

CANNIBALISM IN *POLISTES* PAPER WASPS

Summary

Cannibalism is a common phenomenon among paper wasps. This phenomenon is defined as eating animals belonging to the same species. In paper wasps, such relationships — preceded by killing — can occur both between separate colonies as well as within a single colony. Apart from typical larvae cannibalism, in paper wasps a particular type of

cannibalism, called oophagy, can be distinguished. The larvae are cannibalised in the early part of the season to accelerate emergence of the first workers, and in the final part when a declining group of workers cannot provide enough food for the whole colony.