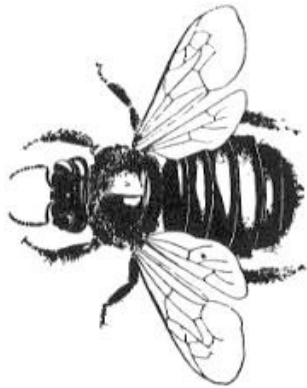


CARPENTER BEE

Hymenoptera: Anthophoridae, *Xylocopa virginica*

by Eric Day



Carpenter Bee, (USDA)

SIZE: Up to 1 1/2 inches (38mm)

COLOR: Dark-colored

DESCRIPTION: Carpenter bees are large bees, resembling bumblebees. They are heavy-bodied and metallic blue-black with green or purplish highlights. The bodies are covered with bright yellow or orange hairs.

HABITAT: These insects build their nests in wood siding, the ends of logs used in modern log houses, or other areas where bare or painted wood is exposed.

LIFE CYCLE: The males and females cut a one-half inch

circular hole into the wood, then create a tunnel parallel to the surface of the wood. Within the tunnel the female stores food and lays eggs. The developing carpenter bee larvae are in individual cells in the tunnel. There is usually only one generation per year.

TYPE OF DAMAGE: Cut holes in wood; yellow sawdust containing waste materials leaves unsightly stains.

CONTROL: Spraying the entrance hole with an aerosol insecticide and plugging it with wood putty to prevent adults from returning can achieve control of these insects.

INTERESTING FACTS: Females are quite docile, although they can sting. Males are aggressive, but cannot sting.



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Carpenter bee and entrance hole. Photo: Johnny N. Dell, Bugwood.org