



# Fact Sheet: The Asian Giant Hornet

All photos courtesy of the Cornell University Insect Collection

## Overview

*Vespa mandarinia*, or Asian Giant Hornet (AGH), is an invasive pest from the tropical and temperate forests of eastern Asia. In the United States, it was first detected in Washington State in December 2019. AGH is not known to exist anywhere in the United States except for the far northwest area of Washington State. No sightings of AGH have been confirmed in New York State.

This introduced pest is primarily a threat to European Honey Bees (*Apis mellifera*). However, it is a stinging insect and could potentially be a human health concern. AGH are generally not aggressive to humans unless provoked. They will defend a nest or foraging site. Only the female hornets are capable of stinging.

## Identification

AGH are the largest species of hornet and range in size from 25mm (approx. 1 inch) to 45mm (nearly 2 inches).

New York State is home to 416 types of bees and 90 types of wasps for a total of 506 species that could possibly be mistaken for AGH. Only two of these species found in New York are close to the size range of the AGH: the European Hornet and the Cicada Killer.

Beekeepers should be alert for AGH as they would likely be the first to notice signs of AGH if it were to be introduced in New York State.

Email [Plants@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:Plants@agriculture.ny.gov) for more information or to report suspected sightings of AGH.



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# Species in New York That Look Similar to the Asian Giant Hornet

European Hornet (*Vespa crabro*)



European Paper Wasp (*Polistes dominula*)



Cicada Killer Wasp (*Sphecius speciosus*)



Bald-faced Hornet (*Dolichovespula maculata*)



Dark Paper Wasp (*Polistes fuscatus*)



Western Yellow Jacket (*Vespula pensylvanica*)



Scale=MM