



Queen



Worker



Male

### Tree bumblebee (*Bombus hypnorum*)

Queens, workers and males all have a brown-ginger thorax, and a black abdomen with a white tail. This recent arrival from France is now present across most of England and Wales, and is thought to be moving northwards.

Size: queen 18mm, worker 14mm, male 16mm



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Male

### Heath bumblebee (*Bombus jonellus*)

Queens, workers and males have three yellow bands. Individuals generally have a white tail, while those in Ireland and northern Scotland have an orange/ buff tail. The colouration is similar to the Garden bumblebee, but this species is smaller and the is face round. Patchy distribution across the UK.

Size: queen 16mm, worker 12mm, male 12mm

There are 24 species of bumblebee in the UK. This field guide contains illustrations and descriptions of the eight most common species. All illustrations 1.5x actual size.

There has been a marked decline in the diversity and abundance of wild bees across Europe in recent decades. In the UK, two species of bumblebee have become extinct within the last 80 years, and seven species are listed in the Government's Biodiversity Action Plan as priorities for conservation. This decline has been largely attributed to habitat destruction and fragmentation, as a result of urbanisation and the intensification of agricultural practices.

The Centre for Agroecology and Food Security is conducting research to encourage and support bumblebees in food growing areas on allotments and in gardens. Bees are essential for food security, and are regarded as the most important insect pollinators worldwide. Of the 100 crop species that provide 90% of the world's food, over 70 are pollinated by bees.

### The Centre for Agroecology and Food Security

Creating resilient food systems worldwide

The Centre for Agroecology and Food Security (CAFS) is a joint initiative between Coventry University and Garden Organic, which brings together social and natural scientists whose collective research expertise in the fields of agriculture and food spans several decades.

The Centre conducts critical, rigorous and relevant research which contributes to the development of agricultural and food production practices which are economically sound, socially just and promote long-term protection of natural resources. The Centre also offers education and training at masters, postgraduate and professional development levels, and consulting services to the public and private sector.



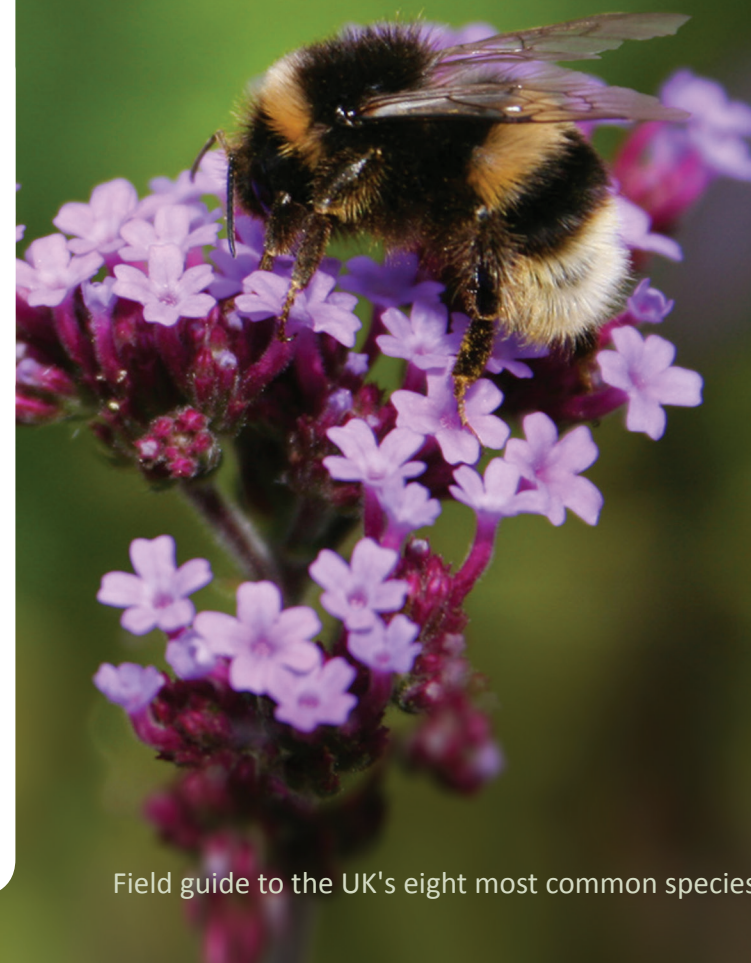
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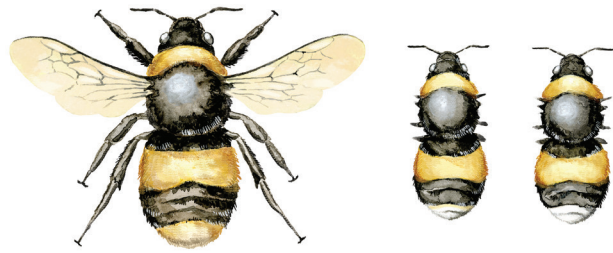
Illustrations: Matt Miles - <http://www.datmattmiles.com>  
Cover photo: Gemma Sutton



# Common Bumblebees of the United Kingdom



Field guide to the UK's eight most common species



Queen

Worker

Male

Buff-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus terrestris*)

Queens, workers and males have two dull-yellow bands. The queens and males have an off-white/ buff colour tail, which can sometimes appear brownish. The workers have a white tail with a subtle buff line. Common throughout the UK, although absent in parts of Scotland.

Size: queen 20-22mm, worker 11-17mm, male 14-16mm



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Garden bumblebee (*Bombus hortorum*)

Queens, workers and males have three yellow bands and a white tail. The face of this species is longer than others with similar markings. Common throughout the UK.

Size: queen 17-20mm, worker 11-16mm, male 14-15mm



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Common carder bee (*Bombus pascuorum*)

Queens, workers and males are almost completely brown or ginger. Common throughout the UK, but the shade of the abdomen varies from dark to light depending on location.

Size: queen 16-18mm, worker 10-15mm, male 13-14mm



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Male

White-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lucorum*)

Queens, workers and males have two bright lemon-yellow bands, and a bright white tail. Males also have tufts of yellow hair on their head, thorax and abdomen. Common throughout the UK.

Size: queen 19-20mm, worker 11-17mm, male 14-16mm



Queen

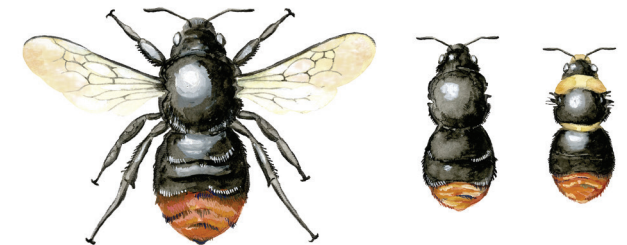
Worker

Male

Early bumblebee (*Bombus pratorum*)

Queens, workers and males have two yellow bands, and dark orange-red tails. Abdominal yellow band is often less pronounced or missing in workers. This species is particularly small. Common throughout the UK, although absent in parts of northern Scotland.

Size: queen 15-17mm, worker 10-14mm, male 11-13mm



Queen

Worker

Male

Red-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*)

Queens and workers have a black body with an orange-red tail. Males also have a yellow band on the thorax and yellow facial hairs. Common throughout the UK, although absent in parts of Scotland.

Size: queen 20-22mm, worker 11-16mm, male 14-16mm