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Bulldog chewing a wasp

Wasps

Pest Control Services

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Wasps

Characteristics

The Common Wasp (*Vespula vulgaris*) has distinctive black and yellow coloration. The queens have similar coloration but are larger.

Where to find wasps

Nests are built in soil banks, roof spaces, wall cavities and trees and are frequently associated with domestic housing. The nests are formed of chewed wood and may become very large.

Problems caused by wasps

Wasps are beneficial garden insects, collecting insects and larvae etc. to feed to developing wasp larvae in the nest during the summer months. It is however the ability of wasps to cause painful stings that concerns people most. People's reactions to wasp stings can vary considerably from intense pain and swelling round the area of the stings, to a severe allergic reaction (known as anaphylactic shock) which can be life threatening.

Worker wasps collect wood to construct nests and may therefore damage wooden fences and garden furniture. They also later in the season search for sweet foods such as cakes and fruit and can become a nuisance and aggressive.

Life Cycle

The over-wintering and fertilised queen wasp emerges from hibernation around mid-April and finds a suitable site for her colony. She makes the initial cell from chewed bark and timber mixed with saliva, and lays her eggs, which develop into workers. These take over the task of enlarging the nest and providing food for the subsequent eggs laid by the queen. By late summer the nest will contain up to 20,000 individuals and be more than 30cm across. Fertilised queens then fly away to find suitable overwintering sites - only the queens survive the winter. Old nests are never re-used.



Control

Treating wasps nests can be very dangerous. For this reason, a professional treatment is always advised.

Similar Species

These include:-

Hornets. These are larger than the common wasp and are banded yellow and brown. Despite their large size they are not particularly aggressive and because they are relatively uncommon they should not be destroyed unless absolutely necessary.

Giant Wood Wasp. These are very large fearsome-looking insects but are harmless to humans.

Hover Flies. These are actually harmless flies which mimic wasps. Although their coloration is similar they are easily distinguished by their flight pattern of alternate darting and hovering.

Please contact us for further information on treatments and current charges



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