

## SACRAMENTO-YOLO MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

The Africanized honey bee (AHB) has migrated into California. They look the same and in most ways behave like the European honey bees (EHB) that currently reside in the United States.

### AFRICANIZED HONEY BEES

One very important difference between the two varieties is the ultra defensive behavior AHB's can display while protecting their colony. In some South American attacks, AHB's have seriously stung or killed animals, and humans. This behavior has earned AHB's the common name "Killer Bees."

#### Activities that could cause an attack:

Vibration or noise: Operation of power equipment within 100 feet or more of a colony

Motion: Movement within 50 feet or more of the colony

#### Behavioral differences:

Africanized honey bees will pursue a longer distance than European honey bees.

<b>AHB</b>	Up to ¼ mile	<b>EHB</b>	100 feet
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Africanized honey bees will remain agitated longer than European honey bees after a colony is disturbed.

<b>AHB</b>	8 or more hours	<b>EHB</b>	1 or more hours
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SACRAMENTO-YOLO  
MOSQUITO  
& VECTOR  
CONTROL  
DISTRICT

FIGHT THE  
**BITE**

### OFFICE LOCATIONS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

#### Sacramento County

8631 Bond Road  
Elk Grove, CA 95624  
Phone: 1-800-429-1022  
Fax: 916-685-5464  
Web site: [FIGHTtheBITE.net](http://FIGHTtheBITE.net)  
Hours: 7:00 am to 3:30 pm

#### Yolo County

1234 Fortna Avenue  
Woodland, CA 95695  
Phone: 1-800-429-1022  
Fax: 530-668-3403  
Web site: [FIGHTtheBITE.net](http://FIGHTtheBITE.net)  
Hours: 7:00 am to 3:30 pm

# BEES

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### HONEY BEES

Honeybees are highly social bees known for their honey-hoarding behavior and their use as a domesticated species. The European honey bee is important in modern agriculture and in nature, providing pollination for many valuable crops and wild plants.



#### Appearance

The body of the bee is divided into three main sections: head, thorax and abdomen. Bees have six legs, four wings, and five eyes. The two antennae are used for smelling and touching. The honeybee color varies but is generally amber to brown with black stripes. The coat of the honeybee appears furry due to short hairs covering the body and grows up to 1/2 inch.

#### Colonies

The natural nesting sites of honeybees are caves, rock cavities and hollow trees. European honeybees exhibit preferences with regard to several nest site properties: the height above ground is usually 3-16 feet, entrance positions tend to face downward and nest sites over 950 feet away from the parent colony are preferred.

#### Behavior

Worker honeybees will sting intruders as a form of defense, and alarmed bees will release a pheromone that stimulates the attack response in other bees. The different species of honeybees are distinguished from other bee species by the possession of small barbs on the stinger. The stinger and associated venom sac will pull free of the body once lodged.

### BUMBLEBEES

Like their relatives the honeybees, bumblebees feed on nectar and gather pollen to feed their young. The agricultural use of bumblebees is limited to pollination though. They are not useful as honey producers because they are not compelled to stockpile honey due to the fact that they do not overwinter the entire colony.



#### Appearance

The bumblebee shares the same basic parts as the honeybee, head, thorax, abdomen, etc., yet the color differs slightly by appearing as a brighter yellow with black stripes and sometimes a red tail. The coat of the bumblebee appears and feels fuzzy due to long hairs covering the body. This bee grows, on average, to one inch but may grow even larger.

#### Colonies

Bumblebees, like honeybees, form colonies yet bumblebee colonies are usually much less extensive than those of honeybees. The small physical size of the nest cavity is related to the fact that a single bumblebee female is responsible for the initial construction and reproduction within the nest and that this must all occur in one season.

#### Behavior

Queen and worker bumblebees can sting, but the stinger is not barbed like that of the honeybee so they can sting more than once. Bumblebees are non-aggressive and are only likely to sting in defense of their nest or if harmed.

### CARPENTER BEES

Carpenter bees are often considered solitary bees. Their name is derived from the fact that nearly all species build their nests in burrows in dead wood, bamboo, or structural timbers. Carpenter bees can be important pollinators, though many species will actually "rob" nectar by slitting the sides of the flower instead.



#### Appearance

The carpenter bee shares the same basic parts as the honeybee, head, thorax, abdomen, etc., yet the coloring differs in that the carpenter bee is most often entirely black. Males of some carpenter bees may have a white or yellow face. The coat of the carpenter bee appears shiny due to the lack of hairs covering the body and grows to an average of one inch.

#### Colonies

Carpenter bees are traditionally considered solitary bees, though some species have simple social nests in which mothers and daughters may cohabit. Carpenter bees do not eat wood but instead make nests by tunneling into wood, vibrating their bodies as they scrape their jaws against the wood.

#### Behavior

The male carpenter bee is harmless since it does not possess a stinger. Female carpenter bees do have a stinger, but are preoccupied with foraging and only return to the nest to stockpile. They are not aggressive and will not sting unless aggressively provoked.

### BEE CONTROL

If you discover a swarm/colony of bees:

- **Avoid the area**

Keep children and pets away from a swarm or colony

- **Notify a professional**

Notify a pest control company or government authority

If you are attacked by bees:

- **Leave the area quickly**

An attack can last until the victim vacates the area

- **Cover your face**

Use clothes to protect the eyes and mouth from bees

- **Seek shelter**

Go to an inside enclosure where bees cannot enter, such as a car, house or other building

### FIRST AID FOR BEE STINGS

#### For any sting:

- Remove stinger quickly by scraping with a fingernail or edge of a dull thin object

#### For allergic reactions:

- Seek immediate medical care

#### For multiple stings or hypersensitive persons:

- Seek immediate medical care
- Do not wait for symptoms to develop