

Kev's Guide to - Wasps

Several species of paper wasps are found in Australia, however only the yellow paper wasp and the common paper wasp are widespread in south-west Western Australia. Both are introduced species, not native to WA.

Paper wasps make their nests from plant and wood fibres which they chew and mix with saliva into a 'paper mache'-like consistency. The final product is a grey papery nest of many cells in a single comb. The nest has the shape of a cone or crumpet, ranging in size from a golf ball to a dinner plate but are more commonly the size of the palm of your hand. They are fixed in place by a single attachment point.

Paper wasp queens start building new nests early in spring and continue through summer and autumn. New wasps develop and take over the major duties of food collection, caring for the young, nest maintenance and defence. The colony dies out in late autumn and the new mated queens disband, leaving the nest to find shelter in protected places (such as hollow trees, wall voids) to hibernate.

Adults feed on plant nectar and insect honeydew and forage for caterpillars and other insects (including beneficial insects) to feed their developing young.

Well adapted to urban environments, paper wasps commonly nest under fence capping, under eaves and roof tiles, attached to walls and bushes or in metal tubing or pipe work such as that of gates, clothes lines or play equipment. Letter boxes are also common nesting locations for these species.

Paper wasps will often attack if they feel threatened or their nests are disturbed. They can deliver painful stings and unlike honey bees, paper wasps can sting repeatedly.

Control

Nests can be treated by either the householder or a pest control operator. If the nest is not visible, watch where the foraging wasps fly to, or check eaves, walls, shutters and fence capping around your property.

Nests left untreated will produce more queens that can lead to an increase in paper wasp populations the following year.

To control:

1. Locate the nest(s) - there may be more than one in close proximity.
2. **After dark, or before sunrise**, spray the nest with a fast knock-down fly spray or surface spray. This is the safest time to treat nests and ensures that all wasps belonging to the nest are present and not out foraging.
3. **The following day**, knock the nest(s) to the ground and dispose of dead wasps and nest (crushing the nest will kill the pupating wasps in the white capped cells).

Kev Wasp control also means that we inspect the whole block for more nests because where there is one there will usually be more.

We use a fast knock down spray that kills the wasps almost immediately, then remove the nests for the property. A spider treatment can help with keeping wasps from coming back due the long-lasting chemicals we use.

Price for single story home on average block size \$185