

# Insect Fact Sheet

## Wasps

Wasps are social insects, which means they live in large groups, often containing well over 1000 adult wasps and their brood. Such large groups are known as colonies. Social insects build a nest in which there are chambers to rear their young and wasps probably build the most elaborate nest of all. Wasp nests are built out of chewed wood mixed with their saliva, which is called pulp. This is brought back to the nest by the workers, who construct rows of hexagonal cells. There will be several layers of cells built during the Summer, all producing new workers, but some will eventually produce new Queens and males (Drones) that will mate late in the Summer. Only the young Queens will survive the Winter months, spent under loose bark or other sheltered spot.



In the Spring, the Queens become active during the warm days and set off in search of somewhere to build a new nest of their own. The nest is small at first, little larger than a golf ball and a few cells are built to rear the first worker wasps. It is the workers that will do all the work for the Queen, so she can concentrate on laying more eggs, till she eventually dies with her workers in the Autumn.

Wasps are very useful insects, although not liked by many people. Each Summer, a single colony eats thousands of insects, many of which are considered pests. So respect these busy insects and watch them from a safe distance, so you don't get stung!



### Life cycle stages

Egg



Larva



Pupa

