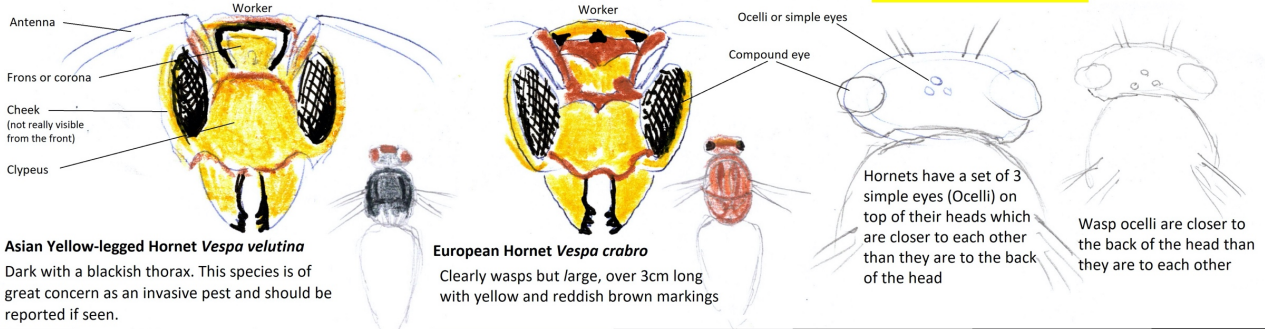


Wonderful Wasps

FACING UP TO WASPS - A SKETCH OF BRITISH SPECIES

Social wasps found in Britain (they are tricky to identify but here are some of their special features)

Hornets (Vespa) are large by most insect standards (twice the size of other wasps) and difficult to mistake for anything else. **Hornets have brown antennae.**



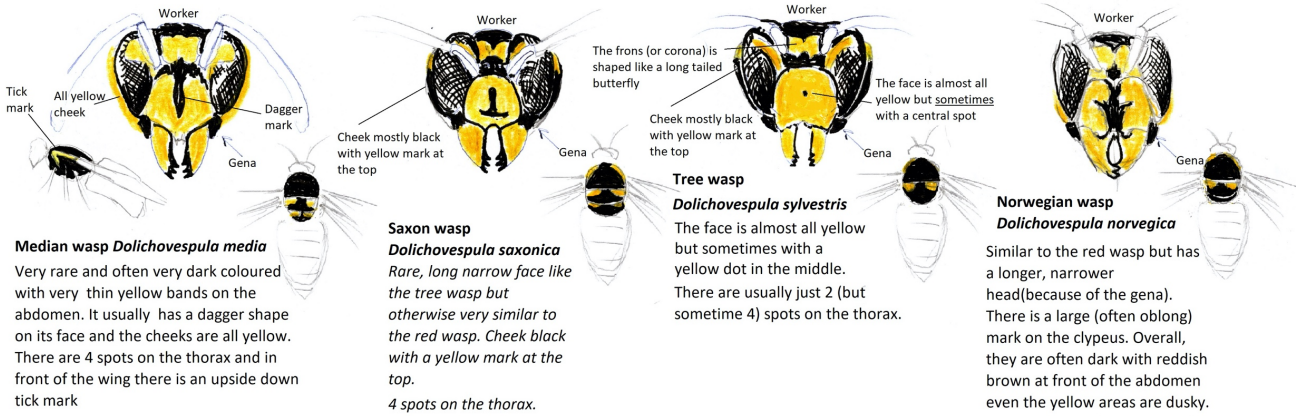
Asian Yellow-legged Hornet *Vespa velutina*
Dark with a blackish thorax. This species is of great concern as an invasive pest and should be reported if seen.

