

Yellow Jackets, Hornets & Paper Wasps

There are three very different kinds of social wasps that make paper nest, yellow jackets, hornets and paper wasps. Although they all belong to the same family of wasps, Vespidae, they build quite different kinds of nests. Paper wasps in the genera *Polistes* and *Mischocyttarus* build open faced nests, where the individual cells are exposed. Hornets and yellow jackets build cells in separate combs that are all enclosed in a paper shell or shroud. Yellow jackets tend to build their nests in cavities. Hornets often create spherical free-hanging nests, but will also build nests in colonies.

Enclosed Nests



Western yellow jacket, *Vespa pensylvanica*, nest and worker.



Giant Asian hornet, *Vespa mandarina*, nest and worker.

Open Faced Nests



Typical *Polistes dominula* nest.

Typical *Mischocyttarus* nest.



Polistes dominula, exotic European hornet



Native *Polistes fuscatus* color forms.



Bald-faced hornet, *Dolichovespula maculata*, nest and worker