

Prepared by:
The Office of the County Veterinarian
San Diego County
Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures



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

All shown approximately life size.



European Honey Bee



Africanized Honey Bee



Bumble Bee



Yellowjacket



Mud Dauber Wasp



Paper Wasp



Carpenter Bee



BEE STINGS AND YOUR PETS AND LIVESTOCK

This information was provided
courtesy of:

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of Santa Barbara County

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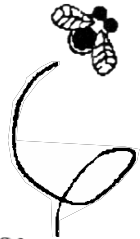
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of Santa Barbara County


Africanized Honey Bees (AHB), also called “Killer Bees,” are now found throughout most of southern California. Although their killer reputation has been greatly exaggerated, the presence of AHB increases the chances that people and animals will be stung. AHBs defend their nest with more vigor and in greater numbers than our common European Honey Bee. When bees defend their colonies, they target dark-colored objects that resemble their natural enemies, which include bears and skunks. Therefore, your pets and livestock are likely to be stung if bees are disturbed. Animals that are penned up or tied near Honey Bee nests or hives are at an even higher risk of being stung.





Protecting Animals


 **MAKE A REGULAR INSPECTION OF YOUR PROPERTY FOR BEE HIVES.** Honey Bees nest in a wide variety of sites, such as trees or shrubs, animal burrows in the ground, water meter boxes, and overturned flower pots. Look for active bees and listen for a buzzing or humming sound.

 **DO NOT PEN, TIE, OR TETHER ANIMALS NEAR KNOWN BEE HIVES OR NESTS.** Keep animals away from apiaries and bee nests. Bees may seem docile at first, but don't take chances.

 **DO NOT DISTURB OR TEASE BEES AND DO NOT TRY TO REMOVE THEM YOURSELF.** Do not shoot at, throw rocks at, or pour gasoline on, or use aerosol pesticides on bee nests, since this will only arouse the bees.


 **KEEP PETS AND CHILDREN INDOORS WHEN USING WEED EATERS, HEDGE CLIPPERS, TRACTORS, POWER MOWERS, CHAIN SAWS, OR OTHER MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT.** Honey Bees are sensitive to unusual odors, such as cut grass, and to loud vibrations. Attacks often occur when a person is mowing a lawn or pruning shrubs and trees and inadvertently strikes a bee or wasp nest.


 **KEEP DOGS UNDER CONTROL WHEN HIKING.** A dog bounding through the brush is more likely to disturb bees than one following quietly at your heels.

 **STAY ALERT WHEN HORSEBACK RIDING** through brush or under low hanging branches, where bees might nest.




If Your Animal is Stung

 **REACT IMMEDIATELY! WITHOUT ENDANGERING YOURSELF,** try to get the animal away from the bees. Call your dog inside your house or car or release the animal **if it will not harm the animal or others nearby.**


 **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO APPROACH A PERSON OR AN ANIMAL BEING STUNG WITHOUT SOME SORT OF PROTECTION** (such as a beekeeper's suit or inside a car), because the bees may attack you as well. If you approach an animal that is being stung, remember that **an injured animal may**


bite or attack unexpectedly. If you release penned livestock, be aware that an unrestrained animal may run into the road and be hit by a car or may run away. In addition, if the animal runs to you with aroused bees following it, you are likely to be stung too.

 **IF POSSIBLE, DOUSE THE ANIMAL WITH A SHOWER OF PET SHAMPOO AND WATER.** This will kill any bees clinging to it. Covering the animal with a heavy blanket may also discourage the bees.



Treating Your Animal

 **ONCE THE ANIMAL IS AWAY FROM BEES,** look for stingers. When a Honey Bee stings, it loses its venom sack and stinger. This means the Honey Bee dies after it stings, but the stinger may continue to inject venom for up to a minute or until the stinger is removed. If you can see stingers on the animal, remove them by scraping them out with a credit card, knife, or fingernail. Do not pull them out with tweezers or fingers because you will squeeze more venom into the animal.

 **IF AN ANIMAL HAS SUSTAINED NUMEROUS STINGS, EMERGENCY TREATMENT BY YOUR VETERINARIAN MAY BE REQUIRED.** The number of stings an animal can survive depends on its body weight, the amount of venom it received, and whether or not it is allergic to bee venom. As with humans, even one sting may be dangerous if the animal is allergic.