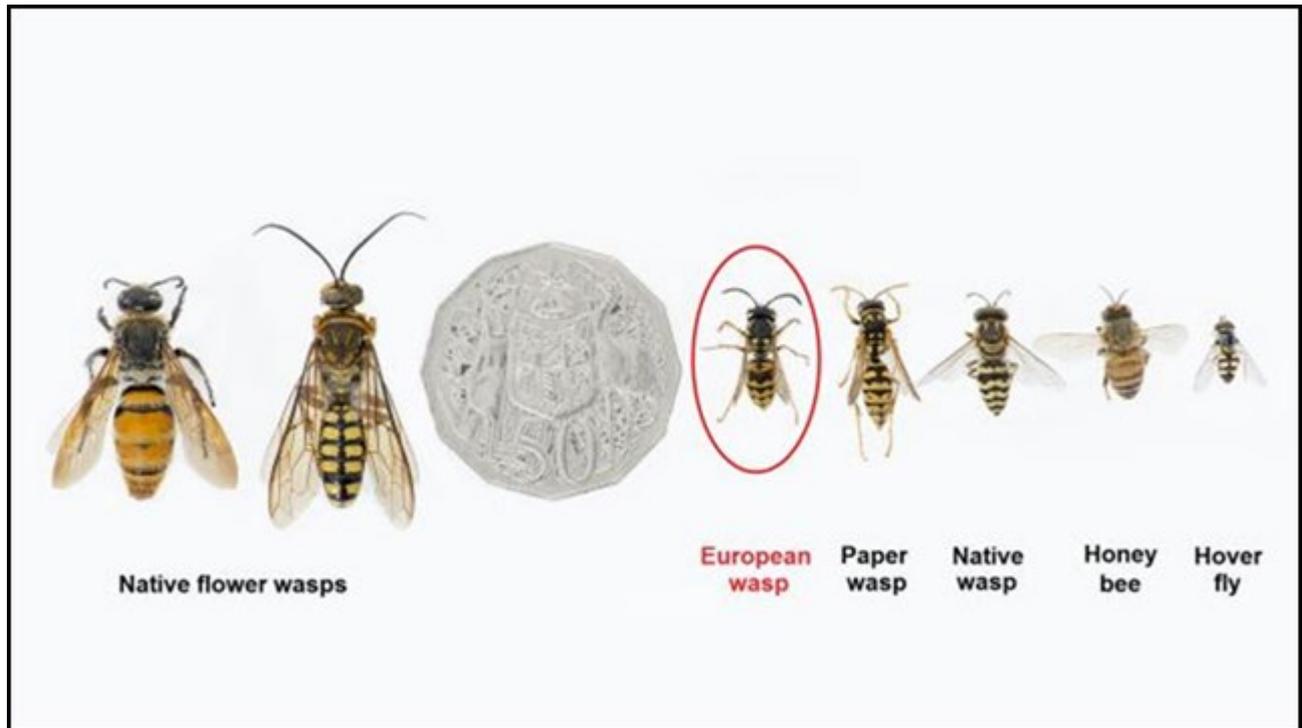


Learn the differences between the European wasp, *Vespula germanica*, and other species including the common and widespread yellow paper wasp, *Polistes dominulus*. The European wasp is considered one of the worst wasps in the world; harmful to people, our outdoor lifestyles and our horticultural and agricultural industries.

Because of their yellow and black stripes, several wasps, bees and flies can be mistaken for European wasps.



**Native flower wasps** (Families Tiphiidae and Scoliidae) are much larger than European wasps. These harmless solitary wasps are beneficial pollinators. They are solitary and only come together during the mating season.

**Yellow paper wasps** are bright yellow and black. Paper wasps differ being slightly longer and thinner (more wasp-like). Unlike European wasps, paper wasps hover with their back legs hanging down and have orange-brown antennae.

**Honey bees** are about the same size, but have black legs, are hairier and are dull brown-orange in colour, as opposed to bright yellow and black.

#### European wasps:

- Have black antennae
- Usually nest underground and
- Have an attraction to meat, pet food and human foods.

## European wasp or yellow paper wasp?

Yellow paper wasps are easy to confuse with European wasps. They are very common and widespread in Victoria and are frequently seen nesting in guttering, under fence capping or attached to bushes. Paper wasps are often seen visiting flowers, ponds or water taps. Look for their distinctive papery honeycomb nest, or note the color of the antennae and the position of the legs when they fly.



### Differences between European wasps and Paper wasps

	European wasp	Paper wasp
<b>Size</b>	Workers: about 15mm long (size of a bee) Queens: larger (not usually seen)	15–19mm long (longer than a bee)
<b>Body shape</b>	Stout: like a bee	Longer and thinner than a bee. Narrow waist
<b>Antennae (feelers)</b>	All black (see picture above)	Yellow-orange (see picture above)
<b>Flying</b>	Legs held close to body during flight. Fly very quickly, generally do not hover	Back legs dangle down during flight. Often seen hovering around bushes, over lawns and around water sources
<b>Food</b>	European wasps are scavengers feeding from pet food, meat or vegetable scraps, meat products, fish or dead insects on vehicle grilles.	Paper wasps feed on insects including caterpillars, flies, beetle larvae and nectar. These are not scavengers and will not target meat products (eg. BBQs, pet food, dead insects etc.)

Information source: WA Department of Agriculture and Food.