Insect Pollinator Identification Quick Guide

FOR COASTAL GEORGIA

CARPENTER BEE





- Very large bee with hairy thorax (where wings are attached).
- Hairless and glossy abdomen ("shiny hiney").
- Black, thick body with black or yellow bands.
- Pollen-collecting hair spread over back legs (versus basket of bumble bee).
- Large eyes and head compared to bumble bee.
- Wings often spread wide when at rest.

BUMBLE BEE





- Large to medium bees, hairy over entire, thick body.
- Black with yellow and black stripes or orangey brown; males have more variable coloration.
- Long, slender elbowed antennae.
- Distinctly separated thorax and abdomen.
- Pollen-collecting "basket" with stiff hair on hind legs (females).

HONEY BEE





- Medium sized; smaller than carpenter or bumble bee.
- Light hairs over dark thorax (where wings are attached).
- Torpedo shaped.
- Brown or black striped abdomen (stripes can be hard to see on darker ones).
- Carry pollen in "basket" on hind legs (flattened areas with stiff hairs).
- Distinctly separate thorax and abdomen.

SMALL BEES





- Smaller than the honey bee.
- Can be "fuzzy" to scarcely hairy.
- Body color and hair color varies greatly.
- Can be slender to somewhat wide.
- Four wings.
- Long, slender antennae.
- Distinctly separated thorax and abdomen.

WASPS





- Small to large, shiny, long, slim pointed body with distinct narrow waist; some have very long waist.
- Generally smooth and hairless with little or no pollen on body.
- Long antennae, wings typically long and thin.
- Long, thin legs, some with spines.
- Some fold forewings lengthwise when at rest, making them look more narrow.
- Eyes long and oval shaped at side of head; head triangular or tear-shaped.

FLIES





- Some are bee mimics, but typically not as hairy.
- Large eyes often forward-facing, covering most of their head.
- Variable antennae, often short and stubby antennae ("V") from middle of face.
- Thick waist compared to bees and wasps.
- Two wings (versus four wings in bees and wasps) frequently held in a "V" when at rest.
- Skinny legs, little or no pollen, head round and large.

BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS





- Wings held high above body (tent shape) for butterflies versus held flat along body for moths.
- Antennae with knob at end (butterfly) versus simple or feathery ending in a fine point (moths).
- Long proboscis to suck up nectar.
- Typically bright colors, but maybe light or subdued.

OTHER INSECTS (beetles, lacewings, dragonflies and others)





- Beetles often have a round to oval body shape.
- Hard front wing covers with hindwings often hidden in adults (larvae are grublike).
- Antennae are often long and slender or clubbed at tips.
- Chewing mouthparts, typically short flights, huge variety of colors and sizes.
- Unlike other groups above, bugs change gradually from nymph stage to adult (adult has fully developed wings), long narrow piercing mouthparts, wings may be soft or hard.