European Hornet *Vespa crabro*
Clearly wasps but *large*, over 3cm long with yellow and reddish brown markings

Hornets have a set of 3 simple eyes (Ocelli) on top of their heads which are closer to each other than they are to the back of the head

Wasp ocelli are closer to the back of the head than they are to each other

Long-faced (or tree) wasps **First segment (scape) of antenna is yellow underneath but otherwise black.** The elongated plate beneath the eye (called the gena), makes the face look long



Median wasp *Dolichovespula media*
Very rare and often very dark coloured with very thin yellow bands on the abdomen. It usually has a dagger shape on its face and the cheeks are all yellow. There are 4 spots on the thorax and in front of the wing there is an upside down tick mark

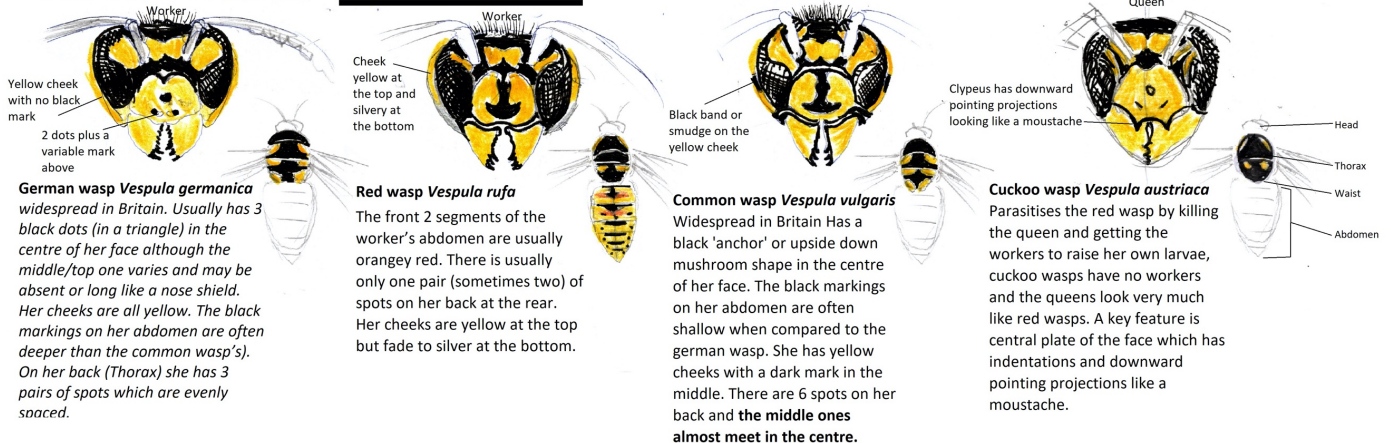
Saxon wasp *Dolichovespula saxonica*
Rare, long narrow face like the tree wasp but otherwise very similar to the red wasp. Cheek black with a yellow mark at the top. 4 spots on the thorax.

Tree wasp *Dolichovespula sylvestris*
The face is almost all yellow but sometimes with a yellow dot in the middle. There are usually just 2 (but sometime 4) spots on the thorax.

Norwegian wasp *Dolichovespula norvegica*
Similar to the red wasp but has a longer, narrower head (because of the gena). There is a large (often oblong) mark on the clypeus. Overall, they are often dark with reddish brown at front of the abdomen even the yellow areas are dusky. The 2 spots on the thorax may be so dark that they are difficult to see.

Short-faced or ground wasps (Vespula)

Antennae are usually black all over



German wasp *Vespula germanica*
Widespread in Britain. Usually has 3 black dots (in a triangle) in the centre of her face although the middle/top one varies and may be absent or long like a nose shield. Her cheeks are all yellow. The black markings on her abdomen are often deeper than the common wasp's. On her back (Thorax) she has 3 pairs of spots which are evenly spaced.

Red wasp *Vespula rufa*
The front 2 segments of the worker's abdomen are usually orangey red. There is usually only one pair (sometimes two) of spots on her back at the rear. Her cheeks are yellow at the top but fade to silver at the bottom.

Common wasp *Vespula vulgaris*
Widespread in Britain Has a black 'anchor' or upside down mushroom shape in the centre of her face. The black markings on her abdomen are often shallow when compared to the german wasp. She has yellow cheeks with a dark mark in the middle. There are 6 spots on her back and the middle ones almost meet in the centre.

Cuckoo wasp *Vespula austriaca*
Parasitises the red wasp by killing the queen and getting the workers to raise her own larvae, cuckoo wasps have no workers and the queens look very much like red wasps. A key feature is central plate of the face which has indentations and downward pointing projections like a moustache.