

ASIAN GIANT HORNET



Asian giant hornet photo: Wikimedia Commons; Alpsdake, Wikimedia

During the latter part of 2019, a nest of Asian giant hornets (*Vespa mandarinia*) was detected and eradicated on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada and in Whatcom County, Washington. To our knowledge, there are no other confirmed sightings outside Whatcom County in the United States.

The New Mexico Department of Agriculture has received a number of calls regarding sightings of what is believed to be the Asian giant hornet.

New Mexico has several wasp species that can be mistaken for this insect. The two more common species that may be mistaken for the Asian giant hornet include the cicada killer wasp and the scarab hunter wasp.



Photo: Lyle Buss, University of Florida

CICADA KILLER WASP

- 1.2-1.6 inches in length
- Dark colored head
- Incomplete abdominal bands

Despite their aggressive name, cicada killer females are mild tempered and do not have the nest-guarding instincts of bees and hornets. Males can be territorial, but do not have stingers and do not pose a health risk to humans.



Photo: Cory Sheffield, on Canada.ca

SCARAB HUNTER WASP

- 3/4 to 1 inch in length
- Dark colored head
- Furry midsection (thorax) and legs

While the possibility of Asian giant hornets reaching New Mexico at this moment is very low, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture appreciates the public's assistance monitoring for this insect, as early detection is key to the eradication of invasive pests. For further information, please contact Entomology and Nurseries at (575) 646-3207.