

Are Yellow Jackets Bugging You?



Photo: Yellow jackets, courtesy of Oregon State University

In late summer, you may be seeing more aggressive yellow jackets around your home. This happens when the temperatures start to decline, and the colony of adults begin to die off.

OSU does not suggest killing yellow jackets unless they pose a hazard to humans. These omnivorous wasps are native to the Pacific Northwest and are beneficial to our ecosystems. To avoid conflicts, pay attention to your environment, listen for buzzing and watch for wasps flying near the ground. Avoid loose fitting clothes when working outside. Cover food while eating outside.

If you must act, consider hiring a professional to remove the nest. If you decide to do it yourself, use a long-distance aerosol labeled for yellow jackets. Another option is to treat a ground nest with boiling water. Both should be done at night.

Yellow jacket nests can be above or below ground. They are permanently abandoned and disintegrate at the end of the year. Only the queen may survive the winter in a protected site.

Yellow Jackets, <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/pollinators/yellow-jackets>

Written by Jane Collier, August 2024