprayings in early and midsummer, wasps will be deterred from nesting. For cavity building wasps, cotton wool balls soaked in mint oil can be stuffed in the cavities to the same effect.
- It has been found that blend of lemongrass, clove and geranium essential oils also repel worker wasps. Again, several drops of each of the oils in a spray bottle filled with water, and a few

tablespoons of dishwashing liquid can be sprayed onto areas outside of your house, in places wasps are known to build nests.

- Sugar water wasp traps can be made, although bees may also fall victim. By cutting the top from a two-litre bottle and inverting it inside the bottom, the wasps become trapped and die.
 - Cut the neck off a two-litre plastic cold drink bottle.
 - Remove the bottle cap and flip the neck upside down and place it in the bottle opening that you just cut.
 - Tape it together using packing tape or duct tape.
 - Bait the trap by placing a mix of water and sugar inside. By adding a bit of cooking oil along the steep edges of your trap, it can cause the wasps to lose their footing and fall in.
 - Hang your trap by taping a string to it or affixing a screw that can be used to hang it.
 - When you're ready to empty your trap, be sure all wasps inside are dead by pouring in boiling water – or, you can simply throw it out and make a new one.

While these traps are effective, they can, as mentioned, kill bees too. They may also attract wasps from adjacent properties.

Removing existing nests.

IMPORTANT: Removing wasp nests can be **very dangerous**. It is strongly recommended to hire an experienced professional to do the job for you. If attempting this yourself, first ensure you are not allergic to wasp stings by setting up an allergy test with your doctor. Ensure that you wear protective clothing at all times and plan an escape route should the wasps decide to swarm.

- A dishwashing soap and water mixture can be sprayed on existing nests that are reachable. Add two tablespoons of dish washing liquid soap to a spray bottle filled with water, and spray away, directing it at small hanging nests. This method is humane and much more environmentally friendly than using toxic pesticides.
- The nest must be removed in its entirety, otherwise the surviving wasps will simply rebuild it, or another colony will take over the site. Destroy the nest by burying it or putting it in a plastic bag and placing it in the rubbish bin. Spray one of the abovementioned oils onto the clean site to deter further nesting attempts.
- Smoking wasps out is often an option given on websites, however this method is rather dangerous and only of use when nests are found away from flammable materials. The danger of starting a fire is too great to recommend this method.

Wasp removal contractors –

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