



Question of the Week

Q: What's the difference between bees and wasps?

A: Many people confuse bees with wasps. Although related, they aren't the same. Wasps feed insects to their young. They have slender bodies with narrow waists and slender, cylindrical legs, and appear smoothed-skinned and shiny. Yellowjackets, baldfaced hornets, and paper wasps are the most common types of wasps encountered by people.

Bees feed pollen and nectar to their young. They are robust-bodied and very hairy compared with wasps. Their hind legs are flattened for collecting and transporting pollen. Bees are important pollinators. Honey bees are responsible for more than 80% of the pollination required by most fruits, legumes, and vegetables as well as many ornamentals grown in our landscapes. Common bees are the honey bee and the bumble bee.

During late summer and fall, yellowjackets become aggressive scavengers, disrupting outside activities where food or drink is served, and lurking around trash bins and compost piles. Preventing wasp-scavenging is difficult, as there are no insecticides that effectively repel or discourage them.

For more information on wasp control, contact the UNH Cooperative Extension Family, Home & Garden Education Center @ 1-877-398-4769.

Got questions? UNH Cooperative Extension's Family, Home & Garden Education Center Info Line offers practical help finding answers for your lawn and garden questions. Call toll free at 1-877-398-4769, M-F, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., and W 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., or e-mail us at answers@unh.edu