



# Wasp Nest of Genus *Parachartergus*

Ruta Senahu to Telemán,  
Alta Verapaz, Guatemala

Photos by Franklin Xol,  
Text by Nicholas Hellmuth

FLAAR Reports, FLAAR (USA) and FLAAR Mesoamerica (Guatemala),

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This nest is not very thick—it is more “tall” than wide or thick. These nests are wrapped around a narrow tree trunk instead of being affixed to a wide tree trunk. So these wasps are able to adapt their nest to the width of the tree trunk that the queen has selected.

There are hundreds of articles and web pages on *Parachartergus* wasps. One web page of interest is by Jim Conrad: <https://www.backyardnature.net/yucatan/pred-bee.htm>

Fig. 1.







The parallel ridges on this wasp nest make it easy to recognize the genus of wasps that has this exterior design: *Parachartergus*. We discuss the two potential species on the following page.

All photos are by Franklin Xol because the wasps attacked Byron Pacay. He estimates that the deodorant that he used resulted in a chemical odor that these wasps could detect—to home in on Byron to sting him. But Franklin cleverly used no deodorant that day and the wasps did not attack him as quickly as they went after Byron.

We photographed a wasp nest of identical size and shape, on a tree of the same species, on March 17<sup>th</sup> that is pictured in FLAAR Reports for that day.

Fig. 2, a and b.





Map by  
Byron  
Pacay.

The nest is  
listed for  
10:51am.

