

IRISH BUMBLEBEES

Thanks to all those who have generously allowed their photographs
to be used in this guide

Photographs will first appear unlabeled so that you have the
option to test your identification if you wish



©Les Reed

Bombus hortorum: note the white tail, two yellow bands on the thorax and the long face (longer than wide)



©Les Reed

Bombus hortorum: note the long face (longer than wide)



©Ralph Sheppard



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Bombus jonellus: note the white tail, two yellow bands on the thorax and the short face. This is a male *B. jonellus* – you can see the yellow hairs on it's face



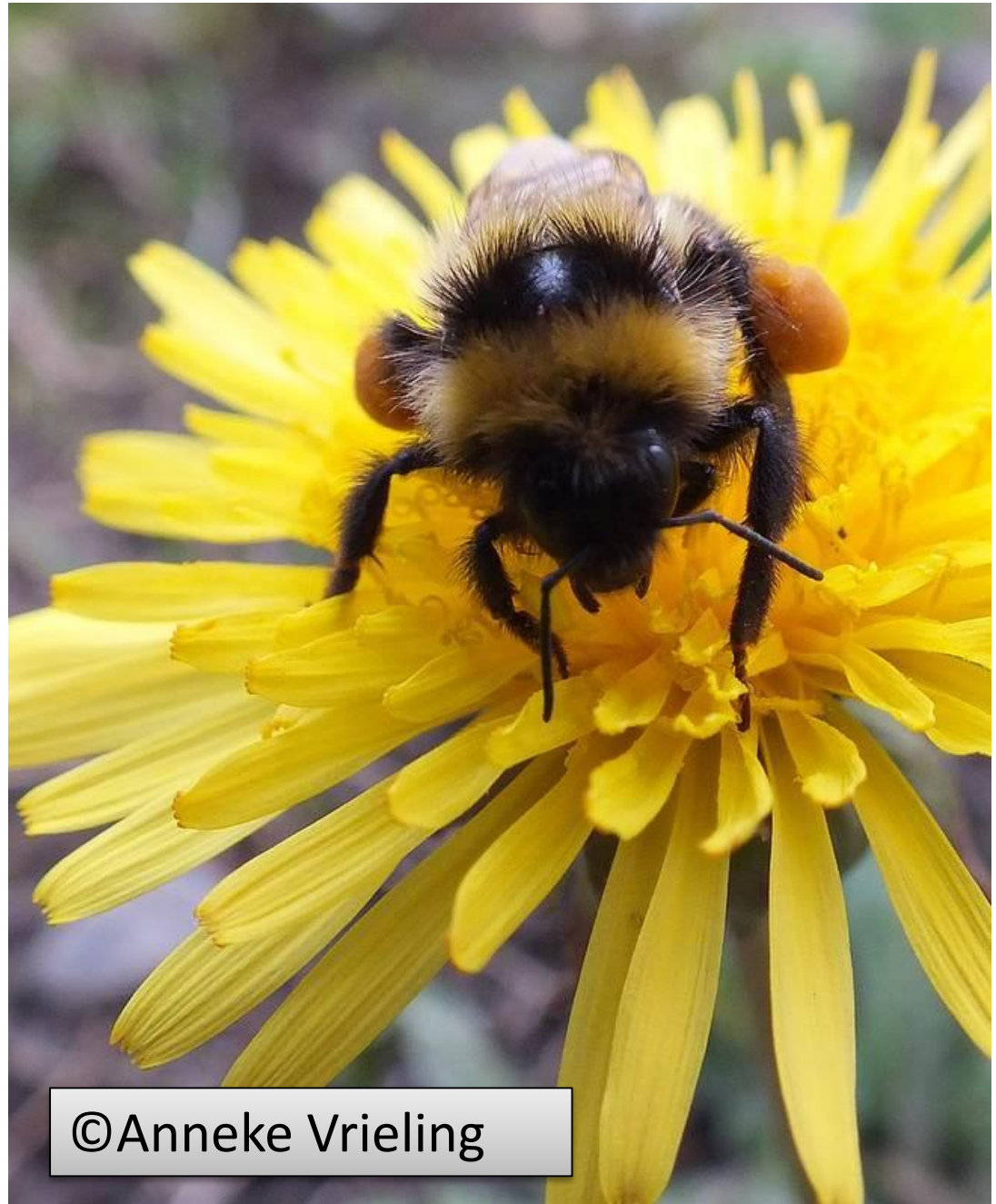
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Bombus jonellus: note the short face (not longer than wide) on this male



