

## Murder Hornet

### Why in news?

Recently, US had completely eradicated the Murder Hornet species in the country.

### Hornets

- They are exotic *insect pests* of the *genus Vespa*
- True hornets are *social wasps*, a group of 23 species occurring naturally only in Asia, Europe and Africa.

#### • Prominent types

- Asian hornet
- European hornet
- Oriental hornet
- Lesser banded hornet
- Asian giant hornet

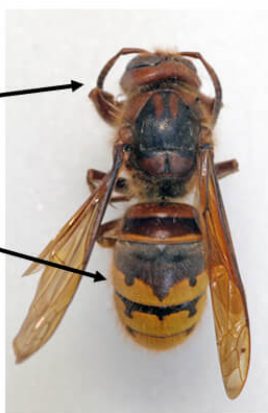
Asian Giant Hornet



Queen ~ 5 cm (~2 inches)

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

European Hornet



Queen ~ 3.5 cm (~1.4 inches)

Dr. Michael Raupp, Bug Guy, University of Maryland,  
College Park, www.bugoftheweek.com

- **In India** - Out of 23 species, 15 are found in India.

- **Murder Hornet**- *Northern giant hornet* are nicknamed as murder hornet, are an ***invasive species from Asia.***
- **Features** - It is the *largest member of the wasp family*, measuring 2 inches in length and is the *world's largest hornet.*
- Their stingers deliver as much *venom as a snake or 7 times that of a honeybee* and its powerful sting can kill a human.
- **Threat to other species** - It poses a significant threat to insects and native pollinators.

- It poses a *threat to bees and agriculture*, can kill an entire beehive of honeybees in just 90 minutes.
- **Slaughter phase** - They kill entire hives by *decapitating the bees*.
- The hornets then defend the hive as their own, taking the brood to feed their own young
- **Threat to humans** - While attacks on humans are fairly rare, the insects are *reported to kill from 50 to 75 people each year*.

*Murder Hornet 1<sup>st</sup> came under the spotlight in 2013 when they killed at least 42 people in China, and seriously injured 1,675. In USA, it was 1<sup>st</sup> spotted in Washington State near the Canadian border in 2019.*

- **Co-evolution of Asian bees** - These bees will swarm onto the hornet interloper and beat their wings until they cook their quarry alive.
- Such bee-induced temperatures have been measured to reach 115 degrees Fahrenheit.

## Reference

[The Indian Express| Murder Hornet Eradicated in US](#)

