

Deadliest Plants and Bugs



Fact sheet: Wasps

There are many different types of wasp. Wasps play an important role in the ecosystem. Without them, the world would be overrun with spiders and insects.

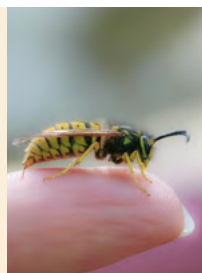


Wasp scores decoded:

	1
	4
	6
	7
	6
	5

Size: 1

The average size for a wasp is 2 cm. This is a bit smaller than a 2p coin. The largest wasp, the Asian hornet can be up to 5 cm long.



Colour / Camouflage: 4

The most commonly seen wasps in the UK are black and yellow. Even though we think of them as being black and yellow, actually only 1% of wasp species have this colouring. Other colours are red, orange, brown or black.



Life Span: 5

A worker wasp can live between 12 -22 days while a queen can live up to a year. Queens wasps hibernate over winter.



Armour / Defence: 6

Their brightly coloured stripes warn predators that they are poisonous and not a tasty lunch. This defence mechanism is called aposematism.



Poison level: 7

Wasps use their sting to attack their prey. They inject venom into their prey when they sting to paralyse it, making it easier to eat. Only female wasps can sting, but unlike bees, they can sting multiple times.



Strength: 6

Wasps can fly faster than you can run. Some can even fly up to 40 mph – you'd have to be in a car to keep up with them. Wasps living in colonies usually fly between 300 to 1000 metres from their nest in search of food.



More amazing wasp facts:

Many wasps are solitary, which means they live alone. Social wasps live in colonies. There can be up to 10,000 wasps in one nest. A social wasp that is upset can signal to other wasps to come and help them. Wasps generally return to their nests when the sun goes down. They don't sleep though, they are just less active at night.



Wasps make nests from paper. They chew up strips of bark and spit it out again to form a rough paper.