

BUMBLEBEE IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

Buff-tailed bumblebee *Bombus terrestris*



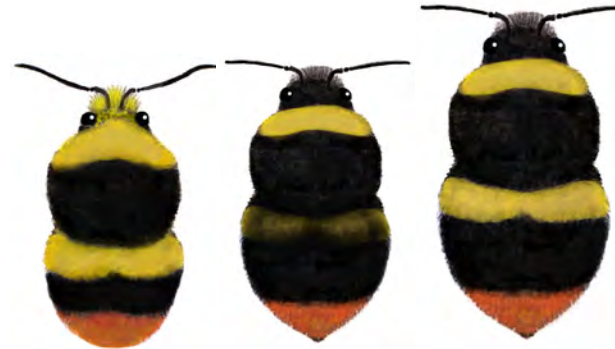
Worker/male

Queen



Has a dirty/golden yellow collar near the head and one on the abdomen. The queen's tail is an off white/buff colour which can sometimes appear orange. The workers have a white tail with a subtle buff line separating the tail from the rest of the abdomen. Males have black facial hair, as opposed to yellow, and a buff-tinged tail.

Early bumblebee *Bombus pratorum*



Male

Worker

Queen



Queens and males have two strong yellow bands, but workers often only have one. The tail is dark orange-red, but fades over time. The Early bumblebee is particularly small. Males have a broad yellow collar and yellow hair on the face.

White-tailed bumblebee *Bombus lucorum*



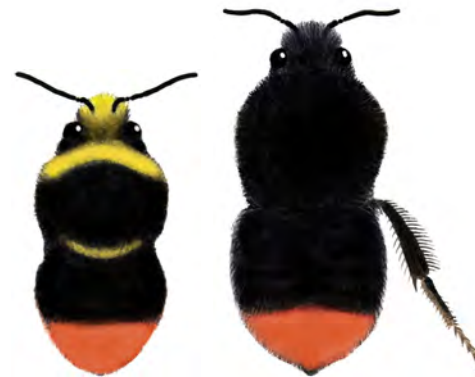
Male

Queen/worker



Queens, workers and males have a yellow band on the thorax and on the abdomen. On a fresh specimen, the tail is a bright white and the yellow bands are a bright lemon-yellow colour. The males have yellow hair on their head, and extra tufts of yellow hair on the thorax and abdomen.

Red-tailed bumblebee *Bombus lapidarius*



Male

Queen/worker



The queens and workers are completely black, except for an orange-red tail. The males look similar, but have some yellow hair on the face and thorax. Females are distinguished from the much rarer Red-shanked carder bee by having black hairs on the hind leg.

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Common carder bee *Bombus pascuorum*



Queen/worker/male



Queens, workers and males are almost completely brown or ginger. However, the shade varies significantly, depending on the location.

Some have abdomens which are very dark, while the abdomens of others can be quite light. It is the only common UK bumblebee that is mostly brown or ginger.

Tree bumblebee *Bombus hypnorum*



Queen/worker/male

Queens, workers and males all have a black head, brown-ginger thorax, black abdomen with a white tail. The proportion of white on the tail does vary significantly but is always present. This species was first found in the UK in 2001, but is now found throughout most of England and Wales. It prefers to nest above ground, often inhabiting bird boxes.

Garden bumblebee *Bombus hortorum*



Queen/worker/male



The same pattern is shared by queen, worker and male: three yellow bands (at the front and rear

of the thorax and a third band at the front of the abdomen). The tail is a clean white colour. The face is distinctly long, differentiating it from other species with similar banding, such as the Heath bumblebee. It is a very long tongued species that prefers flowers with deep tubes.

Heath bumblebee *Bombus jonellus*



Queen/worker/male



Similar to the Garden bumblebee, which also has three yellow stripes and a white tail. However, the face of the Heath bumblebee is round and the bee is smaller. This species is not common everywhere, but can be quite common in Ireland and northern Scotland where it has an orange/ buff tail. Despite its name, it is not only found in heath habitats.