



Asian giant hornet is an invasive species that was discovered in Whatcom County in 2019. Asian giant hornets attack honey bees and other insects. They can kill an entire beehive in a matter of hours. While initially detected in Whatcom County, it is not known how widespread this pest may be.

Risk to gardeners and gardens

- 1. Direct damage to soft fruits.** While Asian giant hornets primarily feed on honey bees and other insects, they have also been known to eat soft fruit. This could result in damaged fruit in your garden.
- 2. Reduced pollination.** Because Asian giant hornets can destroy entire honey bee hives, this can reduce the number of pollinators available to pollinate your garden.
- 3. Beehive attacks on your property.** Once Asian giant hornets begin a group attack on a beehive, they will defend it as aggressively as they would their own nest. During this time, they are very likely to sting people approaching that hive.
- 4. Stings: allergic reactions and more.** Asian giant hornets do not generally bother people. However, they will sting if they feel threatened. They can sting repeatedly and their venom is more toxic than that of local bees and wasps. Stings can be serious and even life threatening if you are allergic or receive repeated stings. You could be at risk for stings if you:
 - step on a nest (they usually nest in the ground)
 - swat at them
 - disturb them when working in your garden or managing property (weed whacking, pruning — especially in forested areas, applying pesticides, etc.)

Please note that typical beekeeping attire will not protect you from Asian giant hornet stings.

What gardeners can do

WSDA is currently working to locate and eradicate populations of Asian giant hornet in Washington. Learn about Asian giant hornet and how to identify it. If you encounter an Asian giant hornet, note the location, obtain a photograph if you can safely do so, and report it. You can report Asian giant hornet using these methods:

- Visit agr.wa.gov/hornets
- Call 1-800-443-6684
- Email hornets@agr.wa.gov

Learn more about Asian giant hornet at agr.wa.gov/hornets.



ABOVE: These Asian giant hornets will leave piles of dead bees, most of them headless, outside their beehive, similar to that shown in the photo above. This photo is courtesy of Washington beekeeper Teddy McFall. (WSDA has not been able to confirm that this is definitely the result of an AGH attack.)

