

ASIAN GIANT HORNET, NOW KNOWN AS NORTHERN GIANT HORNET

On July 25, the Entomological Society of America officially changed the common name of *Vespa mandarinia* to northern giant hornet.

In December 2019, the Washington State Department of Agriculture confirmed four reports of the northern giant hornet (*Vespa mandarinia*) in their state. The Washington state reports were the first confirmed sightings in the United States. Canada also discovered northern giant hornet at two locations in British Columbia in the fall of 2019.

The northern giant hornet will attack and destroy honeybee hives. A few hornets can destroy a hive in a few hours. The hornets will decapitate adult honeybees in the hive and take the bee larvae to feed their own young. When provoked, the northern giant hornets are known to sting humans.

At this time, the northern giant hornet is not known to occur in Virginia. While the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) has received numerous reports of the northern giant hornet in Virginia, all reported sightings were species that are similar in appearance to the northern giant hornet, but not the northern giant hornet.

For more information on the identification of the northern giant hornet and other species that are similar in appearance to the northern giant hornet, please visit the Virginia Tech Department of Entomology website at https://www.ento.vt.edu/News/Asian_Giant_Hornet.html

It is unlikely that the northern giant hornet is now in Virginia. If you suspect that you have found the northern giant hornet, please contact your local Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Agent at <https://ext.vt.edu/offices.html> or contact VDACS at ReportAPest@vdacs.virginia.gov.