



Call to beekeepers to help protect honeybee colonies from invasive Asian giant hornet

WSDA needs your help to locate the current spread of a new invasive species in Washington that threatens our local bee colonies.

After two separate detections in Canada last fall, Washington confirmed a report of a suspected Asian giant hornet in Blaine, WA in December and also received three credible reports of Asian giant hornet attacks on honeybee hives in Blaine and Bellingham.

Asian Giant Hornet is an invasive species from Asia and is a known pest of honeybees. This hornet is about one

and a half inches in length with yellow and black stripes and has a large yellow head. Though not typically aggressive to humans, they will attack anything that threatens their colony, which usually nests in the ground. They can sting multiple times and have a powerful venom that can inflict serious injury or in some cases lead to death. In late summer through fall, hornets can attack honeybee colonies en masse, resulting in the complete destruction of a healthy colony in only a few hours. The attack leaves piles of decapitated victims in front of the hive. The hornets will then defend the hive as their own, taking the brood to feed their own young.



Photo: Teddy McFall

Asian giant hornet poses a serious threat to Washington honeybees and the honeybee industry. While the extent of possible Asian giant hornet damage to the honeybee industry in Washington is not yet known, an introduction of a similar invasive hornet in Europe has resulted in reductions of beehives by 30% and up to a two-thirds reduction in honey yield.

Our goal is to protect Washington's honeybee industry by determining the extent of the spread of these invasive hornets with the hope of eradicating them.

Report 2019 and 2020 Asian giant hornet attacks or sightings

If you suspect you experienced Asian giant hornet attacks in 2019, please report the attack as soon as possible. Please also immediately report any suspected sightings or attacks throughout 2020.

There are three ways to report:

1. Call 1-800-443-6684
2. E-mail us at PestProgram@agr.wa.gov
3. Upload photos of sightings or attacks to our interactive reporting map agr.wa.gov/hornets

Reporting tips

- ✓ Include your name and contact information
- ✓ Include the location where your colony was attacked
- ✓ If you can, include the approximate date your hives were attacked
- ✓ Report any losses or damage sustained
- ✓ If possible, include a photograph of the hornet or damage
- ✓ If known, include the direction of flight when the hornets fly away



Photo: Teddy McFall



IMPORTANT NOTE: Use extreme caution near Asian giant hornets. The stinger of the Asian giant hornet is longer than that of a honeybee and the venom is more powerful than any local bee or wasp. **Typical beekeeping protective clothing is not sufficient to protect you from stings.** If you find a colony, do not attempt to remove or eradicate it. Report it to WSDA immediately. Anyone who is allergic to bee or wasp stings should never approach an Asian giant hornet.