

## PAPER WASPS

*Polistes spp.*



### PEST STATS

**Color:** Brownish with yellow markings; a few species with reddish markings

**Legs:** 6

**Shape:** Wasp-like, with long legs

**Size:** 5/8 – 3/4” (16-20 mm)

**Antennae:** Yes

**Region:** Found throughout U.S.

Paper wasps get their common name from the paper-like material out of which they make their nests. Paper wasps are sometimes called umbrella wasps, after the shape of their distinctive nests.

### Habits

Paper wasps are semi-social and live in small colonies. They eat nectar and other insects including caterpillars and flies. In the autumn, inseminated females will seek places to spend the winter, and may find their way indoors, especially if there is a cathedral ceiling present.

### Habitat

Paper wasps hang their comb nests from twigs and branches of trees and shrubs, porch ceilings, the tops of window and doorframes, soffits, eaves, attic rafters, deck floor joists and railings, etc.

## Threats

While not an aggressive species by nature, paper wasps will sting if they are disturbed or their nest is threatened. Wasp stings are painful and can cause the same risk of allergic reaction as other insect stings.