The first signs of spring were a welcoming sight in the Patterson home.
With the sun brightly shining and the flowers beginning to take on vibrant colors, I ripped my porch door open to take in all the wonders of the new season.
Taking a deep breath, I almost skipped outside onto the side porch.
That mood quickly changed when an angry red wasp came flying at my face.
I immediately ran back into the kitchen, slamming the door behind me. I felt ridiculous and trapped as the wasp kept hitting the window of my kitchen door.
Yes, spring is back with her warm temperatures, colorful flowers, hearty plants and perfect fishing weather. But with it comes those pesky wasps, rampant pollen and frisky snakes.
I know the good Lord gave everything a purpose in life. Bees must pollinate. That storm of pollen helps continue the growth of those beautiful plants and other vegetation.
But what in the heck does a wasp do?
I asked my friend, who is an animal lover, that one day. She is one of these people who would never wear fur. She only eats vegetables. And she uses special soaps and other beauty items made of organic products. It's safe to say, she loves animals.
"They don't do anything but swarm at you and sting you," I said, looking around to make sure one wasn't planning an attack. "I mean, the first sign of warm weather and they come out like an army. Swooping and diving at you. What is their real purpose in life other than to annoy me?"
She looked at me like I had a disease. To her, it must have been a stupid question.
"They happen to be effective predators of other insect species," she said, with an eyebrow raise. "They are very helpful with our local farmers because they also hunt many crop pests. Some even pollinate."
Predators was the right word to use. Her answer still didn't satisfy me.
"Well, I have never seen them controlling any pest population," I said. "I have only seen them speeding toward my face, making a nest in the corners of my porch or hanging around my car door when I am ready to go somewhere."
I told myself I was going to less frightened of them this year. My husband Jason makes fun of my reactions to them so I thought I could control it.
It hasn't worked out yet.
We must have had some wasps hibernating in our attic over the winter season because they are really starting to come out in our house.
A few days ago, I really put on a show when I saw eight wasps coming out of the vent over our dining room.

“Good heavens,” I shouted, running around the house like I was on fire.
Jason came running out of the bedroom, thinking someone must be breaking into the house.
The funny thing about my “fight or flight” routine is that I never stop moving. Nervously walking around Jason and waving my dish rag in the air, I told him the wasps were coming out of the vent.
“Just calm down,” Jason said. “There is no need to get hysterical.”
I never really heard him because I was running into the kitchen, throwing my rag around myself to keep them from landing on me.
Within seconds, Jason had taken all eight of them down with a fly swatter.
But before he could announce his victory, I came running into the dining room with a can of wasp spray. I literally sprayed the entire room with this poisonous gas, hoping to take out every wasp.
I never intended to take out my own husband. Struggling to breathe and coughing, Jason told me to quit spraying immediately.
“You got a film all over the dining room table,” he said. “We can’t eat off that for days until you clean it off. And the floor is just as slick from it too. Baby Elsie can’t crawl near this stuff.”
I admit I overdid it with the spray. I don’t mean to but I usually empty a whole can on one wasp. Then I get a lecture about how the stuff “costs five dollars a can.”
We opened all the windows and turned on some fans to try to get the stench and the poison out of our house.
I hate to admit it, but I do the same thing every time Jason is not at home. I have to spend a good portion of my time getting rid of the evidence before he returns.
I must not be the only wife who has a problem with spraying down wasps. Go to every dollar store in town and tell me if you can find a can of wasp spray right now. They sell out as soon as they hit the shelves. Even Little Yazoo Grocery was sold out.
With big plans to work on the yard this weekend, I need to stock up on my own supply.
I would like to get out there and get my flower beds ready or clean my pots out for a new season.
But every time I go to the door, those wasps are waiting. They’re always right by the door.
They seem to hate Jason because they never go near him. He can be in the yard working all day, and they never approach him.
I go to check the mail, and I feel like I am in a World War II movie dodging enemy aircraft. Our neighbors probably think I am crazy when they see my bob and weave routine back to the house.
I have a few more days to work my nerves up.
But I fear it’s gonna be one long summer.