





Honeybees compared to Yellow Jackets, Paper Wasps and Hornets

	Honeybee	Yellow Jacket	Paper Wasp	Hornet
				
Color	Varies but generally amber to brown translucent alternating with black stripes; some are mostly black	Black and opaque bright yellow stripes	Dusty yellow to dark brown or black	Black and ivory white markings
Size	½ inch	½ inch	¾ to 1 inch	¾ inch
Legs	Not generally visible while flying; pollen baskets on rear legs can be seen while walking	Two long legs are visible hanging down during flight; no pollen baskets	Long, no pollen baskets	No pollen baskets
Behavior toward humans and animals	Gentle unless hive is threatened	Aggressive	Gentle	Aggressive
Preferred Food	Nectar and pollen from flowers	Other insects, overripe fruit, sugary drinks, human food, particularly meat	Other insects	Other insects
Stinger	Barbed, kills bee when used	Smooth, retracts and can be used indefinitely	Smooth, retracts and can be used indefinitely	Smooth, retracts and can be used indefinitely
Lives in	Large colonies of flat wax-based honeycomb hanging vertically	Ground, small cavities or semi-open structures	Small umbrella-shaped papery combs hanging horizontally in protected spaces; attics, eaves	Large paper nest shaped like inverted pear; usually hangs from branches or eaves