

European Hornet



The **European hornet** *Vespa crabro*, commonly known simply as the "hornet", is the largest European eusocial wasp. Its name is not to be confused with the colloquial use of "hornet" for the bald-faced hornet, or other social wasps in other countries. The queen measures 25 to 35 mm (1–1.4 in) long; males and workers are smaller.

In males, as in most members of the Aculeata, the antennae have 13 segments, while in females there are only 12; also as in other aculeate, the male abdomen has seven visible segments, while the female has six; females possess an ovipositor modified into a sting which is not barbed. See wasp and bee characteristics to help identify similar insects.

This species is not particularly aggressive except when defending the nest, and care must be taken when in its proximity, as the stings are quite painful. As with most stinging insects, European hornets will sting in self-defense when grabbed or stepped on.