



Class Insecta, Insects

Order Hymenoptera, Ants, bees, and wasps

Hymenoptera means “membraneous wings.” The hind wings are smaller than the front wings and have a row of tiny hooks, hamuli, that attach the two wings. There are two suborders. The smaller suborder includes sawflies and horntails, which are phytophagous. Bees, wasps, and ants belong to the larger suborder, which includes nectar, pollen, and insect feeders. Hymenoptera is the second largest group of insects, most of which are beneficial. These insects undergo complete metamorphosis and have complex behaviors. Most parasitic wasps do not sting humans. All hymenopterans have chewing mouthparts.

Scelionid wasps

Family Scelionidae

Description and life history: Adult scelionids are usually less than 1 mm long. However, just as the eggs of their hosts come in a variety of shapes and sizes, so do the parasitoids themselves. They are quite diverse in body form, some being relatively large and elongate while others are small, wingless and almost round.

Prey species: Scelionids are internal parasitoids of insect and spider eggs, especially those of true bugs and moths. *Telenomus* and *Trissolcus* are important genera for biological control. *Trissolcus basalus* is an important and effective parasitoid of the southern green stinkbug, *Nezara viridula*.



Scelionid wasp adult parasitoid of bug eggs. (351)

Photo: John Davidson