

Bugs you might need to be scared of!



•**American Oil Beetle:** This inky black beetle is related to the blister beetle family. If you see one, leave it alone, because if you make this little beetle angry it can spray you with a chemical called cantharidin, which will cause your skin to blister.

•**Bald-faced Hornet:** The black and white bald-faced hornet isn't a hornet at all. It is related to the yellow jackets. The bald-faced hornet makes a ball shaped, gray paper nest with a hole at the bottom. If you see the nest, stay back. Like yellow jackets, the bald-faced hornet is extremely aggressive. If you make the hive angry, you will soon be surrounded by a whirlwind of angry stingers. Unlike honeybees, they can sting you multiple times and use their sharp mandibles to bite and tear your skin.

•**Black Widow Spider:** If you see an inky black spider with a red hourglass on the abdomen, you might want to stay back. Her bite is where the danger lies. Black widow venom packs neurotoxins, which mess up your central nervous system. If you get bit by a black widow, you should always seek medical attention.

•**Carpenter Ant:** Carpenter ants are not threatening to you. It is your house that is in danger. Carpenter ants make their homes in wood. If they get into your house, they will make their home in your walls. They carve out tunnels and galleries until your home becomes unstable.



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•**The Cow Killer:** This large insect is also called the eastern velvet ant. It is big and covered in black and red hairs. It isn't an ant, but a solitary wasp. Even though its sting isn't deadly, it is said to be one of the most painful insect stings in America. No wonder they call it the cow killer.



•**Giant Water Bug:** This insect lives in the water. It has massive mandibles. Its first line of defense is to play dead. If you keep bothering it after its first line of defense, it will bite you with those powerful mandibles and inject you with a mixture of digestive enzymes. Even though its bite is not deadly, it is considered to be one of the most painful insect bites in the world.



•**Saddleback Caterpillar:** Caterpillars are supposed to be cute and harmless, right? Unfortunately, the saddleback caterpillar breaks the rules. It looks like a saddle, but it also has tiny hairs on its body, each one is a painful barb. If you decide to touch one, the barbs get into your skin and can create a terrible, itchy rash. In Virginia, not even caterpillars are safe.



•**Assassin Bug** They may be little, but they are vicious. They use their strong beaks to stab their prey to death...repeatedly...and violently..then they suck their body fluids out. And, while they are non-venomous, they can leave a pretty uncomfortable bite on humans.