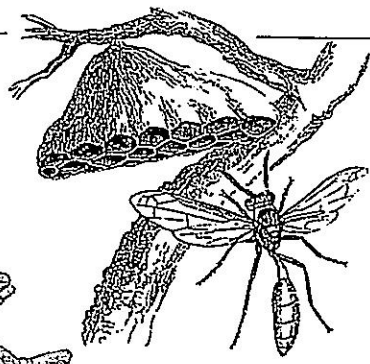


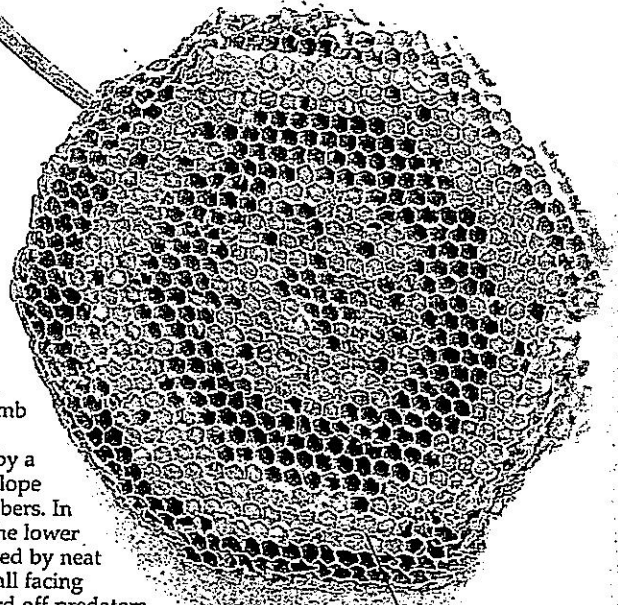
Nest of *Polybia scutellaris* from South America



**HOME PROTECTION**

These wasps (*Apoica pallida*) build a simple, open nest with one comb of cells. The upper surface is protected by a conelike outer envelope made from plant fibers. In its natural state, the lower surface is protected by neat rows of wasps, all facing outward to ward off predators with an array of eyes and antennae — and the ever-ready stings.

Spiny outer casing is made of chewed plant fibers



Brood cells containing developing grubs

Entrance to nest

**DRUMMERS' HOME**  
This simple nest with a single comb is built flat against a tree branch and enclosed in a ridged envelope made from chewed plant fibers. It is produced by a swarm of wasps that is thought to include several queens.

These metallic blue wasps (*Synoaeca surinama*) are among the largest social wasps in South America, with a powerful and painful sting. They fly quietly, but when annoyed they drum on the inside of their nest, producing a warning sound.

**WINTER PROTECTION**  
Some *Polybia scutellaris* nests have been known to exist for 30 years, and the thick, spiny envelope may be important in protecting the wasps through the cooler winters of southern South America.

Mouthlike entrance