

Asian Giant Hornet

(*Vespa mandarinia*)

Pest Alert:

The Asian Giant Hornet (*Vespa mandarinia*) was first found in B.C. in Nanaimo in August 2019. A single nest was located and destroyed. Since then, six specimens have been found in the Fraser Valley from White Rock to Aldergrove in 2020. No other specimens have been found on Vancouver Island since 2019.

Surveys are being carried out in the Fraser Valley and Vancouver Island in 2021. To improve the chances of finding Asian Giant Hornets, the public is encouraged to report any sightings or collections of large wasp-like insects, and to include a picture, if possible, for verification.

The Asian Giant Hornet is the largest hornet in the world with a body length of up to 5 cm. It has a distinct shield-shaped head. It is classified as a honeybee predator and its sting can be hazardous to people. The insect builds its nest in the ground, making detection very difficult.

HOW TO REPORT:

British Columbians who think they may have seen a large wasp-like insect are asked to take a photo if possible and report it to:

- **1-888-933-3722 - Invasives Species Council BC**
- <https://bcinvasives.ca/report>
- www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species
- paul.vanwestendorp@gov.bc.ca

ASIAN HORNET IMAGES:



Adult Asian Hornet



Asian Hornet vs Yellowjacket Wasp

LOOK-ALIKE SPECIES:

There are several large insects that are native to British Columbia that are commonly seen and could be mistaken for Asian Hornets. There is no need to report these ones:

Bald faced hornet



Yellow jacket



Horntail wasp



Elm Sawfly



Other information about Asian Hornets:

- Asian Hornets are not interested in humans, pets and large animals. They hunt insects for food. The only time hornets will attack is when their nest is disturbed.
- Asian hornets will feed on honeybees and are capable of destroying a honeybee colony.
- Hornet nests die off in late fall. Only queens winter on their own.

If you are stung:

- **Don't rub the site**, to prevent the venom of spreading into the surrounding tissue.
- As with all wasp or bee stings, **place an ice cube/pack or cold compress on the location** to immobilize the venom and reduce tissue inflammation.
- If you are stung multiple times or have symptoms of an allergic reaction, seek medical attention immediately.

Biology:

- *V. mandarinia* is a large hornet that feeds on honeybees and other large insects. It establishes ground nests and forages as far as eight kilometres from its nest. Similarly to endemic wasps including Bald-Faced Hornets and Yellowjackets, the Giant Hornet establishes annual nests in the spring. During the summer it expands until virgin queens emerge in August. After mating, the young queens will disperse and winter on their own. The original nest dies in the fall.
- This hornet is widely distributed in East Asia from the sub-tropics of South China to the temperate zones of the Korean peninsula and northern Japan.

Links:

- <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/sig44526>
- <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/rt1285>
- Invasive Species Council of BC - <https://bcinvasives.ca/>