Pest Profile

Photo credit: Jim Kalisch, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Entomology Extension

Common Name: Carpenter bee

Scientific Name: *Xylocopa* spp. (Large carpenter bees)

Order and Family: Hymenoptera, Apidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg		
Larva/Nymph		
Adult	Varies by species 0.5 – 25 mm	• robust and resemble bumble bees • dorsal surface of the abdomen is primarily base and glossy • *X. virginica* – black with yellow hair on its thorax and first abdominal segment. • Other species may be black, metallic green, or purple, with various shades of cream, yellow, or light-red areas of hair. • The valley carpenter bee exhibits a distinct color dimorphism where in the female is metallic black and the male is golden brown.
Pupa (if applicable)		

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Chewing-lapping mouthparts.

Host plant/s: They infest a wide range of hardwoods and softwoods, particularly when the wood is weathered. Eastern species of carpenter bees seem to prefer dead, sound wood of bald cypress, eastern white pine, and southern yellow pine. Western species of carpenter bees often nest in oak, eucalyptus, and redwood.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Adult carpenter bees are important pollinators because they visit blossoms of many trees and flowers, consuming pollen and nectar. Typically, they are simply a nuisance pest in and around structures because of their conspicuous entry holes in wood, the saw-dust displaced from their nest, and the yellowish to brownish streaks of excrement deposited on surfaces below entry holes. In natural settings, female carpenter bees excavate nests only in dead, dry wood. However, they do attack structural timbers and other wood products, including fence posts, utility poles, firewood, and lawn furniture, when available. In buildings, carpenter bees most commonly occur in bare wood associated with headers, roof eaves, siding, shingles, shutters, porch ceilings, windowsills, and doors.

Reference:

Gold, R. E., & Jones, S. C. (2000). *Handbook of household and structural insect pests*. Entomological Society of America.

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