

How to Avoid Getting Stung

- Avoid using things yellowjackets are attracted to: perfume and other scents, hair spray, brightly colored clothes.
- Don't go barefoot.
- Keep garbage away from eating areas.
- Use lids on soft drinks.
- Check food before you put it in your mouth.
- Don't swat with your hands.
- Don't disturb the nest.
- Cover your face if attacked.

If You are Stung

- If the stinger remains in your skin, remove it by scraping from the side with your fingernail.
- Apply cold water or ice.
- Lie down.
- Lower the stung arm or leg.
- Do not drink alcohol.



Allergy and Anaphylactic Shock

People who are highly allergic to yellowjacket venom may develop serious, immediate medical problems. If you have any of the following signs or symptoms **CALL 911** immediately to seek emergency medical response:

- Respiratory distress, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain, tightness.
- Hives, itching, burning of the skin, swelling of the limbs.
- Swelling of the face, lips, tongue, airway.
- Dizziness, faintness, unconsciousness.
- Nausea, vomiting.
- Weak, rapid pulse.

Information

If you have any questions about yellowjackets or other wildlife in the East Bay, call or email a Park District naturalist at one of the visitor centers listed on the back cover.

Local Help

If you have an underground nest on your property or need more information, contact:

Alameda County Vector Control Services District
Environmental Health Services
1131 Harbor Bay Parkway, Suite 166
Alameda, CA 94502
510-567-6800
acvc.org

Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District
155 Mason Circle
Concord, CA 94520
925-685-9301
contracostamosquito.com

2950 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, CA 94605
1-888-EBPARKS or 1-888-327-2757 (TRS 711)
ebparks.org

Visitor Centers

Ardenwood Historic Farm, Fremont
510-544-2797, awvisit@ebparks.org

Big Break Regional Shoreline, Oakley
Big Break Visitor Center at the Delta
510-544-3050, bigbreakvisit@ebparks.org

Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, Antioch
510-544-2750, bdvisit@ebparks.org

Coyote Hills Regional Park, Fremont
510-544-3220, chvisit@ebparks.org

Crown Memorial State Beach, Alameda
Doug Siden Visitor Center at Crab Cove
510-544-3187, ccove@ebparks.org

Del Valle Regional Park, Livermore
510-544-3146, dvvisit@ebparks.org

Garin/Dry Creek Pioneer Regional Parks, Hayward
510-544-3220 (*Coyote Hills*), chvisit@ebparks.org
Open summer Saturdays

Sunol-Ohlone Regional Wilderness, Sunol
510-544-3249, svisit@ebparks.org
Open weekends

Tilden Regional Park, Berkeley
Botanic Garden: 510-544-3169, bgarden@ebparks.org
Tilden Nature Area/Environmental Education Center
510-544-2233, tnarea@ebparks.org



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Living with Yellowjackets



What are Yellowjackets?

“**Yellowjacket**” is the common name for several different species of wasps that naturally occur in California. Some species are considered pests and are often common in the parks, especially at picnic areas, garbage cans, and refreshment stands.

Where Do They Live?

Yellowjackets live in colonies (actually large families) housed in enclosed nests. Some species attach their nest to trees, shrubs or buildings. Native pest species usually construct nests underground, often in old rodent burrows. Arriving in North America in the 1970s, the invasive pest species German yellowjacket tends to nest in cavities in walls or trees. Each colony is ruled by a single queen; there are no kings.



Judy Dautovic-Roiff Hunsinger

How Do They Build the Nest?

Nests are constructed from paper. Yellowjackets make a pulp by gathering wood or plant fibers, chewing them up and

mixing in some of their own saliva. When the pulp is spread out, it dries to form paper. The inner core of the nest is a series of horizontal combs which contain many six-sided cells used for rearing immatures. The core is surrounded by a spherical envelope of overlapping sheets of paper.

What Do They Eat?