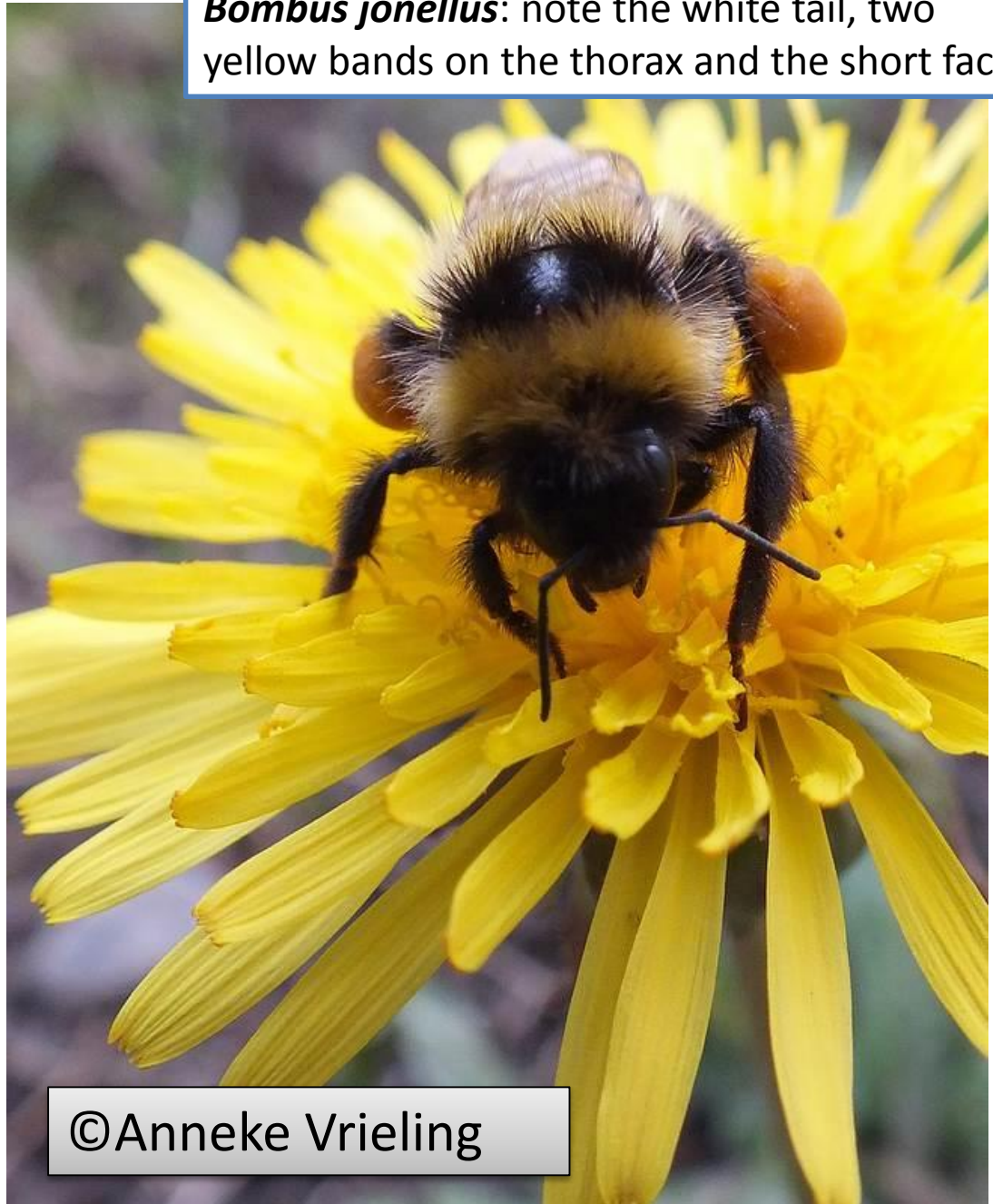
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Bombus jonellus: note the white tail, two yellow bands on the thorax and the short face.



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Queen

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Bombus lucorum: Note the white tail and one yellow band on the thorax. Bands are lemon yellow and the tail is a clean white.



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©Chris Wilson

Bombus pascuorum: this species can be very variable. Always look for the combination of ginger thorax and some black hairs on the abdomen

©Chris Wilson





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Bombus pascuorum: this species can be very variable. Always look for the combination of ginger thorax and some black hairs on the abdomen

©Ralph Sheppard





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Bombus pascuorum: this species can be very variable. Always look for the combination of ginger thorax and some black hairs on the abdomen. This individual is faded. *B. pascuorum* seems to be more prone to fading and becoming worn than the other species.



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Bombus monticola: Note that most of the abdomen is a rich red. Yellow band on thorax. Found only in counties Antrim, Dublin, Wicklow, Carlow & Wexford



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Bombus muscorum: Ginger thorax and hairs on the abdomen entirely blonde.



