

# CARPENTER BEES

*Xylocopa* sp.



Actual Size

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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Carpenter bees are very large bees (3/4 to 1 inch) and are commonly mistaken for bumble bees. They are *not* closely related to the bumble bee. The females are solid in color and usually black or steely blue. The rarer males are light brown with golden hairs. Bumble bees are marked with yellow and black striped hair patterns.

The carpenter bees are so named because they bore into wood and form tunnel-like nests for the rearing of the young. These bees attack different kinds of woods such as fence posts, building timbers, telephone poles, and even palm trees; however, the effects are seldom damaging.

Upon completion of the nest tunnel, the females place pollen and nectar into the cells and lay their eggs. The larvae develop into adults within 40-45 days.

These bees are commonly found about flowers. Their large size and habit of "buzzing" people earn them a bad reputation. The females can sting but do so very reluctantly and cause only mild pain; however, some persons are hypersensitive to bee stings and may experience adverse reactions very quickly. Persons so affected should contact their doctor *immediately* (or the Orange County Medical Association for a doctor's reference) and secure a prescription or treatment with a specific antidote. Applying damp baking soda to the sting site or a saturated cloth of household ammonia (diluted with seven parts water) will help alleviate the discomfort.

This information is provided to help homeowners with their pest problems. Insecticides may be purchased at nurseries, hardware, farm supply, and pet stores. If additional help is needed, contact with a licensed pest control operator is suggested.

No endorsement of trade names or products is intended nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.

## PRECAUTIONS

1. Handle insecticides with care and follow instructions on the label.
2. Do not use around open flame or exposed foods, and always clean food preparation areas after the use of pesticides.
3. Store out of reach of children and pets, preferably in locked cabinets.
4. Never keep pesticides in anything other than the original container.
5. Never reuse the pesticide container to store any other materials.
6. Dispose of all empty containers by placing them in the trash can for removal to the local disposal area.

## PRECAUTIONS

Do not handle carpenter bees and avoid activities near flowers being visited by these bees. They will leave you alone if you leave them alone.



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