



## Bald-faced Hornets

**H**ave you ever seen a large gray wasp nest about the size of a football made of paper-like material hanging down from a tree? They can be quite a work of art and are sometimes attractive to naturalists to collect them as one of nature's many beauties. If you look closely, however, you would see the owners of this home, the bald-faced hornet workers, flying back and forth as they look for food on a summer's afternoon. Bald-faced hornet nests are pretty recognizable, as are the hornets themselves. They are one of the few hornets with a white face (if you want to get close enough to take a look – this is not highly recommended!) However, they are also one of the

wasps that when they sting can really pack a punch. Especially when a whole colony is alarmed by would be invaders and starts coming after you! Do not attempt to remove these wasps and their nests yourself. We have the knowledge and experience, and also the proper personal protective equipment to do this correctly and safely. Keep in mind that bald-faced hornets are extremely protective of their nests and will sting repeatedly if disturbed. The main area of the body that bald faced hornets attack on humans is the facial area, thus making them very dangerous to have around. Please contact us, your pest professional experts, if you spot one of these nests forming in or around your home or yard.

## How to Take the **STING** Out of Summer

- Wear shoes, especially in grassy areas.
- Over-seed grassy areas to get better coverage, as this will deter ground-nesting insects.
- Remove garbage frequently and keep trashcans covered.
- Do not swat at a stinging insect as it increases the likelihood of an aggressive reaction.
- Avoid wearing sweet-smelling perfumes.
- Ensure all doors and windows in your home have screens that are in good condition.
- Seek immediate medical attention if stung, as reactions can be severe.
- Do not attempt to remove a nest on your own. If you have an infestation, contact a qualified pest professional.



# Blow Flies



Blow flies may be black, blue, coppery green, olive green or bronze in color.

**B**low flies are regulars at hamburger and hot-dog cookouts! You have no doubt seen these bright shiny flies show up at your summer picnic table, especially if meat was being served!

Blowflies are a diverse group of flies ranging in size from 1/4 to 1/2 inches in length, and generally having a metallic sheen to their bodies. They may be black, blue, coppery green, olive green, or bronze in coloration. All adult blow flies have blunt mouthparts and do not bite. Blow fly larvae (called maggots) however feed on dead and decaying organic matter and help to break it down. In addition to meats and flesh, they often infest wounds of sheep, deer, cattle, and other animals. But, they can also be attracted to nectar, carrion, garbage, and other refuse. Blow flies deposit eggs in wounds or on dead carcasses. The fly larvae which soon hatch feed on decaying flesh or matted hair. As a rule, blow fly larvae never attack healthy tissues.

As disgusting as all of this may sound, blow flies actually do serve a useful purpose in nature by helping to facilitate decomposition; and, they are often the first to arrive at a crime scene; they have been successfully used by law enforcement to ascertain timelines by using their development along with climatologic data to blow a culprit's alibi and put a murderer behind bars. Blow fly maggots have also been used successfully in medicine to clean out necrotic tissues of patients.

But beyond these benefits, most homeowners do not want to see blow flies in their homes! When you do see blow flies in your home, it usually means that there is a carcass of some animal nearby to the fly sighting. Perhaps a mouse, rat, squirrel, bird or some other type of urban wildlife has died within the structure, inside a crawlspace, behind a wall void or in an attic space; the blow flies are coming to the carcass to break it down. We are experts at eliminating blow flies and also the urban wildlife and rodent pests to which they come. Be sure to call us at the first sign of flies in your home! ■





# SHOO FLY, DON'T BOTHER ME!

## Here are few simple tips to help reduce flies around your patio

- Keep all meat and protein products and plates and utensils covered tightly until the food is ready for grilling.
- Keep grill lids down except to flip meat and veggies.
- Remove all sources of standing/stagnant water near your home — tip bird baths of water weekly, fill-in standing mud puddles, clean drains and gutters, tip potted plant saucers.
- Don't over water your yard; set automatic sprinklers and irrigators back to less frequent watering.
- Remove pet droppings from your yard prior to the party.
- Keep trash cans covered with tight fitting lids and at a distance from your patio.
- Keep recycle bins covered with tight fitting lids and at a distance from your patio.
- A fan blowing a gentle breeze over cooking, prep and eating surfaces will keep flies at bay.
- Keep screens in good repair.
- Change light bulbs from white to yellow on your patio. And angle all exterior lights away from the grill and picnic areas. (Most flying insects do not perceive wavelengths of yellow and will not be attracted; this will also reduce the number of spiders present.)
- Call in your local pest management professional (PMP) for advice with lingering fly issues.
- Enjoy a fly-free picnic this summer with family and friends!





Skunks become a nuisance when their burrowing and feeding habits conflict with humans. They may burrow under porches or buildings by entering foundation openings. Garbage or refuse left outdoors may be disturbed by skunks. If you see skunks in your area, call us. There are many steps we can take to prevent skunks from making *your* home *their* home.

# SKUNKED!

## DID YOUR DOG DO BATTLE WITH A SKUNK?

**T**his time of year, skunks are active in many parts of the country. Sometimes dogs will get close enough to skunks to get “sprayed.” This creates a very noxious situation when the dog comes inside. Kansas State University suggests the following home remedy to “de-skunk” a dog. ■

### How to DE-SKUNK your pooch:

**Ingredients:** One quart 3 percent hydrogen peroxide  
One-fourth cup baking soda (sodium bicarbonate)  
One teaspoon liquid soap

Mix the ingredients together. Wet the animal down, then apply the mixture and work it through the animal's hair. Leave the solution on three to four minutes, and finish with a tap water rinse.

Mix only enough of the solution to use on the dog and discard the rest as it should not be stored.