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Bombus distinguendus: entirely blonde bee with a black band on the thorax. Very rare

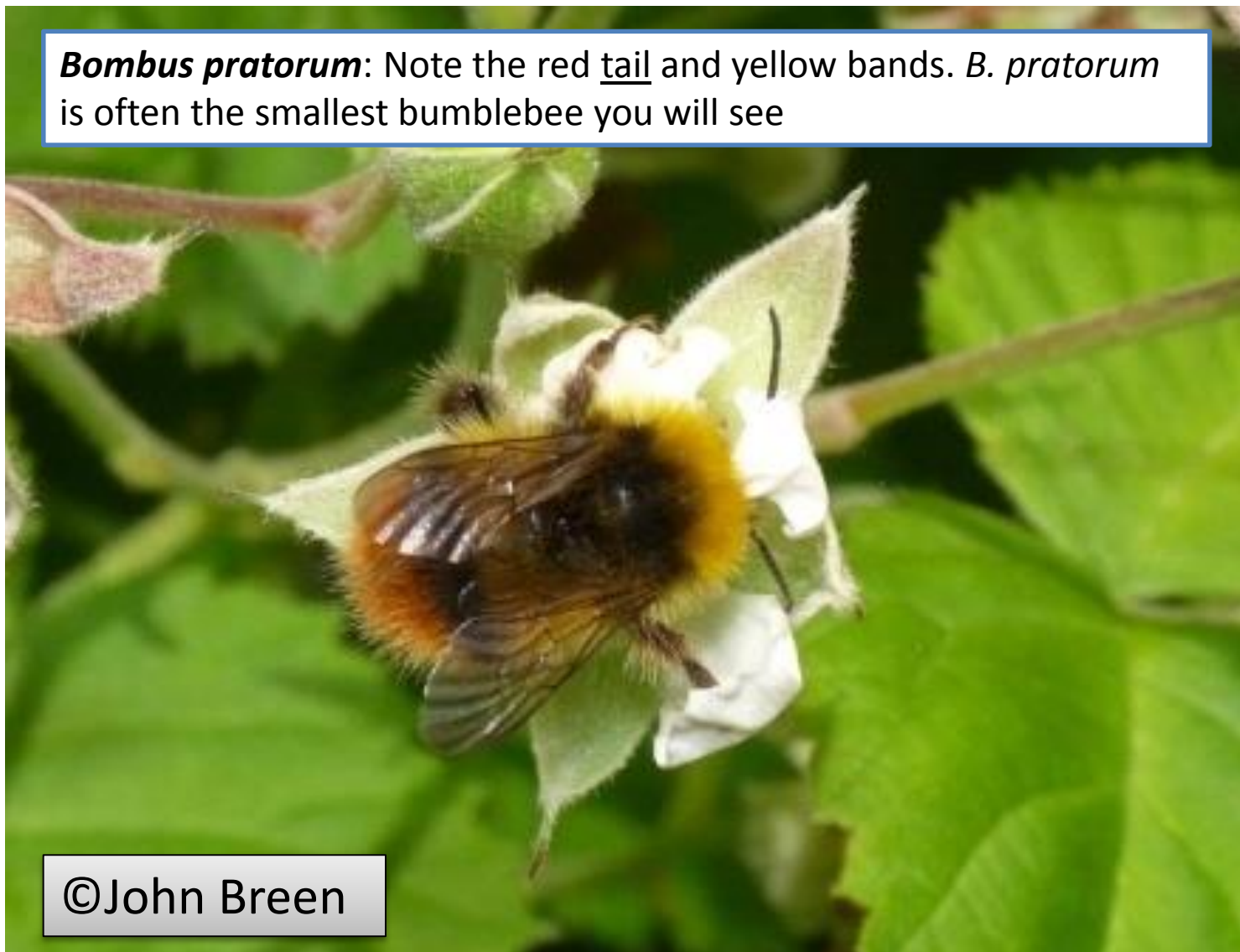


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Bombus pratorum: Note the red tail and yellow bands. *B. pratorum* is often the smallest bumblebee you will see



©John Breen



©John Breen

Bombus pratorum: Note the red tail and yellow bands. It is not unusual for the yellow band on the abdomen to be reduced or absent. *B. pratorum* is often the smallest bumblebee you will see

©John Breen





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***Bombus lapidarius* queen:** Red tail and otherwise jet black. Black hairs on its hind leg distinguish it from *B. ruderarius* females. *B. lapidarius* is common.

