

# 'Murder Hornet' comes to North America

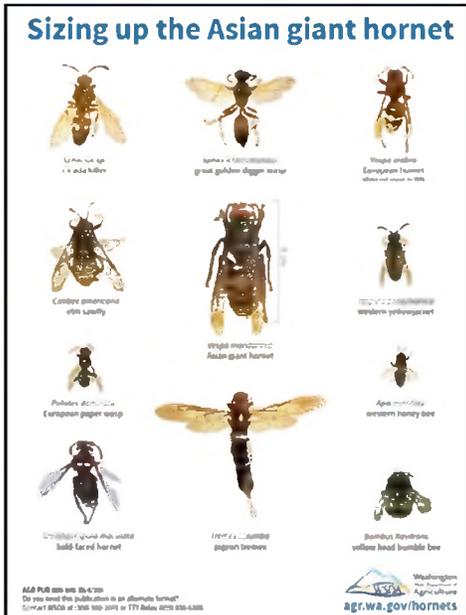
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Queen Asian hornets can grow up to two inches long. Asian giant hornets have sharp spiked mandibles that they use to prey upon bees. They feed their young with the thoraxes from the carnage they leave behind. Unfortunately for humans, the murder hornet has a long and powerful enough stinger to pierce through beekeeping suits.

Scientists have now embarked on a full force fight to stop the hornets from spreading throughout the United States any further. "This is our window to keep it from establishing," said Chris Looney, an entomologist at the Washington State Department of Agriculture. "If we can't do it in the next couple of years, it probably can't be done."

Washington state beekeepers are now resorting to making their own traps, in an effort to ward off the invasive insect. "Most people are scared to get stung by them," Ms. Danielsen, a beekeeper, said. "We're scared that they are going to totally destroy our hives."

Everyone knows that the bee is one of the most important creatures on earth, as they pollinate plants. Without our dutiful pollinators, life would cease to exist on Earth. The invasion of the Asian murder hornet is just the newest struggle in maintaining the bee population and ensuring that they survive.



A chart from the Washington State Department of Agriculture comparing the size of the Asian Murder Hornet to other, similar-looking insects.

# NASA and SpaceX soon to take off

By Lande Simpson  
Staff Writer

NASA recently announced that SpaceX will launch astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley to the International Space Station on May 27, launching from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. This will be the first rocket that takes astronauts into space from the United States in almost nine years. It will also be the first SpaceX launch with humans aboard in 18 years of the program. But, unfortunately, due to the pandemic, there will not be any spectators along the beach of Cape Canaveral, or any sort of viewing sights to watch the spaceship take off.

Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley had experience on shuttle missions in the past, but this is the first time NASA has put anyone into space through a private company to go to the International Space Station. Statistically, it is said to be a riskier mission since this type of spaceship has yet to go into space with humans in it. And it is very different than the spaceships the two have operated in the past.

But the two have high hopes and are confident. NASA has stated that the pandemic is forcing them to make adjustments to ensure the safety of their astronauts and everyone else.

They want to prevent the virus from spreading among crew members, the astronauts and other NASA employees. Behnken and Hurley entered their pre-flight quarantine a bit earlier to ensure no foreign pathogens would affect them and that they do not have COVID-19. These procedures are most important now more than ever because Behnken and Hurley cannot risk spreading the virus (most importantly) or anything else to the crew members already aboard the laboratory, or at the International Space Station.

Behnken and Hurley are expected to spend up to 110 days in space, but this timeline could change based on the readiness of the International Space Station for the next launch. Upon the two's return, once Behnken and Hurley have gotten back into Earth's atmosphere, they are expected to land in the Atlantic Ocean off of the coast of Florida.



Astronauts Robert L. Behnken (left) and Douglas G. Hurley (right) prepare for a test flight.