

BEETRONICS

Vezzpa Octave Stinger

More wasp than bee – this is an aggressive fuzz with a sting in its tail

Words Trevor Curwen Photography Olly Curtis

Beetronics has a history of octave fuzz pedals with its standard series Octahive high-octave fuzz and Whoctahell low-octave fuzz. Now the California-based company has introduced an octave fuzz pedal into its Babe series of smaller-format pedals.

A compact wedge-shaped pedal with its knobs on the front edge, the Vezzpa (crossing the species barrier to be named after a wasp) has an op-amp at the heart of the action and features two different sounds: Fuzzzz mode is the pedal's standard fuzz, while Stinger adds an aggressive high octave. The volume knob has plenty beyond unity gain if you need a bit of a boost when the pedal is kicked in, and the intensity of the effect is adjusted with the Sustain knob.

Fuzzzz mode gives you sputtery gated fuzz – it's fat and sustain-y, but the gate cuts in more quickly at lower levels of the sustain knob and with lower guitar volume. This means you can roll your volume knob back for more staccato notes and sputter to a point that sounds like the pedal is about to die on you.

Stinger is something else again. You can turn your guitar volume down to achieve some faux sitar sounds, but it's when it's full-on that the high octave really sings out – especially so if you switch to your neck pickup and play up the neck. It offers an aggressively edgy sound, which you can expressively exploit with harmonics that take off as you sustain notes.

These are sounds that you can truly kick in for effect, something that can be exploited during live performances by the pedal's hi-tech footswitching system. Besides normal one-click latching action, the pedal also provides a momentary action – as long as you hold the switch down, the effect will be active, and that's great for bringing in that high octave for certain notes or passages. In addition to that, when the effect is already engaged, a double-click will switch between the Fuzzzz and Stinger modes, while a hold will momentarily swap the modes. It's easy to get the hang of the sharp switching needed, but if you're not quite comfortable with this method then there's a Lazy Bee mode for slower reactions.



VERDICT

Distinctive sound and some nifty footswitching options to add emphasis in performance make this an innovative and characterful addition to your fuzz locker. **G**

PROS Very compact size; two distinctive sounds; versatile footswitching action

CONS Front-mounted knobs and glitchiness of Fuzzzz mode won't suit everybody

ALSO TRY...



DANELECTRO

3699 £159

An updated version of the vintage Foxx Tone Machine, this features a standard bypass footswitch and another to bring the octave in. There are also two different midrange settings.



RED BEARD EFFECTS

Honey Badger £199

An aggressive fuzz with footswitchable octave: this time, though, you get lower octave action with either -2 or -1 octaves down or a blend of the two courtesy of the Divide knob.



WAMPLER

Fuzztration £189

With a footswitchable octave that can be pre- or post-fuzz, this is a versatile pedal that offers a choice of two distinct fuzz voices and separate bass, middle and treble controls.

Tech Spec

ORIGIN: USA

TYPE: Octave fuzz pedal

FEATURES: True Bypass, 2x modes, smart footswitch, Lazy Bee and Fast Bee options for footswitching sharpness

CONTROLS: Volume, Sustain, Bypass footswitch

CONNECTIONS: Standard input, standard output

POWER: 9V DC adaptor (not supplied) 36mA

DIMENSIONS: 57 (w) x 114 (d) x 57mm (h)

**Guitarist
CHOICE**

9/10