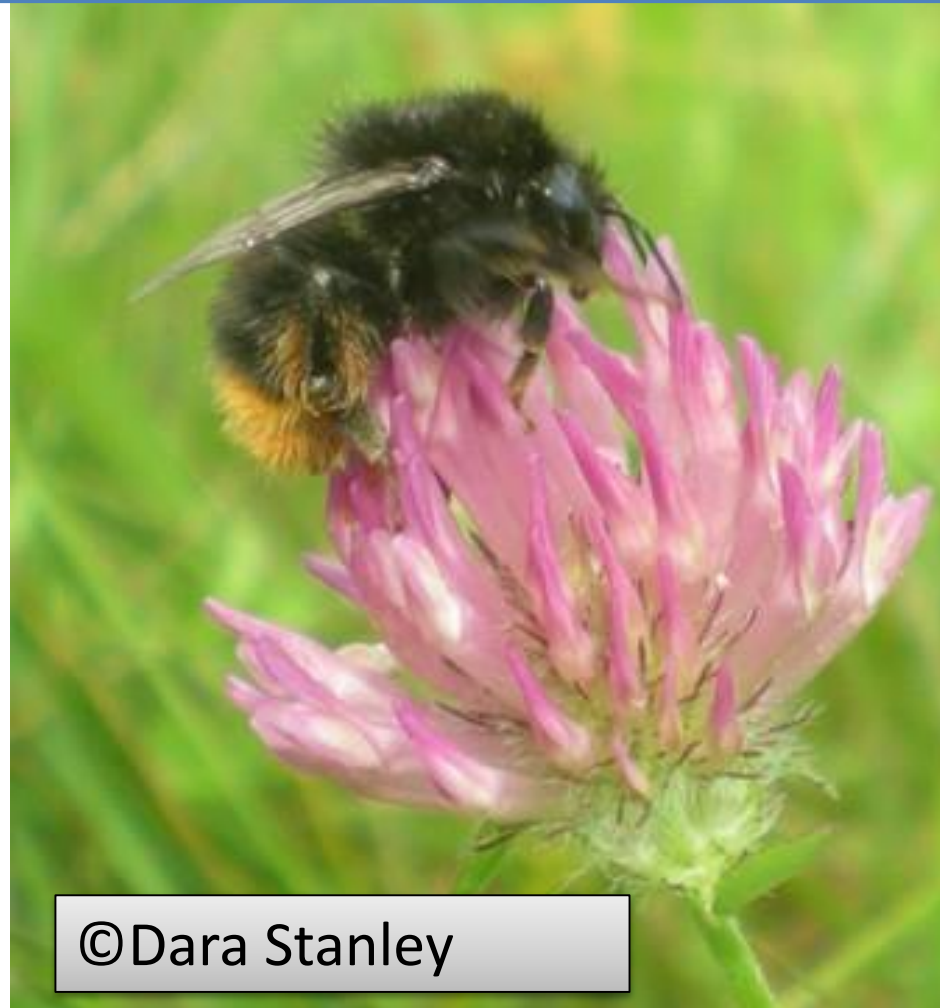


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Bombus ruderarius: Red tail and otherwise jet black.
Red hairs on its hind leg distinguish it from *B. lapidarius*
females. Rare



©Dara Stanley



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***Bombus lapidarius* male:** Red tail and yellow band on thorax. Note that *B. lapidarius* males have red hairs on their legs. Common. Could be confused with *B. pratorum* males, but they have a yellow band on the abdomen whereas *B. lapidarius* males do not.



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***Bombus ruderarius* male:** Red tail and grey bands on thorax. Both *B. ruderarius* males and females have red hairs on their hind legs. Rare

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Bombus sylvarum: note the combination of red tail and distinctive black band on thorax. Normally greyish in colour but is variable. Rare



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Bombus rupestris: Red tail and otherwise jet black. Hind leg not flattened and does not have a long fringe of hairs (so cuckoo bee). Dark chocolate coloured wings. Rare



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Bombus bohemicus: Hind leg not flattened and does not have a long fringe of hairs (so cuckoo bee). Note the white tail and no bands on abdomen (cuckoo species). One yellow band on thorax and slight yellow flashes at top of white tail – *B. bohemicus*. (The solitary bee is *Andrena cineraria*).



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Bombus sylvestris: Hind leg not flattened and does not have a long fringe of hairs (so cuckoo bee). Note the white tail and no bands on abdomen (cuckoo species). One dull band on thorax and no yellow flashes at top of white tail – *B. sylvestris*. Note that the key identification feature in this species is that the tip of the abdomen is often strongly curled downwards under the body (difficult to see clearly from the photo).



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Bombus hypnorum

The tree bumblebee nests above ground in holes in trees or in empty bird boxes. It hasn't been recorded in Ireland yet, but arrived in Britain in 2001 and is expanding its range.

It is very distinctive with a ginger thorax and white tail.

If you are the first to record it in Ireland we will need a photograph or a specimen.

