

Paper wasps

*Polistes spp**

KEY FEATURES

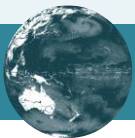
Asian paper wasp



European paper wasp



- Two species of paper wasps are of concern around the Pacific region
- Asian paper wasps have slender 13mm-25mm reddish brown to black bodies with yellow rings and reddish areas on abdomen. Their wings are reddish or amber brown and they have long legs that especially noticeable in flight when they hang down
- European paper wasps are a little larger (20-25 mm long), and the body is black and yellow
- They live in a wide range of habitats, including woodland, shrubland, grassland and agricultural, urban and suburban areas.
- European paper wasps build nests using paper and saliva
- The Asian paper wasp frequently constructs its nest on man-made structures such as houses or other buildings, or in trees or bushes, usually on the branches, but sometimes on stems and leaves. Often nests are hidden inside dense shrubs, making them difficult to locate

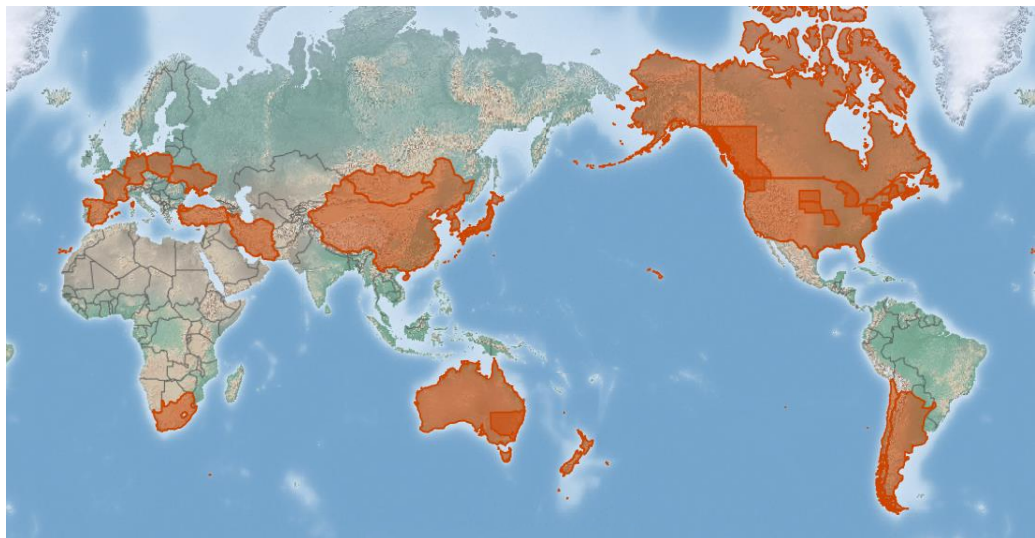


PATHWAYS

✓ shipping

✓ bulk freight/cargoes

Present



Paper wasps

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IMPACTS



Environment

The Asia paper wasp eats insects and so competes with other insect eaters. This can have a flow on effect to ecosystem like pollination



Health

Both species can sting people, who can suffer allergic reactions. European paper wasp spreads yeast and fungi that damage fruit and may adversely affect people who work in those environments



Society & Culture

The Asian paper wasp is a nuisance, stinging people when it is disturbed and making nests on houses



Economy

European paper wasp is a common pest in fruit orchards and spreads yeast and fungi that damage fruit

DISTRIBUTION

Ranges Spain, France, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Turkey, Iran, China, Mongolia, Japan, Korean peninsula, United States and Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Hawai'i(?), Argentina, Chile, South Africa

ADDITIONAL NOTES

* This factsheet describes two closely related species, the Asian paper wasp (*Polistes chinensis*), and the European paper wasp (*Polistes dominula*). They have similar impacts and look similar. As their native and introduced ranges all differ, the entire range of both species is described here

INFORMATION SOURCES (click links for more)

Images Asian paper wasp © Philip Spradbery via CABI, European paper wasp © Garnhami CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikipedia and © Bramfab CC BY 2.5 via Wikipedia

Text and map *Polistes chinensis* (Asian paper wasp) – CABI <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/42745>
Polistes dominula (European paper wasp) – CABI <https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/42750>