



Interaction with humans

Although cicada killers are large, female cicada killer wasps are not aggressive and rarely sting unless they are grasped roughly, stepped upon with bare feet, or caught in clothing, etc. One author who has been stung indicates that, for him, the stings are not much more than a "pinprick".^[2] Males aggressively defend their perching areas on nesting sites against rival males but they have no sting. Although they appear to attack anything that moves near their territories, male cicada killers are actually investigating anything that might be a female cicada killer ready to mate. Such close inspection appears to many people to be an attack, but male and female cicada killers do not land on people and attempt to sting. If handled roughly, females will sting, and males will jab with a sharp spine on the tip of their abdomen. Both sexes are well equipped to bite, as they have large jaws; however, they do not appear to grasp human skin and bite. They are generally non-aggressive towards humans and usually fly away when swatted at, instead of attacking.



A male eastern cicada killer guarding its territory and looking for females with which to mate