

What to Do if Stung

- First, go quickly to a safe area.
- Scrape – do not pull – stingers from skin as soon as possible. The stinger pumps out most of the venom during the first minute. Pulling the stinger out will likely cause more venom to be injected into the skin.
- Wash sting area with soap and water like any other wound.
- Apply ice pack for a few minutes to relieve pain and swelling.
- Seek medical attention if breathing is troubled, if stung numerous times or if allergic to bee stings.

Don't Forget!

Hives of European honey bees managed by beekeepers play an important role in our lives. These bees are necessary for the pollination of many crops. One-third of our diet relies on honey bee pollination.

If European honey bees were eliminated in an area, Africanized honey bees would quickly fill the gap.

Finally, people can coexist with the Africanized honey bee by learning about the bee and its habits, supporting beekeeping efforts and taking a few precautions.

Remember, exercise caution around any stinging insect. Honey bees are not the only stinging insects people may encounter. Here are a few found in Georgia:



Stinging Insects

Honey bees are not the only stinging insects people and animals may encounter. This illustration shows some common stinging insects. You should take precautions when encountering any of them.

Stinging Insects *



European honey bee



Africanized honey bee



Bumblebee



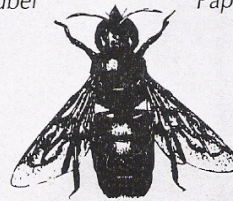
Yellow jacket



Mud dauber



Paper wasp



Carpenter bee

* All insects shown approximately life size.

Bee Alert!

Africanized

Honey Bee Facts



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Be Prepared

Africanized honey bees (AHB) – sometimes called “killer bees” – became established in Texas in 1990 and are spreading to other states including Georgia.

The Africanized honey bee is related to our state’s familiar honey bee (the European honey bee) that produces honey and pollinates our crops. The two types of bees look the same and their behavior is similar in many respects. Each bee can sting only once, and there is no difference between Africanized honey bee venom and that of a European honey bee. However, Africanized honey bees are less predictable and more defensive than European honey bees. They are more likely to defend a greater area around their nest and respond faster and in greater numbers than European honey bees.

In other words, Africanized honey bees are more likely to sting than European ones, but learning about AHB and taking certain precautions can lower your risk of injury.



Here are some tips to remember:

Africanized Honey bees

- Are very defensive of their nest.
- Respond quickly and sting in large numbers.
- Can sense a threat from people or animals 50 feet or more from nest.
- Sense vibrations from power equipment 100 feet or more from nest.
- Will pursue an enemy ¼ mile or more.
- Swarm frequently to establish new nests.
- Nest in small cavities and sheltered areas.

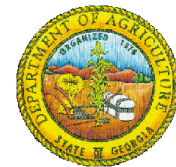


Nest sites include empty boxes, cans, buckets, or other containers; old tires; infrequently used vehicles; lumber piles; holes and cavities in fences, trees, or the ground; sheds, garages and other outbuildings; and low decks or spaces under buildings.

General Precautions

- Be careful wherever bees may be found.
- Listen for buzzing – indicating a nest or swarm of bees.
- Use care when entering sheds or outbuildings where bees may nest.
- Examine work area before using lawn mowers and other power equipment.
- Examine areas before penning pets or livestock.
- Be alert when participating in all outdoor sports and activities.
- Don’t disturb a nest or swarm – contact a pest control company or your county Cooperative Extension office.
- Teach children to respect **all** bees.
- Check with a doctor about bee sting kits and procedures if sensitive to bee stings.
- Remove possible nest sites around home and seal openings larger than 1/8” in walls and around chimneys and plumbing.

As a general rule, stay away from **all** honey bee swarms and colonies. If bees are encountered, get away quickly. If you are stung, try to protect your face and eyes as much as possible and run away from the area. Take shelter in a car or building. Hiding in water or thick brush does **not** offer enough protection. Do not stand and swat at the bees; this will only cause them to sting.



Tommy Irvin
Commissioner