Yellowjackets are attracted to, and eat, sweet foods: honey, candy, fruits, soft drinks, nectar, etc. To feed their young with protein, they hunt other insects and spiders. They also collect meat, fish — the same foods that people often bring to eat in the parks — and even pet food. Yellowjackets are beneficial predators and pollinators. Sometimes they become pests when their foraging is focused in our recreational areas.



Bernard Lynch

Why Do They Sting?

Yellowjackets sting only when they sense a threat to themselves or their colonies. Those flying about are looking for food, and will usually not sting unless swatted at or accidentally touched. Those near the nest will attack anything that disturbs the ground or passes close by.

Why Are There So Many Yellowjackets?

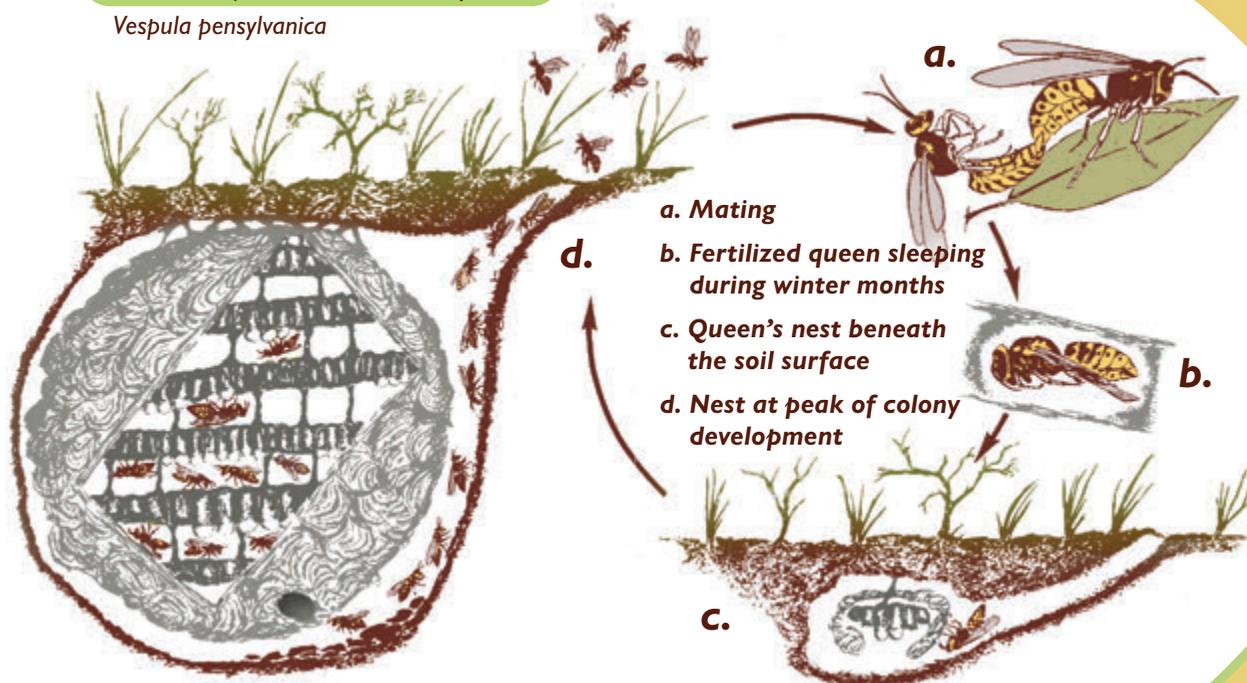
Because yellowjackets feed on insects and some of the same types of food as humans, they will grow and multiply when this food is easily available. Good sanitation, disposal of garbage, and proper use of pet food is essential in controlling yellowjacket populations.



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Yellowjacket Life Cycle

Vespula pensylvanica



How Do Yellowjackets Affect People?

Yellowjackets can defend themselves by delivering multiple powerful stings and bites, which cause pain, swelling and itching. People who are allergic can suffer medical complications from even a single sting. Yellowjackets often annoy people by hovering around and trying to gather food.