

Asian Hornet What does it look like?

- Distinctive hornet, smaller than our native European Hornet species. A key feature is the almost entirely dark abdomen, except for the 4th segment which is yellow.
- Bright yellow tips to legs (native hornet dark)
- Entirely brown or black thorax (native hornet more orange)
- Workers can be up to 25mm in length.
- Makes very large nests
- Most likely to be confused with European Hornet. Less likely to be confused with queen Median Wasp.

What should I do if I come across an Asian Hornet?

- Stay away from their nests to avoid group attack, they do not generally sting without provocation.
- Don't run. They can fly faster than you can run and are intrigued by moving targets and consider running a provocation. Crouch low to the ground, stop moving and try to cover your head.
- Giant hornets are excited by bright colours so wear brown or black.
- They are drawn to perfume and aftershave.
- They're also agitated by the smell of alcohol.
- Sightings should be sent with a photograph and location details to alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk
- Do not under any circumstances disturb or provoke an active hornets' nest
- The cost of eradication on private land will be met by the Animal and Plant Health Agency, who can be contacted through Defra on the **Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301**.
- The Helpline is open Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm. There is an out of hours facility on the same number for reporting suspicion of disease in animals. You can also email apha.corporatecorrespondence@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Main difference between European Hornet and Asian Hornet is the latter is slightly smaller, has characteristic yellow legs, a dark velvety thorax and a dark abdomen with a distinctive yellow band on the fourth segment.

- Asian Hornets are never active at night whereas European Hornets may be. Median Wasp queen is smaller, has some yellow on the thorax (unlike Asian Hornet) and lacks the characteristic feet and abdomen of Asian Hornet.
- Asian Hornet Not easily confused with any other species. Dark brown or black velvety body.

Where would I see one?

- Most likely to be seen close to bee hives - bee keepers should be alert. Active from February to November in suburban areas in the south of England and Wales, or around major ports.
- Habitat: Nests usually high in trees and man-made structures, sometimes closer to the ground; hunts honey bees, other insects and also feeds on fruit and flowers.

Advice from a beekeeper in France

I have been keeping bees in the south of France for years and have had to face the Asiatic Hornet problem since 2013. I've found 2 effective ways to control them. Traps - cut the top 4 inches off a 1 ltr plastic drinks bottle, invert the top into the base and bait with brown beer laced with blackcurrent juice. Hang several in trees near hives.

Only hornets and wasps will take the bait, not bees. I catch around 50 hornets per week. Second method, an electrified squash-like racquet! Widely available in France for around £5. Takes 2 AA batteries. Press the button and 100s of volts go through the wire mesh. Stand at the hive entrance (best in the evening), whack the hornets as they hover and whack them again hard when they're on the ground. Both methods really work.