

IRISH BUMBLEBEES 2

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

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



©Ralph Sheppard

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



©Anneke Vrieling

Bombus pascuorum: this species seems to be more prone to fading and becoming worn than the other species. This individual is exceptionally worn but you can see that the thorax is a uniform colour (has to be ginger) and that the abdomen has some black hairs.



©Anneke Vrieling



Queen

©Patrick McGurn

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



©Patrick McGurn

With only a photograph, it is difficult to get a perspective of the size of workers in comparison to the queens. Queens are noticeably large (particularly *B. terrestris*) and are only observed occasionally outside spring.



Bombus lucorum agg. This worker has one band on thorax and a 'white' tail. Unless it's a queen (would be larger) you cannot reliably distinguish *B. lucorum* from *B. terrestris* regardless of band and tail colour.



©Paul Spain

With only a photograph, it is difficult to get a perspective of the size of workers in comparison to the queens. Queens are noticeably large (particularly *B. terrestris*) and are only observed occasionally outside spring.



©Michael O'Donnell

***Bombus monticola* male:** Note that most of the abdomen is a rich red. Two yellow bands on thorax and face yellow. Found only in counties Antrim, Dublin, Wicklow, Carlow, Kilkenny & Wexford



©Michael O'Donnell



©Dara Stanley

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



©Dara Stanley



©Patrick McGurn

Bombus muscorum var allenellus: This is a unique variety of *B. muscorum* found only on the Aran Islands. It has a ginger thorax and blonde abdomen (as usual) but the sides of thorax and abdomen are jet black.



©Patrick McGurn



©John Fogarty

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



©John Fogarty



©Anneke Vrieling

Bombus hortorum: slightly difficult to see but this bee has a white tail and two yellow bands on the thorax. Note the long face (longer than wide).



©Anneke Vrieling



©John Breen

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



©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 (hard to see here). *B. lapidarius* is common.



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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



©John Breen



©Fred Walsh

***Bombus lapidarius* queen and male:** you can't see the colour of the hairs on the queens hind legs but you can see that the male has yellow bands so has to be *B. lapidarius*.



©Fred Walsh



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***Bombus lapidarius* male:** Note the red tail, yellow band on thorax and yellow face. *B. lapidarius* males have red hairs on their legs (can't see in this photograph). Common. Could possibly 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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© Sharon Parr

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



© Sharon Parr



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Bombus vestalis: Hind leg not flattened and does not have a long fringe of hairs (so cuckoo bee). Note the white tail with very obvious yellow flashes. Hasn't been recorded in Ireland since 1926



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Bombus bohemicus: Note the white tail and no bands on abdomen (cuckoo species). One band on thorax and slight yellow flashes at top of white tail – *B. bohemicus*



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