

Greater Banded Hornet

Vespa tropica

Not known to be present in Hawaii

Large, tropical hornet species with a powerful sting that nests in trees or subterranean cavities. They prey on honeybees, raiding nests and taking larvae to feed their own colonies.



Photo: Filippo Turetta, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>

Adult Greater Banded Hornet.



Impacts

- Human health hazard: aggressive hornet with potent sting. Individuals with bee allergies, children and the elderly can have extreme reactions. Multiple stings resulting in death have been documented.
- *V. tropica* has also been reported to raid hives of the European honeybee (*Apis mellifera*).
- Predatory to other wasp species and has been observed preying on honeybees and dragonflies.



Photo: Allan Smith-Pardo, Invasive Hornets, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org

Adult Greater Banded Hornet.



Identification

- Worker 2.5 cm (approx. 1in), queens 3cm (approx 1.25in).
- Head is dark brown/red, the abdomen is black with a distinct yellow stripe covering most of the second abdominal segment.
- Color variants from Singapore and southeast Asia range often completely black.
- Nests are in tree cavities or underground. If excavated, nests are brittle and bowl-shaped with an open bottom (vs. completely enclosed).
- Extremely painful sting, causing welts/blistering.



Photo: Allan Smith-Pardo, Invasive Hornets, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org

Adult *V. tropica* worker (dark variant).



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Vectors/Commodities

- Soil and logs.
- Forest Products. Preferred habitat is forests, nesting in tree cavities.



Distribution

- Native Range: Southern Asia (China, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, India) Philippines, New Guinea and west Africa.
- Introduced Range: Guam (2016).



Photo: Allan Smith-Pardo, Invasive Hornets, USDA APHIS PPO, Bugwood.org

Adult *V. tropica* worker.



Best Management Practices

- Consider pest distribution when sourcing plant material.
- Carefully inspect all material coming from areas where Asian giant hornets are established.
- Report suspect hornets to 643pest.org, or by phone to 643-PEST (7378).



Selected References:

- Burgett and Akwatanakul. 1982. Predation on the western honey bee, *Apis mellifera* L., by the hornet, *Vespa tropica*.:
 - <http://psyche.entclub.org/89/89-347.html>
- CNAS News. College of Natural and Applied Sciences, University of Guam. Retrieved 12 April 2017.
 - https://www.postguam.com/news/local/greater-banded-hornet-finds-its-way-to-guam/article_1f26214c-57b3-11e6-8bee-e3cc07facef6.html

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