




The Big 7 poster

Common UK bumblebee species

As temperatures start to warm up, you should start to see some newly emerged bumblebee queens on the wing looking for food and nesting sites. We call the species that emerge first our early emergers, and they tend to be our most common bumblebee species.

Bumblebees listed by colour pattern

-  White-tailed bumblebee
-  Ginger-tailed bumblebee
-  Red-tailed bumblebee

Social bumblebee



Tree bumblebee (*Bombus hypnorum*)

Queen/Worker/Male



Recent immigrant from France. Unique brown, black and white colour pattern. This bumblebee has spread rapidly and is now widespread in England, Wales and Scotland.

Photo: Bumblebee worker



Buff-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus terrestris*)

Queen Worker



Queens and males usually have buff tails but workers' tails are largely white, usually with a hint of buff at the front margin. Yellow bands slightly darker/dirtier than in the White-tailed.

Photo: Queen bumblebee by Andrea Finch



Common carder bee (*Bombus pascuorum*)

Queen/Worker/Male

The only common brown bumblebee. Some forms have a very dark abdomen, but others are very light and similar to rarer carder bees.

Photo: Bumblebee worker



White-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lucorum*)

Queen Male



Similar to Buff-tailed bumblebee but tail always pure white and bands brighter yellow. Males have yellow faces and often extra yellow bands.

Photo: Queen bumblebee by Andrea Finch



Early bumblebee (*Bombus pratorum*)

Queen Male

A common small bee with an orangey-red tail. Has one or two yellow bands and males have a yellow face. Rarely seen after July.

Photo: Male bumblebee by Gordon Mackie



Garden bumblebee (*Bombus hortorum*)

Queen/Worker/Male



A very long-tongued species with a white tail and yellow bands, including one at the rear of the thorax. Has a longer 'horse-like' face.

Photo: Male bumblebee by Andrea Finch



Red-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*)

Queen Male

Females are all black, with a red tail. Males have yellow hair on the face and a yellow band at the front of the thorax.

Photo: Queen bumblebee by Jack Reid

