



## How to Find an Underground Yellowjacket Nest

Locating underground yellowjacket nests can be a challenge that requires time and lots of patience, but it can be done. Yellowjackets look for food close to their nest - usually within 1,000 feet. Yellowjackets often make their nests underground in an abandoned gopher hole but are also known to nest in wood piles, dense vegetation (like Italian cypress and ivy), utility vaults, and other enclosed spaces.

The best time to look is after the day has warmed up - usually after 10 a.m. - when the yellowjackets are actively flying in and out of their nest. Yellowjackets are most active between 10 am and 4 pm, weather dependent. If the weather is too cold or too hot, yellowjacket activity will be a little sluggish. Sometimes the late afternoon sun can work in your favor, increasing your ability to see their "bee line". Begin by searching the ground around your home for holes. Watch for yellowjackets flying in and out (often along a constant "bee line") or a cluster of yellowjackets "guarding" an opening. If you are lucky enough to find an active nest on your first go-round, don't stop there, continue checking the rest of your property as there may be more nests.

Continue walking in a circular pattern around your property, expanding your search area with each pass. Be careful where you step and be aware that the vibrations from your footsteps may agitate underground colonies causing them to become defensive and aggressive. If this method does not work, you can try to locate the nest by placing a piece of meat on the ground and waiting for a yellowjacket to take a piece. They do not eat the meat themselves, but take it back to their nest to feed the larvae (young yellowjackets). Once a yellowjacket picks up a piece of meat, your job is to follow it back to its nest. This method can be time consuming and requires patience because yellowjackets don't always fly in a straight line back to their nest, but is well worth the time and energy if you do find the nest. If there's an established attraction (water in a birdbath, uncovered trash can, blooming flowers, decaying fruit, etc.) that the yellowjackets are already using, use that in place of the meat bait method.

Once you find the underground nest, mark it so that it can be re-found easily by one of our technicians. **DO NOT place the marker directly on or in the nest as it could easily agitate the yellowjackets.** Once the nest is marked, call our office at 707-285-2200 or [submit a service request](#) online.

Remember, we only treat underground yellowjacket nests and we do it for free! If you find a structural nest (one that is attached to a structure or in the wall of a structure) contact your local pest control operator.