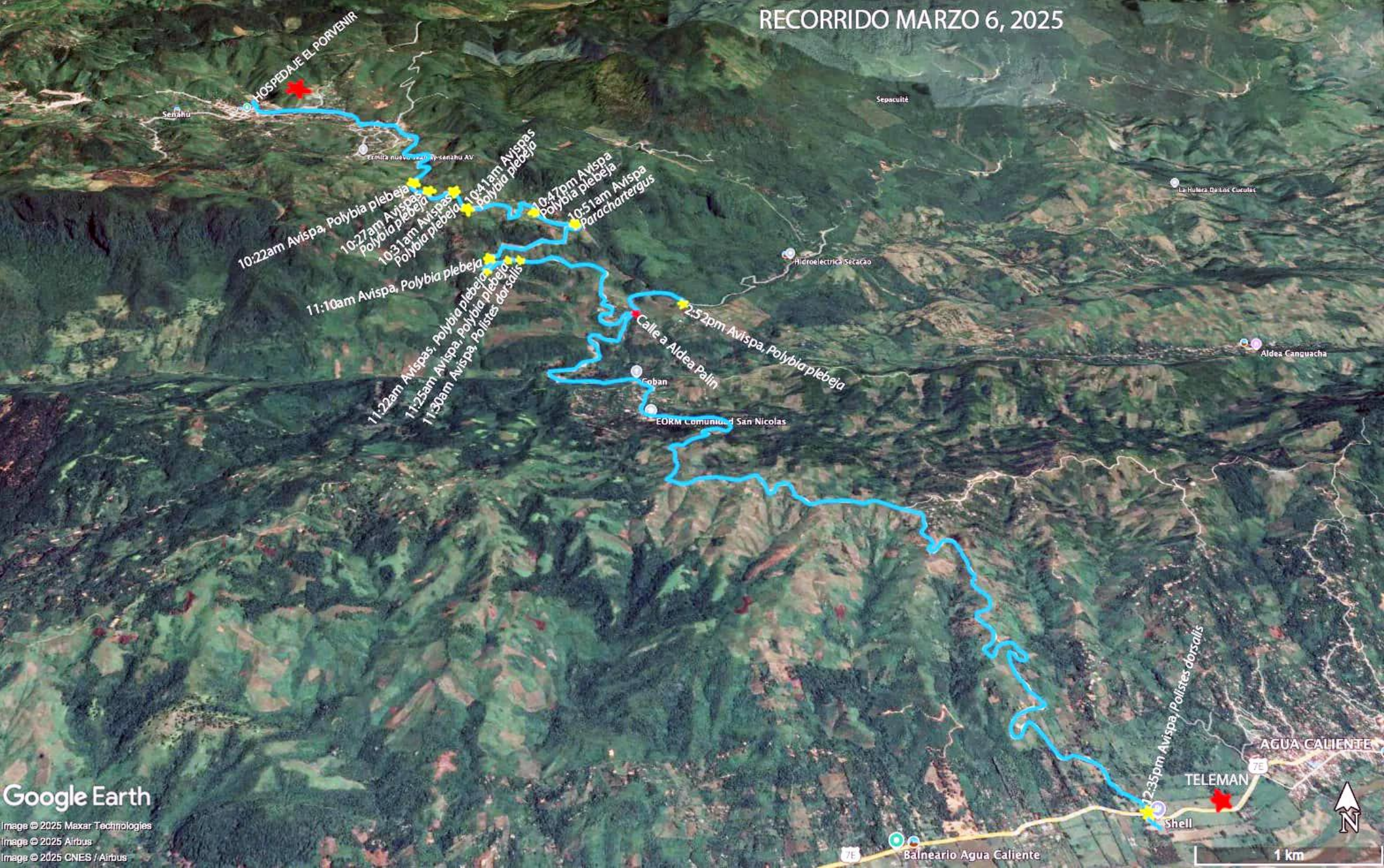


Fig. 3.

