



NEWS COLUMN

WSU Master Gardener
WSU Grant-Adams Area Extension
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YELLOWJACKETS

This time of year stinging insects can make your life miserable and cause unpleasant encounters. Use caution when they are present. Yellowjackets are social insects meaning they live and work together. Most form paper nests in the ground although some species make nests under eaves of buildings or trees. Nests are used for one year and only the fertilized queen survives over winter.

Before you spray, consider whether they are actually disturbing you enough to destroy them. They are beneficial predators. Don't swat at them but move slowly away. Crushing them releases a strong scent (pheremone) that attracts others. Perfumes, hairspray and brightly colored clothing attracts them. Check soft drinks before drinking if left unattended. If using traps, position away from areas populated by people (decks, patios, and outside cooking areas).

Follow directions on any insecticides purchased. When stung, to reduce swelling, use ice or bags of small frozen vegetables. Use meat tenderizer and water to make a paste to help draw out the venom. See a doctor if you are allergic or carry an anti venom kit.

If you would like further information, contact the WSU Master Gardeners. Many publications are available for a minimal cost. The WSU Grant-Adams Area Extension Office is located at the Grant County Courthouse. Master Gardeners are available to help with gardening questions on Mondays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. To contact the WSU Master Gardeners by phone 754-2011, 765-2160 or 800-572-0119, ext. 413. Additional information can be accessed on our web site at http://grant-adams.wsu.edu/master_gardeners/master_gardeners.htm.