

A Bug's Life Cicada killer wasp

Sphecius speciosus

Fun facts

- Largest wasps in NE
- Active late June to Sept when cicadas are out
- Intimidating, but not aggressive
- Nest underground in loose soils, full sun, sometimes adjacent to plants, pavement and retaining walls
- In large numbers can cause damage to landscape with nest building

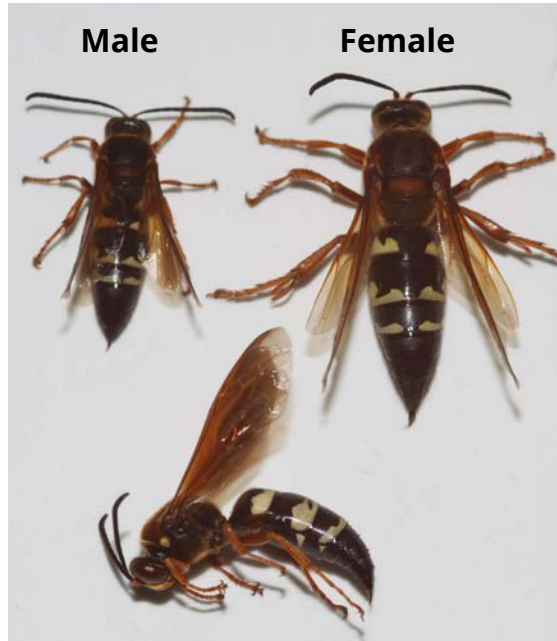
Identification

Nest: Underground burrow marked by mound of excavated soil with U-shaped entry/exit hole

Wasp: Large wasps 1¼" to 1¾" long, black hairless body with 3 bright yellow broken bands on abdomen, visible stinger, rust-colored legs, wings and eyes

Management

- Keep area excessively wet to deter nesting in specific location
- Chemical treatment consists of treating each nest with insecticidal dust or spray
- Not a sting risk, but avoid handling wasps or stepping on with bare feet



Photos: J. Green