Google Earth

Image © 2025 Maxar Technologies

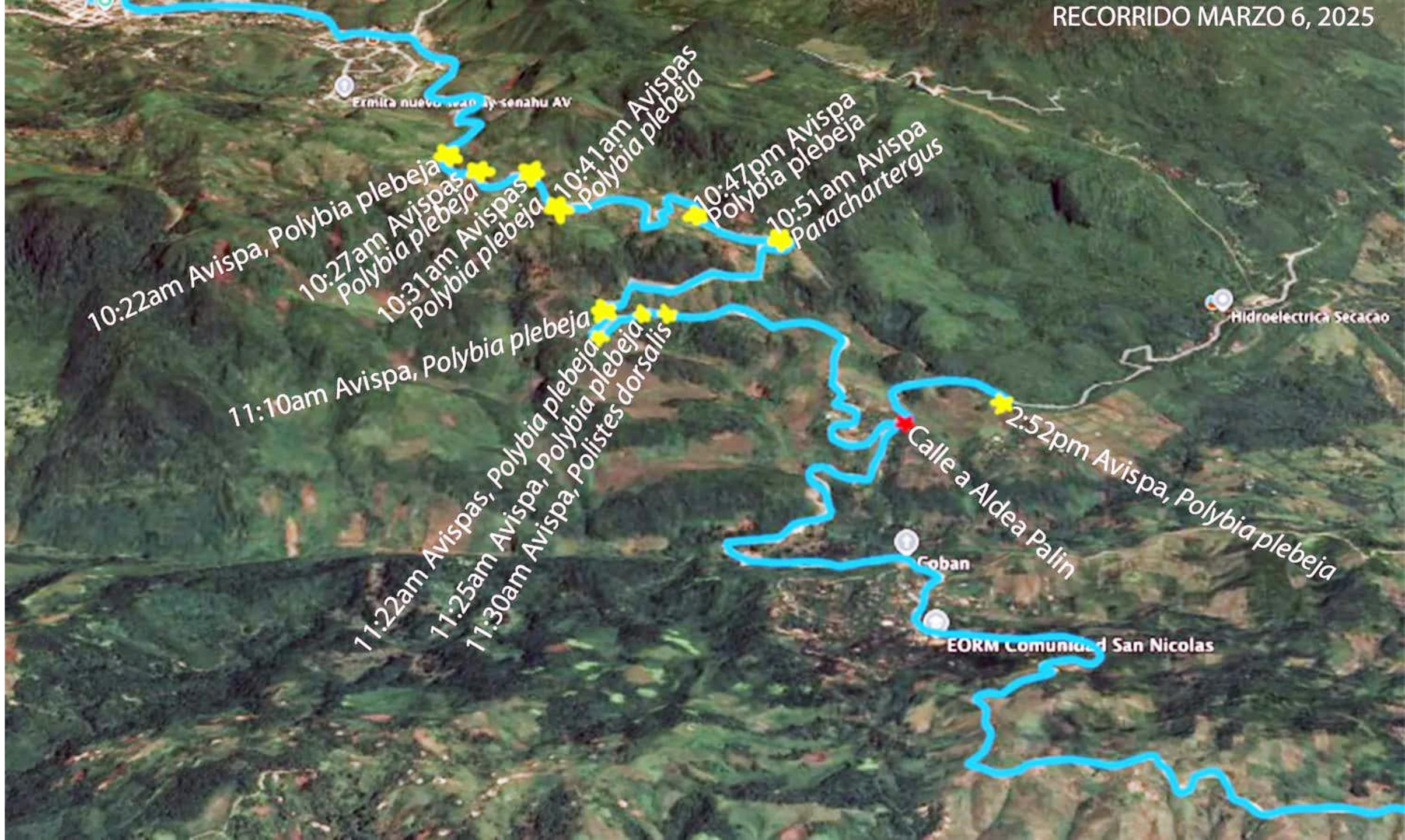
Image © 2025 Airbus

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Map by  
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# Concluding Comments on which species this may be

When you ask Google what species of genus *Parachartergus* are in Guatemala, their AI Overview says: The two confirmed species of the genus *Parachartergus* found in Guatemala are *Parachartergus apicalis* and *Parachartergus fraternus*. When you look in an inventory by experienced wasp entomologists you are told *Parachartergus apicalis* (Fabricius 1804) and *Parachartergus aztecus* Willink 1959 (Carpenter, Garcete and Freire 2012: Appendix 1, page 279).

*Parachartergus apicalis* has been documented for Departamento de Guatemala, Alta Verapaz, Suchitepequez, Escuintla and Izabal ([biodiversidad.gt/portal/](http://biodiversidad.gt/portal/)). This wasp has white area on the end portion of its wings ([inaturalist.org](http://inaturalist.org)) and their nest has horizontal ridges (like we found in Alta Verapaz). Several nests pictured on [inaturalist.org](http://inaturalist.org).

*Parachartergus fraternus* has no results in Portal de Biodiversidad de Guatemala. Has same wandering parallel ridges ([inaturalist](http://inaturalist.org)) on nest as *P. apicalis*. Wikipedia says they are not very aggressive and do not attack when their nest is approached.

*Parachartergus aztecus* has no results in Portal de Biodiversidad de Guatemala (but is listed by Carpenter et al. but [iNaturalist.org](http://iNaturalist.org) lacks adequate photos).

Since *Parachartergus apicalis* is listed for Guatemala and very common in many areas of Guatemala, including Alta Verapaz, we estimate that the wasp nest found and photographed by the FLAAR Mesoamerica team is most likely *Parachartergus apicalis*. If you Google is "*Parachartergus apicalis*" aggressive? You are told by AI Overview, "Yes, *Parachartergus apicalis* wasps are known for their aggressive behavior. They are described as very aggressive, especially the large black species with white wing tips."

Although over a decade in the past (meaning that today in 2025 there should helpfully be more documentation on wasps in Guatemala), we recommend the following chapter on wasps of Guatemala, especially since it's easily available on-line:

CARPENTER, James Michael, GARCETE Battett, Bolivar Rafael and Joseph Aledander FREIRE

2012      Las Vespidae (Hymenoptera: Vespoidea) de Guatemala. Chapter, pages 269-279 in Biodiversidad de Guatemala, Volumen 2, Universidad del Valle de Guatemala.

Available as helpful download from ResearchGate and elsewhere.

## Aknowledgements

The itinerary of this field trip was organized by Senaida Ba and her husband Franklin Xol, since they both live in Senahu. Franklin is a Tuk Tuk driver when not working for FLAAR Mesoamerica, so for this field trip the team rented a Tuk Tuk and Franklin drove them. Byron Pacay assists on all field trips plus he is a good photographer with our Google Pixel 8 Pro. Byron also prepares the highway maps to show where and at what hour we stopped to photograph each wasp nest.

We sincerely appreciate the assistance of the Q'eqchi' Maya guides that told us which areas had wasp nests with edible honey.